

The Pittsburgh Foundation

Executive Summary

Student Consultant, Gayatri Rajamani
Community Partner, Lauren Mikus

I. Background Information

The Pittsburgh Foundation, established in 1945, is a nonprofit organization of 37 employees.

The mission statement as stated on www.pittsburghfoundation.org reads,

“The Pittsburgh Foundation works to improve the quality of life in the Pittsburgh region by evaluating and addressing community issues, promoting responsible philanthropy, and connecting donors to the critical needs of the community.”

The Foundation has focused on issues concerning the youth and the elderly, childcare, teen pregnancies and economic development.

The Community Partner, Lauren Mikus, is the Research Specialist at the organization. Lauren has completed her education from Carnegie Mellon University. She is currently involved in ‘Project IMPACT’ at the foundation, which aims at defining and documenting optimized process.

II. Consulting Tasks

The consulting partnership focused its efforts in the following areas:

1. Process refinement of the preparation of Board Book

The task of process refinement of the preparation of the board book was undertaken to introduce standardization in preparation of committee minutes in the organization, thus making the task of preparation of board book simpler which involves compilation of committee reports. The task involved study of minutes templates used in various departments in the organization. Similar non-profit organizations and industry standards were researched to understand alternatives available in designing the template for committee reports. A common template was designed that could be used across departments, that captures information completely and concisely.

2. Implementation of a Document Management System

The task of implementation of a document management system was undertaken to provide the organization with an improved method of sharing information over the currently used common shared drive. The task was also undertaken to provide a method to archive documents and maintain templates and other reference documents in a common location that is easily accessible. Various document management solutions were studied for compatibility with the organization’s needs and a recommendation of a suitable solution was made.

3. Implementation of a training program through the use of IT

The implementation of a training program through the use of IT was undertaken to establish a process of training and development in the organization. This was essential to report the skill level available in the organization, record and train users on best practices and use of available resources in the organization.

III. Outcomes Analysis and Recommendations

Outcomes:

1. Process refinement of the preparation of Board Book

The design of a common template has introduced standardization in the process of preparation of committee minutes. The template presents information clearly and logically. Thus this template makes the task of compilation of the board book simpler and presents data in the board report in an easy to assimilate fashion. This task highlights the advantages of standardization. The organization plans to now standardize all its reports and documentation.

2. Implementation of a Document Management System

This task resulted in study of the information needs of the organization. The common shared drive used across the organization was identified as an area that could be improved. Document management system alternatives were studied for compatibility with existing software in the organization and extent of address of the organization's requirements. A solution was identified and a proposal was made to the sanction funds for purchase of software. Risks to sustainability of this task include the need to have a system backup plan in place and implementation of the system at a policy level. This task has led the organization to plan on converting its grant making system into an electronic format.

3. Implementation of a training program through the use of IT

The implementation of a training program through the use of IT was undertaken to establish a process of training and development in the organization. This was essential to report the skill level available in the organization, record and train user on best practices and use of available resources in the organization. Risks to sustainability include lack of requisite skills within the organization to carry out large scale maintenance activities of the software system. This activity may also need to be implemented as a policy. With the implementation of this task, the organization plans to roll-out project 'IMPACT', by which new processes and their definitions can be communicated to the staff, training, testing and analysis of results can be undertaken.

Recommendations:

1. Use of e-letters

The recommendation addressing use of e-letters for correspondence is aimed at introducing a process of communication through the use of emails and PDF reports. In addition to going

The Pittsburgh Foundation

Final Consulting Report

Student Consultant, Gayatri Rajamani
Community Partner, Lauren Mikus

I. About the Organization

Organization

The Pittsburgh Foundation, established in 1945, is a community foundation. A community foundation is nonprofit organization serving a particular region by enabling individuals, families, corporations and other nonprofits to actively participate in philanthropy.

The mission statement reads,

“The Pittsburgh Foundation works to improve the quality of life in the Pittsburgh region by evaluating and addressing community issues, promoting responsible philanthropy, and connecting donors to the critical needs of the community.”

Over the years, the Foundation has responded to various issues concerning the community such as at-risk-youth, childcare, care for the elderly, teen pregnancies and economic development. In 2005, the Foundation awarded \$26.7 million, had \$684 million in assets, and consisted of 1,075 funds.

The Pittsburgh Foundation is comprised of the following five departments: Executive, Communications, Development & Donor Services, Finance, and Program & Policy.

The President and C.E.O. of The Pittsburgh Foundation is Dr. William E. Trueheart. The Executive Vice President is Richard W. Reed, Jr.

Facilities

The Foundation has offices on two floors of PPG Place, located in downtown Pittsburgh. The offices consist of the following areas: a large workroom, a small work/mail room, a server room, 2 kitchens, a café area, 23 work stations, 28 offices, 6 conference rooms, and 1 board room which can be divided into an additional 2 conference rooms.

Programs

The Pittsburgh Foundation focuses unrestricted grant-making in the following areas:

- *Achieving Educational Excellence and Equity,*
- *Fostering Economic Development,*
- *Supporting Families, Children, and Youth*
- *Reducing Disparities in Health Outcomes*
- *Advancing the Arts*

A Responsiveness Fund enables the Foundation to make unrestricted grants to organizations that fall outside the five areas of impact. Through donor designated funds, donors may give to the organization of their choice.

Staff

The Pittsburgh Foundation has 34 full-time staff and 3 part-time staff. Again, the organization is structured into following five departments: Executive, Communications, Development & Donor Services, Finance, and Program & Policy. A majority of the staff have limited computer skills. All departments come in contact with the database management system in place. There is currently little technical training incorporated into the professional development of staff.

Technical Environment

The board room and 1 interior conference room are equipped with overhead projectors, DVD players, internet connection and additional support systems for making presentations. Each office or work station is equipped with space for file storage, a phone, and a laptop or a desktop computer.

