Discover the power of questions for fundraising and strategic planning.

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Workshop protocols

• This is a taste, not the whole meal.
• You get what you give.
• What matters is what happens when you leave.
• There are no wrong questions.
• Cell phones silent
The essence of this workshop

• Go meet people.
• Ask them questions, mostly about them.
• Listen to what they say.
• Why ask questions?
• What would you ask?
• Who could you talk to?
• How do you get them to talk to you?
• What to do with the information you collect?
Case: Anytown Small Land Trust

Organization:
- 30 yr. old private, 501c3 land trust in a coastal region
- Fee simple or conservation easements on 500 acres
- Stewardship of properties
- Some trail programs

Staff/Volunteers/Board
- Part time administrator
- 20 Volunteers
- 15 Board members; average age 60

Challenges
- Large scale solar developments threatening unprotected forests and farms
- Hard to attract younger members
- Hard to get all the work done
- Difficulty raising annual operating dollars
- Board president serves function as an unpaid executive director
1. **You build critical abilities essential for your NPO’s survival and growth.**
   1. To tell your story
   2. To build relationships
   3. To engage people and nurture their participation

2. **You increase your social capital**
   1. Power of networks and influence
   2. Access to information pipelines
   3. Access to people, resources

3. **You build evangelists**
   1. Supporters become ambassadors
   2. Insights have more impact when they are generated from within
   3. Board members (and others) practice outreach skills and build confidence
A few ways of asking questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>One at a time, maybe two</td>
<td>• In person or phone or video conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td>Small groups</td>
<td>• In person or video conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charettes</td>
<td>Large group</td>
<td>• Longer time to ponder a question(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveys</td>
<td>Small or large groups</td>
<td>• Closed or open ended</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Topic 1

What questions would we ask?
Some questions to ask

About the person or organization:
• What they care about and why
• What natural places or experiences they value most
• Their current priorities

About the future
• What they are planning for
• What they are worrying about
• What legacy they hope to leave

About your cause
• What experiences have they had related to your cause
• How important it is to them
• How they think about it

About your organization
• Their history with you
• Your reputation/niche
• Advice they’d like to give
• Questions about your relationship with them
Topic 2
Who could you talk to?
Who to talk to

Stakeholders:
• Gain or lose from your work
• Can accelerate or block your work
• Have particular expertise or insight
• Political leadership
• Naturalists
• Government officials
• People who know everyone
• People who know everything
• Business interests
• Your peers
• Faith leaders
• Outdoors users
• Current, future or past supporters/donors
• Economic development - business interests
• Renewable energy interests
• People who have access to young people
• Your adversaries
Topic 3

Getting folks to talk to you
• Make it important
• Engage an intermediary if needed
• Match the right people
• Make it easy for them
• Send a “formal” request
• Follow up right away to schedule
• Remind them of date
• Have your questions prepared and practiced
• Have a conversation, not an inquisition
• Thank them
Topic 4
What to do next
Act on what you learned

- Write up your notes
- Share them

Record

Analyze
- Major themes?
- Overlapping priorities?
- Ahas!
- Opportunities?
- Road blocks?
- Improvements?

Act
- What’s next?
- Incorporate into planning or programs?
QUESTIONS