



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MELBOURNE

## Student Ambassador Leadership Program

# MANAGING A COMMUNITY PROJECT

Identifying Community Needs and Resources

Conducting a Needs/Resources Assessment

Run a Skills Audit

What does a Project look like?

What to include in a Project Proposal

*Defining your Statement*

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*Planning Cost Estimates*

*Organising Timelines*

*Implementing Evaluation Procedures*

More Resources

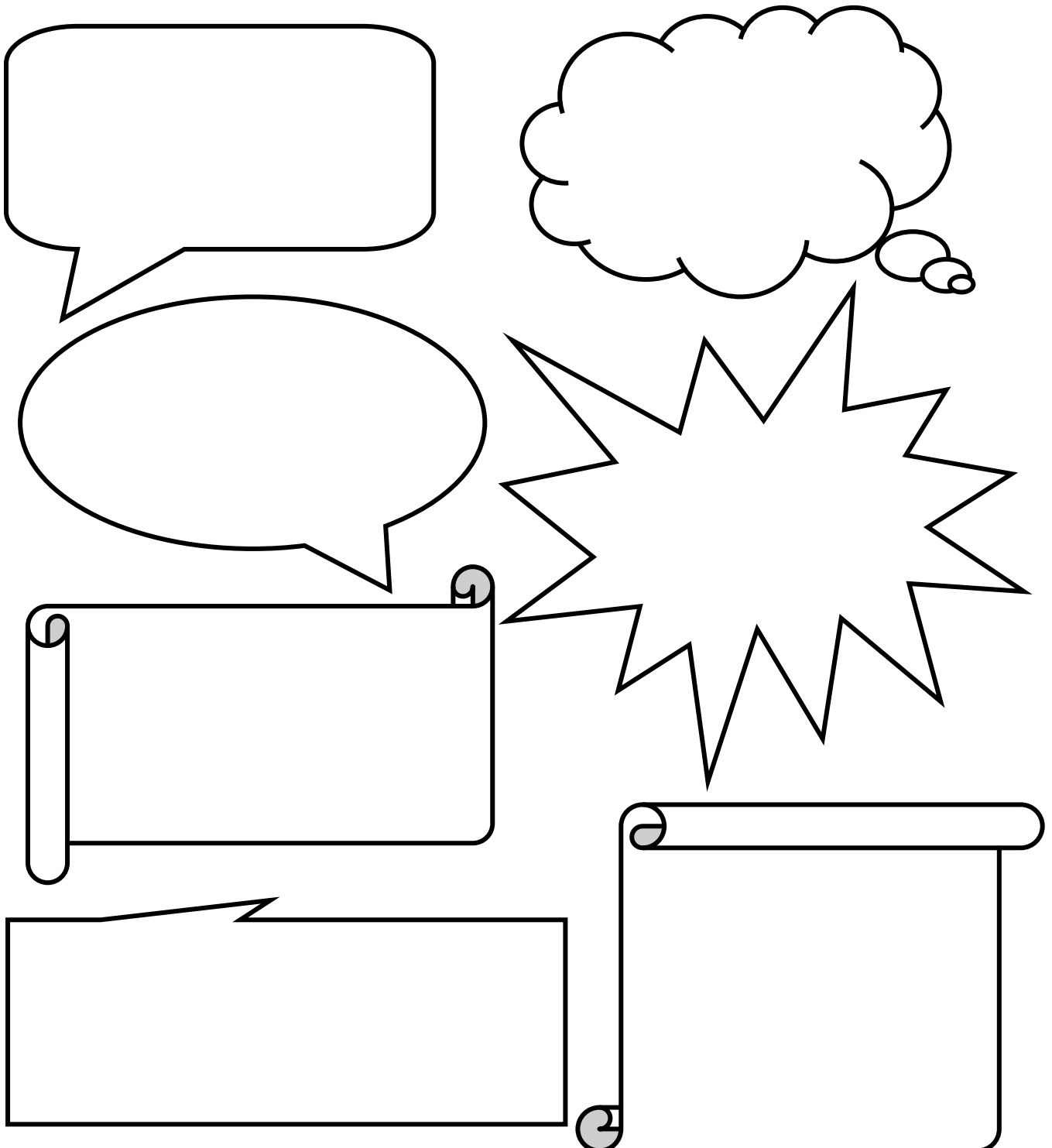
# Identifying Community Needs and Resources

**NEEDS** can be defined as the gap between what a situation *is* and what it *should be*. By examining needs you can discover what is lacking and determine what type of project to develop in order to address those needs.