Access to the server room is restricted. An electronic key is required to enter the server room. Security access is determined by the Director of IT and then communicated to building security. Backups are recorded on tapes periodically and stored in the server room. Additional laptops, desktops, projectors, and other equipment are also stored in the server room as a security precaution.

Each staff is equipped with a laptop or desktop computer. Most members work on Windows, using basic office software. Microsoft Outlook Calendar is used extensively to schedule meetings and reserve conference rooms. The current database system is a package called Foundation Power provided by MicroEdge. The system runs on a Sybase database.

The organization has a LAN supported internet system, as well as, wireless internet capabilities. The Foundation has an external (or public) website which is maintained by the Communications department and the Director of IT. The external website has general information and features such capabilities as scholarship search etc. The current public website is outdated, limited in capabilities, and difficult for current staff to maintain. The Communications Department has convened an ad hoc committee to determine next steps in regards to the public website. The Foundation also has an internal website which functions as a resource for sharing information such as policy documents, discussion boards, contact information, FAQ section, conference room calendars, and announcements boards. Staff members are able to add and edit content. However, there is currently no content manager to ensure that materials are current and/or relevant.

Technical Management

The Foundation has budgeted for one IT position, Director of Information Technology. The Director of IT is responsible for creating a technology plan and directing its implementation, reporting directly to the Executive Vice President.

The Director of IT position is currently vacant. The Foundation is in the process of an extensive search to fill the position. Currently, a part-time consultant manages computer systems and general technology needs.

Technology Planning

A strategic IT plan was developed with the involvement of the board members. This plan highlights various areas that need to be addressed in the organization which includes definition of document sharing standards, development of a training program etc. The Director of IT reviews the strategic IT plan to create yearly goals and objectives.

Internal and External Communication

Internal communication in the organization is carried out by sharing documents in a common folder. The staff places files to be shared in a shared drive, in an ad-hoc manner. There is no folder or file naming convention followed, making it difficult to find. Also, concurrent access issues may occur.

The internal website also serves as a tool for internal communication. The internal website was used extensively during the recent shift of location of the organization, to convey information. The internal website has good capability built in to share documents, discuss topics, FAQ sections etc. However, the methodology of sharing files through the shared drive is preferred by staff to using the online tool to upload data.

External communication is established through the foundation's website. However, the website has not been updated in some time as the capability to update it is not available within the organization. Capability to at least change the content of the website needs to be within the organization so that the website can be kept up to date. The Vice President of Communications is convening an Ad Hoc Committee consisting of board members and technology experts to develop next steps for updating the website.

Information Management

'Foundation Power', the database system in place, has been modified to meet the information needs of the organization. This includes maintaining data regarding donors, funds and grantees. The system is used across departments. However, due to a lack of proper definition of processes, information is not captured at all points. For example, documents in the common folder can be linked to a donor profile in Foundation Power. If the file in the common folder changes location or has been deleted from the common folder, the link in the database is not updated to reflect the change. Thus, the database contains a no-longer existing path name, limiting the user's ability to access information.

Business Systems

Most business processes are executed manually with reference and use of the database management system.

II. Major Consulting Tasks

The Major Consulting Tasks consist of the following:

- I. Refinement of process of preparation of Board Book
- II. Implementation of a document management system
- III. Development of a training program through use of IT

I. Refinement of process of preparation of Board Book

Preparation of the Board Book is an important function of the Executive department. The Board Book is produced quarterly to communicate to the board enabling the board to make informed decisions about governing policies, as well as serve as a record of the actions of board committees and the previous board meeting.

A typical Board Book for The Pittsburgh Foundation includes:

- *Board Meeting Agenda*

- *Chair's Report*
- *Guest Speaker Information & Presentation Materials*
- *Previous Board Meeting Minutes*
- *Consent Agenda – All Committee Minutes since last Board Meeting*
- *Policy Issues and Attachments*
- *President's Report*
- *Executive Session*

The Executive department receives a number of documents from the various departments in the organization. In the current process followed, each department maintains its committee reports in a different format. Preparation of the Board Book is time consuming due to lack of consistency in the process of documenting committee minutes. There is a need for standardization of documents across the organization. Also, department level documents are not being maintained in an organized central repository.

Refinement of this process would help the organization address the issue of communication between departments and the executive office by setting standard templates for documents and developing a workflow for flow of information.

Expected Outcomes

Study the current templates used to define department reports

Study of the current templates would help in understanding the structure of minutes and agendas. Common sections in reports across departments may be identified. Structure of document can be understood to aid in template designing.

Study the current information flow

Study of the current flow of information would help understand the process in place, thus providing information regarding points of optimization.

Design of a standardized template for the process

A standardized template structure may be designed across the organization for committee minutes, reports, and agendas.

Define optimized information flow

An optimized workflow of information may be designed with the help of a document management tool, to maintain and share information.

The activities and the expected outcomes are further clarified below:

ACTIVITY	EXPECTED OUTCOME	HOW TO MEASURE	CURRENT MEASURE	EVIDENCE OF CHANGE
<i>Study the current templates used to define department reports</i>	Data on different template formats used across the organization	List of different template formats used across the organization	No assessment currently done	Identification of problems related to lack of standardization

<i>Study the current information flow</i>	Identification of areas that require re-definition or optimization	Summary of current information workflow	Current workflow not defined or studied	Identification of non-optimized areas of workflow
<i>Design of a standardized template for the process</i>	Definition of a standard template to be used across the organization	Development of a standard template	No standardization in place	Design of template that is used across the organization
<i>Define optimized information flow</i>	Identification of non-optimized areas of operation	Re-definition of process by use of technology	Current process not studied	Implementation of new optimized process.

Summary of Benefits

Implementation of this task will lead to improved and standardized workflow in one of the most important processes of the organization.

Internal Communication

Execution of this task would optimize the flow of information within the organization. The process would be defined and controlled, thus improving internal communication.

External Communication

Execution of this task would improve a product of the organization. Standardizing the flow of information will demonstrate the utilization of best practices and transparency.

