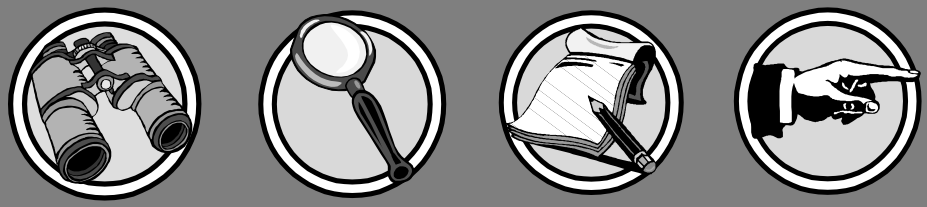
Strategic Technology Program



Participant Workbook

NSP | Nonprofit Support Program
HARTFORD FOUNDATION FOR PUBLIC GIVING

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Special Thanks

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About the Nonprofit Support Program of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving

The Nonprofit Support Program (NSP) strengthens the capacity of nonprofit organizations in Greater Hartford to achieve their missions and address community needs. NSP provides resources that help nonprofit leaders to think strategically, manage and govern effectively, and connect with other leaders. Learn more at www.hfpg.org/nsp or contact nsp@hfpg.org.

About Toolkit Consulting

Toolkit Consulting helps mission-minded organizations design engaging educational events, creative social good communications, and powerful programs. With experience working in and with both the nonprofit and the philanthropic sectors, we understand the importance of creating awesome results on a budget. Current and past clients include the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, TechSoup, Per Scholas, Microsoft Philanthropies, Idealist.org, Educopia, Fairfield County's Community Foundation, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Email lindsay@toolkitconsulting.com to learn more about how we can help you design and plan your next community event, conference or workshop, or help you conceive and execute on a fantastic social good marketing campaign.

How to Use this Workbook

This workbook is designed to help you learn more about technology planning, and to allow you to get a head start on your organization's tech plan. There is valuable content for you to read and review, and there are also worksheets and questions to help you and your planning team think through technology use at your organization. Dog-ear the pages, take notes, and make this a working resource for you!

Keep an eye out for this icon:

"My Tech Plan" Icon: Indicates a section of the workbook that connects directly to your strategic technology plan. When you see this icon, you are creating content that can translate into your completed tech plan. The section numbers correspond to the planning template provided.

Guiding Principles of the Workshop

- Technology is most effective when it is informed by – and therefore directly supporting – the mission and goals of the organization.
- Technology solutions that support mission don't happen by accident; they require long-range planning and input from people at all levels and activity areas of the organization.
- An understanding of the technology planning process will help nonprofit leaders to integrate technology with organization-wide strategic planning, budgeting, and implementation.
- You do not need to be technical to participate in or to lead a technology planning process; you should be inquisitive, resourceful, and excited about helping your organization do its best work.
- Technology means change, and change is hard. Technology planning is as much about change management and openness to new ways of doing things as it is about technology implementation.

Workshop Goals

At the end of this workshop, you will:

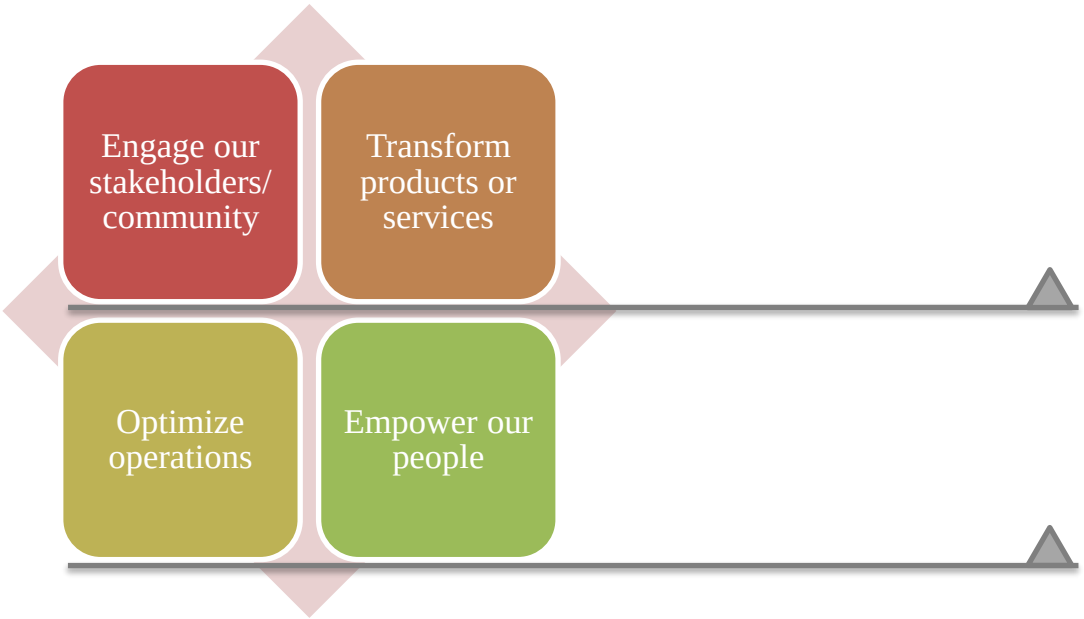
- Understand the importance of technology planning to guide mission-driven decision-making.
- Know the process of technology planning and the components of a typical technology plan.
- Have tools and strategies to help you lead the technology planning process at your organization.
- Have a head start on your technology plan.
- Feel more confident incorporating technology into future planning efforts.

Overview of Technology Planning

Overview

Why Technology Matters

Technology can help our organizations…



- **Optimize Operations**: Technology can make us more efficient
  - *Examples: Automation of things like reporting, fund development process*

- **Empower People**: Technology and training can increase effectiveness and morale
  - *Example: Staff have the right tools for the job and the training to use them*

- **Engage our Stakeholders/Community**: Technology can help us engage with our communities in new and different ways and expand our reach
  - *Examples: Social media, texting, digital storytelling, interactive data*

- **Transform Products or Services**: Technology can help us create direct, human impact in our communities through product development or service innovations
  - *Examples: Apps for good, mobile-enabled service delivery, predictive data*

Overview

The Current Technology Landscape

- **The 4th Industrial Revolution – "The Exponential Age"**
  Technology as a "disruptor", both good and bad

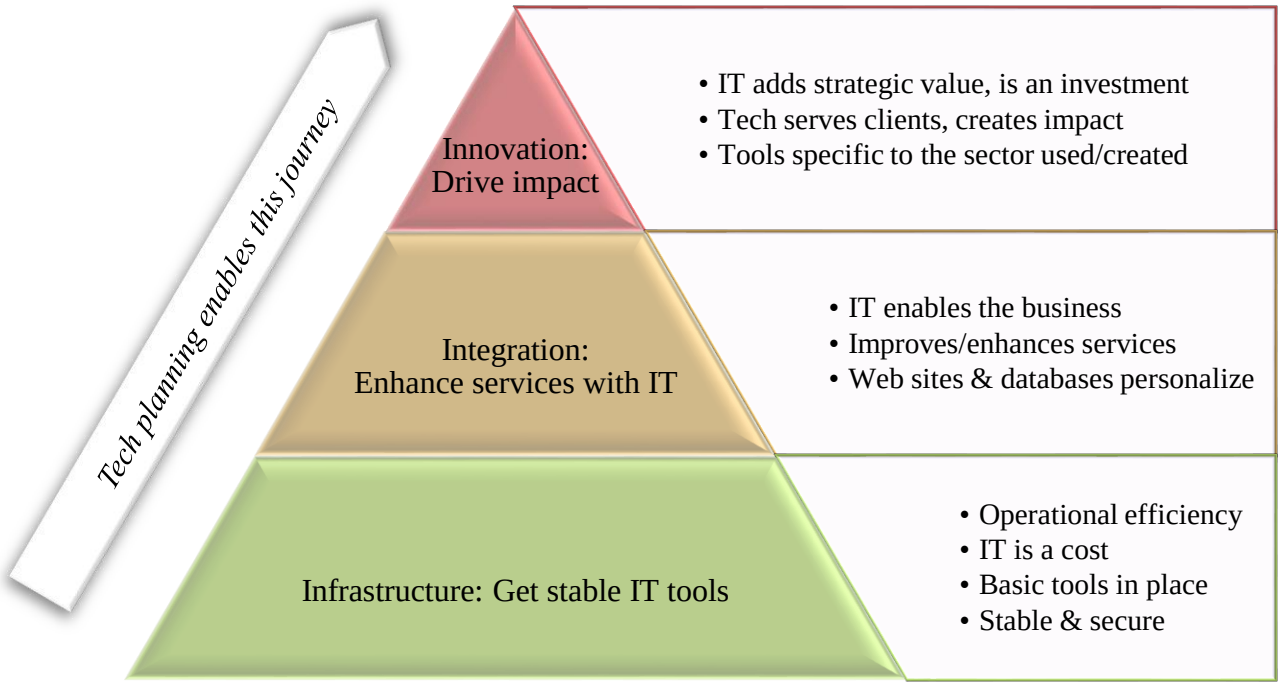
- **Continued convergence of key technology trends**
  Built on the cloud, mobile, social (especially video), and data continue to come together in ways to change what's possible with and expected of technology.
  - Cloud:
  - Social:
  - Mobile:
  - Data – enabling more than just "look back reporting":
    - Descriptive analytics → ad-hoc & standard reports. What did we do?
    - Diagnostic analytics → includes alerts & dashboards
    - Predictive analytics → data modeling & statistical analysis
    - Prescriptive analytics → performance optimization & decision support; helps you recommend one or more course of action

Examples of technology driving social impact/changing lives:

Overview

Why Technology Planning Matters

How Nonprofits Use/Adopt Technology:



My Notes on the Pyramid:

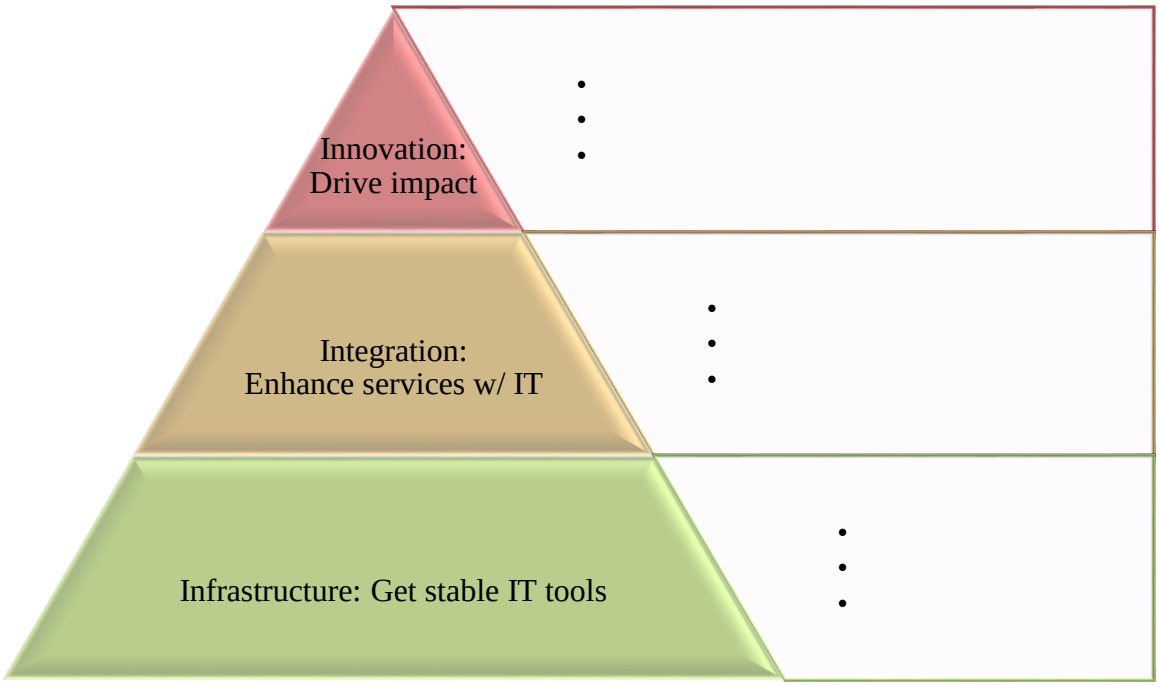
Overview

REFLECTION: Where are you & where do you want to be?

