



December 13, 2012

Dear Friends,

We hope you enjoy this week's edition of the Newsflash!

Sincerely,

The Firelight Team

(Call for Proposals) ICNL's Lifeline Grants through the Embattled CSO Assistance Fund

(Call for Proposals) Dell Social Innovation Challenge 2013: Over \$350,000 in Cash & in-kind Prizes

(Resource) Importance of Team Building

(Call for Proposals) ICNL's Lifeline Grants through the Embattled CSO Assistance Fund

The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) – an international organization promoting an enabling legal environment for civil society, freedom of association, and public participation around the world – is inviting applications from civil society organizations (CSOs) for Lifeline grants to support short-term, discrete advocacy initiatives that seek to support civil society law reform. Grant amounts may not exceed \$20,000.

ICNL is part of the civil society consortium led by Freedom House implementing Lifeline: the Embattled CSO Assistance Fund. This call for applications is issued pursuant to the Lifeline Fund.

The Small Grants Program is open to civil society organizations engaged in civil society legal reform. A civil society organization (CSO) is defined as a group of two or more activists. It does not need to be officially registered but must be able to document its history of activism. The Lifeline supports a variety of CSOs, many of whom conduct advocacy, promote and protect human rights, and/or act in a watchdog capacity.

Applications will be evaluated based on the following factors:

- Compliance with eligibility requirements and application procedures;
- Demonstrated commitment of applicant to promoting the right to associate or civil society law reform (e.g., through past or present experience as a lawyer, academic, government official, or civil society organization leader working on these issues);
- Quality of proposed project, including the significance of the issue, the proposed methodology/design, feasibility of the project (e.g., activities are targeted to achieve stated results, and anticipated results are realistic and attainable);
- Likelihood that the proposed project will alleviate threats and restrictions against civil society;
- Proposed budget and apparent value for cost; and
- Proposal includes reasonable indicators to measure project success.

Applications will be considered on a rolling basis until all grant funds are awarded.

For more go to: <http://www.icnl.org/programs/global/fellowship/lifeline.html>

(Call for Proposals) Dell Social Innovation Challenge 2013: Over \$350,000 in Cash & in-kind Prizes

The Dell Social Innovation Challenge identifies and supports promising young social innovators who dedicate themselves to solving the world's most pressing problems with their transformative ideas.

Who can Enter

Anyone and everyone can join our growing online social innovation community and support students on their projects. Only currently enrolled university and college students may create project entries and compete in our annual grand prize competition.

Our Dell Social Innovation Challenge annual competition is open to ALL university students in the world--it doesn't matter what school you attend or what you're studying. And you don't need a venture plan to enter. Everything from early-stage ideas to mature projects that are up and running can compete to win. Your innovation project could be vested in starting a nonprofit organization, a for-profit business, a campaign, community volunteerism, university club or even other informal or formal operations. Your individual user profile gives you an option to find project team members, join existing teams, attract support and help others on their projects.

Competitions & Awards

The Challenge offers and gives out over \$350,000 annually in cash and in-kind prizes. Our Grand Prize Awards are chosen by judges, offering five cash prizes totaling \$140,000.

Deadline for Submission: 28 January 2013.

For more go to: <http://www.dellchallenge.org/about/how-it-works>

(Resource) The Importance of Team Building

Earlier this May, the Inward Bound Center for Nonprofit Leadership held a great workshop called Building Teams: How to Change your Group into a Team, as part of their Coaching Skills For Leaders series. The session provided knowledge on how teams behave to produce results, the duty of leaders to assess the system that encompasses their teams, and how to put your team on track to high productivity and high positivity. Here are four takeaways from the session to help you build stronger teams at your organization:

Team Identification

What does it take to create or rebuild teams so that they are effective and enjoyable to serve on? The first step in this process is assessing where the team is at. Are they highly enthusiastic or feeling down? Is there an atmosphere of general respect or is there hostility and/or a lack of diversity? How productive is your team? Are there goals in place and is accountability present? Does everyone have a clear sense of who can be depended on for each task?

Understanding the productivity and positivity of team is critical to making progress. This will allow you to obtain a quick understanding of the current dynamics of the team and how to move forward. Ideally, teams would be highly productive and highly positive but this is often not the case and teams can quickly shift in their productivity and positivity as small changes are implemented.

Your Role as a Teammate

Recognizing the type of team you're on helps you recognize where you are personally as a team member. Cathy Perry stated at the beginning of the session that "leaders create a 'state of pause' in an organization" - a time to think, reflect, and build greater understanding. Realizing your role as a team member creates a state of pause not only for yourself, but also for your team. This can be used as an opportunity to reflect on everyone's individual role and contributions. You might be a highly interactive person on a low-communication team, or a methodical worker on a fast productivity team. It helps to know where you stand so that the team can utilize your strengths to create quality productivity, and a positive experience for all who are involved.