Information Management

Maintenance of reports at different levels of the organization can be implemented thus introducing organized data management into daily procedures.

II. Implementation of a document management system

Each of departments at The Pittsburgh Foundation generates documents independently. However, the documents prepared at the departmental level are not easily accessible within the central repository.

The Pittsburgh Foundation also maintains a number of legal and historical documents. These are currently stored in a paper format. There is no central repository for maintenance of these documents in an electronic format.

Additionally, lack of an organized central document management system, makes it difficult to access files. The volume of files, currently being maintained in an ad-hoc fashion, makes it difficult to search and locate them. Working documents and historical documents are currently grouped together and multiple versions are stored in a common shared drive.

Expected Outcomes

The above consulting task can be approached in the following manner:

Study the current method of document sharing

Study of the current method used to share documents would help in identification of areas to be optimized and refined.

Map current structure followed to share documents

Current data segregation used may be studied to identify user requirements.

Discuss with CP the types of users who would access the system

Defining the user who would access the system would define the requirements for the system. The system may be structured as per the categories of users.

Prepare a cost benefit analysis of potential software products

Discover and study potential software products that may satisfy the user's requirements. Software options may include freeware, products for a fee and customized developed software. A cost benefit analysis of these options would help in comparing products and making a decision.

Propose potential software products

Potential software packages that meet the organization's needs and monetary constraints may be recommended.

Implement and provide user training

At the end of the project, the foundation needs to be independently able to manage and update the system. Also, users need to be trained to use the system effectively.

The activities and the expected outcomes are further clarified below:

ACTIVITY	EXPECTED OUTCOME	HOW TO MEASURE	CURRENT MEASURE	EVIDENCE OF CHANGE
<i>Study current method of document sharing</i>	Identification of areas of improvement	Summary of identification of areas of improvement	No study conducted	Need to address areas in current process for optimization
<i>Map current structure followed to share documents</i>	Identification of document sharing needs	Definition of structure of current document sharing model	No defined structure in place	Identification and documentation of current structure used
<i>Discuss with CP the types of users who would access the system.</i>	Identification of stakeholders of the system	List of users of the system	No central document management tool in place.	Development of list of users of the system
<i>Prepare a cost benefit analysis of potential software products</i>	A cost benefit analysis report	Generation of a cost benefit analysis report	Alternative approaches not currently considered	Evaluation of option through the cost benefit analysis report
<i>Propose potential software products</i>	List of products that the organization may evaluate for purchase/use	Organization is presented with options	Alternative approaches not currently considered	Organization makes a well informed decision

<i>Implement and provide user training</i>	High level of comfort of users regards the tool	Proficient users of the system	No document management tool in place	Implementation and integration of tool in workflow
--	---	--------------------------------	--------------------------------------	--

Summary of Benefits

Implementation of this proposal will lead to improved document and information management, contributing directly to the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization.

Internal and External Communication

This task would provide a central repository of information that is standardized and organized, improving the accessibility to information thus improving all forms communication.

Information Management

Organized maintenance of data would make the organization more efficient and improve the organization's information management capacity. The tool would also reduce the paper volume in the organization by conversion of hard copies of documents to the e-format.

III. Development of a training program through use of IT

The organization currently has no ongoing professional development and training programs.

[Employee orientation & responsive training]

Expected Outcomes

The above consulting task can be approached in the following manner:

Discuss with CP impact and outcomes of development of a training application

Study of current system of functioning of the organization and disadvantages of not having a training and development program in place, will highlight the need and use of such a system. Discussion of impact of such a system with the CP will help better understand the value proposition of the proposal.

Prepare a cost benefit analysis of potential software products

Study and discover potential software products that may satisfy the user's requirements. Software options may include freeware, products for a fee and customized developed software. A cost benefit analysis of these options would help comparing and taking a decision.

Propose potential software products

Potential software packages that meet the organization's needs and monetary constraints may be recommended.

Implementation and user training

At the end of the project, the foundation needs to be independently able to manage and update the system. Also, users need to be trained to use the system effectively.

The activities and the expected outcomes are further clarified below:

ACTIVITY	EXPECTED OUTCOME	HOW TO MEASURE	CURRENT MEASURE	EVIDENCE OF CHANGE
<i>Discuss with CP impact and outcomes of development of a training application.</i>	Critical comments and CP's views on the subject.	List of impact areas and benefits envisioned by implementation of project.	No training / development program in place.	Conclusion on proposal.
<i>Prepare a cost benefit analysis of potential software products</i>	A cost benefit analysis report	Generation of a cost benefit analysis report	Alternative approaches not currently considered	Evaluation of option through the cost benefit analysis report
<i>Propose potential software products</i>	List of products that the organization may evaluate for purchase/use	Organization is presented with options	Alternative approaches not currently considered	Organization makes a well informed decision
<i>Implementation and user training</i>	A working software application. User understanding of how to use the product. User understanding of how to manage the product.	Software product that is used and regularly maintained by staff.	Current software not used by everyone. Current software not found manageable by staff.	System of interactive training and learning established. Use of product improves employee morale. Employee skill set increases. Greater awareness in the organization. Efficient performance of day-to-day tasks.

Summary of Benefits

Implementation of this proposal will lead to improved skill levels in the organization, contributing directly to the efficiency of the organization.

Professional Development

A training and development program would help assess and improve skill sets of employees, thereby giving them an added benefit at work. This would in turn improve employee morale and enthusiasm towards their jobs.

Internal Communication

Internal communication process could be refined by standardization, which can be communicated through the training application to improve efficiency.

Information Management

Current methods of sharing information in the organization include file sharing through a common drive. No file naming conventions are used. Training could be used to make a change in such processes making files more accessible.

Training may be used to improve data capture at control points. For example, on receiving an email inquiry about starting a fund, often the email id is not captured with the contact information of the individual in the database. Training would ensure the entry of such data.

Training can be used to integrate new processes and procedures into the workflow, ensuring data integrity and efficiency.