**RESOURCES** are things/people/places that can be used to *improve* quality. Everyone is an asset, and everyone has assets that can be used for community building.

In order to get a comprehensive view of your community, it is important to look at what you *have* and what you *need*. With these things in mind, you can have a positive impact on the problem you wish to address.

## Why identify community needs & resources first?

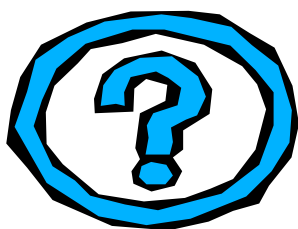


# Conducting a Needs/Resources Assessment

There are many ways to identify local needs and resources. You can interview individuals, hold community meetings or targeted focus groups.

The most important part of identifying local needs and resources is listening to the insights of group members, community members, leaders, and others while incorporating community data and history into the analysis.

This info sheet will guide you through the process of approaching assessment in order to help you establish and develop a suitable community project.



1. **ASK:** What are my reasons for choosing to do this project? Why am I getting involved in this? Asking these questions gives you the chance to become clearer about what you want to achieve.

2. **ASK:** What are my goals in doing this project? What do I hope to achieve? How will the results of this community needs/resource assessment be used?

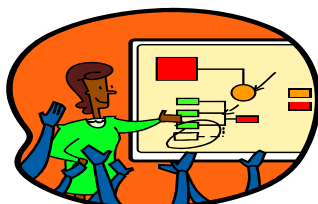
3. **ASK:** Am I willing and able to make the commitment to conduct this project? Am I prepared to do the work that needs to be done, with high-quality effort? Before you begin, make sure your answer is "YES."

4. **FIND OUT:** Who are the stakeholders and how will I approach their needs? Be sure that you include relevant interest groups. For example, if you are assessing the childcare needs of asylum seekers you will need to include the parents, young children and perhaps childcare centres who work directly with this particular group.



5. **DECIDE:** What questions will be asked? You can ask more quantitative, or closed-ended questions, and more qualitative, or open-ended questions. Include questions that find gaps and questions that identify strengths to build on.

6. **CREATE:** A draft format of your questions and practice on a test group as they will let you know if your instructions are clear and if your questions make sense. Give people scope to comment.

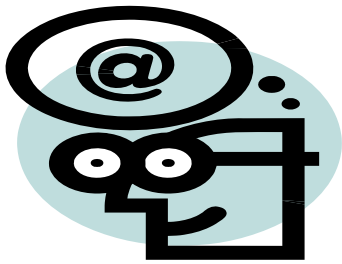
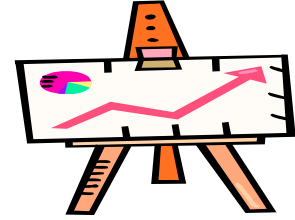


7. **REVISE:** The survey on the basis of your test group feedback. This process may need to be repeated more than once.

8. **ADMINISTER:** Your community needs/resources assessment to the people you have chosen.

9. **TABULATE:** Your results. For closed-ended questions, this can be a matter of simple addition. For open-ended questions, you can code the results into categories.

10. **INTERPRET:** Your results. What is the meaning of the results? What are the main patterns that occur? What possible actions do the results point to? It's helpful if others review the results and share various interpretations. Some discussion here will clarify the most accurate interpretations to draw.



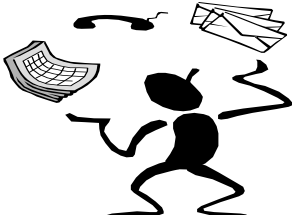
11. **CONSIDER:** How to respond to the results and interpretations. What should we do now? Is there a project that we may be able to deliver to address some of these needs?

12. **PLAN:** Your project and keep in mind that you will need to consult and liaise with the community at all stages.