The Make-up of Nonprofit Teams

Unfortunately, much of the nonprofit sector consists of teams that are very positive but demonstrate low productivity. This type of group is extremely optimistic, communicates well and possesses camaraderie, but often lacks focus, resists change, denies urgency and is not results-oriented. To combat low productivity, nonprofits need to be honest about the effectiveness of their organizations and have open conversations about their teams, seeking assistance when necessary. It is important to remember that anyone on a nonprofit team can initiate positive change. Don't be afraid to create an open conversation with your team about the team's effectiveness, regardless of the role you play on the team.

The Importance of Accountability

For a team to have high productivity and positivity, everyone has to adhere to the principle of accountability. Every team member needs to be clear on their roles and responsibilities in the team. There have to be agreed upon rules and behaviors that team members follow to maintain balance, positivity for themselves, and their teams. This can only be effective if team members routinely hold each other accountable for what they have agreed to. This creates an atmosphere of trust, keeps negative emotions at bay, and provides a stable foundation to tackle obstacles the team may face.

Team Building in the Workplace

Team building is very important if you wish to extract the best out of your workforce. Employees are urged to work smarter and not just harder, in an effort to deliver the desired results. Though it definitely contributes in its own way, individual brilliance does not singlehandedly decide the fate of an entire project. Almost always, it is the joint efforts (or the lack thereof) of the whole team that eventually decide the success or failure of a project. In such cases, team building in the workplace becomes absolutely essential for a number of reasons.

Why is Team Building Important

Team building in an office helps to foster better and open communication between the employees themselves, as well as between the employees and the higher management. It goes a long way in improving professional relations, understanding and cooperation, and this is very much reflected in the quality of work being done. Team building in the workplace significantly contributes towards employee motivation and building trust among the employees, thereby ensuring better productivity.

Now that you are aware of the importance of team building for high performance, let us take a look at some simple team building exercises in the workplace:

Simple Team Building Exercises in the Workplace

These are some common team building exercises for communication, success and improved team performance.

Conduct Employee Feedback Activities: Employee surveys and feedback activities are a great way of breaking the ice and encouraging the employees to speak freely. It makes the employees feel wanted and gives them an assurance of the fact that their opinions are valued.

Promote Informal Addressing: Step out of the traditional formal way of employee-boss interaction and speak freely. This gives the employees a reassurance that you are one among them and not a corporate Hitler. This will work to your advantage as it will encourage open workplace communication, sharing of ideas, and will help to maintain healthy work relations.

Organize a Day Trip: Reward your employees for the good work that they have done in the past by organizing a day trip. Encourage employees to bring along their spouses and children. It can be a welcome break from the daily work-related pressures and can help fellow employees and their bosses to interact, bond, and get to know each other better. This can, in many ways, translate into better returns at the workplace.

Celebrate Each Other's Success: Learn to appreciate and acknowledge each other's efforts. Also, celebrate the success of a job well done or a project delivered well ahead of the deadline. This helps in wiping out any negativity and keeps the team united.

Initiate Group Discussion Sessions: If you have a major project-related decision to make, which you are not very sure about, try asking your employees for their views on the subject. Have a group discussion on the matter and seek their suggestions and opinions. In any case, it will be you yourself who has the last word, but this particular gesture will promote teamwork, boost employee confidence and, once again, make them feel valued and wanted.

Team Building Slogans

Team building projects and activities are seldom complete without the use of some inspirational team building slogans. Here are some popular inspirational quotes and slogans that you can use when working towards team building for success:

"There is no 'I' in TEAM" ~ Anonymous

"A single arrow is easily broken, but not ten in a bundle" ~ Japanese proverb

"A boat doesn't go forward if each one is rowing their own way" ~ Swahili proverb
"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success" ~ Henry Ford

"One man can be a crucial ingredient on a team, but one man cannot make a team" ~

Kareem Abdul Jabbar

"A group becomes a team when each member is sure enough of himself and his contribution to praise the skill of the others" ~ Norman Hidle

"You don't get harmony when everybody sings the same note" ~ Doug Floyd

Remember, team leadership and team

building go hand in hand. Successful team building in the workplace often translates into success for everyone. It is not difficult and does not require you to go out of your way or do anything extraordinary as a common man. As the popular saying goes, "Teamwork is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."

For more go to: <http://www.buzzle.com/articles/team-building-in-the-workplace.html>

As part of the Firelight Foundation's Capacity Building Program, Firelight provides "Newsflashes" to share relevant resources and information with our active grantee-partners via weekly emails and via post on a monthly basis. We hope that by facilitating access to information for grassroots, community-focused organizations, programming for children and families, as well as organizational development, is enhanced. Past editions of the Firelight Newsflash can be found on our website: <http://www.firelightfoundation.org/newsflash.php>.

We welcome your comments, feedback and ideas for upcoming Newsflashes at newsletter@firelightfoundation.org.

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