

Strategic Plan Summary

PLAN PRIORITIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

The YESS Institute has a recognized reputation for excellence locally, and Executive Director Carlo Kriekels is gaining recognition on a national and international stage (as evidenced by a presentation at a national mentoring conference January 2015). In addition, the priorities of the last strategic plan have been realized with a strategic earned income plan, multi-level staff structure, and more formalized board of directors. Last, the organization is extremely stable and sustainable, with a diverse income base and a program model which includes a fee for service structure.

Therefore, this next strategic plan focuses on building the infrastructure of many parts of the organization. In short, updating/aligning the curriculum, formalizing the fundraising approach and putting policies and procedures into place; these strategies will be the foundation of the organization's growth over the next three years (2015-2018). As is the culture of the YESS Institute, the organization will continue to grow at a sustainable and controlled pace.

LIFECYCLES ASSESSMENT

The group assessed where the organization is today, and then a realistic, target capacity building stage in three years. The consensus (after some discussion) was that today, the YESS Institute is in the growth stage and in three years, will be in the maturity stage. Here's a review of both the growth and maturity stages, as defined by Lifecycles.

Growth Stage

The stage in which nonprofit mission and programs have taken hold in the marketplace, but where service demand exceeds current structural and resource capabilities.

Challenges:

- Too much to do, too little time
- Developing board ownership
- Creating a program and strategic focus that does not trap creativity and vision
- Identifying distinctive competence
- Beginning to formalize organizational structure
- Becoming comfortable with change
- Diversifying revenues and managing cash flow

Maturity

The stage of operation in which the organization is well-established, operating smoothly, and has a community reputation for providing consistently relevant and high quality services.

Challenges:

- Remaining client centered rather than policy bound

- Keeping staff motivated around the mission
- Building financial footings of endowment or services
- Maintaining their programmatic “edge,” cycling programs in and out based on continued relevancy
- Becoming “position” rather than “person” dependent

AREAS OF NEED

Next, using the following categories, participants brainstormed concrete, specific tasks that need to take place over the next three years to ensure organizational growth into the maturity stage:

- Program: What we do
- Management: Staff leadership
- Governance: Board
- Resources: Raising and managing money
- Systems: Policies and Procedures

While there are many ideas here, they generally support the strategic plan priorities of: updating/aligning the curriculum, formalizing and further diversifying the fundraising plan and putting policies and procedures into place. Other important themes include reviewing the mission statement and adding an additional senior level staff member, which will allow Carlo to focus on external relations.