*You can now plan and implement future projects with greater confidence that those project are based upon important needs of the people you want to serve.*

# Run a Skills Audit



When determining the type of project we want to develop, we consider our interests, commitments, work preference, etc. Identifying your skills can also help you select an appropriate project.

Use this tool to identify where your skills (and your team members') might be most useful when planning and implementing your project and where potential gaps might need to be addressed.

Rate yourself according to the scale:

- 1 - Can do it with my eyes closed!
- 2 - Excellent
- 3 - Well-developed
- 4 - Know the basics...
- 5 - Huh?

Skill	1	2	3	4	5
Budgeting & Finance					
Dealing with conflict					
Articulating your ideas					
Writing					
Multimedia					
Creating or designing new ideas					
Managing events					
Working independently					
Evaluating events					
Research and analysis					
Documenting and keeping records					
Computer skills (word processing, spreadsheet)					
Helping others achieve					
Marketing and Promoting					
Teaching other people new skills					
Public speaking					
Asking questions					
Facilitating small groups					
Representing others					
Dealing with stress					
Synthesizing - bringing everything together					
Adapting or improving					
Interviewing					
Organising and classifying					
Prioritising					

Making decisions					
Keeping track of details					
Taking instructions					



## What does a Project look like?

- ☐ Has a specific goal
- ☐ Has a start and finish time
- ☐ Has dedicated resources
- ☐ Has associated change

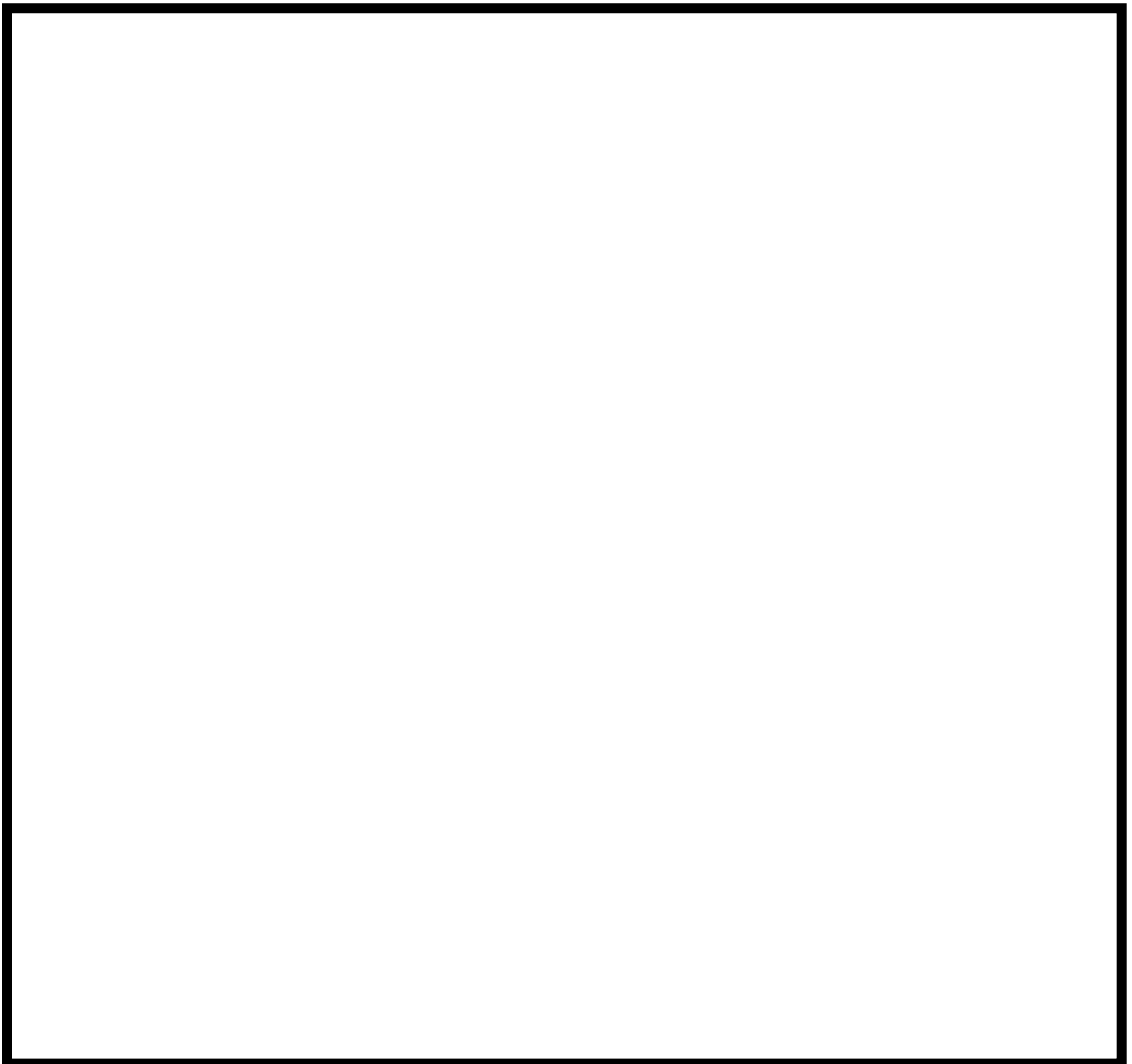
## What to include in a Project Proposal:

