2019

Utilization of The Star Model™ as an Onboarding and Leadership Development Tool

Jacqueline L. Brown

Gardner-Webb University

Consultancy Project
Executive Summary

Organization:	Gardner-Webb University School of Education
Project Title:	Utilization of The Star Model™ as an Onboarding and Leadership Development Tool
Candidate:	Jacqueline L. Brown, MHA, MSL
Consultancy Coach:	Dr. Jeffrey Hamilton
Defense Date:	July 1, 2019
Authorized by:	Linda Nunnallee, Executive Director

Amendment History

Version	Issue Date	Changes
Version 1	May 7, 2019	Initial version.
Version 2	May 9, 2019	Suggested changes from consultancy coach.
Version 3	May 16, 2019	Suggested changes from consultancy coach.
Version 4	May 21, 2019	Suggested changes from editor.

Approval

This consultancy project was submitted by Jacqueline L. Brown under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to Gardner-Webb University School of Education and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Gardner-Webb University.

_____   _____
Jeff Hamilton, Ed.D, Faculty Advisor   Date
Gardner-Webb University

_____   _____
Linda Nunnallee, Site Advisor   Date
Executive Director, StepUp Ministry

Acknowledgements

Thank you for additional prayers and encouragement from Arzie Mason and Victoria Smith. To, my DEOL classmates, Dr. Hamilton my consultancy coach, and the professors of Gardner-Webb University, my life is richer because we have met and learned so much from each other on this amazing path. To my research teammates at Duke University School of Nursing and Dr. Paula Tanabe, thank you for your patience. Additionally, to my former colleagues at Alliant Health Solutions, I am grateful for your continued support. Last, thank you to Charlie Smith, Jr. for your love and continuous support of my goals and dreams – you are my greatest gift!

Abstract

Utilization of The Star Model™ as an Onboarding and Leadership Development Tool.
Brown, Jacqueline L., 2019, Consultancy Project, Gardner-Webb University, Digital
Commons/Onboarding/Leadership Development

The purpose of the project was to utilize The Star Model™ as a tool to address
onboarding and leadership development. Training and development are important to the
success of any organization. Specifically, onboarding of new staff and board members,
as well as continuous leadership development of all staff, plays a critical part in the
success of a nonprofit organization. To address this need, StepUp Ministry took a
proactive approach and implemented a consultancy project to address this issue. The
ultimate goal of the project was to ensure that staff and new board members received
meaningful retreat and training opportunities that would support the goals of the
organization and demonstrate their commitment to be a mission-forward organization. In
addition, the opportunity to improve communication internally and externally ensured
that program participants received the customer service they need and deserve in the
LifeSkills training. Results indicated that the newly implemented opportunities were
successful and well received by staff and new board members.

Table of Contents

1   Introduction

1.1   Project Purpose

The purpose of the project was to utilize The Star Model™ as a tool to address onboarding and leadership development. StepUp Ministry board members and staff have a great responsibility to his/her community and the organization. It is vital that everyone is performing at their highest level in their role and is able to "tell the story" of the organization and its participants. The board members and staff need dedicated time to focus on their personal development and leadership skills, thus providing specific trainings would meet this need.

StepUp Ministry is based in Raleigh, NC and offers participants a year-long, phased, incentive-driven program leading to safe, affordable housing and a stable, life-sustaining job. The comprehensive program model continues to serve working families while expanding to meet the needs of single adults (particularly ex-offenders). A core curriculum has been created to address financial literacy and responsibility, physical and mental health, spiritual nurture, and healthy relationships. A management system (the Balanced Scorecard) has been implemented to tie the organization's strategies to objectives and measures that generate monthly reports and long-term measurable outcomes. StepUp now works with over 600 individuals annually.

Technical Terms and Definitions:

Balanced Scorecard. The Balanced Scorecard is a strategic planning and management system that organizations use to

- Communicate what they are trying to accomplish
- Align the day-to-day work that everyone is doing with strategy
- Prioritize projects, products, and services
- Measure and monitor progress towards strategic targets (What is the Balanced Scorecard, 2019, para 1).