Strategic Planning

A training application would help study current level of skill available in the organization and assess learner performance. This data can help the organization take proactive action to plan future business and technology strategies.

III. Outcomes

Process refinement of the preparation of Board Book

With this standardized template, uniformity is established. This template provides a clear definition of information. It highlights people who attended the meeting, minutes of the meeting, action items, notes and a logical appendix to attach charts and figures.

This template has been reviewed by all departments. The Vice President of Finance has appreciated the template, especially the design that addresses the capture of detail regarding the members who were present and absent during the meeting. This data was often missing in previous reports, thus making audit and tracking difficult at a later date. The Controller of Finance has also appreciated the historical value added by the new structure of the report, in terms of the capture of fields that would help in future reference purposes. She also expressed her view that the template made it easier to find data in a report, compared to earlier formats.

The template will be followed by all departments for the upcoming committee meetings in this year. These committee minutes will then be consolidated to form the board book for the meeting to be held on March 07, 2007.

Contrast

Each department maintained its minutes and reports in its own way. As a result when the board minutes were compiled, it consisted of various reports that were not standardized in their presentation and content thus making it extremely difficult for board members to locate data in reports. Samples of reports generated with and without the use of the template are attached in the appendix for further reference.

Sustainability

The template has been designed such that it caters to the needs of every department. Every department can adopt this new template and capture the information it used to capture in the previous format followed.

The template has been prepared with inputs from each department and has been reviewed by members across departments. Some staff had views that the level of detail captured in the template could be reduced. They were of the opinion that the action items highlighted in the template may not be applicable in all contexts. However this section is vital to the report as it summarizes and highlights sections of the report. The template overall was appreciated for its organized presentation

of data and capture of necessary information. As information needs change the staff may modify this template keeping the basic organization structure the same, thus making the solution a long term option.

New Capability

Since the benefits of standardization have been highlighted, the organization now plans to standardize all its reports. This task has led to the planning of standardization of the agenda template, memo template, briefing note template and meeting checklist.

B. Implementation of a document management system

The task of implementation of a document management system was undertaken to provide the organization with an improved method of sharing information over the currently used common shared drive. The task was also undertaken to provide a way to archive documents and maintain templates and other reference documents in a common location that is easily retrievable.

The organization's needs included a solution that would provide versioning of documents, reduce storage of multiple copies documents and provide storage of documents in a central location in a secure fashion. Document management solutions were analyzed with respect to the aspects of

- Cost of procuring application
- Cost of installation environment
- Need for development environment
- Time to implement the solution
- Availability of support
- Need for training
- Probability of solution degradation

A feasibility study was undertaken to address the above requirements. The following options were considered for providing a solution:

- Re-organizing folders
- Freeware
- Product Purchase
- Software Development

The organization uses Foundation Power as the database management system. Strengthening the grant making function of the organization is a major area that is identified in the strategic plan of the foundation. A document management system that is compatible with the database management system and can be scaled to automate the grant making function would provide the organization with flexibility in terms of functionality in future. The Marin Community Foundation's whitepapers were studied as they had a similar technical environment and requirements as that of the Pittsburgh Foundation.

A document management solution provided by an external software vendor was suggested for the document management needs of the organization. After discussing the requirements for system, an

estimate for the cost of the software was provided by the vendor. This estimate has been submitted to the organization and will be put up before the board for approval of funding.

The strategic technology plan of the organization has been updated to reflect the proposed implementation of the document management solution. By this update, a future budget may be allocated to the task, to purchase and implement the software.-

This solution will introduce a process of knowledge management in the organization. This project has an effect on the entire organization as it redefines the information sharing process.

Contrast

Prior to this task, in the technology plan of the organization, although document management was identified as an area that needed to be addressed, a solution was not identified and a cost of implementation was not associated with it.

This task has identified document management solution that would address the needs of the organization. The task as resulted in a concrete estimate of the cost of implementation, training and maintenance of the solution. As a result, a budget can now be allocated to this task and can be included in the technology plan of the organization.

Sustainability

The need for a document management system has been identified by dialog with the staff regarding the problems they face in their daily tasks.

This approach has helped in buying user involvement. The staff has expressed a desire to have a system wherein they could access documents easily.

The external software vendor provides user and administrator training and also provides annual maintenance. A transition of files from the previous method of sharing documents to the new system will also be undertaken by the vendor after installation of the system.

Risks to sustainability of this task include a need to have a system backup plan and lack of approval to purchase the software. The use of the document management system may need to be established by making it a policy to avoid use of shared folder structures again.

New Capability

This task has led the organization to plan on converting its grant making system into an electronic format, wherein the grantee can make an electronic payment which gets automatically tracked to his record in the database management system and the details get consequently linked with the document management system in place.

C. Implementation of a training program through use of IT

On interacting with staff it was observed that knowledge of current systems possessed by experienced staff could not be passed on to other staff in the organization due the lack of a training

and development process. Alternatives of freeware and products for a fee were considered. Options were evaluated for compliance with the requirements of having the capability of creating tutorials, quizzes and administering them concurrently to an audience of approximately 30. The administration also required capability of evaluating the results of the tests administered. 'Moodle', a freeware training application satisfied these criteria.

Moodle along with Apache web server, MySql database and PHP programming language were downloaded from <http://moodle.org>. These were installed and configured by following the Moodle documentation available at the url. The software also comes with a wizard that guides you through the installation process.

A process of recording knowledge on use of current applications available in the organization has been initiated. To capture the knowledge of the experienced staff, a committee of 7 representing various departments has been formed. Using the testing application, the committee can create tests that can be administered to the other staff in the organization. On the basis of these test result reports, the management can now analyze the current skill levels available in the organization and the areas that require further training. The committee has put together an IT training survey questionnaire. Please refer to appendix for the document. This survey is being converted to an e-format and administered in the organization through Moodle.

The community partner has been trained on carrying out basic administrative activities and use of the system.