- ☐ Statement of Purpose
- ☐ Rationale
- ☐ Cost Estimates: funding, time commitment, personnel, etc.
- ☐ Clear time-lines
- ☐ Evaluation procedures

# Defining your Statement of Purpose

In one short paragraph explain your team's project.

- Describe your project. What are you doing and what would you like to achieve?
- Why are you proposing this project? *Begin with broad picture and then establish focus.*
- Who will your project benefit? (Include information about your target group)
- What makes your project unique?
- How does your project fit in with the goals of the organization you are working with?  
How does it address their needs?



# Researching your Rationale

Has anyone completed a project like the one you're planning? What were their experiences? Were they successful? Why or why not?

If you're trying to solve a problem or meet a need, what are the causes of that problem? What can your project do to address the need? Your Needs/Resources Assessment will be VERY useful here.

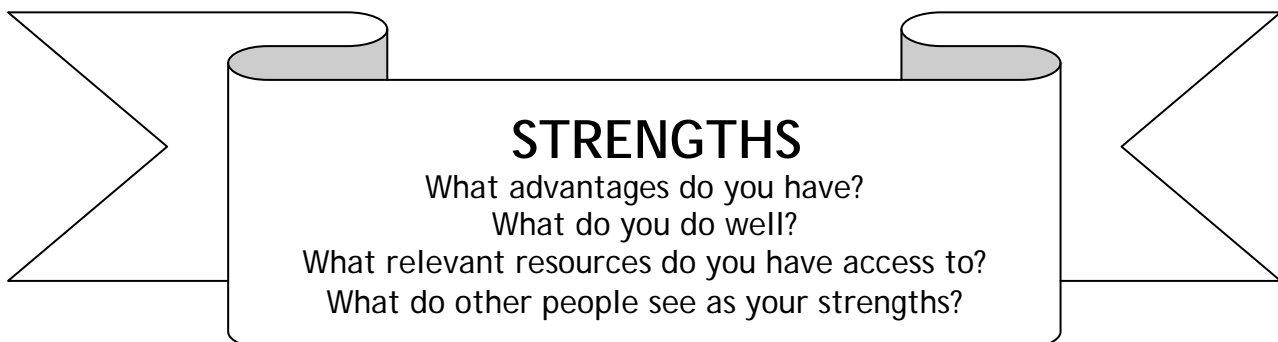
## SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) ANALYSIS

A SWOT analysis guides you to identify the positives and negatives inside your organization/team (S-W) and outside of it, in the external environment (O-T).

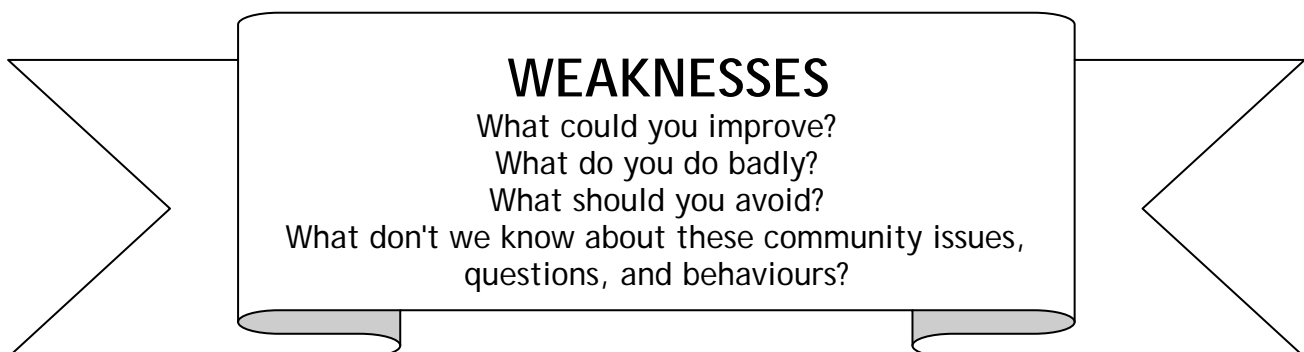
### Internal Factors: Strengths and Weaknesses (S, W)

Internal factors include your resources and experiences. General areas to consider are:

- Human resources - staff, volunteers, board members, target population
- Physical resources - your location, building, equipment (Does your building have a prime location? Does it need renovations?)
- Financial - grants, funding agencies, other sources of income
- Activities and processes - programs you run, systems you use
- Past experiences - your reputation in the community



Consider this from your own point of view and from the point of view of the people you deal with. Be realistic. If you are having any difficulty with this, refer to your skills audit. Some of these will hopefully be strengths!



Again, consider this from an internal and external basis: Do other people perceive weaknesses that you don't see? It's best to be realistic now, and face any unpleasant truths as soon as possible.

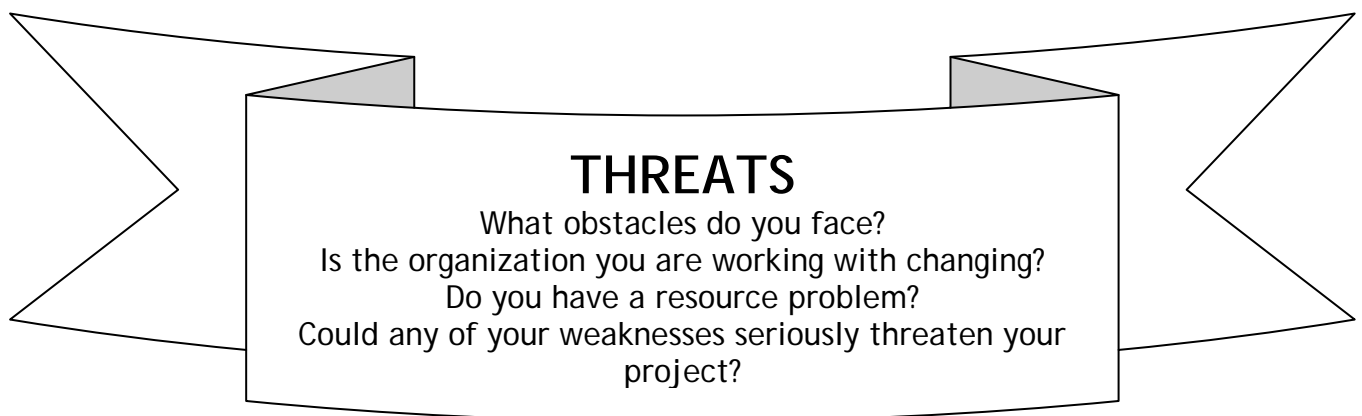
## External Factors: Opportunities and Threats (O, T)

Forces and facts that your group does not control include:

- Future trends - in your field or the culture (Do current movies highlight your cause?)
- The economy - local, national, or international
- Funding sources - foundations, donors
- Demographics - changes in the age, gender, culture of those you serve or in your area
- The physical environment (Is your building in a growing part of town?)
- Legislation (Do new federal requirements make your job harder-or easier?)
- Local, national or international events

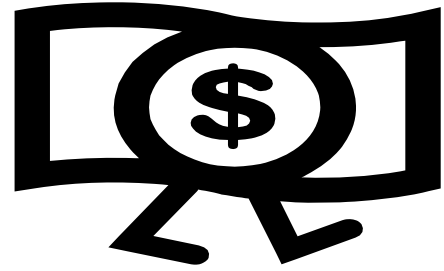


Look at your strengths and ask yourself whether these open up any opportunities. Alternatively, look at your weaknesses and ask yourself whether you could open up opportunities by eliminating them.