StepUp participant. Any adult participating in the Tuesday night LifeSkills training that includes budgeting, personal and relationship development, goal setting, and more (StepUp Ministry, 2019).

Ex-offender. A person who previously committed a crime (StepUp Ministry, 2019).

Life-sustaining job. Gainful, stable employment (StepUp Ministry, 2019, para 1).

1.2   Associated Documents

    A: Staff retreat agenda. The staff retreat agenda provided an overview of the day and the activities that were administered (see Appendix A).

    B: New board orientation agenda. This is the refreshed training and agenda used for the new board orientation (see Appendix B).

    C: The Star Model™. This is a framework for organizational design and is the foundation on which a company bases its design choices (see Appendix C).

    D: **StepUp program statistics.** These statistics show the progress and accomplishments of StepUp Ministry (see Appendix D).

1.3   Project Plan Maintenance
The project plan was written under the direction and assistance of Linda Nunnallee, Executive Director of StepUp Ministry, and Jacqueline Brown, DEOL student. After the proposal was written, Ms. Brown submitted it to Dr. Hamilton, and a face-to-face meeting was held to review and approve. Additional changes and adjustments were completed by Ms. Brown and Ms. Nunnallee and resubmitted to Dr. Hamilton for all and final approval of associated milestones.

2 Project Scope

StepUp Ministry has focused on establishing the "why" of the work they do for the past several years. Under Linda Nunnalee's leadership, the organization's staff and board members have evolved and embrace their personal and organizational "why." This was based on the movement of Simon Sinek (2011) to help people become more inspired at work and in turn inspire their colleagues and customers. This has served the organization well in ensuring that participants receive the best training experience possible. Implementing a new staff retreat and refreshing past staff and new board activities is critical, due to the current momentum of the organization. This project is a critical piece of onboarding and leadership development for the entire StepUp Ministry team.

2.1 Outline of Partnering Organization's Objectives

2.1.1 Objectives

The board members and staff of StepUp Ministry are committed to performing at their highest level and successfully "telling the story" of the organization to their stakeholders and partners. This consultancy project focused on onboarding and the use of The Star Model™ framework by Jay Galbraith (2002) as a tool for organizational design.

The Executive Director of StepUp Ministry has successfully led the organization for over 5 years and was interested in offering the board members and staff new and innovative retreat experiences to foster teamwork, offer leadership development, and improve communication internally and externally.

The StepUp Ministry team is committed to ensuring that participants receive training and opportunities to assist them in their personal growth. Due to this, it is imperative that team members are offered growth opportunities as well, and this aligns with the mission and goals of the organization.

Objective	Performance Indicators
1. DEOL student consultant has a clear understanding of the mission and vision of StepUp Ministry	Successfully develop and facilitate retreat and training opportunities
2. Staff Retreat was effective and beneficial	Evaluation results (see section 8 Metrics and Results)
3. New Board Orientation was effective and beneficial	Feedback from board members
4. Strategic Plan Review completion	Updates and results are shared and discussed with staff and board members

2.1.2 Success Criteria
The success of the project was measured through feedback from staff and board members on the retreat experiences and new onboarding processes. In addition, success was measured by the ability of the student consultant to communicate the mission and vision of StepUp Ministry through retreat design and facilitation.

2.1.3 Risks
The main risk associated with the project is the unwillingness of the Executive Director to complete deliverables and not accept and implement recommendations of the DEOL student consultant.

2.2 Outline of Student's Objectives

2.2.1 Objectives
The DEOL student consultant's main responsibility was to ensure that the goals as presented by the Executive Director were implemented and completed. In addition, the following objectives were the foundation of the consultant project:

1. The mission and the vision will be at forefront of the organization.
2. Staff and board members will have meaningful retreats, orientations, and leadership development experiences.
3. The Executive Director will utilize these activities to inform further training and development activities for staff and board members.

2.2.2 Success Criteria
- The staff and board members will have an opportunity to participate in personal leadership development activities that will support their growth as a member of the StepUp Ministry team.
- The Executive Director will have training and retreat resources that can be replicated each year.
- The organization will have a clear assessment of its progress and adherence to the strategic plan.
- The StepUp Ministry team will provide positive feedback through an evaluation of the retreat and activities.

