

Exercise: Funding Factors

Instructions

This exercise uses a list of “funding factors”.

Strength in these areas can better position your organization to secure unrestricted funds from grant makers.

Take a few minutes to walk down this list. Give your organization a gut-check letter grade in each area.

Note which areas are your top strengths, and which are most in need of attention.

Circle the top three and use them when talking with funders.

Circle the lowest three, think about how you can build strengths in those areas.

Discuss this whole list with your staff. Celebrate your strengths and agree on actions to build even more strengths.

Example:

Funding factor	Grade	Notes
Strong leadership	B	<i>Our leader (me!) is less than 6 months into the role.</i>
Bold vision	C	<i>We tend to limit our “vision” to what we think is realistic. We could change that.</i>
Clear mission, why it’s important	A	<i>Our mission is crystal clear and focused.</i>
Transparency on finances	B	<i>We do the basic reporting required.</i>
Transparent governance	D	<i>I don’t even know what this means.</i>
Transparent program evaluations, outcomes and impacts	C	<i>We gather evaluations sometimes, but our data collection is sporadic at best.</i>
Strong partnerships with donors	A	<i>We have strong, trusting relationships with our top 2 funders.</i>
Strong relationships with volunteers	D	<i>We treat our volunteers as though they are interchangeable.</i>
Strong partnerships with other nonprofits	C	<i>We partner sometimes but feel we’re in competition so not sure.</i>
Strong partnerships with businesses	F	<i>We don’t do any of this.</i>
Strong partnerships with government	C	<i>Some of our funding comes from government, but it’s not a partnership at this point.</i>

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Strong relationships with volunteers		
Strong partnerships with other nonprofits		
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