Chart the path to strategic technology adoption using the pyramid

- **Reality**: Where do you think your agency's use of IT is within the pyramid *today*?

- **Dream Big:** If IT worked well for you at each level of the pyramid, what would that look like? Jot notes in the diagram about your ideal use of IT at *each level*.



Overview

Overview of Technology Planning

What's the value in technology planning?

- Your thoughts on potential value or benefits of tech planning:

- Advice from others on benefits & lessons-learned of tech planning:

Technology plan can help you…

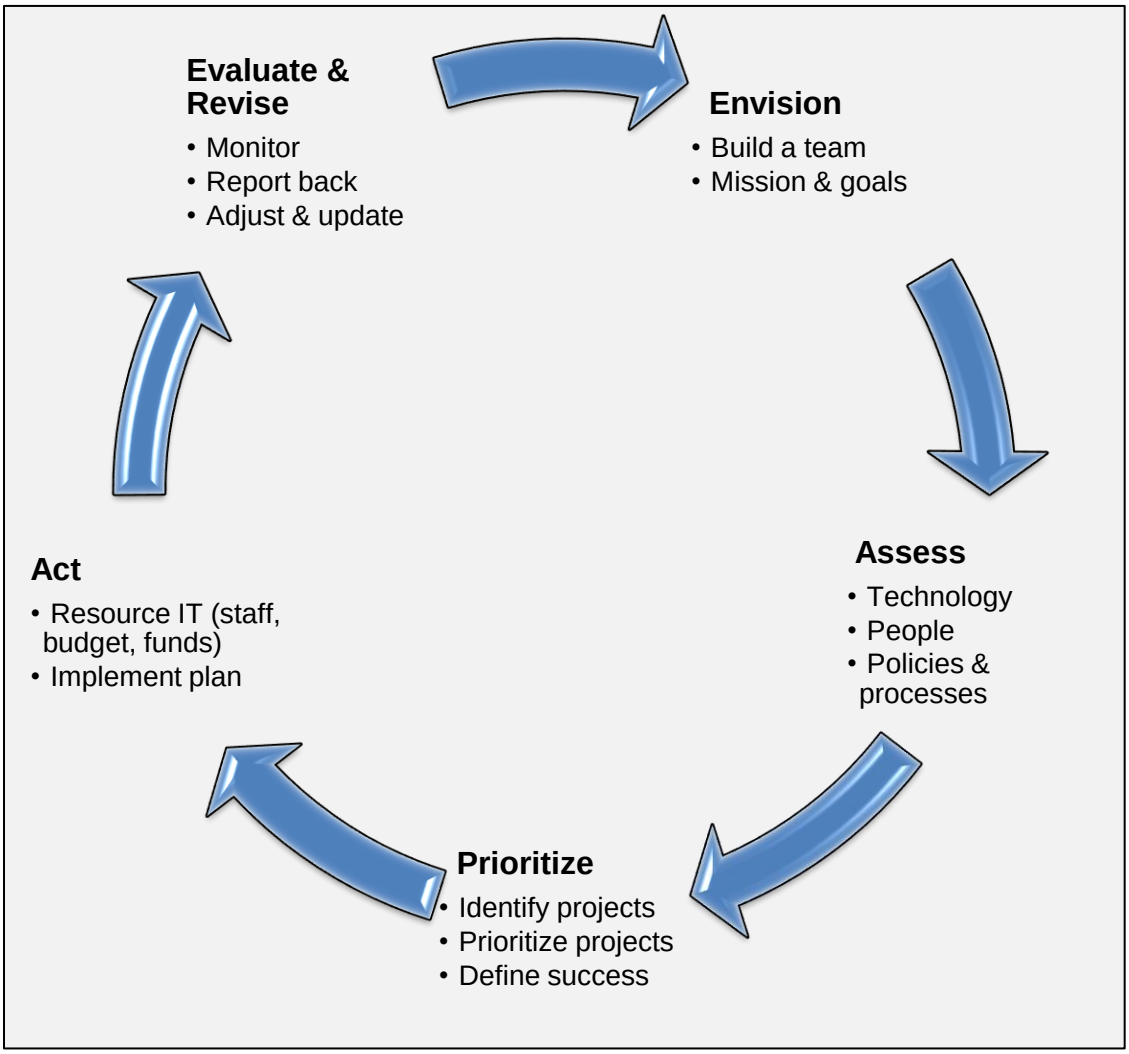
- Get out of "break/fix" mode and into "tech-supports-mission" mode
- Have a framework for decision-making and evaluating technology projects
- Help create more realistic budgets for technology projects, and the basis for doing cost-benefit analysis of technology projects
- More intentional & thoughtful resourcing/funding of technology
- Tech planning helps realize technology value and drive impact

A technology plan is…

- A detailed, written document that provides a roadmap to move your organization from its current use of technology to future use.
- A living strategic planning document that evolves with your organization.
- A by-product of the *process* of tech planning (process itself is equally important).
- A tool for budgeting and fundraising for mission-based technology projects.

Overview

Technology Planning Stages



Overview

Components of a technology plan

Your tech plan will include the following components, as outlined in the tech planning template provided. A more detailed explanation is given on each section in the template. Don't worry; some tech plans are as short as 15 pages despite all the components! Stay focused on your strategy; much of the detail will come later as you implement the plan.

My Tech Plan

- Executive Summary
- Introduction
  - The organization's mission
  - Organizational overview
  - Organization's key goals
- Evaluation Process
  - Involved Parties (who was involved in tech planning?)
  - Decision-making process
- Description of Technology Areas – Status, Resolution & Implementation
  - Infrastructure
  - Data management
  - Digital Communications
  - Training
  - Technical Support
- Summary List of Technology Projects
  - Bulleted list of technology projects with mission justification
- Implementation Plan & Timeline
  - Responsibilities of staff, consultants and vendors
  - Timeline
- Detailed, Three-Year Budget (***not limited to just the amount of this grant!)***

<u>Appendices</u>

- Infrastructure inventory
- Logic models for key projects
- RFPs/RFIs and/or quotes for implementation of large projects such as:
  - Computer workstations and servers + installation
  - Photocopier purchase
  - Web development
  - Cloud solution provider/cloud migration
  - Mission critical software adoption/integration

Overview

Notes on the Overview of Technology Planning section:

Overview

Notes on the Overview of Technology Planning section:

Section 1: Envision

Envision

Building Your Technology Team

A strategic tech planning team is comprised of staff and other key stakeholders of an organization who are empowered to create a strategic roadmap for IT. Your team should be representative of many different levels, programs, and roles. Building your team is one way to begin fostering the buy-in so crucial to the success of technology implementation later in the process.

What will the team do?

The team will meet regularly (perhaps weekly or twice a month) to lead the technology planning process and to write your technology plan. Team members will do research, writing and other tasks between meetings.

Team responsibilities include:

- Reflecting on and documenting the organization's current use of technology
- Interviewing stakeholders about their perceptions of and needs for technology
- Researching technology tools and vendors, and estimating costs for the budget
- Writing pieces of the technology plan and action plans for implementation

Tips for building your technology team:

- Start with getting buy-in (and perhaps representation) from your board.
- Build a team that includes voices from a broad spectrum of program and activity areas. Remember: tech team members need not be technical.
- Distribute information about the tech planning process and allow time for staff buy-in.
- Follow a pre-determined process. Set up a timeline and work from there.
- Help team members make room for tech planning on their already full plates by discussing its value to the organization and helping them re-prioritize other projects.

Envision

What are the key characteristics of a good team participant?

1. **Perspective/Representative:** They must know the organization both from the perspective of their contribution and their department's contribution to the mission, but also from the perspective of how their work fits into the larger 'whole' of the organization. They should be recognized by peers as a representative of their unit and role and should be trusted to speak on behalf of their colleagues.

2. **Attitude:** Think "team player." A good participant is one who is sincerely interested in the well-being of the organization and excited about improving it. They should be willing to contribute input, but they need not be technical.

3. **Effort:** A good participant will plan on making all meetings, doing the required research or reading between meetings, and participating openly in discussions.

4. **Stakeholder awareness:** A good participant will be able to think about how key stakeholders use or interact with your organization's technology, whether it is clients, donors, volunteers, or the community. Keeping these stakeholders or "users" at the center is critical to the success of any technology solution.

Perspectives to consider for your team:

Depending on the size and structure of your organization, your technology planning team may have as few as three people, or as many as seven. Bear in mind what an effective team size is in your organization, and use caution if recruiting more than six people due to the scheduling and decision-making challenges a group that size may experience.

- A senior leader and decision maker (i.e. the Executive Director/CEO)
- The IT lead/key IT staff person (if you don't have IT staff, this could be an IT-savvy board member or volunteer, perhaps)
- A program manager familiar with departments, programs, or key stakeholders
- A field or case worker who may (now or in the future) use IT in the field with clients
- A representative from a satellite office (if there is more than one location)

Envision

YOUR TURN: Plan your technology team

Don't feel like you need to include *everyone* on the planning team. You can use focus groups and surveys to gather input from staff as part of the technology planning process to ensure full representation. A lean team can help the organization sustain momentum in tech planning.

Use the space below to write who you'd like to invite to the technology planning team (if you haven't already done so):

My Tech Plan

Section 2.1 – Involved Parties…

Who	Part(s) of Agency Represented	Perspective They Bring

Tips for Recruiting Team & Sustaining Momentum

Consider whether recruiting a team will be a sensitive issue within your organization.

- Will folks be upset if they are not included? How will you mitigate that?

- Will those NOT on the team lack visibility and lose interest in tech planning? How can you mitigate that?

- Will those that you want to participate be hesitant to add something else to their already full plates? How can you help overcome this?

Envision

First Things First: Focus on Mission and Goals

My Tech Plan

Sections 1.1 & 1.3 – Mission & Goals…

One of the very first things you should do with your team is get grounded in your mission and key goals for the organization over the next one to three years. These are NOT technology goals specifically, but the larger organizational goals that were perhaps outlined in your strategic plan or discussed at the annual board meeting.

Use the examples below and the worksheet on the next page to help your team capture the mission and goals of the organization. *Only then* should you start thinking about how technology could help you reach your goals!

Use the worksheet on the next page to respond to the following questions:

- **What is your organization's mission?**

- **What are your organization's key goals over the next one to three years?**

  Examples:
  - *Grow size and diversity of our client population*
  - *Improve financial stability: Increase earned revenue and diversify funding*
  - *Enhance organization's visibility and establish as a leader in <mission>*
  - *Increase staff retention and provide more growth opportunities*

- **How can technology help you reach those goals?**

  Examples:
  - *Use client database to reduce time spent on manual processes and identify current service gaps; online services to grow reach*
  - *Optimize web site to sell/promote services, including mobile version of site*
  - *Use communications tools like a blog or social media to further engage supporters and promote our mission*
  - *Offer improved technology training, support, and remote access to staff*

Remember the matrix on page 4 of the four key reasons tech matters to nonprofits?
As you look at your goals and potential ways IT can help, which reasons emerge most for you? How could IT help your organization in one of those four ways?

YOUR TURN: Get Grounded in Mission & Goals

Refer to the examples on the previous page to help you think through your goals. *Only once you have your goals captured* should you think about how technology could help you achieve them.

Your mission:							
Key goals in the next 1-3 years to help you achieve that mission *(likely from strategic plan):*							
How can technology help you achieve the goals above? What are the opportunities?							