2.2.3 Risks
The greatest risk for this project was the ability to complete the consultancy project in a timely manner to ensure effectiveness; however, the Executive Director was fully onboard and supportive of the efforts. Additionally, the project met a great need for the organization as a whole. With the implementation of frequent meetings between the DEOL student consultant and the Executive Director, these risks were minimized.

2.3   Definitive Scope Statement
The project utilized the The Star Model™ as a tool to develop and implement new onboarding and leadership development opportunities for the staff and board members of StepUp Ministry.

3 Deliverables

3.1 To Partnering Organization

As a part of the consultancy project, the Gardner-Webb student was responsible for completing the following:

1. Gardner-Webb student will visit StepUp on **January 15, 2019** for Life Skills.

   a. This was held every Tuesday for participants and the student will receive an overview of the program, meet staff, and participants.

2. Develop, implement, and evaluate Staff Leadership Training/Retreat to be held on **March 22, 2019.**

   a. Focus on the importance of storytelling in order to get to their personal WHY and the organizational WHY.
   b. The staff retreat was based on aspects of leadership development from Paul Schmitz (2012) and his philosophy of working with the community to build leadership within organizations. To address, individual leadership qualities and communication, the staff participated in Psychogeometrics training (Dellinger, 1996).
   c. Evaluate the training at its conclusion through written and verbal feedback. The following questions were asked:

      i. What resonated with you about the training?
      ii. What questions do you have about the training or your personal development?
      iii. What additional feedback do you have for the facilitators to assist in preparation for upcoming training opportunities?

3. Strategic Plan Update – Review will take place on **April 13, 2019.**

   a. Provide a summary that shows progress on current plan.

4. Develop a meaningful training for new board members – Agenda due by **May 1, 2019.**

   a. The training included information on the following:

      i. Board members will know how to talk about StepUp's programs and why the organization exists.
      ii. Board members will know their expectations of serving on the StepUp board.

     iii. Board members will understand the governance structure and the role they play leading the organization.

     iv. A mission moment will be incorporated.

     v. A board buddy mentoring opportunity will be introduced.

The student based the program development and research for this project on the The Star Model™ framework for organizational design by Jay Galbraith (2002). The areas of focus were people and strategy.

3.2 From Student

The DEOL student consultant participated in StepUp Ministry team-building activities and any professional development activities.

4 Project Approach

4.1 Project Lifecycle Processes

Phase 1 – Onboarding Program Inception and Staff Retreat

Project Lifecycle Process	Outcome
Stage 1	Introductory meeting with Executive Director of StepUp Ministry to review project opportunities
Stage 2	DEOL student consultant reviewed proposed opportunities and wrote an agreement with the organization for sign-off
Stage 3	DEOL student conducted a literature review in preparation for staff retreat development
Stage 4	Student developed retreat and proposal to Executive Director for approval and acceptance
Stage 5	Student invited trainer to conduct Psychogeometric training activity
Stage 6	Staff retreat is held and facilitated by student
Stage 7	Evaluation was distributed to staff and written and verbal feedback was collected
Stage 8	Feedback was shared with Executive Director

Phase 2 – New Board Orientation Revision

Project Lifecycle Process	Outcome
Stage 1	Executive Director shared new board orientation experiences with DEOL student
Stage 2	DEOL student revised new board orientation and recommended the addition of a mission moment, board buddy program, guided questions and current board member presentations
Stage 3	Executive Director accepted recommendations
Stage 4	DEOL student revised agenda for new board orientation and submits to Executive Director
Stage 5	Executive Director scheduled training and distributed the agenda
Stage 6	DEOL student is invited to participate in new board member orientation

Strategic Plan Review and Progress Summary

Project Lifecycle Process	Outcome
Stage 1	Executive Director reviewed current strategic plan with DEOL student
Stage 2	Executive Director held activity for staff and board to update strategic plan progress
Stage 3	Executive Director met with DEOL student and reviewed the results
Stage 4	A summary for measurement is developed and distributed

4.2   Project Management Processes
The Executive Director of StepUp Ministry held meetings as needed to ensure that the project was progressing and address any needs or challenges that may have developed.