Contrast

Prior to the implementation of this task, the process of knowledge capture, training and development of skills was not followed in the organization. As a result, information was people dependent. This led to a loss of data capture regarding usage of current applications when people left the organization. Implementation of a process of training and knowledge capture, which involves formation of the Knowledge Management Committee, preparation of training material and use of the testing tool, has instituted knowledge management in the organization. Using the training application tool, an IT survey has now been undertaken to plan future training tasks in the organization.

Sustainability

This task is sustainable as the Community Partner is aware of the process of preparing and administration of tutorials and tests on Moodle. The consultant demonstrated the features of the software to the Community Partner. The CP has also created tests on the software independently. She is currently creating a survey to assess the IT capability in the organization. This survey contains approximately 10 questions. User manuals for Moodle are available thus helping with basic maintenance of the software.

Risks to sustainability include lack of requisite skills within the organization to carry out large scale maintenance activities of the software system. These include upgrades to the software, backup of the database etc. At the same time, if the process of preparation of user manuals and tests is not

regularly undertaken, the training program would not be as successful. This activity may need to be implemented as a policy.

New Capability

The organization can now use Moodle to communicate new process definitions to the staff, as part of 'Project IMPACT'.

IV. Recommendations

The Pittsburgh Foundation has a well-developed IT backbone. If this IT infrastructure is leveraged to support and optimize the business and its processes, a significant improvement in terms of time and cost may be experienced. Following are recommendations that identify some important areas that may be improved by application of technology. These recommendations are directed at helping the organization go paperless, web enabled and optimized in terms of key processes.

For an organization to work efficiently and effectively, it is important that a defined and optimized process is in place. One of the ways of making a process that dealt with information more efficient would be to make data electronically available. This would make information available instantly, easily communicable, reduce cost and storage issues related to paper and make data more manageable. The organization currently uses paper for its communication. This process may be optimized through the use of electronic communication.

The recommendation addressing use of e-letters for correspondence is aimed at introducing a process of communication through the use of emails and HTML reports. In addition to going paperless, the organization may further benefit by this task as it would help reach a larger audience at a reduced cost.

Grant making is a major function in the mission statement of the organization. Electronic submission of grant applications would improve the efficiency of the organization's grant making process.

Automation of the function of matching donors to receivers is another important area of focus. Capturing information about the process and automating it would make it simpler to deal with large sets of data. Also the process may be made less manually driven. This aspect is addressed in the recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Use of e-letters

Details of the recommendation

The organization corresponds with its donors and prospective donors through mail, annual reports, reports on developments regarding grants etc. One reason to stick to the paper medium may be a target audience who are not very comfortable with technology. However e-letters may be used as a supplement to the traditional paper communication. The e-letter format may be used to mail out reports like annual financial reports to a list of people. Periodic newsletters briefing the audience regarding functions and achievements of the organization may be used as a marketing and confidence building strategy. E-letters may also be used as a mode of mass advertising by sending

out e-flyers regarding the organization's upcoming events etc. In effect the use of e-letters serves to increase awareness regarding the organization and corresponding with an increased audience without a corresponding increase in stationery costs.

Reasoning behind the goal

Not leveraging technology to optimize business process may serve to act as a competitive disadvantage to an organization. While most organization are using the internet and e-mail to reach out to a larger audience, not considering this alternative may prove to be costly in terms of long term strategy.

Use of e-letters as a supplement to the current medium of communication through paper would address two kinds of audience, people who are comfortable with technology and people who are not. Thus in effect the organization would be enabled to reach out to the entire set of prospective donors.

E-letters reduces the cost of stationery and postage. Currently the organization may adopt it as a supplement. Eventually when paper based communication phases out, considerable cost savings maybe experienced through the use of e-letters.

The process of preparing communication material that is ready to be posted involves resources of time, cost and material. This can be substantially reduced through the use of e-letters. At the same time it provides quick response capability.

Strategies

1. Formatted HTML email messages may be used to present reports.
2. A database of donor and prospective candidate's email addresses needs to be maintained for this purpose.
3. A process of capturing email addresses needs to be implemented.
4. This database would need to be maintained by updates and additions, for example, any query mail received may be added to the database as a person with interest in the organization.
5. e-letters may be mailed to people on the list in addition to paper reports.
6. Recipients may be asked if they prefer e-reports to paper reports, thus increasing the number of audience who accept an electronic mode of communication.
7. The organization's website may include links for users to sign up for e-letters. This would provide the organization with data on prospective donors.
8. Annual reports, event details etc may also be uploaded on the website in PDF downloadable formats for further circulation.

Outcomes

Since the cost of correspondence does not increase with an increase in the number of mail, the organization should be able to communicate with more number of people. Awareness regarding foundation events should increase. This in turn should increase the number of grants the organization receives. As the process of communication gets automated, the process time and effort should proportionally reduce.

Research Resources

Internal Resources

- A policy may be implemented with the consent of the management on implementing a process of capture of email address at every opportunity, like a query email received and save it in a central location.
- A policy of supplementing the traditional method of communication with e-letters may also be passed.

External Resources

- The article available at <http://ezinearticles.com/?How-to-Choose-the-Right-E-Newsletter-Service-Provider-for-Your-Nonprofit&id=300776> by Nancy E. Schwartz provides a checklist for non-profits to keep in mind when deciding on an e-newsletter service provider.
- The company MediaBlend provides e-newsletter hosting services. Such options may be considered. The relevant url is https://secure100.mediablend.com/mediablend_com/e_newsletter.shtml.
- PDF converters are available on the web for download. Some sites are www.adobe.com, <http://www.primopdf.com/>. Such software may be considered for use to convert word documents into PDF format.
- Sites such as www.cnet.com provide a rated download of various software options. These could be evaluated for possible PDF converters, either freeware or at a nominal cost.

