

Tips for Success.....

1. The Mission Statement

Developing your mission statement is one of the most important things that you will do because this is the cornerstone of your organization and plan. Without this there is no road map!

Without a clear mission statement that is clearly understood by all within your organization, eventually you will find yourself working very hard, but trying to do too much. Which brings me to the most important part about your mission statement: you can't be or do everything for everybody and every animal. Keep your mission focused. Start simple with best practices and achievable goals for your environment.

You can always add to your mission statement as the organization grows. Also, you don't have to start working on all aspects of your mission statement at the same time. It can be developed one part at a time. All parts of the mission statement should be the framework for growth.

2. Make the Commitment

Now that you have worked through the 'what have I done' and have sorted out 'what it is we are going to do', you are armed and dangerous, set to go with "the mission statement"but you can't ignore how consuming this project has become and that other things in your life have begun suffer. I know you are certainly sleeping less and feeling like there aren't enough hours in the day.

SO...at this point my advice is: don't start this unless you can devote yourself to this like a job or a second job.

3. Work the Program Consistently

Work the consistently, not when you feel like it or it is easy. The program can't get going unless it is worked. Someone must move it forward every day. Just randomly working on it and putting it out there as "a great idea," hoping someone is going to run with it, isn't going to get anything done. From the start, you must plan to work hard, be flexible, capable of dealing with frustration, and not do this for your ego. In the beginning, it takes workers who give their expertise and professional service free, not volunteers who want to "help-out" – that comes later.

4. Start Small and Keep it Focused

Focus on what you can realistically do for starters. To get things started is going to take your or someone else's money – probably someone you know. Buy only what you absolutely need – a filing cabinet isn't the first purchase. A box and file folders will work fine. And you don't need to have a shelter to start doing good work.

5. Appoint a Board of Directors

Your Board should be composed of influential people who share the same vision as put forth in your mission statement. Also, it is important to clarify who the working board members are and who are the figureheads. Too often boards and management clash because it is not clear in the beginning how each body will participate. Some organizations are comprised of a working board, others have boards whose members are only seen or heard from once a year. Some countries or provinces have rules and regulations regarding the function of foundation board members.

6. Get Proper Licensing

This minimizes governmental problems in the future, especially when you become recognized and start making a difference. Also, you will be ready to start fundraising immediately, as most sponsors require that you be properly documented. Don't lose out on opportunities because you don't have the proper paperwork in place.

7. Setup Your Accounting

Set up your books. It is a must. Do not go any further if you cannot get your bookkeeping managed. In the beginning, there is hardly anything – a few receipts here and there, a few hundred bucks borrowed – but before you know it, a year has gone by and things are out of control and you are probably in need of money but don't know where it is going – mainly because you are living from pocket to organization. For both your financial health and the organization's, don't be casual about this.

Open up a separate bank account for your organization. Get a merchant credit card account if possible, so that you can accept credit card donations - but do not use it and get yourself in debt!

8. Start Fundraising Right Away!!

Don't wait until you have spent all of your own money BEFORE you start fund raising! Accept that fund raising is going to be one of your main jobs. If there is no money, there is no organization. Also look for non-monetary donations. Be creative. Look locally and look abroad. Use the internet! Apply for grants. Your

board members should be avenues of networking for you. Start seeking community support. Market your organization to the media, schools, local community, expatriate community, government and international communities. Think MARKETING.

9. Establish Local Management

If you are not native to the area, you must build an organization that is indigenous to the country you are working. Western management should be kept to an absolute minimum! Develop local management to run organization. There must be equal commitment by both parties and built on common trust and respect.

10. Respect the Culture

People's attitudes about animals vary widely in different countries and cultures. Animal welfare is often times seen as a Western concept not sensitive to local values. Respect the local culture and the traditions of the country you are working in and understand that their may be different ways of doing things. The more you work with it rather than against it the happier and more productive everyone is.

11. The Organization is Theirs Not Yours

Your job is to organize, fundraise, set objectives and show the organization how to keep moving forward with the vision and the mission. The less you are "out in front" the better.