Envision

Notes on the Envision section:

Envision

Notes on the Envision section:

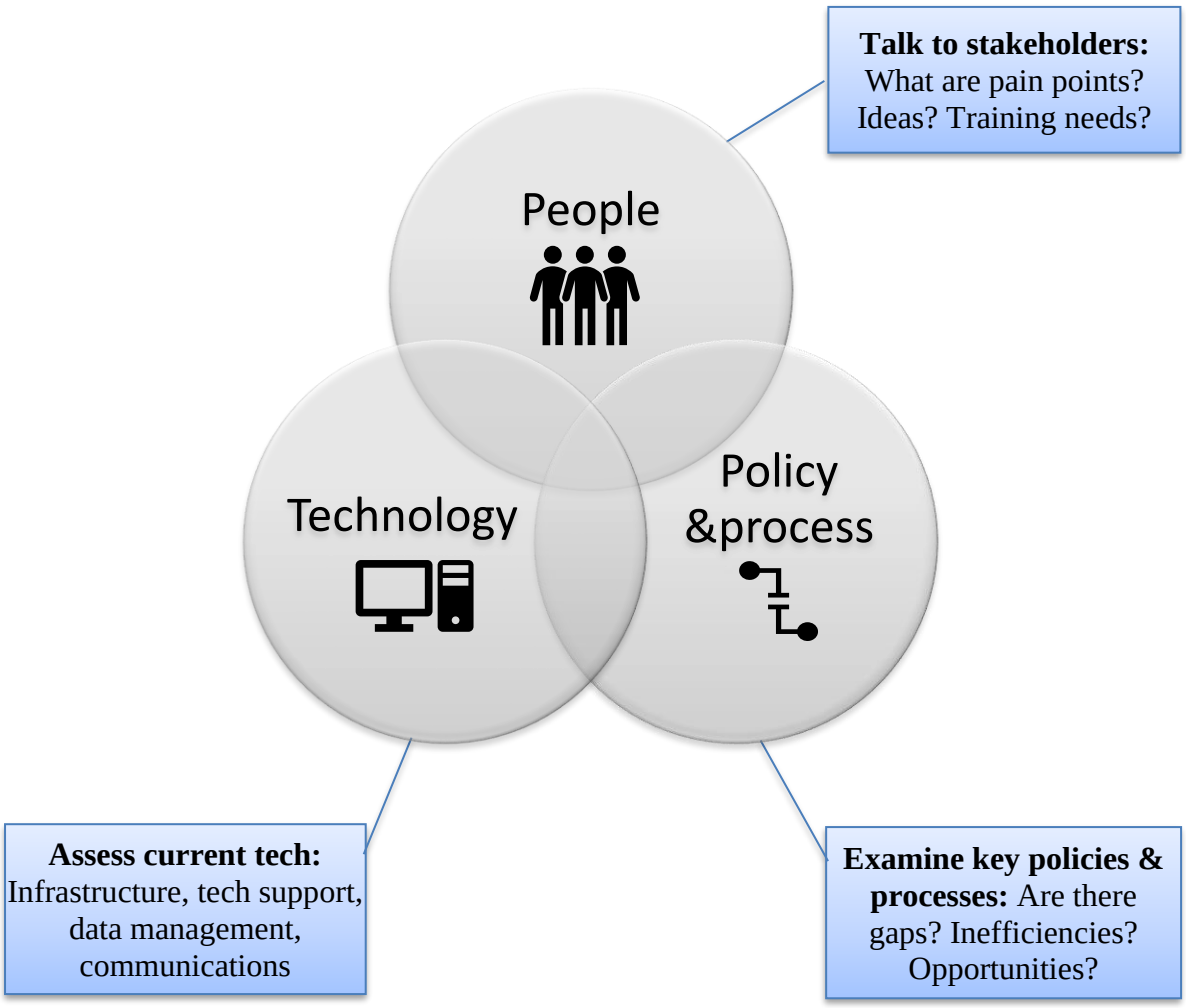
Section 2: Assess

Assess

Goals of Assessment

- Identify what people *already know* needs to be changed/addressed
- Conduct a review to reveal other items that need to be changed/addressed
- Reference best practices to identify recommended areas for change/improvement

What to Assess



Assess

Assess Technology

The Infrastructure (i.e. the "stuff", hardware & software)

My Tech Plan

Appendix A: Infrastructure Inventory…

- Build on and update any existing information or documentation.
- Document your inventory and update it regularly!
- Having an up-to-date inventory is a helpful part of technology planning, but more importantly, it's important for insurance and disaster recovery purposes!

Consider questions such as:

- How many computers do we have?
- What is the "make & model" of our hardware?
- What software is installed? What software are we actually *using*?
- How are we connected to the Internet?

Sample hardware inventory spreadsheet

Name (of computer or person)	Processor type & speed	Operating System	Purchase date (& warranty)	Hard drive size	RAM	Brand	Rating (1=great; 5=toss)

Assess

Refer to Stable & Secure Benchmarks

For each benchmark, review and discuss the questions below to help you identify opportunities for improvement that can be addressed in your tech plan. If these raise questions for you and/or if there are some question you do not understand, make a note of them to discuss with your planning consultant or another IT resource.

1. Computer Life Cycle
2. Operating Systems for Computers and Servers
3. Appropriate Network Environment
4. Reliable Internet Connection
5. Firewall Protection
6. Secure Wireless Networks
7. Backup & Recovery Process
8. Malware Protection
9. Secure Internet Browsing
10. Data Security
11. Documentation
12. Technology Support
13. Physical Security
14. Power and Surge Protection

1. Computer Life Cycle
Nothing lasts forever, and computers (and other electronic equipment) are no exception. It's important to keep track of which equipment is nearing the end of its usefulness, to manage a regular transition from the older equipment to newer, and to plan for these expenses in your budget.

Q1. Do you keep an equipment inventory up to date and do you have a plan for replacing computers as they become less useful?

Q2. Do you have any backup computers that could operate as a spare in case an "everyday" computer crashes? Does the backup have the software installed necessary to actually take the place of another in the office?

Q3. Do you have a regular expense in your budget to smooth out the costs of replacing computers, or do you plan for a "big bang" upgrade every several years?

Assess

2. Operating Systems for Computers and Servers
The operating system (OS) is the basic environment on which all your other applications run. Windows, OSX (Apple), and Linux are the most popular operating systems.

Q4. Do you have a strategy for approaching operating system decisions? For example, standardization on a single OS vs. allowing people to choose their own workstation and OS or bring their own devices (BYOD) to work? Does your strategy take into account the maintenance implications of your chosen approach?

Q5. Is there someone within your organization (or a vendor) who is responsible for making sure security patches are applied to your computers' OS and monitoring when patches will no longer be produced for each OS in use?

3. Appropriate Network Environment
Computer networks are an increasingly important part of any IT infrastructure, and it's important to have a reliable and fast network for efficient collaboration.

Q6. Do you have a network in place at your office(s)? If the network operates via cables in a building, are those cables in good condition?

Q7. Is there someone responsible (internally or a vendor) for designing the network and keeping it up and who you could call in an emergency to restore it? Are there frequent emergencies that interrupt the daily operations of your organization?

4. Reliable Internet Connection
Internet services, including email and various web applications, have become an integral part of daily work. Having a fast and reliable Internet connection can help to promote everything else in your office going more smoothly, especially if you already have or intend to move some of your critical software to cloud-based services.

Q8. Is your office network connected to the Internet, or are individual computers able to connect to the Internet directly via a hub or router? What is the speed of the connection? Do you find that you ever saturate *the connection (when everything slows down because everyone is doing heavy internet-based work at the same time)?*

Q9. Are there frequent Internet outages that interrupt the daily operations of your organization? How long does it typically take for service to be restored? Are there other options for Internet access at your location(s) if and when this happens?

Assess

5. Firewall Protection
It's very easy for ill-intended people to launch automated attacks over the Internet, so it's important to filter the raw Internet traffic from getting directly to the computers on your network. That's what a firewall does – protects your computers from being accessed via your network from the outside in.

Q10. Are computers on your internal network, or individual computers, connected to the Internet?

Q11. If yes, is there a device that sits in your network between the Internet and your computers to filter traffic coming into the network? This is usually called a firewall but can also be combined with a router (with the combo device typically just called a router).

Q12. Do you have any internal servers that are designed to be Internet-facing? Is there someone responsible (internally or a vendor) for the security of those systems?

6. Secure Wireless Networks
Wireless networks can be very convenient for untethering ourselves from a particular working space, but they must be properly maintained and can also present security risks.

Q13. Do you have a wireless network at your office? If yes, is there some level of security required for connecting to the network?

Q14. Is there someone responsible (either internally or a vendor) for monitoring the wireless network and working to bring it back up when it goes down?

Q15. Are there frequent wireless outages that interrupt your normal operations? How long do these outages usually last?

7. Backup and Recovery Process
Backups are easily overlooked until you need them (and then it's usually too late!). Make sure you have operational and technical processes in place to ensure your critical organizational files are copied to a secure location on a regular basis, and make sure you occasionally test your ability to recover from your backups.

Q16. Is there a process by which everyone's individual computers are backed-up, or a portion of them where people are instructed to keep important files, on a regular basis? Is the backup process automated or manual?

Assess

Q17. If you are maintaining any servers (or vendors are maintaining servers for you), are they backed up on a regular basis?

Q18. If you are using any web applications for core processes, do you take backups or full extracts of that data on a regular basis? For example, for a cloud-based CRM tool?

Q19. Are all of your back-ups in one physical location, or does your process ensure that some backups are in another location ("off-site," although it could really just be another one of your sites)?

Q19. Do you have a plan to make sure each of your backup and restore processes will work properly in an emergency (i.e. have you actually every tested the process to restore and recover data)? Do you run through your plan at least once a year?

8. Malware Protection

Some software is malicious; serving unwanted ads, stealing your data or processing power, or worse. Prevention is the best approach to staying malware-free, but it's also important to have a plan for when a computer becomes infected.

Q20. Do you have anti-virus software installed on all your computers? If not, do you have a good reason why it's not installed?

Q21. Are staff savvy enough not to click strange links in emails? Are they familiar with the basic ways that they can be fooled into infecting their own computer (phishing emails/scams, Trojan horse programs, infected media, unpatched OS, etc.) so they can be better able to avoid them?

Q22. When a computer is discovered to contain malware, do you have a process for resetting the computer and restoring the data files (but not the malware!) from backups?

9. Secure Internet Browsing

The internet is one common avenue for information to be stolen and for malware to be installed. It's important to understand the basics of Internet security to avoid making the organization vulnerable.

Q23. Are staff familiar with HTTPS, the secure version of HTTP which is used on sites that deal with online banking, health data, or other secure information? Do they know to check that a site connection is secure prior to entering any secure information?

Q24. If anti-virus software is installed, is it set-up to protect against malicious websites?

Assess

10. Data Security
Many organizations are increasingly paperless, and that has translated into an abundance of data. Some data may have protection requirements written into the law (medical data, payroll data, credit card data, etc.); it's important to know how to protect all your data with the appropriate level of security.

Q25. Do you keep any data that is particularly sensitive and perhaps regulated? If so, is there an appropriate infrastructure for securing that data in-transit and while "at rest"?

Q26. Is all secure data on all devices secured by a password? Do you have a strong password policy? Do staff know never to share their password with anyone*?*

11. Documentation
It's important to document your systems and processes for consistency and so that you can transition duties from one person to another if necessary. Documentation can also be an excellent way to look at whether your current processes can be improved or optimized, and for cross-training staff.

Q27. Are your core processes documented so that if a key staff person was no longer available to work, others would be able to keep things going by following the documentation?

Q28. Are your plans documented so that you can quickly execute them when necessary? For example, you might have plans for what to do if the internet goes down, or if a computer crashes, or if someone gets a computer virus, etc.

12. Technology Support
Good IT support can be provided internally or by a vendor; the most important thing is that they can promptly provide both proactive and reactive support and be a partner with the organization they are supporting.

Q29. Do you have an internal person or a team or a vendor that is primarily responsible for day-to-day tech support? Are technology crises frequent? When they happen, are they solved quickly? After they happen, is there a post-crisis analysis to put structural solutions in place to reduce the likelihood of future crises?

Assess

13. Physical Safety
One of the most important kinds of technology security is physical security. You can have all the protection software in the world on your server but if someone can just pop open a door and walk out with your server, that's a much bigger risk.

Q30. Are devices with secure or mission-critical data kept behind locked doors? Are there other elements of physical security in place, like an alarm company or security cameras, that would discourage a potential thief?

Q31. For paper files that contain secure or mission-critical information, are they kept in a locked room or in a locked file cabinet? Is there any redundancy or protection for those files in the event of a fire?

14. Power and Surge Protection
All computer devices need electricity to function, and there are accessories that can prevent too much power or too little from getting to them. These are especially important if you live in a place that experiences big storms that could cause surges in power.

Q32. Are all electronic devices plugged into surge protectors which are themselves plugged directly into the outlet? A surge protector will prevent a power surge from making it all the way to your device (and frying it).

Q33. Do you have Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) units connected to any particularly critical devices, computers, or servers? A UPS will provide steady power for an additional period of time in the event of a power outage. It probably won't be enough time to run your whole infrastructure while the power's out (unless it's only out for a few minutes), but it should give you enough time to shut things down in an orderly way and avoid data loss that can be associated with suddenly cutting the power.