Budget

Cost incurred in this task may be in areas of:

- Cost of renting e-newsletter service
- Cost of purchase of e-flyer software

Recommendation 2: Automation of grant making process

Details of the recommendation

The process of grant making may be automated through the use of technology. Grant making forms may be made available through the organization's website. Facility to attach supporting documents may also be provided on the website. On submission of this set, these may be integrated with the document management system which in turn would be integrated with the database management system.

A facility to track applications and grant submissions may be provided to users. Using this facility a donor may log on to the system and check the status of the application. This would provide the grantee with real-time instantaneous information. The use of a donor's funds may also be reflected on the website, on logging on, to the user.

Reasoning behind the goal

This recommendation aims at optimizing the grant making process through the use of technology. Grant making being an important function of the organization needs to be one of the most effective processes in the organization. Automating this area would help free resource time that is currently spent in processing data on paper. It would also reduce the mean response time by quick processing of grant applications.

A tracking facility would provide the donor current information regarding the status of his application. This would increase customer satisfaction. This feature would also help the organization communicate with donors more effectively as they can regularly provide information regarding use of donated funds.

Strategies

This task would involve studying the requirements of the grants making function, understanding the current software environment, designing and developing an application that can build on the current infrastructure by ensuring compatibility with the document management system and database management system in place. The system would also need to be implemented and maintained .

These tasks may be accomplished through one of the following alternatives:

1. Outsource for development

The tasks may be outsourced to an external service provider. The company should have sufficient experience in the non-profit domain to understand the objectives. It should possess the necessary skills to develop an application that would be compatible with the existing document management system and database management system. It is vital to ensure that this link is established to enable chaining of record information. Outsourcing to a company may increase the organization's dependency on the service provider.

2. Hiring interns

A team of interns may be hired to develop the module. This approach reduces the cost associated with the above option. However future maintenance activities may be an issue after completion of the process unless a system administrator is hired and trained.

Outcomes

- Data can be captured electronically thereby experiencing a reduction in processing time for each grant application
- Data entry at the level of the grantee reduces the chances of errors in the application
- Increased availability of information for donor
- Increased donor satisfaction

Research Resources

Internal Resources

- White papers of other non-profit organizations with similar requirements and technical environment may be referred to for information on implementation of automated grant making function. The Marin Community Foundation's whitepaper's on the subject may be referred to. This whitepaper is available with the community partner.
- A policy of making information on current grant status, use of grant funds etc available may have to be passed with the consent of the management.

External Resources

- <http://philanthropy.com/> lists organizations that specialize in grant making software.
- <http://www.techsoup.org/learningcenter/software/page5056.cfm> provides a comparison of various grants making software available. It is important to compare products taking into account the current software capability of the organization, to ensure backward compatibility of suggested solution.
- Community Foundation of America at <http://www.cfamerica.org/> is an organization that has automated its grant making functions. Its website may be referred to for further details.

Budget

Cost of implementation of the above task may include:

- Cost of developing/purchasing the software.
- Cost of setting up the technical environment for the application, in terms of purchase of user licenses etc.
- Cost of maintaining the application.

Recommendation 3: Automation of process of matching donors to receivers

Details of the recommendation

The process of matching donors to receivers is another major process in the organization. This process may be automated to improve efficiency.

Complete records of donors and their criteria for donations may be maintained. At the same time a set of records of receivers with criteria for receiving donations may be maintained. A tool may be designed that data-mines this information to find the ideal match between donor and receiver based on donor and receiver criteria.

For example, a donor's criteria of wanting to donate to environment friendly causes may be entered into the system's search text field. A keyword match based on entered criteria maybe implemented on records in the receiver's category. This tool may be made intelligent by implementation of inferential matches like environment to animals etc.

Reasoning behind the goal

The current process of matching donors to receivers is person dependant. Also the process is not documented or defined. Automation of this area would make it feasible to sift through a large volume of records to find a good set of matches. This may be difficult to carry out manually. The processing time of this operation would be reduced significantly hence allowing the organization process more applications.

Criteria to match applications may be defined in the system. This makes the process less manually driven. At the same time a standardized approach to this process can be adopted through automation.

Strategies

This task would involve studying the requirements of the grant matching process, understand the current software environment, designing and developing an application that can leverage the current infrastructure. The system would also need to be implemented, maintained and provided user training on.

These tasks may be accomplished through one of the following alternatives:

1. Outsource for development

The tasks may be outsourced to an external service provider. The company should have sufficient experience in the non-profit domain, data mining and donor matching process. Outsourcing to a company may increase the organization's dependency on the service provider.

2. Hiring interns

A team of interns may be hired to develop the module. This approach reduces the cost associated with the above option. However future maintenance activities may be an issue after completion of the process unless a system administrator is hired and trained.

Outcomes

- The process of matching donors to receivers would be carried out with less manual intervention.
- The task of finding a match amongst hundreds of records is would be easier as the process would be automated.

Research Resources

Internal Resources

- The current committee may be interacted with to capture process details and record them.

External resources

- Since the process of matching donors to receivers is organization specific there may be a need to develop a customized product. This may be achieved by involving software developers who can study the requirements and convert that into an application for the organization.

Budget

Implementation of this task may incur a cost in the following areas:

- Cost of hiring software developers
- Cost of acquiring the software environment for product development
- Cost of building the requisite technical environment in terms of licenses
- Cost of maintaining the application

About the Consultant

Gayatri Rajamani is pursuing her Masters in Information Systems Management at Carnegie Mellon University. Prior to this course, she has completed her Bachelors in Computer Science and Masters in Computer Applications from India.

Appendix A:

The following is the project summary for 'Project IMPACT'.