4.3   Project Support Processes
The Executive Director of StepUp Ministry and staff and board members were vital pieces of the process for successful implementation of the consultancy project. The DEOL student consultant facilitated the staff retreat with the Psychogeometrics trainer and was invited to participate in restorative justice training for staff to be held on May 17, 2019.

4.4   Organization

4.4.1 Project Team
The Project Team members included the following:

- Executive Director, StepUp Ministry
- Volunteer Coordinator, StepUp Ministry
- Psychogeometrics Trainer
- DEOL Student Consultant

4.4.2 Mapping Between Organization and Student

```
                    ┌──────────────┐
                    │  Volunteer   │
           ┌────────│ Coordinator  │
┌──────────┐        └──────────────┘
│ Executive│
│ Director │        ┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────────┐
└──────────┘────────│ DEOL Student │───│ Psychogeometrics │
                    │  Consultant  │   │     Trainer      │
                    └──────────────┘   └──────────────────┘
```
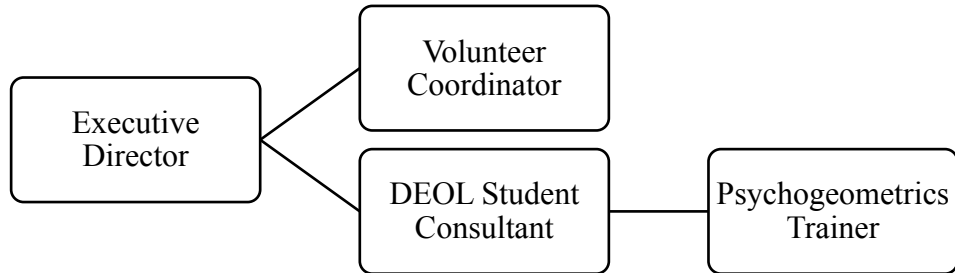
5 Communications Plan

The communications plan ensured that the Executive Director and DEOL student consultant were accountable and able to meet the milestones in a timely and efficient manner. In addition, the plan provided a written process that could be referenced during the project and adjusted as needed.

Stakeholder	Information Needed/Required	Rationale	Timeline
Executive Director StepUp Ministry	Plan and budget for staff retreat and proposed agenda for new board orientation	Provides an overview of activites and costs – submitted by the student consultant	February - March 2019 May 1, 2019 for New Board Orientation
Psychogeometrics Trainer	Agenda for staff retreat	Provide an overview of the retreat and organization and a guideline for this presentation – submitted by the student consultant	March 1, 2019
DEOL Student Consultant	Past retreat activities, feedback from staff and strategic plan	To provide information on what was effective and what could be improved	January 30, 2019

6 Work Plan

6.1 Work Breakdown Structure

Objective	Task	Sub-Task	Begin Date	End Date
Mission and Vision Overview				
	Begin introduction to StepUp	Face-to-face meeting with Executive Director	November 2018	January 2019
		Participate in tour, dinner, and LifeSkills class for participants		January 2019
		Share feedback with Executive Director		January 2019
Staff Retreat	Create a staff retreat	Appendix A	January 2019	March 2019
	Identify activity to administer at training	Leadership moment	February 2019	March 2019
		Hire co-facilitator for Psychogeometrics training and negotiate price	February 2019	March 2019
		Implement training		March 2019
		Compile evaluation feedback and share with Executive Director and trainer		April 2019
New Board Orientation	Identify new and innovative ways to conduct new board orientation training	Review materials and notebook with Executive Director	March 2019	May 2019
		Research and provide a proposal for revision	April 2019	May 2019

		Develop an agenda for new board orientation with changes	April 2019	May 2019
Strategic Plan Review	Assist Executive Director in reviewing feedback on strategic plan and updating progress	Review the strategic plan	January 2019	May 2019
		Executive Director will provide update to student consultant on feedback from staff and board	April 2019	May 2019
		Student consultant will assist Executive Director in writing an update		May 2019

6.2 Resources
Please see Section 6.1.

7 Milestones

Milestone Number	Title	Forecast date
1	Executive Director and DEOL student in-person meeting to review mission, vision, and values of StepUp Ministry o Develop a detailed statement of purpose and project proposal. o Develop SMART goals, objectives, deliverables, and scope boundaries	January 4, 2019
2	Mission and Vision Exploration – Attend LifeSkills training for participants o Develop a summary of the business, risk assessment, key assumptions, outline of the plan with communications plan, and financial budget	January 15, 2019
3	Develop a staff retreat proposal and agenda	February 1, 2019
4	Identify a training to conduct at staff retreat and a co-facilitator	February 10, 2019
5	Finalize agenda for staff retreat with Executive Director and co-facilitator for distribution to staff	March 1, 2019
6	Administer leadership training and Psychogeometrics activity	March 22, 2019
7	Create an evaluation and administer at staff retreat o Create a quality assurance plan	March 22, 2019
8	Review current new board orientation with Executive Director	March 28, 2019
9	Research board orientations and present a newly revised agenda and plan for new board orientation	April 8, 2019
10	Analyze feedback from staff retreat and share with Executive Director and co-facilitator	April 10, 2019
11	Strategic plan refresh and update activity with staff and board	April 13, 2019
12	Track and document overall plan performance	April 25, 2019
13	Submit final agenda for new board orientation to Executive Director	May 1, 2019
14	Final written document and executive summary	May 7, 2019
15	Executive Director and DEOL student review final updates for strategic plan and finalize tracking	May 10, 2019

8   Metrics and Results

The goals and outcomes in sections 2 and 3 address the evaluation and how it is a tool for measuring success of the retreat. The following information was collected and analyzed through written and verbal feedback. There was an attendance requirement for the staff retreat and new board member orientation. This included not only attendance, but active participation. An evaluation was distributed after the staff retreat to measure the effectiveness and gain feedback for both facilitators. The following open-ended evaluation questions were presented to the staff:

- What resonated with you about the training?
- What questions do you have about the training or your personal development?
- What additional feedback do you have for the facilitators to assist in preparation for upcoming training opportunities?

Results

Participants completed 19 open-ended evaluations. Results indicated

- Great training and a great opportunity to learn more about our team and improve communication.
- The leadership moment and stories were helpful and allowed me to learn more about the team.
- The Psychogeometrics training was a great activity and it was something new.

The following feedback was suggested as a change to the retreat/training from one survey:

- The leadership story activity was nice, but only 2-3 stories were needed, not everyone needed to share.
- We want to learn more about how to communicate with others outside of the organization in the Psychogeometrics training.
- We want a longer retreat to cover more leadership material.

9 Risks, Constraints, Assumptions

9.1 Risks
The following risks were assessed and addressed in the project: lack of participation of engagement of staff, lack of funding, and inability to find an appropriate trainer.

Risk Description	Mitigation Plan (what to do to avoid or lessen the risk occurring)	Contingency Plan (what to do if the risk occurs)	Impact (what the impact will be to the project if the risk occurs)	Likelihood of occurrence (e.g., %, or high/medium/low)
Lack of participation and engagement from employees due to scheduling conflicts	Executive Director sends invitation to activities and lessens their workload during this period	Offer an opportunity for virtual training or distribution of materials	Low morale and lack of team support	Medium
Lack of funding for additional activities	Ensure that Executive Director has reviewed budget	Adapt training to ensure that costs remain low	Less activities and less opportunities for innovation	Low
Inability to find a co-facilitator	Brainstorm a list of potential trainings and trainers	Revise retreat and trainings to include interactive activities	Lose of opportunity to do personal development	High

9.2 Constraints
The project activities had to be conducted in White Memorial Church. This venue is a church and is free to the organization. The projector and screen had to be manually set up. In addition, all activities were based on a timeline from the previous year, and that had to be continued for consistency.

9.3 Assumptions
Assumptions are necessary in assessing risks, managing change, and ensuring that a contingency plan is in place in project management.