Assess

Assess Beyond Infrastructure

- **Data Management:** Can you find (and use) the data and reports you need to offer/improve services, steward supporters, and make program decisions?

- **Digital Communications:** Is technology adequately supporting communications and donor engagement? How is social media used in support of mission?

- **On-premise vs. Cloud software:** How much cloud-based software are you already using, and is it time to consider moving some of your technology services and resources to the cloud? More on this below.

Cloud vs. On-Premise Software

The cloud has become a common part of our technology vocabulary lately. Read on to learn more about the cloud and what it may mean for your nonprofit.

- Nonprofits have used "cloud" solutions for years under the monikers Software-as-a-Service ("SaaS") or Application Service Provider ("ASP") solutions.
- While "cloud computing" can mean many things, at its core, it means software or other computing solutions delivered via the Internet as *services*, instead of you installing and running those solutions on site (or "on-premise") at your agency.
- In that way, "the cloud" is another way to refer to any SaaS or ASP solutions you may already be using at your organization (but it can be more than that!)
- Cloud has gotten more attention in recent years because organizations are now accessing more than just *software applications* in the cloud.
    - Nonprofits are using the cloud to *host servers* so they don't have to manage their own physical servers on premise (ex: email or file servers).
    - Instead, they can rent server space at someone else's datacenter, and have that company maintain the server, be responsible for its uptime, and more.

When it comes to budgeting, this presents an interesting opportunity: To shift from capital, up-front expenses for things like servers (and the security and maintenance needs that come with them), to more predictable, monthly, operating costs to "rent" servers and computing power via the Internet, or "cloud."

Assess

Cloud vs. Traditional "On-Premise" Model

Cloud	*On-Premise*
• Remote, data lives at 3rd party site; *they* own & run the servers, not you • Shift from capital to operating expenses, monthly fees • "Elastic" – grows or shrinks easily with your organization • They update for security, versions, etc.	• You own & manage data, apps, servers on-site at your organization • Upfront, capital costs to procure equipment like servers every few years • Set amount of capacity based on server; if you need more, may need to buy another server • You update for security, versions, etc.

Industry Debate

There is some debate about the security and reliability of the cloud, data privacy, potential costs, and more, but many nonprofits have decided that the benefits outweigh the risks. To learn more about the discussion about cloud computing in the nonprofit sector, check out the "Resources to Learn More" links.

Cloud computing could change the way you think about owning, managing and maintaining IT. As with all technology solutions, it's important to do a TCO analysis and to consider factors *besides* cost before making a decision. Moving to the cloud may not necessarily reduce your total costs, but it could change how you manage technology purchases, support, maintenance, and upgrades, and what your IT staff focus on.

Resources to Learn More: Cloud Computing for Nonprofits

- Idealware's cloud resources: www.idealware.org/?s=cloud
- TechSoup Cloud page: www.techsoup.org/cloud-computing
- Tech Impact's cloud resources : https://techimpact.org/our-resources/ (select the category « cloud services »

Assess

Assess People

Is IT responsibility in the right places?

Consider your IT staffing mix as part of your assessment…

- Is IT responsibility in the right places? Are you satisfied with your IT support and staffing mix? Do you have access to support/services you need when you need them?
- Consider the balance of what you staff in-house and what is best outsourced.

Assess IT training needs and perceptions of all staff:

- Use the sample survey on the next pages as a guide. Adapt to be relevant to your organization and staff as needed. You can use an online survey tool if preferred.
- Consider what the IT "core competencies" are for your agency and add questions related to them if needed. Use the survey to determine staff comfort with these competencies and to identify potential training needs.
- Use "practical" observation sessions to observe if staff have the core competencies they need to do their work

Collect stakeholder perceptions of and attitudes toward IT use at the organization:

- Determine other stakeholder groups besides staff (ex: key donors, board, clients)
- Use the sample perceptions surveys on the next pages as guides. Adapt as needed for different stakeholder groups.
- As you interpret the surveys, look for themes as well as diversity in the responses.
- Try to identify technology limitations, requests or requirements.
- The results of these surveys should help inform your technology projects.

Who are your key stakeholders?

How will you ask them for input on the agency's use of technology?

Assess

Sample Staff Technology Perceptions & IT Training Survey

1. What are the primary goals or tasks you do in your job?

2. What access do you currently have to IT to help with the above? (Ex: a laptop, access to a printer, the Internet, shared files, key software packages, etc.?)

3. Is this access above sufficient to accomplish your everyday tasks and the primary goals mentioned in your answer to question 1? If no, please explain.

4. Are there particular skills that would help you to accomplish the tasks and goals above, particularly as it relates to the technology, software and/or applications you use on a regular basis? What IT skills training would be most helpful?

5. What is your preferred method of learning technology skills? (ex: self-teach, online class/webinar, attend training, coaching, book, etc.)

6. Are there programs, tools or technologies not currently used in your office that would make you more efficient in your job? (Please list technologies you imagine being helpful even if you're not sure they exist or what they're called).

7. What processes or parts of your job/function run very smoothly and work well?

8. What processes have bottlenecks or feel cumbersome and inefficient? How could they be made more efficient?

9. Are there barriers, constraints, or pain points you face in your day-to-day tasks that prevent you from doing your best work? (they don't have to be IT-related)

10. What data, information and reports do you need to access to do your job? Do you have sufficient access to it today? Please explain.

11. Anything else you want us to keep in mind/know as we take on strategic technology planning for the organization?

Assess

Sample Stakeholder Technology Perceptions Survey: For Supporters

We are undertaking a strategic technology planning effort and would appreciate your candid input on the following questions:

1. What information, data or updates would you like to have access to as a supporter of our organization?

2. How do you get that information from our organization today? Is your access to this information adequate? Could it be improved? Please explain.

3. Are there bottlenecks or pain points you've faced in any of your interactions with our organization, either online or offline?

4. What do you think our organization does really well?

5. What opportunities do you see for our organization to improve?

6. Do you have suggestions for particular technology initiatives we may want to explore during this technology planning effort that would improve our organization's ability to serve you or our community?

What questions will you add/adjust to get stakeholder input and gather perceptions?

Assess

Assess Policies & Processes

Look at organizational policies:

- Do you have the necessary policies needed to protect your organization? Ex: appropriate use policies, disaster policies, social media policies, etc.
- Is staff *aware* of the policies? Do they know how they are able to and allowed to use technology at work? What to do in the event of a disaster?
- See policy resources at the end of this section to help you consider/create needed policies.
- Incorporate IT policy review/training into staff orientation and training.

Look at organizational processes:

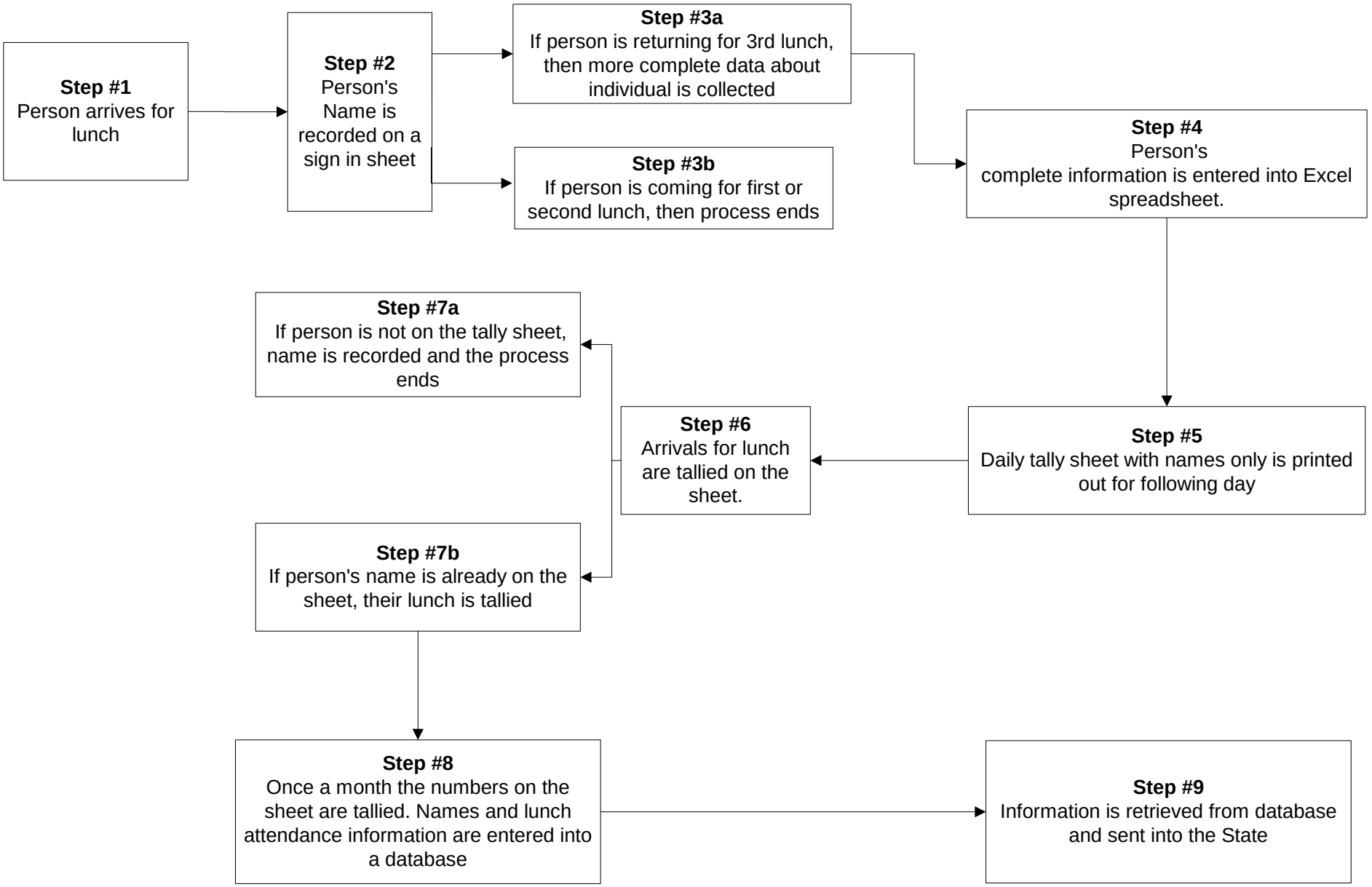
Process mapping is a technique to help you document existing processes at your organization. It can be helpful simply to document information or time-intensive processes, or it can also help you find inefficiencies, bottlenecks, or duplications so you can address them. It's key to fix these inefficiencies "on paper" and in practice *first* to ensure they work before you also fix them or build them into technology solutions. Don't automate broken processes or workflows!

To use process mapping at your own organization, follow the steps below:

- Identify key processes that drive the business/work of your organization. Mapping is particularly useful for information- or time-intensive processes. Do you have processes that seem unwieldy, opaque/mysterious, broken, and/or duplicative? (Ex: reporting to certain funders, intake of new clients, thanking donors, etc.)
  - You may also consider process mapping before you introduce technology into an area or process that has never been automated before. Map how the process works manually, then determine how it could be optimized before automating.
- Map the as-is process and determine if there are inefficiencies in the process (either offline or online). Then map out what the ideal process would look like without these inefficiencies.
- THEN look for opportunities for technology to automate the process, improve operations, efficiency, or service delivery – where can value be added?

Sample Process Mapping Example

Sample process map courtesy of NPower (www.npower.org)



Assess

YOUR TURN: Identify Key Processes to Map & Analyze

1. **What processes are the main "business drivers" at your organization?**
   These processes are likely done frequently and/or are critical to the ability of your organization to operate or deliver on its mission. *Examples: client intake, payroll, billing, processing donations and thanking donors, training volunteers, or reporting to state agencies or other funders.*

   List your main processes here:

2. **Identify if these processes are unwieldy, duplicative, or inefficient.**
   Do they involve a lot of staff or take an undue amount of time to complete? If you suspect there are inefficiencies in a process, it might be wise to map it out.

   These key processes seem unwieldy:

3. **Map the process "as-is" today.**
   The first step in process mapping is to map the process exactly as it is today. How does it work from the first step to the final step? Who is involved? How does a client's/volunteer's/donor's identity and information move through your org? Discuss the steps with those involved and capture it like the sample on the previous page.