THE PITTSBURGH
FOUNDATION
IMPACT
Project Summary

CONTENTS

Project Team

Introduction

Objectives

Methodology

Evaluation

Timeline

PROJECT

The Pittsburgh Foundation
Information Management, Process Analysis and Comprehensive Technology (IMPACT)

PROJECT TEAM

Project Leader:	Richard Reed
Project Manager:	Lauren Mikus
Project Committee:	Sherry Murray Jeanne Pearlman Kelly Uranker Mary Wilson

INTRODUCTION

The Pittsburgh Foundation is committed to best practices in all aspects of its operation. Toward that end, several organization-wide efforts have been undertaken in the last few years. A comprehensive Strategic Plan was completed in 2002. This was followed by an in-depth analysis of operating costs and sources of revenue utilizing the Cost Study tool developed by Foundation Strategy Group (FSG). Based on the Cost Study data, a financial modeling tool, the Interactive Strategy Model (ISM) created by FSG, was used to develop revenue and operating cost scenarios for planning purposes. Additionally, the Foundation has submitted compliance documents demonstrating the adoption of best practices to the Council on Foundations (COF) National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations. The Foundation is continuing to identify opportunities to introduce best practices and is using the IMPACT project to further this effort.

By building upon earlier initiatives, this project will evaluate operating policies and procedures through an in depth analysis of current practices and, where indicated, suggest changes to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency. The project will use the five general operating categories from the Cost Study as a framework. This will allow us to use the wealth of data collected through the efforts of everyone who participated in that process. The IMPACT Team will also review existing practices, documented policies and procedures, and conduct staff interviews to formulate an accurate baseline assessment. Staff will then be engaged in making informed decisions to improve efficiency and effectiveness, ensuring transparency and integrating technology to greatest extent possible.

OBJECTIVES

The IMPACT project will:

- document current policies and procedures
- engage all staff in the review of current processes and development of improvement plan
- assess and implement technology solutions when applicable
- establish framework for continued process evaluation and improvement

METHODOLOGY

Phase 1: Executive Office and Communications Department

1. *Define* Core Office Functions of the Executive Office and Communications Department
2. *Survey* of Effectiveness and Efficiency
 - 2.1. Review Existing Operating Procedures with all members of department
 - 2.2. Map
3. *Describe* Current Structure for Carrying Out Identified Functions
4. *Analyze* Comparable Best Practices
5. *Recommendations*
 - 5.1. Process Improvements
 - 5.1.1. Function
 - 5.1.2. Structure
 - 5.1.3. Staffing
 - 5.2. Changes in Functions as Assigned to Executive
 - 5.3. Changes in Structure to Effect Improvement
 - 5.4. Changes in Staffing to Carry Out Proposed Structures
 - 5.5. Current Staff Development Needed to Carry Out Staffing Changes

Phase 2: Program, Finance, and Development & Donor Services

Phase 2 will follow the general outline of Phase 1, but may be modified once Phase 1 has been completed.

EVALUATION

The evaluation of the project will consist of monthly reports to Cabinet for their review and input, as well as a Final Cabinet Review tentatively scheduled for June of 2007.

The final report will be presented to Board of Directors of The Pittsburgh Foundation at the July 26th Board Retreat in 2007.

TIMELINE (MONTH/YEAR)

Phase 1:

07/06	Finalize ISM Project
08/06	Project Planning
09/06	Initiate with Full Staff
10/06	Data Collection: Executive Department
11/06	Analysis of Data
12/06	Report to Cabinet
01/07	Project Review
	Preparation for Phase 2

Phase 2:

02/07	Data Collection: Department #1
03/07	Data Collection: Department #2
04/07	Data Collection: Department #3
05/07	Analysis of Data
06/07	Report to Cabinet
	Project Review
07/07	Report to Board at Retreat

[red indicates TPF Board Meeting Date, □ indicates report out]

Phase 1	<p>August 2006</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>6 7 8 9 10 11 12</p> <p>13 14 15 16 17 18 19</p> <p>20 21 22 23 24 25 26</p> <p>27 28 29 30 31</p> <p>Planning Sessions for Project</p>	<p>September 2006</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2</p> <p>3 4 5 6 7 8 9</p> <p>10 11 12 13 14 15 16</p> <p>17 18 19 20 21 22 23</p> <p>24 25 26 27 28 29 30</p> <p>Planning/ Initiate Project Develop Organization Schedule</p>	<p>October 2006</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</p> <p>8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>15 16 17 18 19 20 21</p> <p>22 23 24 25 26 27 28</p> <p>29 30 31</p> <p>Data Collection: Executive Department</p>
	<p>November 2006</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4</p> <p>5 6 7 8 9 10 11</p> <p>12 13 14 15 16 17 18</p> <p>19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p> <p>26 27 28 29 30</p> <p>Analysis of Data Any Additional Follow-Up</p>	<p>December 2006</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2</p> <p>3 4 5 6 7 8 9</p> <p>10 11 12 13 14 15 16</p> <p>17 18 19 20 21 22 23</p> <p>24 25 26 27 28 29 30</p> <p>31</p> <p>Report to Cabinet Project Review</p>	<p>January 2007</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6</p> <p>7 8 9 10 11 12 13</p> <p>14 15 16 17 18 19 20</p> <p>21 22 23 24 25 26 27</p> <p>28 29 30 31</p> <p>Prep for Phase 2</p>
	<p>February 2007</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3</p> <p>4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p> <p>11 12 13 14 15 16 17</p> <p>18 19 20 21 22 23 24</p> <p>25 26 27 28</p> <p>Data Collection: Department #1</p>	<p>March 2007</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3</p> <p>4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p> <p>11 12 13 14 15 16 17</p> <p>18 19 20 21 22 23 24</p> <p>25 26 27 28 29 30 31</p> <p>Data Collection: Department #2</p>	<p>April 2007</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</p> <p>8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>15 16 17 18 19 20 21</p> <p>22 23 24 25 26 27 28</p> <p>29 30</p> <p>Data Collection: Department #3</p>
	<p>May 2007</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>6 7 8 9 10 11 12</p> <p>13 14 15 16 17 18 19</p> <p>20 21 22 23 24 25 26</p> <p>27 28 29 30 31</p> <p>Analysis of Data</p>	<p>June 2007</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2</p> <p>3 4 5 6 7 8 9</p> <p>10 11 12 13 14 15 16</p> <p>17 18 19 20 21 22 23</p> <p>24 25 26 27 28 29 30</p> <p>Report to Cabinet Develop Final Report</p>	<p>July 2007</p> <p>Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7</p> <p>8 9 10 11 12 13 14</p> <p>15 16 17 18 19 20 21</p> <p>22 23 24 25 26 27 28</p> <p>29 30 31</p> <p>Final Report Out to Board</p>

Appendix B:

The following is the project proposal of the Knowledge Management Committee

DRAFT
12/10/06



THE PITTSBURGH
FOUNDATION

Knowledge Management

“The process of enhancing company performance by designing and implementing tools, processes, systems, structures and cultures to improve the creation, sharing and use of knowledge.”