The following assumptions were considered:

1. The Executive Director is committed to ensuring that the DEOL student meets all set goals.
2. Staff and board members will provide honest feedback on retreat experiences.
3. Staff and board members will attend retreat activities and be engaged.

4. Staff and board members will demonstrate improved communication internally and externally.
5. Staff, board members, and DEOL student consultant will have a clear understanding of the mission and vision of StepUp Ministry.
6. The Executive Director will receive additional feedback from staff and board members after the completion of the project.

10 Financial Plan

Initially, having a budget was in question; but as the work has evolved, we made the following changes:

- A DEOL cohort presenter was hired to conduct Psychogeometrics training with the staff. The DEOL student led the leadership discussion, created the training, and assisted in facilitation of the training. The cost was $400 including travel and time. An additional $20 was spent to copy and prepare training materials for the team.
- A board and staff retreat was added as a project for the student and preceptor to discuss the strategic plan and how to revise it. This new retreat opportunity was an additional $1,000. This included location, transportation, and food for the staff and board members.

The financial plan below outlines the costs associated with the consultancy project. The cost of the venue for all activities was free.

Item	Cost	Description
Psychogeometrics Training Facilitator	$400	The facilitator provided a detailed presentation on Psychogeometrics. This included materials and travel.
Copies and Materials	$20	An additional $20 was spent to copy and prepare training materials for Steve and the team
Strategic Plan Refresh Retreat for Board Members and Staff	$1,000	This new retreat opportunity was an additional $1,000. This included location, transportation, and food for the staff and board members.
Total: $1,420		

11 Quality Assurance Plan

The purpose of this section is to develop, document, and test small changes through the use of the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle by Edward Deming (1993). The consultancy project addresses onboarding and leadership development. The Deming cycle includes PLAN: plan ahead for changes, analyze and predict results; DO: execute the plan, taking small steps in controlled circumstances; STUDY: check, study the results; and ACT: take action to standardize or improve the process.

Observe:

During the consultant project, the Executive Director and the DEOL student consultant reviewed the organization's mission, vision, values, and previous strategic plan. In addition, the DEOL student consultant attended participant programs to gain a deeper understanding of the structure of the StepUp Ministry and its operations. This provided a foundation for the structure of the project.

Plan:

After the groundwork was completed, the Executive Director and DEOL student held in-person meetings to determine milestones, timelines, and outcomes. The student provided feedback on suggestions from the Executive Director and made revisions as needed, based on the requirements of the consultancy project and observances made during the participant program visit.

Do:

The Star Model™, specifically the people aspect, was a critical aspect of determining that onboarding and leadership development for staff and board members should be addressed. The staff retreat, new board orientation, strategic plan refresh, and implementation of these activities were important parts of the consultancy project. In addition, gaining feedback from participants through the evaluation was necessary in designing future activities.

Check:
The goals set for the consultancy project were met, and additional opportunities for engagement were offered to the DEOL student consultant through invitations for staff activities, social activities, and professional development. In addition, aspects of the student's DEOL curriculum were successfully integrated into the project through the use of literature and cohort presenters.

Act:
Although the activities were successful, the staff and board activities can be revised by inviting new presenters and speakers for trainings. Also, continuous review of the strategic plan, mission/vision/values, and staff input are vital to not only the success of the organization, but ensuring that the activities continue to be new and innovative.

References

Dellinger, S. (1996). *Communicating Beyond Our Differences: Introducing the Psycho-Geometrics System* (2nd ed.). Tampa, FL: Jade Ink.

Deming, W. E. (1993). *The new economics: For industry, government, education.* Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Center for Advanced Engineering Study.

Galbraith, J. (2002). The star model (pp. 1-6, Tech.). Retrieved from http://www.jaygalbraith.com/images/pdfs/StarModel.pdf

Schmitz, P. (2012). *Everyone leads: Building leadership from the community up.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sinek, S. (2011). *Start with why: How great leaders inspire everyone to take action.* London: Portfolio/Penguin.

