

The Challenge: Navigating Organizational Loss

- Unexpected changes resulted in a sudden loss of over 1 million dollars in grant funding to an organization, with the expectation that programs and services level would not change
- Simultaneously a key leader stepped down from the organization to address family needs
- Org-ology was called on to help the organization define options and opportunities to survive the crisis.

The Technique: Triage and Mission Planning

- Building backwards from the community needs supported by the programs, defined and ranked critical work areas based on skills and activities, de-coupling work from job titles, roles or personnel
- Evaluated existing staff skill sets, including skills acquired in previous roles and not currently used, etc., to create a complete inventory of opportunities.
- Plotted service delivery needs over annual work cycle: what effort might be delayed until funding gap could be offset? Or senior leadership role replaced?
- Developed inventory of outsourcing options could replace previously in-house activities with fee-for-service, enabling executive leadership to evaluate cost impacts and options vs. current and future cash flow
- Developed communications strategy for internal and external representation of the changes; developed motivation strategy to avoid further staffing losses.

Intervention

- Developed clear near-term plan for staffing changes, and mid-range plan options that reflected optimistic and pessimistic recovery estimates.
- Worked regularly on individual and group level with teams and staff to reduce uncertainty and mistrust: team trainings, information Q&A sessions, and increased transparency around timeline and changes.
- Completed long-delayed, almost-complete projects in a visible manner to give staff tangible “wins” to celebrate.
- Worked individually with impacted staff through coaching to assist in finding ways to do more with less.
- Reassessed recovery process at 3 and 6 months to adjust approach accordingly.

Results

- Services provided to the community through the programs were not markedly impacted.
- Staffing loss was minimized to two FTE as well as slow replacement of three positions that had been vacated due to natural attrition.
- Both FTE positions were replaced after 6 months.
- At 9 month mark organizational morale of long-term staff is acceptable and new staff have brought great enthusiasm.