4. **Analyze the "as-is" process for inefficiencies and fix them "off line"**
   If you find places where the information or process is getting "stuck", being duplicated, or is otherwise inefficient, discuss how you could fix the inefficiencies. It is best to consider how to fix them off-line first (and map it!) to see if it can work *before* you spend time or money to adjust an automated or technology-based process.

   If the "offline" fix seems to work and there is opportunity to mirror the fix in related technology systems (or to automate the process for the first time), THEN build or adjust the automated or tech-enabled version of the process.

YOUR TURN: Map a Key Process at your Organization

Take processes identified in Step #2 on the previous page and use the space below to draft out a "map" of the as-is process. Start by creating a box for the first step in the process, which is often the first time you hear from or interact with a potential client, volunteer, or donor. Then work your way through the process, capturing how that stakeholder's identity and information moves through your organization. Document each step. Which staff are involved? What steps do they take? Refer to the process map example for inspiration.

Our Process Map for _____:

Assess

"At-A-Glance" Executive Assessment

It's well worth the effort to do a full-blown assessment of your current IT when conducting a comprehensive tech planning initiative. However, this level of assessment can be difficult to execute on an ongoing basis, and is probably only necessary every two or three years (unless there have been big changes in the organization's use of IT).

Between major assessments, consider the following approach to a quick, "At-A-Glance" IT assessment that your leadership or tech team can do to ensure IT is aligned with mission and working effectively, and whether more comprehensive assessment is needed.

Twice a year, ask:

- Is our technology…
  - Stable and secure?
  - Meeting organization and client needs?
  - Causing excessive frustration or complaint?
- What are we doing to advance our mission through technology?
- Is technology responsibility in the right places?
- Are there trends I should pay attention to? What are private sector businesses adopting?

Other Tips for Keeping a Finger on Your Organization's IT Pulse:

- Create a technology sounding board (within the org, with other orgs, etc.)
- Set up a coffee date to talk tech strategy and management with a peer ED
- Ask a tech-savvy board member or volunteer about new technology trends or the latest "buzz", and if they see it being applicable in nonprofit contexts

Resources to Help You "Know What You Don't Know":

- Sign up for TechSoup's "By the Cup" enewsletter – techsoup.org
- Review "Consumer Reports" on Idealware – idealware.org
- Check out blogs and webinars from NTEN (nten.org), TechSoup, TechImpact (techimpact.org), Community IT Innovators (communityIT.com), or Idealware

Assess

Resources and Tools to Help with Assessment

To Assess Technology:

- Inventory computers
    - Use a tool like Belarc Advisor if you are trying to do it on your own and you only have a handful of computers: belarc.com/free_download.html
    - If you have an IT staffer and quite a few (networked) computers, they may want to try the free, ad-supported Spiceworks inventory tool: spiceworks.com/free-pc-network-inventory-software/
- To assess how "well" you are integrating and using technology, use the TechSoup Canada IT assessment and review the Stable & Secure Benchmarks in this section
- Refer to benchmark studies of the field from NTEN (www.nten.org/research)

To Assess People:

- Use online survey tools to help administer perceptions surveys (many options exist like surveymonkey.com or Google forms)

To Assess Policies & Processes:

- Idealware's Nonprofit Technology Policy Workbook: idealware.org/reports/nptechpolicyworkbook
- Idealware's Nonprofit Social Media Policy Workbook: idealware.org/reports/nonprofit-social-media-policy-workbook/

Assess

Notes on the Assess section:

Assess

Notes on the Assess section:

Section 3: Prioritize

Prioritize

Defining Technology Projects

Technology projects, by nature, need not be overly technical or complex. In considering projects for your organization, keep in mind that while some projects *may* be complex, some simple projects can also help you make big strides forward with technology.

- **Examples of small, simpler projects**: Create a file naming convention and/or folder structure for your shared files; establish standard email signatures for all employees; increase your Internet bandwidth; complete an inventory of your hardware and software; send an employee to technology training; establish safe computing policies and train your staff on them.

- **Examples of larger, more complex projects**: Redesign your organization's web site; consolidate databases; upgrade to a new line-of-business software application; migrate existing software, data or files to the cloud.

Where Do Technology Project Ideas Come From?

The technology projects you consider in your planning process should be:

- Grounded in strategic organizational goals (to help realize said goals)
- Discovered via assessment results and input from surveys, stakeholders, etc.
- Informed by conversations with your consultant and/or other organizations

Prioritize

YOUR TURN: Potential Technology Projects

Use this space to capture technology projects you may address in your plan, informed by goals and assessment results. Start by writing down the key goals you brainstormed at the beginning of class and try to link tech projects to those goals. You may have multiple projects in the right-hand column linked to one goal in the left-hand column.

Key Organizational Goals	Technology Projects that Support/Align

Prioritize

Prioritize Your Potential Technology Projects

Once you have several projects in mind, it's time to prioritize them. Prioritization is critical because some projects will need to be *sequenced* in your plan so that you aren't taking on too many big initiatives at once. Prioritization will also help you weed out non-essential projects or projects you simply can't afford to take on due to time or financial constraints.

My Tech Plan

Section 4.1 – List of tech projects…

Questions to help you prioritize quickly

- Housekeeping: Are there infrastructure needs that must be taken care of first? Are there any potential "single points of failure" that need to be addressed immediately?
- Are there "low hanging fruit" initiatives that will bring quick success/momentum?
- Are their projects that will be big wins for your staff?
- Are there projects that will result in immediate, positive program outcomes? Are their projects you should eliminate because their outcomes don't justify the investment of time and dollars? The Logic Model will help surface this as well.
- Do some projects need funding before you can pursue them? Do some have to be done in a certain sequence to ensure they are successful?

Use the Prioritization Framework

While the questions above are a helpful starting place, the following framework will help determine how you may stage/sequence projects, and which might be tabled for the time-being. Make your best, informed guesses on things like cost, time, and complexity for your first pass through the matrix if you aren't sure. Make note of those projects that you have lots of questions around so you can do further research or discuss with your consultant to refine your sense of their relative priority.

Prioritize

Technology Project Prioritization Framework

Adapted from TechBridge prioritization model (www.techbridge.org)

High

Implementation Complexity:
- Degree of specialization
- # of processes, dependencies
- Cost & timeline

Low

Leave for Now	Big Hits
• Developed/implemented in 12-18+ months • High Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) relative to project outcomes/impact • Not directly connected to program impacts or strategic goals • Examples: Some database enhancements; some complex networking solutions	• Developed/implemented in 12-18+ months • TCO commensurate with project impact; significant impact • Core process or program affected • Helps meet strategic goals • Significantly reduces cost/risk or increases revenue • Significantly automates manual processes • Significantly enhances organization's internal/external communications
Nice to Have	**Quick Wins**
• Developed/implemented in 1-12 months • Reasonable TCO • Not directly connected to program impacts or strategic goals • Examples: some web site enhancements, some hardware/ software upgrades or purchases, some phone system solutions, "Pie in the Sky" software customizations	• Developed/implemented in 1-12 months • Reasonable TCO • Manual processes affected • Staff morale improved • Enhances organization's communications • Easy to implement / "Off the shelf" applications

Low → High

Potential Benefits:
- Strategic value/program impact
- Dollars saved/earned
- Increased services offered / clients served
- Risk decreased

Prioritize

YOUR TURN: Technology Project Prioritization

Referring back to your list of Potential Technology Projects, use the framework below to prioritize how those projects may shape up in your tech plan. Note where you are missing key information/details to help you plot projects accordingly, and do further research or discuss with your consultant to try to ensure your assumptions are realistic.

Leave for Now	**Big Hits**
Nice to Have	**Quick Wins**

High

Implementation Complexity:
- Degree of specialization
- # of processes, dependencies
- Cost & timeline

Low

Low ——— **Potential Benefits:** ———→ High
- Strategic value/program impact
- Dollars saved/earned
- Increased services offered / clients served
- Risk decreased

Refer to the Total Cost of Ownership and Logic Model sections of this handbook for more valuable information that can assist you with project prioritization.

Prioritize

Logic Model Process

It can be challenging to prioritize your IT projects – especially the larger, more costly ones – if you don't understand the impact and outcomes you can expect from them. Putting some of your key "big investment" IT projects through the Logic Model can help you articulate the expected outcomes so you can weigh if a project is really worth the investment. If so, the logic model will also help you consider what success will look like once the project is implemented, and create some metrics to help you track and measure if the project helped you achieve what you hoped.

My Tech Plan

Appendix B: Logic Model for key…

Objective	Activities	Resources	Outcomes	Indicators

1) Define a clear objective for the technology project

This should be a **one-sentence** statement that captures what basic goal you have for a project. Describe what you are doing and why. It's as if you are stating a theory about what your project will accomplish, which you'll prove later in the process. For example:

- Our updated, mobile-friendly web site will provide our clients and the public with the information they need in a more accessible way so they can still easily engage with and learn about our organization.
- The migration to cloud productivity software will enable staff to more easily collaborate, share files, schedule meetings, and work remotely to improve productivity.
- The new tablet PCs will enable case workers to easily take notes during client visits and reduce their data entry backlog, so they can serve more clients in need.
- The new client tracking software will enable us to target our services more effectively and produce timely reports to stakeholders about our activities

Note that these statements make general assumptions about the direction a project will take and why, but do not specify detailed outcomes or the measures you will use to evaluate your progress in reaching those outcomes. Don't list all your expected goals or outcomes for a project in your objective statement; you can save those for later.

Prioritize

2) List all the activities you will need to complete to bring this initiative to life

Activities are the tasks and strategies staff or volunteers will need to do to implement the project. Listing tasks in detail will help you understand how complex a project is, the resources you will need to implement it, and will give you a head start on an action plan should you decide to move forward with the project.

- After you brainstorm the list, put the activities onto the Logic Model form in a sequence that makes sense.
- In some cases, the activity listed will be self-explanatory and in other cases the people responsible for it will have to develop a deeper list of things to do to complete the task. This is something that the team should not do at this point. Either delegate this out to a subgroup or reconvene once you have completed all the columns in your logic model.

3) Describe all the resources you will need to implement this initiative.

Often referred to as project *inputs*, the resources are what this program will need to operate well. When brainstorming what resources you'll need, consider these examples:

- Time (staff, volunteer)
- Supplies
- Physical Space/Facilities
- Attitude
- Human Resources
- Equipment
- Policies
- Money
- Information
- Knowledge/access to expertise or support

Prioritize

4) Describe the expected or desired outcomes for the project

Outcomes are benefits or changes that occur in an individual, in the community, or at an organization as a result of your technology project. They seek to answer the question, "So what?" or "What difference is it making/will it make?". Outcomes are often phrased as a change statement with words such as *increased, decreased*, *enhanced*, or *improved*.

Questions you can use to help you frame your thinking are:

- What will change as a result of your efforts? *So what?*
- What knowledge/opportunities will people have? *So what?*
- What will be the ultimate community impacts of the initiative? *So WHAT?*

For example, outcomes from development of a client relationship database might be:

- Staff collaborates more closely on client services and work in silos less often
- Clients receive more timely and effective services from various case workers

Some indicators that are evidence of this new collaboration include:

- Staff review case notes from each other's visits with a client before seeing client
- Average wait time for a client decreases by XX%
- Cross-referrals for services within the organization increase by XX%.

Remember that outcomes are actual changes in the way things happen and NOT simply the quantifiable or anecdotal measures that are outputs of the activities.

When looking at the outcomes you list, be sure to ask:

Is this an actual change, or just an indicator or evidence that change has occurred?

Prioritize

5) What are the concrete indicators (metrics, evidence) of the initiative?
Indicators are often the direct products of activities and are usually are measured in terms of the volume of work accomplished – such as numbers of clicks on a web page, new members joined, or documents collaborated on. They are often service or product units.

For example, indicators of a new website you develop may be:

- $13,000 more than last year in donations from fund drive from existing donor base
- 455 new members signed up via the mobile site
- 21% decrease in incoming calls requesting basic program materials

Indicators usually answer the questions: *How many? How often? Over what duration?* They are the evidence you look for to prove that expected outcomes are being realized.