- **Design training process**
 - Conduct a needs assessment
 - Assess current users’ skills and additional training needed.
 - Create a learning environment
 - Develop an evaluation plan
 - Post session questionnaire
 - Job performance
 - Selection of training methods
 - Group (in-house/offsite)
 - One-on-one
 - Monitor and evaluate program.
 - Support network
- **Foundation Power Training**
 - Grants
 - Funds/Donations
 - Finance
 - Contacts
 - Executive/Communications
 - Levels of Security
- **Document retention**
 - Save documents electronically – paperless grantmaking
 - Directories – standardize (g: drive)
 - Offsite storage
- **Orientation for new employees**
 - Outlook
 - Foundation Power
 - Telephones
 - Security

- Who does what?
- **Equipment**
 - Digital scanner
 - Copiers
 - Fax machines
 - Printers
 - Audio Visual
 - Laptops
 - USB
- **Software**
 - Excel
 - Basic spreadsheets
 - Exporting Foundation Power reports
 - Charts and Graphs
 - Word
 - Use of templates for letters
 - Standard formatting
 - Powerpoint
 - Adobe
 - MS Project
 - PG Calc
 - Publisher
 - Off-line access
- **Intranet**
 - What is on there?
 - What should be added?
 - Back up materials from training/How-to's
 - Who do I ask?
- **Internet**
 - TPF Website
 - Resources
 - Guidestar
 - Charity Navigator
 - Subscriptions
 - COF
 - GWP
- **Troubleshooting**
 - Hardware (trained person for each department)

IT Training Committee

Barbara Brooks, Finance
 Lauren Mikus, Executive
 Sherry Murray, Human Resources
 Julie Pezzino, Communications
 The Pittsburgh Foundation
 Gayatri Rajamani, Student Consultant

Jennifer Steinmetz, Program
 Kelly Uranker, Development & Donor Services
 Mary Wilson, Finance
 Vacant, Director of Information Technology

Fall 2006

Appendix C:

TRAINING COMMITTEE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

IT Training Committee Survey Questions

DRAFT

11/27/2006

Self Assessment

Foundation Power

Please indicate how often you use the following modules of Foundation Power:

	Not at All					Daily
Grants	1	2	3	4	5	6
Funds	1	2	3	4	5	6
General Ledger	1	2	3	4	5	6
Grants Payables	1	2	3	4	5	6
Contacts	1	2	3	4	5	6

For the same areas, how would you rate your level of competence:

	No knowledge					Expert
Grants	1	2	3	4	5	6
Funds	1	2	3	4	5	6
General Ledger	1	2	3	4	5	6
Grants Payables	1	2	3	4	5	6
Contacts	1	2	3	4	5	6

Software

Please indicate how often you use the following software:

	Not at All					Daily
Excel	1	2	3	4	5	6
Word	1	2	3	4	5	6
Powerpoint	1	2	3	4	5	6
Adobe	1	2	3	4	5	6
MS Project	1	2	3	4	5	6
PG Calc	1	2	3	4	5	6
Publisher	1	2	3	4	5	6

For the same areas, how would you rate your level of competence:

	No knowledge					Expert
Excel	1	2	3	4	5	6
Word	1	2	3	4	5	6
Powerpoint	1	2	3	4	5	6
Adobe	1	2	3	4	5	6
MS Project	1	2	3	4	5	6
PG Calc	1	2	3	4	5	6
Publisher	1	2	3	4	5	6

paperless, the organization may benefit by this task as it would help reach a larger audience at a reduced cost.

2. Automation of grant making process

Grant making is a major function in the mission statement of the organization. Electronic submission of grant applications would improve the efficiency of the organization's grant making process.

3. Automation of process of matching donors to receivers

The process of matching donors to receivers is a major process in the organization. Automation of this process would improve its efficiency. A system may be designed to data-mine the records and make intelligent matches between donors and receivers.

Community Partner
Lauren Mikus
mikusl@pghfdn.org

The Pittsburgh Foundation
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-5414
<http://www.pittsburghfoundation.org/>

About the Consultant
Gayatri Rajamani
grajaman@andrew.cmu.edu

Gayatri is pursuing MISM at
Carnegie Mellon University

Hardware

Please indicate how often you use the following hardware:

	Not at All					Daily
Copiers	1	2	3	4	5	6
Printers	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fax	1	2	3	4	5	6
Audio Visual	1	2	3	4	5	6
Digital Scanner	1	2	3	4	5	6

For each piece of hardware, how would you rate your level of competence:

	No knowledge					Expert
Copiers	1	2	3	4	5	6
Printers	1	2	3	4	5	6
Fax	1	2	3	4	5	6
Audio Visual	1	2	3	4	5	6
Digital Scanner	1	2	3	4	5	6

Internet

How often do you use the following areas of the Internet as a reference source?

	Not at All					Daily
Google	1	2	3	4	5	6
Guidestar	1	2	3	4	5	6
Charity Navigator	1	2	3	4	5	6
Council on Foundations	1	2	3	4	5	6
Grantmakers of Western Pennsylvania	1	2	3	4	5	6

In your opinion, what are the top 5 training needs, in order of importance, with number 1 as the most important?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

Extra comments: