6-2016

Executive Summaries

RESULTS

7 · Building a Field: Blue Shield of California Foundation's Strong Field Project Leaves a Legacy and Valuable Lessons

Hanh Cao Yu, Ph.D., and Jennifer Henderson-Frakes, M.P.P., Social Policy Research Associates; and Lucia Corral Peña, J.D., Blue Shield of California Foundation

Philanthropy has a long history of supporting field building, but few comprehensive evaluations have assessed the principles, elements, and impacts of these endeavors. This article shares the results of a five-year evaluation of a large-scale field-building initiative: Blue Shield of California Foundation's Strong Field Project. It aimed to strengthen field leadership and organizations, and to create vibrant collaborative networks. Evaluation data show that the project achieved much of its desired impact on the domestic violence field in California, in particular by challenging long-held assumptions and entrenched patterns that had stalled the development of the field.

DOI: 10.9707/1944-5660.1294

20 · Key Ingredients for School Food Systems: An Evaluation of the Orfalea Foundation's School Food Initiative

Holly Carmichael Djang, M.A., Evaluation Specialists; Barbara Andersen, M.P.A., Orfalea Foundation (formerly); Tatiana Masters, Ph.D., Jan Vanslyke, Ph.D., and Blair Beadnell, Ph.D., Evaluation Specialists

Among California's 58 counties, Santa Barbara is ranked 14th worst in meeting residents' daily food needs. In 2007, the Orfalea Foundation launched the School Food Initiative to improve the quality of school food and promote food literacy in the county's public schools. The initiative involved 84 schools and more than 50,000 students over its nine years of programming. Striving to tailor programming to specific needs, the foundation emphasized stakeholder involvement throughout the process. The foundation took a number of steps to understand the value and impact of the initiative, including working with an outside evaluator. This article shares best practices and lessons learned.

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TOOLS

39 · Partnerships, Paradigms, and Social-System Change

Patricia Jessup, Ph.D., Jessup & Associates; Beverly Parsons, Ph.D., InSites; and Marah Moore, M.C.R.P., i2i Institute

Communities frequently confront issues entangled in a web of multiple social systems and underlying assumptions, perspectives, and beliefs. In this article, the authors offer a

partnership configuration with three types of partnerships: project-focused, formal-systems-focused, and community-grounded, that focus on the deep structures and paradigms that shape social systems. The configuration provides funders, initiative leaders, and organizational leaders with ideas on how to adjust existing partnerships and/or create new ones to enrich their capacity to bring about systemic change within communities. They conclude with concrete actions that funders and leaders can take to stimulate partnerships committed to deep systemic change.

51 Developing a Framework for Grant Evaluation: Integrating Accountability and Learning

Shelley C. Scherer, Ph.D., The Pittsburgh Promise

Existing research provides a compelling case for grant evaluation, often citing its benefits in terms of accountability and learning. Drawing from insights shared by CEOs and program officers representing 17 foundations in Pennsylvania's Allegheny County, the author presents three questions designed to help other foundations develop their own framework for grant evaluation. A key takeaway is that foundation boards should not feel constrained to adopt uniform evaluation practices for all grants. This serves as a discussion guide, providing a starting point for conversations about the purpose of evaluation for each type of grant, along with a range of possible evaluation processes and criteria.

64 Critical Team-Building Tools in Philanthropy

Ali Webb, Ph.D., W. K. Kellogg Foundation, and Michael Bell, B. A., InPartnership Consulting

With only the organization's vision and mission as a guide and without a measurable bottom line, teams within foundations struggle to row in the same direction. Using the experience of one team in a large U.S.-based foundation over a four-year period, this article examines four essential tools for cultivating high-performing teams in the philanthropic sector. The tools discussed are giving and receiving feedback, the art of appreciations, organizing meetings to produce accountability, and assessing team communication styles, all applied with a racial equity lens. The tools are likely applicable in every sector, but when used by foundations where large-scale social issues are the crux of the work, the resulting high-performing teams may be better equipped to confront concerns vital to the philanthropic sector.

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SECTOR

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SPECIAL SECTION: IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE

97 Getting Real With Strategy: Insights From Implementation Science

Douglas Easterling, Ph.D., Wake Forest School of Medicine, and Allison Metz, Ph.D., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Foundations are increasingly coming to appreciate that they need to have a coherent and well-grounded strategy if they have any hope of creating a discernible impact in the world. To implement strategy effectively, foundations need to operationalize it in the form of specific functions that staff will carry out and to create an organizational infrastructure that supports the strategy. The field of implementation science offers a set of tools for helping foundations address these tasks. This article describes in depth the concepts of practice profiles, which translate programs or strategies into specific activities to be carried out by implementation staff, and implementation drivers, which point to organizational factors that determine whether a program or strategy is implemented well enough to achieve its intended outcomes.
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116 Using Implementation Science to Translate Foundation Strategy

Allison Metz, Ph.D., University of North Carolina, and Douglas Easterling, Ph.D., Wake Forest School of Medicine

The field of implementation science offers guidance to foundations as they effectively implement strategies that depart from prevailing practice. This article focuses on two specific tools: the practice profile and the implementation drivers assessment. The practice profile answers the question, "What does the strategy require of particular foundation staff?" The implementation drivers analysis explores the broader question, "What does the strategy require in the way of organizational change within the foundation?". These two tools were used by the Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust in implementing its place-based initiative, Healthy Places NC. In the process the tools brought to light a number of fundamental misalignments, which were resolved by shifting the organization rather than retreating on the strategy.
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