Logic Model Sample: Web Site Upgrade/Mobile-Friendly Web Site

OBJECTIVES What basic goal(s) have you set for this technology project?	ACTIVITIES What do you do to implement this project?	RESOURCES What will you need to implement the project?	OUTCOMES What will success look like? What will change as a result of your efforts?	INDICATORS What are some concrete (measurable) 'results' of the project?
Web Site Upgrade To develop an updated and enhanced web site with a mobile-friendly version that keeps us connected with current and potential supporters.	▪ Determine key goals and audiences for re-design ▪ Meet with program heads to discuss their web site needs ▪ Research web vendors with mobile-friendly templates/features ▪ Determine what content "goes mobile" ▪ Determine hardware, software, and security needs ▪ Create RFP for project; review bids ▪ Train staff how to use the new content management system to keep content fresh ▪ Create plan/calendar for fresh content ▪ Launch new site	Time: ▪ For staff input on web content for mobile ▪ For staff (re-) writing ▪ To consult w/ designers & developers Money: ▪ For re-design/ customization ▪ For monthly subscription fees Hardware/software: ▪ Subscription to CMS ▪ E-communications tool (if not integrated in CMS) Staff Training: ▪ To use CMS ▪ To use enewsletter tool Service/Contracts: ▪ Web site hosting	Immediate: ▪ Improved communication with stakeholders who can actually read our site on their phones ▪ More current and useful web site content with more engagement opportunities Intermediate: ▪ Ease of donation for donors ▪ More convenient engagement for supporters & event attendees Longer-term: ▪ Engage younger audience; diversify support base ▪ Ensure those w/o home computers can learn about our services ▪ More community awareness about our programs & services ▪ Improved long-term sustainability ▪ Organization seen as a thought leader for issue area	▪ Mobile-friendly version of web site & enewsletter *exists*; # of visitors via mobile ▪ # of new articles and updated posts written for the site; social integration exists ▪ Decreased drop-off of mobile visitors to web site by XX% ▪ Higher placement in search results by X factor ▪ # of donations received, event registrations, etc. via mobile ▪ # of social shares/engagements driven from new site ▪ % increase in subscribers/ members under age XX ▪ % increase in service enrollment via mobile ▪ # of new members or clients in our programs/services ▪ # of Conference speaker requests

Logic Model Sample: Migrate Email & File Server to the Cloud

OBJECTIVES What basic goal(s) have you set for this technology project?	ACTIVITIES What do you do to implement this project?	RESOURCES What will you need to implement the project?	OUTCOMES What will success look like? What will change as a result of your efforts?	INDICATORS What are some concrete (measurable) 'results' of the project?
Migrate email/file server to the cloud Move our email & file servers to the cloud so we have centralized email, shared files, remote access capability for staff and more reliable file/data back-ups (and can stop managing server on-premises).	▪ Work with tech consultant to review options; ask other nonprofits about their experience ▪ Obtain quotes & timelines for data migration ▪ Determine which cloud email/file share provider to use ▪ Work with vendor to configure system; plan for data migration & training ▪ Contract for IT support and ongoing maintenance ▪ Train staff on how to use new system ▪ Develop file structure and file management conventions for staff	▪ Time to research different options & make a decision ▪ Access to other nonprofits or tech experts to get input ▪ Upgraded internet bandwidth to accommodate cloud traffic ▪ Money to pay for up-front costs (data migration) & ongoing subscription fees ▪ Staff training on new environment (including IT administrator) ▪ Tech support and maintenance contracts ▪ Acceptable use policy covering remote access	Immediate: ▪ Staff work more efficiently ▪ Easier to share files ▪ Easier to see calendars & schedule meetings Intermediate: ▪ More secure data and files ▪ Staff collaboration is improved Longer-term: ▪ Improved staff morale ▪ Cost savings ▪ Staff able to serve more clients in a week due to time saved through remote access ▪ Able to take on other mission focused tech solutions	▪ # of hours saved because staff use remote access instead of driving back to the office ▪ System downtime decreased by X% ▪ % of staff who regularly save files to cloud server vs. desktop ▪ # of hours saved in meeting scheduling; decrease in double-booking of conference rooms ▪ Centralized, cloud-based data back-up exists; reduced risk ▪ XX% of staff share & edit files in cloud server, reducing version control issues ▪ Fewer staff complaints ▪ Less $ spent on emergency tech support and downtime ▪ Average weekly # of clients served increases ▪ Take on new IT project now that infrastructure is stable

Logic Model Sample: Client Tracking Database

OBJECTIVES What basic goal(s) have you set for this technology project?	ACTIVITIES What do you do to implement this project?	RESOURCES What will you need to implement the project?	OUTCOMES What will success look like? What will change as a result of your efforts?	INDICATORS What are some concrete (measurable) 'results' of the project?
Install & Use Client Tracking Database To install and begin using a client tracking database so we have faster access to more accurate data about our clients.	▪ Meet with staff to assess existing data and where it lives ▪ Meet with project team to determine requirements for new database ▪ Determine what reports we need for funders, board, others ▪ Research and compare possible tools/vendors ▪ Meet w/ top 2-3 vendors ▪ Work with vendor to purchase, install, configure and train staff on new software ▪ Migrate all existing data to new database ▪ Develop data entry / management protocols and train staff	▪ Staff time and input ▪ Tech expert or volunteer to help us compare systems ▪ Money for upfront costs and ongoing monthly costs ▪ Money for data migration project ▪ Staff training on data management principles and on new software ▪ Time or volunteer to do data clean-up & prep for migration ▪ Contracts for tech support and maintenance	Immediate: ▪ Staff work more efficiently & free up time for service delivery ▪ Uniform data collection ▪ Easier to share information about clients across programs ▪ More secure client data and files Intermediate: ▪ Better tracking and reporting capabilities ▪ More efficient and professional communications to stakeholders (annual report, grant reports, etc.) ▪ More accurate data due to reduction in duplicate data entry and disparate data worksheets Longer-term: ▪ Improved service delivery protocols, systems, and processes ▪ Happier/better-served clients ▪ Increased revenue due to ability to better report on, target, and sell services	▪ # of disparate data sources decreases ▪ # of staff who can look up client data increases ▪ Permissions are set on new database for entering and viewing client data ▪ Client data is backed up regularly/automatically ▪ # of saved/ "canned" data reports available for use ▪ Decreased # of duplicate data entries ▪ Reduced # of hours spent preparing stakeholder reports ▪ # of clients using >1 service or participating in >1 program ▪ # of cross-program referrals ▪ Avg score on client satisfaction surveys increases by X% ▪ % increase in program/service revenue ▪ Able to develop new "targeted" program or service

My Tech Plan
Appendix B:
Logic Model

YOUR TURN: Create a Logic Model for a Key Project

OBJECTIVES What basic goal(s) have you set for this technology project?	ACTIVITIES What will you do to implement this project?	RESOURCES What will you need to implement the project?	OUTCOMES What will success look like? What will change as a result of your efforts?	INDICATORS What are some concrete (measurable) 'results' of the project?
			Immediate: Intermediate: Longer-term:	

Prioritize

Benefits and Uses of the Logic Model

- Helps you determine if a project's outcomes are worth the effort/costs
- Prepares you to communicate project success in measurable terms to funders and leaders
- Helps relate operational tech projects back to programmatic and/or community outcomes
- Helps you think through implementation details and needed resources to take on a project
- Will help inform RFPs and features/functionality for significant technology investments
- Thinking through the evaluation metrics for a project's success at the front-end will help you know what to collect, monitor and analyze so that you can demonstrate success later

Practical use of the logic model: Compelling Technology Case Statements

No focus on community outcomes:
"Our new database will make our staff more efficient."

Some focus on community outcomes:
"Our new database will make it possible for our staff to better gather and manage data about our clients, so we can better serve them."

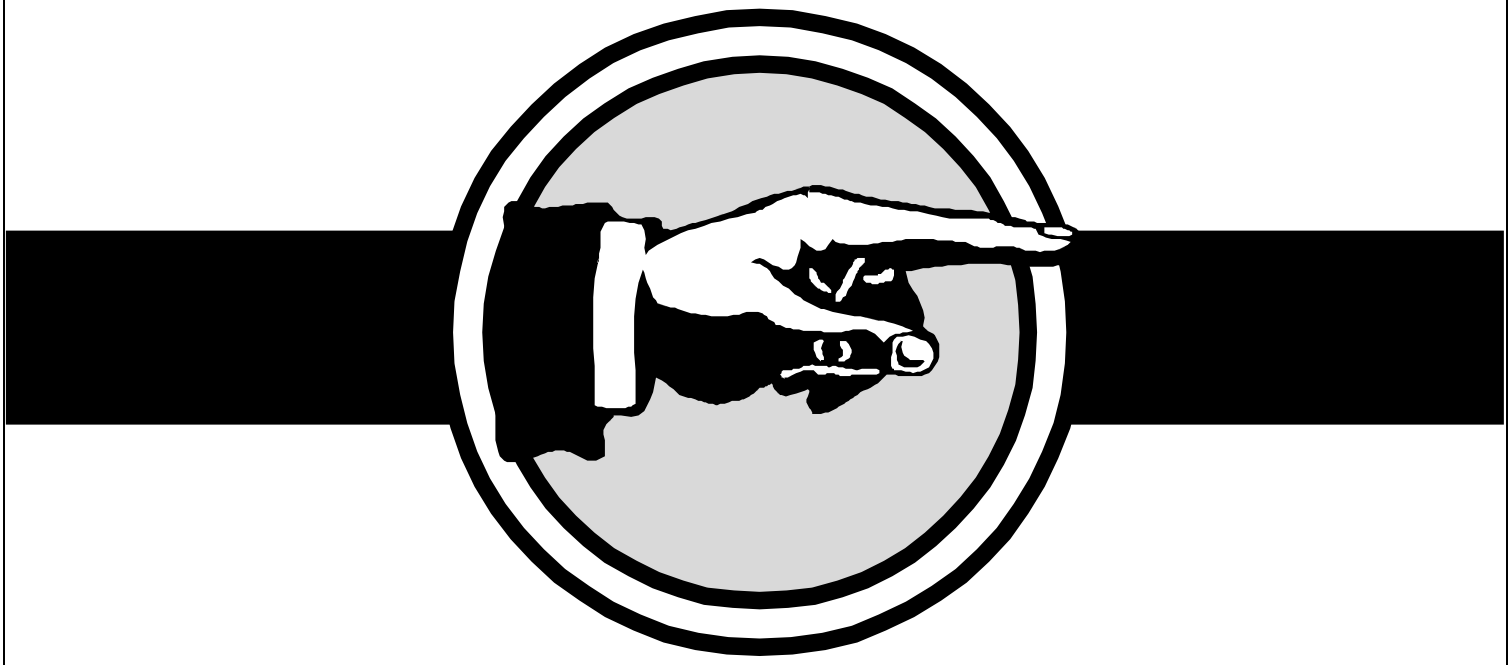
Outcomes-first, tech-second thinking:
"To best serve our clients with the care and services they need, when they need them, we need visibility into their past interactions with us, their current use of services across the agency, and to into their needs and progress. When staff can easily access and share this key information, they can provide more comprehensive, timelier, and higher quality services. This builds greater trust with clients and leads to improved outcomes. To augment our personal contact and knowledge of our clients, a new database will empower us to see and analyze real-time client data. This will improve individual service delivery and help us understand and predict important trends in our service delivery approaches."

Adapted from *Writing a Winning Grant Proposal* by Marc Osten, Susan Myrland, Katrin Verclas.

Prioritize

Notes on the Prioritize section:

Section 4: Act



Act

Resourcing Technology

Staffing IT

You've aligned with goals. You've reviewed the current state. You've prioritized. And now you have some great, mission-based technology projects to take on, as well as the substantial task of sustaining effective use of technology at your organization for the long-term. In short, *you need help*! You need expertise to help you implement the projects outlined in your tech plan, some vendors to provide the solutions you need, and a plan to help you sustain and maintain effective technology going forward.

My Tech Plan

Section 5.1 – Staff, consultants & ve…

- When we talk about "staffing" IT, we are not only talking about in-house IT staff.
- Most nonprofits won't have the ability, capacity or resources to staff all IT needs/functions in-house (nor would it make sense).
- You will probably use a mix of staff, vendors, and consultants – *maybe* even some interns/volunteers (though proceed with caution here!)
- It is important to understand when to work with these different types of subject matter experts, and how to manage the relationships even if you are not technical.

First things first: Consider the reality of in-house vs. outsourced staffing

Inspired by and adapted from the Rasmuson Foundation. Learn more: www.rasmuson.org

Given all the technology you likely use and the expertise and support it demands, you will need to consider the balance of in-house vs. outsourced IT support and staffing.