12. Build an Organization That Can Eventually Run Without You

That is the lasting legacy you leave behind. Too often welfare organizations shut down once the original founder has burned themselves out

13. Develop a Business Plan

Find someone who can help you write one. Don't let the task of getting your thoughts and ideas organized and down on paper stop you from getting this done.

This is the expansion of the mission statement. It will be the document that programs and marketing evolve from. With a business plan you'll have an understanding of the staffing and equipment requirement. It is the blue print of "what you will be doing". You will find fundraising and grant applications almost impossible if you do not have a business plan. There are so many ways you can get a business plan produced with a little help.

14. Develop your Programs

Though most of your programs may be to solve a particular problem, don't forget to include animal welfare education. As we all know, this is ultimately the only long term solution to change.

15. Make a Budget

Develop and budget and REALLY STICK TO IT! Make sure to include everything from salaries, equipment to water and paperclips.

16. Organize the Jobs

Think about what needs to be done and what the job entails. How many people you need to fill the positions? Do you have redundancies?

17. Develop an Operating Manual

Your personnel management will be much stronger and more focused if you have a manual in place at the time of hiring. This can be developed and elaborated as you get on into your campaign. Your employees will have a better foundation to start from as there is no question about what you want them to do, what the organization does, and how it goes about doing it. This will include everything from job descriptions, program protocols, vacation, salaries, rules - - anything that is important and relevant to the success of your business.

18. Build a Core Staff

Build a core staff of professionals, young and seasoned people. These people are not volunteers, they are staff members with a real jobs and commitment to the mission of your organization.

19. Create a team with self esteem

When people work as a team all members are responsible to achieve the end goals of the program. One can not do the entire job without the other. The driver is just as important to the success of a spay program as the doctor or the dog catcher. Each has responsibility for a part of the team and its success. Manage and grow your team – teach them to work together not autonomously. Remember that you are running a business and your business depends on the strength and success of the human resources.

20. Manage Your Volunteers

If not used wisely volunteers can cost your organization more time, money and energy than the benefit they provide as free help. Volunteers can erode a team

and undo good work so make sure your volunteer knows exactly what they can and can't do and what you expect. Again, here is where an operations manual can help. Each new volunteer should be required to read the guidelines governing their work. And don't forget, volunteers come and go and when they are gone it all boils down to you and your team. Your responsibility and loyalty is to them first. Don't forget tip #10 - build mutual respect and trust!

21. Develop a Website

The website is your national and international calling card. This is where you describe your programs, put up your pictures, get endorsements, list your sponsors. It is your international marketing tool that tells your story.

There are many ways to get a website built. Start with a local kid in college or high school. And there are many freelance designers that you can find on the internet. You can do all of this remotely.

22. Public Relations Play's a Major Role in Your Business

Find someone who can consistently manage your public relations. The public includes, locals, volunteer vets, media, universities, business owners, government agencies, housewives, other charities, staff, board members, schools, and people who have seen injured or abused animals and want help NOW. YOUR Public is everywhere. Your public can be positively behind you or against you. BE READY. Know your mission statement and don't waver under pressure.

23. Establish a Relationship with the Government and Other Influential Groups

Get to know the people in the government, veterinarian department of the university, veterinary association, schools, social organizations, major businesses, hotels, restaurants and other animal welfare organizations in your community.

24. Manage your Non-Monetary Donations

Don't end up spending more on custom fees than the donation is worth. People will often times send you stuff you don't need. Don't take it! Don't become someone else's dumping ground. Also make friends with someone in the customs office so that they can help you with the importation of donated goods.

25. Remain Transparent

Make sure that your partners and Board of Directors know where the money is coming from and how it is being spent. Otherwise suspicions will undermine

you. Many people will think that there is more money than there is and that you are benefiting yourself. You need to be transparent if you want to receive grant funding. Establish a check writing protocol that requires two signatures for every check. Think carefully who should have this responsibility.