

RECREATION CONFERENCE – SESSION OUTLINE

Session Title:

ALIGNING RECREATIONAL SERVICES WITH ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

SESSION DESCRIPTION (25 words):

Learn how to determine your agency's Core Services; and gain a defensible "Pricing Strategy" and a designated "Marketing Strategy" for each specific program and service.

SESSION DESCRIPTION (Full Text):

Come learn how to determine your agency's Core Services; and gain a defensible "Pricing Strategy" and a designated "Marketing Strategy" for each specific program and service. We will analyze how to use the "evaluative criteria" for each program, and how to place it on the "5-Level Benefit Scale" so that we can set the proper cost recovery level for each service.

SESSION TARGET MARKET: Recreation Programmers, Agency Directors, Supervisors

Speaker's Name: Mark Honberger

Total Length: 1.25 hour session

SESSION LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Participants will:

- 1) Identify how to determine your agency's Core Services using strategic "Evaluative Criteria"
- 2) Define the "5-level Benefit Scale", and learn how to apply it to your agency services
- 3) Analyze how to set proper cost recovery expectations for each program or service

SESSION NEEDS IDENTIFICATION: Some Recreation agencies try to offer all programs for all sections of their community's population, and often find that they have spread themselves too thin. They are doing more things than they can fiscally afford to do. Other agencies may be programming within their means, but they have yet to determine what their Core Services are. If your agency is asking "which programs should we be doing?", "Which programs should we cut?", or "Why do we do what we do?", then this is the session for you.



MARK'S EXPERIENCE PRESENTING EDUCATION SESSIONS: Throughout his 30+ years in the Parks and Recreation Profession, Mark Honberger has annually provided training presentations on a variety of recreation topics. He has provided training sessions for the California Park and Recreation Society (District Training Events & State Conferences), the Arizona Park and Recreation Association (State Conference 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021), the Nevada Park and Recreation Society (State Conference 2018, 2019), & the New Mexico Park and Recreation Association (State Conference 2019). Additionally, Mark has conducted numerous Team Building sessions for parks and recreation agencies.

MARK'S EXPERIENCE WITH THIS SUBJECT MATTER: It was only 3 years into his 30+ year career in the Parks and Recreation Profession, when Mark Honberger was tasked, by his director, with engaging in this process to determine their agency's core services. Through that experience, he learned methods that worked, and some that didn't. Then when he was an agency director himself, he was able to implement this same process for his new agency. Mark will bring these experiences to this session and show how you can do the same for your agency.

SESSION OUTLINE

Introduction of Speaker (2 Minutes)

Introduction of Topic (5 Minutes)

- A) Attention Grabber: Bring out the importance of Aligning Recreational Services. Ask Audience to raise hand to share a reason why they think it is important to do this alignment process. Reward those who answer with a sweet treat.
 - a. Without it, we might be pursuing programs we shouldn't
 - b. To obtain a Defensible Programming Strategy (choosing programs based on benefit)
 - c. To understand our agency's pricing strategy for each service
 - d. To apply a Marketing Strategy for each service

- B) NEEDS IDENTIFICATION: Discuss the need for this topic and this session. (from above)

Cover Learning Objectives (3 Minutes)

PRESENTATION OF TOPIC SPECIFICS



Determining your Core Services (10 Minutes)

(LEARNING OBJECTIVE #1)

- A) Putting all programs through the “Evaluative Criteria” (see below)
 - a. Does it support the position/mission of the Agency?
 - b. If so, does it serve a Target Market?
 - c. If so, does it fill a gap in existing services in our community?
 - d. If so, is their agency the best service provider for this program?
 - e. If so, does their agency have the organizational capacity and/or resources to provide the program?
- B) Discuss how to align existing classes to better meet the “Evaluative Criteria” listed above
 - a. Some classes can be added (GROWING)
 - b. Some classes can be Re-Aligned (GUIDING)
 - c. Some classes will need to be cut (PRUNING)
- C) Apply a Marketing Strategy to each program or service
 - a. You will know which programs to press forward on, and which programs may need to be moved out.

Defining the 5-Level Benefit Scale (10 Minutes)

(LEARNING OBJECTIVE #2)

- A) Level 1 = Program provides “Mostly Community Benefit” (base)
 - a. The parks and recreation facilities themselves
 - b. Drop-In programs for youngsters
 - c. Low-income or scholarship programs
 - d. Park maintenance.
- B) Level 2 = Program provides “Considerable Community Benefit”
 - a. Drop-In programs for teens and adults
 - b. beginning level instructional programs and classes
- C) Level 3 = Program equally provides “Community Benefit & Individual Benefit” (Balanced)
 - a. Summer recreational day camp
 - b. Summer sports leagues
 - c. Year-round swim team
- D) Level 4 = Program provides “Considerable Individual Benefit”
 - a. Specialty classes
 - b. Outdoor adventure programs
- E) Level 5 = Program provides “Mostly Individual Benefit”
 - a. Elite diving teams
 - b. Golf lessons
 - c. Food concessions
 - d. Company picnic rentals
 - e. Other facility rentals such as for weddings or other services

Applying all programs and services to the Benefit Scale (5 Minutes)

(LEARNING OBJECTIVE #2)

- A) Developing Programming Categories customized to the agency
- B) Fitting or sorting the agency's inventory of services into the categories
- C) Fitting the categories to the Benefit Scale

Defining Direct and Indirect Costs (5 Minutes)

(LEARNING OBJECTIVE #3)

- A) These definitions vary from agency to agency
- B) Costs (or budget line-items) must be consistently applied to all programs
- C) Direct Costs = expenses that would not exist without the program
- D) Indirect Costs = typically overhead and administrative costs

Establishing Cost Recovery (or Subsidy) Goals for each level (10 Minutes)

(LEARNING OBJECTIVE #3)

- A) Set Cost Recovery (or Subsidy) levels by service area based on your agency's definitions of direct and indirect costs
- B) Consider revenue sources and service costs
- C) Staff typically accounts for program costs differently, which become apparent through this exercise. Methods will need to be agreed upon by all staff
- D) Do staff have the capacity and resources to account for and track all costs
- E) Subsidy and Cost Recovery are complementary. A program subsidized at 80%, has a cost recovery of 20%
- F) The goals established must reflect your community
- G) This process will allow the agency to place higher subsidies where it identifies the need

The Importance of a Consensus Process (5 Minutes)

- A) It is not a one person show. All staff must be involved.
- B) Key Decision makers also need to be involved in the process
- C) Key Community Members should be invited to participate as well
- D) A consensus process leads to a more thorough buy-in by the community

At the end of the process, your agency will have a: (5 Minutes)

- A) Defensible Programming Philosophy (*Why we do what we do*)
- B) Designated Cost Recovery / Subsidy Goals for each program category
- C) Defensible Pricing Philosophy (*Why programs are price a certain way*)
- D) Designated Marketing Strategy (*To press forward, or to ship 'em out*)

QUESTION AND ANSWERS (15 Minutes)