Technology used:		*Expertise/support needed:*
Infrastructure – Servers, computers, networks, connectivity, data projectors, etc.	⇨	Networking consultant, project manager, IT support & maintenance
Software – Productivity applications (ex: email, OS & Office), line of business applications like fundraising, financials, or client management	⇨	Helpdesk/desktop support, line of business software experts, business & process strategist, database admin, data analyst, software developer (for custom features/reports), etc.
Communications – Web site, blog, ecommerce, enewsletters, social media, etc.	⇨	Web developer, ecommerce expert, database administrator, content manager, social media lead

- Given the vast number of technologies in use at your organization and the diverse skill set needed to maintain them, it would be difficult and costly to hire for all of these skills and functions in-house.
- As you think about how to meet technology-expertise needs (staff, vendors, or consultants), consider which roles make most sense to staff in-house – what skills and expertise would you like to keep within your walls? What can easily be staffed with non-permanent, external resources?

For those roles or functions that are least specific to your mission or least able to combine with other key functions your organization needs, you may consider out-sourcing and setting up a contract for a predictable, monthly support instead of paying for support on an as-needed basis or trying to hire staff to handle it all.

The Various Roles of Technology Subject Matter Experts

Vendors

Vendors will typically provide the IT solutions you've identified in your plan, such as donor databases, CRMs, CMSs, and other software packages. Their solutions may be cloud based or installed on-premise. Many vendors do more than sell their product – they help install it, service it, customize it, and train your staff to use it. You may also turn to vendors for help with broad infrastructure installs or networking projects, or to procure ongoing "managed support services", helpdesk services or other IT support. If you are a small organization without the size or resources to hire your own network administrator, outsourcing management of your infrastructure to a vendor (or moving to a cloud solution) is also a possibility. Choose vendors wisely using the advice on the following pages. While they won't work at your organization, you may be in a long-term relationship with them, and your success is tied to their success.

> ***What:*** *"Off the shelf" solutions; software customizations; support, service or training; usually set fees/monthly costs. Often remote.*

Consultants

Consultants are different than vendors in that they are used more for occasional or one-time advice versus providing an ongoing service, and they can be helpful on custom solutions where an "off-the-shelf" option doesn't exist or won't meet your needs. They can help you at a strategic level (as they do during tech planning) to assess your current state, define needs, and advise on potential solutions. Consultants can also provide one-time, highly specialized skills to help you with a project (ex: building that at-a-glance

services dashboard you've been dreaming about). Consultants can often act as "architects" or advisors on your organization's use of IT. Make sure they take the time to get to know your organization's mission, goals, business drivers, and constituents. If they don't, their suggestions or solutions won't position you for maximum success.

> ***What:*** *Occasional or one-time advice, strategy or specialized skills. Help define needs, create/inform solutions. Short – mid-term needs. Hourly fee. Often on-site.*

In-House Staff

In-house IT staff can take a variety of forms – "accidental techies", network managers, database administrators, web managers, CIOs, and more. If you've analyzed your current costs, the benefits of hiring, and budget available, and have determined the benefits outweigh the costs, you may be ready to hire in-house staff. Once hired, build in reviews and internal "service-level agreements" to ensure you get the benefit expected – from saving costs, to decreased downtime, to current web content, to timely reports, to supported staff. Before hiring, think carefully about what technology-related functions and know-how you absolutely need *in-house* on your team, versus those that could be outsourced. If you are looking at technical support staff, review the level of support and service they can provide versus a vendor (ex: what happens during vacations and at 3AM?). Likely you will still use some of the other resources listed here even if you hire in-house IT staff, so consider how you can balance those resources for maximum benefit.

> ***What:*** *Ongoing need, costs-benefit analysis suggests need is great enough to hire; skillset that should be in-house, understanding org services or mission is critical.*

Volunteers

It's okay to use volunteers to help your organization boost its IT capacity, but it's key to be strategic in where, how and when to ensure the effort is not wasted. Volunteers work best when the need is short-term and the timeline is flexible (so if they can't show up one day, things don't go awry). In other words, volunteers are NOT a great way to staff ongoing network support but may be okay for a one-day training or data clean-up project. Volunteers work well remotely (and may prefer to). Keep the scope small and near-term, and make sure there are *clearly defined deliverables*. Also, plan for project-handover so the needed know-how and work files end up with staff at your organization. It is not advisable to use volunteers for mission-critical, can't-afford-to-falter projects.

> ***When:*** *Short-term, clear deliverables, flexible deadlines, not mission-critical.*

Act

Resources to learn more about staffing your IT needs

- Download the free NTEN report, *Nonprofit Technology Staffing & Investments Report*, at www.nten.org/research
- Find consultants and tips for hiring and managing consultants at the New England Nonprofit Consultant Directory: www.neconsultant.org/

Working Effectively with Technology Vendors

The Seven Step Model to Selecting a Technology Vendor

For many organizations the success of IT projects is tied to the selection of an appropriate technology vendor. This process is critical, and many organizations underestimate the time and effort it takes to make a well-informed decision. The following information will help you understand the critical steps in the vendor identification and selection process.

1. **Assess Feasibility – Is this viable for my organization?**
2. **Define Requirements – What does my organization need?**
3. **Research & Refine Options – What solutions/vendors might fit my needs?**
4. **Evaluate Vendors – What is the best fit for my organization's needs?**
5. **Select & Engage Vendor – Is this a reasonable price and contract?**
6. **Manage Implementation – Has the vendor delivered on its promises?**
7. **Support & Maintenance – How will we maintain and support the solution?**

Act

STEP 1: ASSESSING FEASIBILITY

Organizational Readiness - Consider important elements to project success such as getting staff buy-in and overcoming resistance to change.

Budgeting - Ensure you have the appropriate budget level to execute on the project and that your budget can withstand reasonable variances from original estimates. Technology projects have varying degrees of financial risk based on the complexity of the project. At a minimum, your project budget should be able to withstand a 15% variance.

Staff Availability - Most technology projects require a significant investment of time by your staff. You should designate a project advocate from your staff to manage the vendor relationship and internal resources associated with the project. Before taking on any large project, ensure your organization can free up time from appropriate staff to make the project a success.

Sustainability – Ensure that you have the proper resources in place to sustain the technology at project end. This could include budgeting for ongoing support, hiring a technology manager, or giving ownership of maintenance to a staff member.

Arriving at a Decision – After careful review of the aforementioned factors, you are now ready to make a decision. Most organizations will have a clear "go" or "no-go" decision. If the limiting factor is budget or staff availability, you may decide to opt for a "go-later" decision.

OUTCOME: "GO", "NO-GO", "GO-LATER" DECISION

Act

STEP 2: DEFINE REQUIREMENTS

Review Project Goals – Identify the outcomes you hope to accomplish with this project.

Process Map Related Processes – Document critical business processes that your organization performs. This understanding will be critical for a vendor to understand how its solution should be implemented at your organization.

Process Re-engineering – Technology implementation often provides an opportunity to change the way certain tasks or processes are managed at your organization.

Requirements Analysis – Identify critical requirements (such as number of users, current technologies in use, need for remote access, training, etc.) that you will need as a part of your technology solution.

Prioritization of requirements – Prioritize your list of requirements and determine which ones are essential and which ones are "nice to have" but not required for success.

Environmental assessment – If your project involves environmental or physical location factors, make sure a thorough assessment is conducted and that findings are documented.

Technical assessment – Document your current technology and catalog all areas that may interface with your new solution.

OUTCOME: REQUIREMENTS DOCUMENT/REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Act

STEP 3: RESEARCH & REFINE OPTIONS

Buy/Blend/Build – Most technology solutions can be categorized into one of three areas: Buy an off-the-shelf solution, Build a custom solution, or Blend a solution by combining an off-the-shelf product with some customization.

Establish Evaluation Criteria – Develop a set of criteria on which you would like to evaluate prospective vendors. See the list on the page 71 to get you started.

Conduct Research – Use the resources at your disposal to learn more about existing products or solutions that could meet your needs. Discuss your project objectives with related organizations, trusted advisors, and technology consultants.

Define Targeted List – Based on your requirements and your research into solutions, create a short list of vendors who may be able to meet your requirements. The size of your short list of vendors should correlate to variability in proposed solutions and project complexity. For instance, for a small, defined project, a short list of three vendors may be appropriate. For large, complex projects with many different approaches, you may have a list as large as six vendors. Try to keep your list of vendors to a manageable scale.

Send RFP – If necessary, send the vendors your requirements information and ask them to submit a proposal. For off the shelf solutions, this may not be necessary.

OUTCOME: TARGETED LIST OF VENDORS/SOLUTIONS TO PURSUE

Act

YOUR TURN: Defining requirements for a technology solution

My Tech Plan

Appendix C:
Quotes, RFPs…

To define requirements for one of your needed technology solutions, use the prompts below (and the information you already captured in your logic model) to think about your requirements (i.e. what you need it to *do* or what information/data you need it to capture). The solution may be a donor or client-tracking database, an updated web site, a new phone system, a copier, or more. Any solution that can come in various sizes, shapes, flavors, makes or models is a solution that requires some upfront thinking about what you actually *need* the technology solution *to do*. Prioritize the features you *need* versus those you *want* to stay within budget or timeline constraints.

If you need a solution to automate or improve one of the processes you mapped earlier in this workbook, refer to each step in the process map as you think through the following questions. The solution will likely need to collect certain bits of information at certain steps in the process, and potentially *do* something different at each stage in the process.

- **Determine the <u>functional</u> requirements: What the tool must <u>do</u> to support the process**
  - What should the tool do at each point in the process? What features are needed?
  - Where will staff be when they use the tool? How many? Will it be simultaneous?
  - Will it need to integrate into other technologies/tools currently in use?
  - What customizations do you anticipate needing?
  - Rank the functional requirements (need-to-have, nice-to-have, "fluff")

- **Determine <u>informational</u> requirements: The info/data it must track & report on**
  - What reports do you need to be able to generate?
  - Working backward from reports needed, what information should it track/collect?
  - What should this information look like (text fields, data fields)? At which stages in the process will it be collected?
  - What common information needs/data will be shared among all service areas?
  - Does the system need to share information with other systems or databases?

YOUR TURN: Define your functional requirements

What technology solution are you defining requirements for? What are your desired goals/outcomes from it?	
What are the *functional* requirements? What do you need it to *do*?	**Then prioritize them** (Need-to-Have, Nice-to-Have, "Fluff")

Sample functional requirements for a photocopier

What technology solution are you defining requirements for? What are your desired goals/outcomes from it?	
A networked photocopier to help us work more efficiently and effectively, reduce staff frustration, save costs on outside printing, and provide more professional materials to our clients and donors.	
What are the *functional* requirements? What do you need it to do?	**Priority** Need-to-Have, Nice-to-Have, Fluff?
Network to all of our computers so we can all print directly to it (all on same floor of building – existing networking infrastructure is in place)	Need to have
Accommodate print jobs from up to 50 different users (though not all simultaneously)	Need to have
Print & copy double-sided, B&W	Need to have
Print/copy 5000 pages a month with no compromised performance	Need to have
Finishing options: Staple	Nice to have
Print over Wi-Fi connection	Nice to have
Scan & Fax	Nice to have
Color printing	Nice to have
Print 11x17 foldable books	Fluff

Refer to your logic model to review your outcomes for a solution. They will help inform your requirements. If you are doing the requirements for a database or more information-based process, you may want to use your process map as a starting point to capture your information requirements – write down what info the solution would need to collect/track at each step in the process map.

YOUR TURN: Use Requirements to Narrow Down a List of Potential Solutions/Vendors

Based on your list of requirements, start researching vendors who could be a match for your needs. Create a short-list of vendors that meet your critical requirements. You may want to add other key evaluation dimensions from the list on the following page.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	**POTENTIAL VENDORS** (Check or make notes of if/how they meet your requirements)			
Requirements (list need-to-have requirements below)				
Other Criteria (list other key evaluation dimensions below)				
Ex: Cost/pricing, timeline, access to support				

Act

POTENTIAL EVALUATION DIMENSIONS FOR VENDORS

This list contains typical dimensions along which vendors can be evaluated. While extensive, the list is not exhaustive; you should consider adding your own dimensions to the evaluation criteria. Review the list and check/highlight those dimensions that are most critical for your project.