StepUp Ministry (2019). How it works. Retrieved from https://www.stepupministry.org/how-it-works

What is the Balanced Scorecard? (2019). Retrieved from https://www.balancedscorecard.org/BSC-Basics/About-the-Balanced-Scorecard

Appendix A

StepUp™
Ministry

Jobs | Life Skills | Stability

Staff Retreat Agenda
Friday, March 22, 2019
9:00 a.m. - Noon
Theme: Leadership from the Community Up

---

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

2. **Icebreaker**

3. **The Theme**

4. **Psychogeometrics Activity**

5. **Reflections/Evaluation**

Appendix B

New Board Orientation

A.   Welcome and Introductions
- Devotion and Prayer
- Mission Moment
- Icebreaker (first Job) then "JOY"

B.   History of StepUp Ministry

C.   Adult Program's and Process
- Who we serve
- Jobs is the entry
- ENER-G
- StepUp Connect
- Life Skills
- Alumni Programs

D.   Children and Real World

E.   Budget

F.   Development
- Financial Development Plan (Annual Appeal; WeStepUp; Rebuild Dreams; Planned Giving)
- Events (Impact Luncheon – - 30th Anniversary - Share the Pie)
- How you can help – Pledge Form in front of notebook

G.   Board Governance
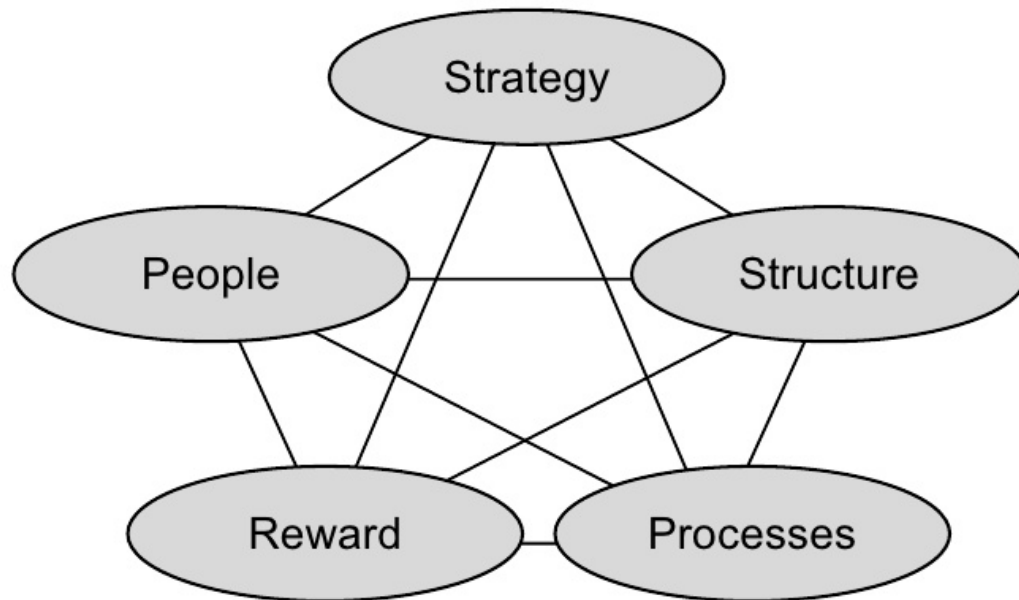What role does the board play?
- Committee Structure
- Be prepared by being informed
    - Visit program
    - Participate in Development
    - Have a voice
    - What resonates with you most about this role?

H.   Questions and Answers

I.   Adjourn
- Dates to remember on bottom of agenda
- Board Buddy – Resource for follow-up after orientation

Appendix C

The Star Model (Galbraith, 2002)

Galbraith, J. Designing Organizations, San Francisco; Josssey-Bass, 2002

Appendix D

Because unemployment and lack of resources keeps the entire community from thriving. And every family deserves stability.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 20.1% of the people in Raleigh are living below the poverty level. In some neighborhoods in Wake County, 23% of residents are unemployed.

Many of these men and women are actively seeking employment and stability, but face barriers such as criminal backgrounds, racial inequality, histories of drug abuse, domestic violence, and/or homelessness.

Unemployment creates vulnerable situations for hundreds of families, which prohibits people from living their best lives.