Carrying out this analysis will often be illuminating - both in terms of pointing out what needs to be done, and in putting problems into perspective.

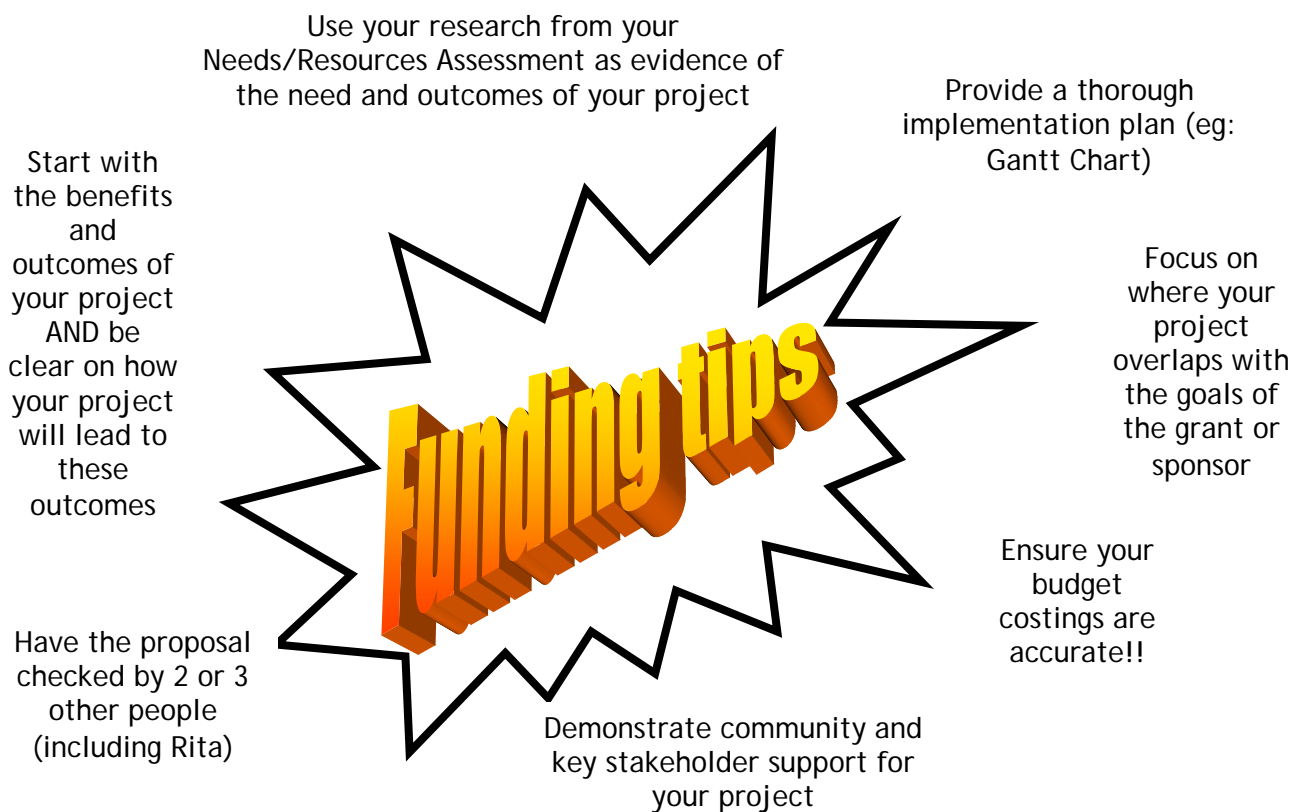
# Planning Cost Estimates



- 💰 Get quotes!
- 💰 Keep VERY clear and accurate records.
- 💰 Be realistic and comprehensive.
- 💰 Be conservative when estimating income and expansive when estimating expenditure.
- 💰 Be vigilant: any budget that is put together should be passed by at least 2 pairs of eyes for verification (including Rita's!)
- 💰 Document assumptions that have been made when putting together the budget. Eg- 20 people will attend the fundraising Trivia Night.
- 💰 Break your project down into stages, and then breakdown those stages into their component activities and then cost out each of those.
- 💰 Check last year's budget if possible OR the budget of a similar current project.
- 💰 Getting free stuff? Put it in the budget.
- 💰 Link your budget with your GANTT chart to ensure you can cover expenses over the period of the event/project.
- 💰 If you get grant money as a lump sum amount, make sure it's not all spent early!
- 💰 Make sure team members provide receipts and tax invoices for all expenses.

## BUDGET EXAMPLE:

Description	Projected	Actual
Stationery		
Equipment: - Lighting - AV - Chairs/tables		
Travel		
Catering		
Venue hire		
Postage		
Phone/Fax		
Marketing and Promotion: - Design - Printing - Copying - Sponsorship Packs - Advertising - Invitations - Tickets		
Gifts for presenters		
<b>TOTAL</b>		



## Looking for available funding?

**Department for Victorian Communities - Office for Youth**  
 Information on eligibility, contact details, closing dates and amounts available.  
<http://www.youth.vic.gov.au/>

**Parks Victoria - Volunteer Group Grants**  
 Volunteer Group Grants available for projects that relate to Parks Victoria managed areas.  
<http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au/>

**Our Community**  
 A comprehensive online grants database can be accessed via this online resource  
[www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au)

**Australian Government**  
 GrantsLINK makes it easier to become familiar with grants offered by the Australian Govt.  
[www.grantslink.gov.au](http://www.grantslink.gov.au)

**The Foundation for Young Australians**  
<http://www.youngaustralians.org/>

**Myer Foundation**  
[www.myerfoundation.org.au/](http://www.myerfoundation.org.au/)

**University of Melbourne - Cultural and Community Relations Grant**  
<http://www.unimelb.edu.au/unisec/pdf/CCRAGguide-app.pdf>

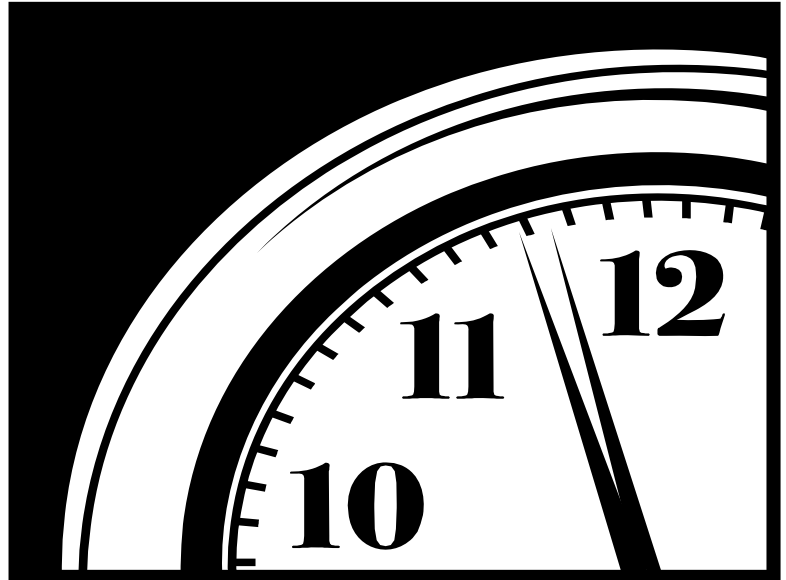
# Organising Timelines

1. Write down *EVERY LITTLE STEP* that needs to be completed to accomplish that particular event. Use lists, diagrams, tables, or post-it-notes.

2. Put into a logical order of importance all of these small steps. Some things have to be done before others, but also some are more important than others. Once prioritized and in a logical order you have a timeline.

3. Then put time frames on each of the steps. How long will each take? 20mins to do an essay plan, 3hours to research a business, 10 minutes to send emails etc. Now it's a GANTT chart!

4. Lastly you need to allocate steps to certain days (or people) when they will be completed. **BE AWARE OF YOUR OTHER COMMITMENTS!** This becomes a timeline on a wall, or lists of things to do associated to each day.



5. **GET ON WITH IT!** As you complete each and every small step you cross it out, rip it out, give it a tick - whatever makes you feel good about completing that section. This provides small rewards for your achievements along the way.

**GANTT CHART EXAMPLE:** Raising funds for community organization via café customer tips

TASK	Team Member	Wk1 25/Jul	Wk 2 1/Aug	Wk 3 8/Aug	Wk 4 15/Aug	Wk5 22/Aug	Wk6 29/Aug	Wk7 5/Sept
Meet with organization to discuss fundraising proposal	Amer							
Draft letter to be distributed to selected proprietors	Anna							
Send draft for organization's approval	Anna							
Draw up contact list of potential proprietors to approach	Chris							
Design flyers for café counters	Pete							
Approach cafes with letters	All							
Follow-up cafés with phone-call to confirm interest	All							
Buy tins	Amer							
Design tin labels	Pete							
Print flyers and tin labels	Chris							
Deliver tins to interested cafes	All							
Collect tins from cafes	All							
Deliver funds to organization	Anna							
Draft thank-you letter for cafes	Pete							
Deliver thank-you letters to cafes	Chris							

# Implementing Evaluation Procedures



## Why evaluate?



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## We can ask questions about...

### OUTCOME

- Did our services *make a difference* to the student's career choice?
- *How well* did that child do at primary school?
- What is the person's long-term view of Australian society?

### IMPACT

- Did that person *improve* his/her skills as a result of that activity?
- Did that counselling session assist the student to *cope* better with their homework planning?
- Did that session help to *resolve* the person's immediate problem?

### PROCESS

- How did that session go?
- Did the presentation makes sense to them?
- Were there enough staff helping?

# Some evaluation tips...

Start with the question you want answered NOT with the method you are going to use to seek information or gather data.

Ask yourself first, "What is it we are trying to do here?" If you're evaluating an activity make sure you're clear what the aims and objectives of that activity actually are.



Keep it simple. You can always return and re-evaluate or ask different questions or seek more information

Always consider your achievements against your aim and objectives BUT don't forget to ask broader questions also – were these the right aim and objectives? Is there something else we should try doing here?

Consider what time, resources and expertise are available when planning your evaluation.

Be imaginative when thinking about how you will collect relevant information. There are many methods!

Be skeptical and broad-minded when considering the implications of the information you have gathered.



- **Think about the questions you want to ask before you seek the answers**
- **Ensure you ask the right people**
- **Collect the right information**
- **Involve the right people in the reflective process**
- **Apply the conclusions**
- **Keep the cycle going with a critical and open mind.**



# On-line Resources!

## **Vicnet**

The Victorian community information portal. You can freely publish, share and find online information in virtual communities both locally and globally.

<http://www.vicnet.net.au/>

## **YouthGAS**

Join this is email list which highlights a wide variety of youth-focused resources, news, events, media, announcements, publicity and communication and networking opportunities.

<http://www.youthgas.com.au>

## **Ignite!**

Join the free mailing list for this e-newsletter packed with opportunities and inspiration that helps you get educated - get involved - and get enterprising

<http://www.youth2youth.com.au/maxmail2/>

## **Community Tool Box**

Provides over 6,000 pages of practical information to support your work in promoting community development.

<http://ctb.ku.edu>

## **ActNow - Inspire Foundation**

A web-based service making it easy for young people to get involved in causes they are passionate about.

<http://www.actnow.com.au>

## **Vibewire**

An online community created by young people for young people and is always on the lookout for writers, artists, doers and culture-makers to create and run innovative youth media projects.

<http://www.vibewire.net/>

## **communitybuilders.nsw**

Need help getting \$\$ to fund a community project? Check out these tips on writing submissions.

[http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/finding\\_funds/submissions/](http://www.communitybuilders.nsw.gov.au/finding_funds/submissions/)