FEATURES (from above)
- ❒ Need-to-Have Features
- ❒ Nice-to- Have Features

VENDOR STABILITY
- ❒ Vendor Size
- ❒ Years in Business
- ❒ Number of (nonprofit) clients
- ❒ References

TECHNOLOGY ELEMENTS
- ❒ Usability/Ease of Use
- ❒ Ability to customize (w/o support?)
- ❒ Compatibility with other tools you use
- ❒ Security, data ownership, data privacy
- ❒ Data export & portability considerations

PRODUCT STABILITY
- ❒ Performance Levels
- ❒ Uptime/Downtime

TIMELINE
- ❒ How soon can they start working?
- ❒ When will they be done?

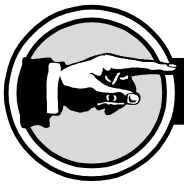
COSTS
- ❒ One-Time (Setup, Config, etc.)
- ❒ Ongoing (Maintenance, Licensing)
- ❒ Length of contract/payment terms
- ❒ Training & support
- ❒ Data Migration

TRAINING & SUPPORT
- ❒ Support Availability & Hours
- ❒ Support Response Time
- ❒ Training Plan
- ❒ Online Help Resources & Documentation
- ❒ Availability of Support Talent

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS
- ❒ Cloud vs. on-premise product
- ❒ Platform (Windows, Mac, Android)
- ❒ Vendor location
- ❒ Ability to terminate contract

SECURITY & BACKUPS
- ❒ Backup & Recovery Policies/Procedures
- ❒ Security Levels & Practices

What other evaluation dimensions will be important for you? Add them below and/or to the table on the previous page:



Act

STEP 4: EVALUATE VENDORS

Evaluation Matrix – Develop an evaluation matrix to help you objectively evaluate each vendor's proposal and product demonstration.

Proposals – Each invited vendor should respond to your RFP with a written quote. Carefully evaluate each quote and track the information in your evaluation matrix.

Product Demonstrations – Many vendors will request a web-based demo opportunity to showcase the capabilities of their solution. Demos are a valuable way to get more information and also evaluate intangible aspects of a vendor.

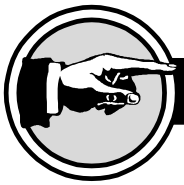
Reference Checks – Don't forget to check the vendor's references as a part of your evaluation process. Consider site visits if you are making a large investment. Ask vendor for a recent, complete client list. Pick from this list rather than the two or three names they might otherwise give you.

Conducting a reference check:

Begin your talk with an *open-ended question*. For example: "We're thinking about hiring Vendor V for our client-tracking needs. I understand you use the same system. How is it working for you?"

End with another open-ended question – "If you had it to do over again, are there any aspects of the project or working with this vendor/product that you would approach differently?"

OUTCOMES: VENDOR PROPOSALS & DEMOS, WEIGHTED VENDOR MATRIX



Act

STEP 5: SELECT & ENGAGE VENDOR

Primary and Secondary Options – At the conclusion of your evaluation process, you will need to identify a primary option (your winner) and some secondary alternatives.

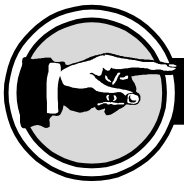
Negotiations – Do not burn the bridges with secondary option vendors; they will serve as a valuable resource in negotiation. While you are in negotiation, keep in mind your secondary options – they serve as your best alternative if your negotiation falls through.

Contracting – Identify a clear set of objectives, deliverables, timeframes, and budgets for your project with the vendor. Make sure these are written in the terms of the contract.

Items to address in a comprehensive contract

- **Project Objectives.** What are the products of the work? Make clear how you will know when the work is accomplished, and who gets to declare it finished.
- **Vendor's Responsibilities.** What are the vendor's specific tasks? Identify the major steps the vendor will take to complete the project. It may be useful to include checkpoints and signoffs (and perhaps payments) at the conclusion of each major step, to make it easier to monitor progress and direction.
- **Nonprofit's Responsibilities.** What's required from the client for the vendor to be able to do its job?
- **Fees.** What are the fees for different phases of the work? Upfront? Ongoing?
- **Time Schedule.** This section identifies the phases of the project. It includes starting times, any intermediate benchmarks and anticipated completion dates.
- **Legal Terms.** This section should include a discussion of confidentiality, the ownership by the agency of products developed under the contract, a bar on subcontracting if applicable, data ownership issues, and more.
- **Intellectual Property.** Will the vendor be developing a database, a website, a new logo or customized software application? Who owns the final product?
- **Exit clause.** How does either party end the relationship? Are there penalties?

OUTCOME: FINAL VENDOR SELECTED & CONTRACTED



Act

STEP 6: MANAGE IMPLEMENTATION

Dedicate Project Manager – Your organization should dedicate one or more staff to oversee the solution implementation. These staff should have regular checkpoints with the vendor to ensure that delivery matches expectations.

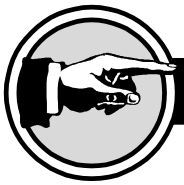
Ensure Timely Delivery – Vendors often juggle many clients at once and as such it is important for your organization to keep track of deliverable dates and ensure that the vendor is meeting them. Be conscious of your deadlines and deliverables to your vendor so they can make their target delivery dates. Keep an eye out for contract terms that apply additional fees for late delivery of necessary project materials from you to the vendor.

Ensure On-Budget Delivery – If your organization negotiates a Time & Materials (T&M) contract with vendor (versus a flat rate or "not-to-exceed" contract), then it will become imperative to track hours spent and budgeted hours remaining on a project. Without careful consideration of these elements, project costs could spiral.

Manage Scope – The greatest area of risk for most technology projects is in controlling project scope. Once an organization begins to see the possibility of technology, they often attempt to do too much in the initial development and launch of the solution. If this is the case, consider your project with the vendor a "Phase 1 deployment" and try to push back on new additions until a future phase. If a new addition is essential, then clearly define it in an addendum to the scope of work and negotiate the price with the vendor.

Manage Expectations – Manage the expectations of all parties involved in the implementation support. Be sure to provide realistic timeframes and advance warning of any variances in budgets and timeframes.

OUTCOME: ON-TIME & ON-BUDGET DELIVERY OF SOLUTION



Act

STEP 7: SUPPORT & MAINTENANCE

Resources: Ensure that the appropriate resources are dedicated to support the technology on an ongoing basis. Your support and maintenance plan could include:

- Support Hours/Contract
- Hiring of tech resources to manage it
- Assignment of staff member to take ownership
- Patches & Maintenance
- Ongoing Training

Upgrades: If the technology solution becomes mission critical, plan an upgrade path for it. For cloud-based solutions, upgrades will likely be built in to your licensing of the product, but it's best to confirm.

OUTCOME: TECHNOLOGY SOLUTION THAT EMPOWERS THE ORGANIZATION!

Act

Other Tips for Working with Vendors

- Manage Your & Staff's Expectations… One system = silver bullet?
- Is technology really the key issue?
- Time & dollars will inevitably e x p a n d
- Don't skimp on training
- Use phasing if your requirements are many
- Don't base decision on cost alone
- Know who you are working with
- Leverage product demo's/tours/evaluation period
- Assign project manager & manage UP

Budgeting for Technology

Consider the Total Cost of Ownership

One of the keys to effective budgeting for technology is to consider the Total Cost of Ownership, or TCO. *TCO is a number representing what it actually costs to install, operate, and maintain a piece of technology, as opposed to just the purchase price*.

TCO of a Car	TCO of a Computer
• **STICKER PRICE** • **Registration** • **Tax, title, license…** • • • • • • • •	• **"STICKER PRICE"** • • • • • • • • • • •

Benefits of Understanding TCO

- Adds predictability & realism to your budget by exposing "hidden" costs
- Provides a framework to do cost-benefit analysis on new approaches
  - Outsource tech support vs. hire it
  - Lease vs. buy hardware or systems
  - Cloud vs. on-premise software
- Ensures the maximum return on your technology investment by planning for maintenance, upgrades & training
- Decreases emergency and ad-hoc purchases

Act

Tips for Managing TCO at Your Organization

Careful decision-making can help you control your TCO. What strategies are you already using at your organization to keep the cost of owning technology manageable?

Technology:

- Standardize software & OS so maintenance & upgrades are easier to manage.
- Consider sharing infrastructure or tech support between organizations.
- Buy quality, name-brand equipment with warrantees.
- Replace old computers on a regular cycle, ideally every four to five years.

People:

- Find one good tech support provider who knows your systems and stick with them.
- Hire employees that already *have* technology skills.
- Invest in your existing resources – train your staff!

Processes and Policies:

- Establish and stick to safe computing policies for Internet use, back-up, antivirus, & passwords.
- Set-up a hardware replacement cycle so you aren't overwhelmed by replacement expenses all at once.
- Take advantage of low-cost and no-cost technology resources for nonprofits.
- Don't buy a Cadillac when a Buick will get you there! Not all of your staff need the latest and greatest tools; consider who needs what and don't buy what won't get used.

Budgeting Tips

- **Make sure you budget for *the full, 3-year costs of your plan*, NOT just the portion the foundation will fund**
- Ask yourself…
    1. What will be scaled back if adequate resources are not available?
    2. What would you expand/accelerate if more resources became available?

Technology Budget Worksheet

My Tech Plan
Section 6 – 3-year Tech Budget…

This worksheet is a sample of the budget template provided to you online. You will submit it as part of your tech plan and grant application. Using a detailed, three-year budget can help you plan for the TCO of technology.

		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Operating Costs					
Costs to sustain & maintain existing/current technology:					
Hardware costs		0	0	0	
Software		0	0	0	
Service fees/Contracts		0	0	0	
Consulting Fees		0	0	0	
In-House Staff Costs (not specific to a project)		0	0	0	
Staff IT Skills Training		0	0	0	
Supplies		0	0	0	
Other		0	0	0	
Sub-total, Operating costs					
Project Investment Costs					
Project 1:	**Project Name Here**				
	Hardware	0	0	0	
	Software (including cloud/SAAS)	0	0	0	
	Staff IT Skills Training	0	0	0	
	Consulting	0	0	0	
	Service Fees/Contracts (not including SW)	0	0	0	
	In-house staff costs (specific to this project)	0	0	0	
	Supplies	0	0	0	
	Other	0	0	0	
Sub-total, Project 1					
Project 2:	**Project Name Here**				
	Hardware	0	0	0	
	Software (including cloud/SAAS)	0	0	0	
	Staff IT Skills Training	0	0	0	
	Consulting	0	0	0	
	Service Fees/Contracts (not including SW)	0	0	0	
	In-house staff costs (specific to this project)	0	0	0	
	Supplies	0	0	0	
	Other	0	0	0	
Sub-total, Project 2					

Act

Seeking Funding for Technology

Adapted from NPower's "Technology Strategies for Nonprofit Leaders" program

When it comes to fundraising for technology, you may know more about what it takes to be successful than you think. In short, the rules of good fundraising don't change when you are fundraising for technology; relationship development is still key, as is picking a receptive target. In fact, the 'ask' for tech funding probably only *amplifies* the need to demonstrate the qualities below.

In all grant-making, funders look for:

- Mission focus
- Credibility
- Sound planning
- Implementation
- Accountability

What's Different about Fundraising for Technology?

- Educate your funders: Don't assume that funders will understand a tech plan as well as a program plan; they are probably not "techie" either!
- Show how technology aligns with your mission: Use the logic model to articulate the community and program outcomes of technology projects.
- Show due diligence: Use tech plan to describe projects, impact, and that you've done your homework and have the capacity to implement. Inspire confidence!
- Show fiscal stewardship: Show how technology projects will help you save money, reduce risk, increase revenue, or reach more communities in need.
- Demonstrate a commitment to sustaining the tech: Many funders are scared off by how quickly tech solutions become out of date or need replacing. Address this.
- Some funders will be particularly interested in opportunities to support and showcase innovative uses of technology

Act

YOUR TURN: Write a case statement for technology

As we learned when working on logic models, it is valuable to think about the success criteria for technology projects and how they tie into your community outcomes. Using the logic model for one of your key projects, practice making the link between your IT project and community outcomes to help you craft a compelling case statement for a funder. Use the examples below to help you get started.

Example: Getting to a Compelling Technology Case Statement

No focus on community outcomes:
"Our new database will make our staff more efficient."

Some focus on community outcomes:
"Our new database will make it possible for our staff to better gather and manage data about our clients, so we can better serve them."

Outcomes-first, tech-second thinking:
"To best serve our clients with the care and services they need, when they need them, we need visibility into their past interactions with us, their current use of services across the agency, and to into their needs and progress. When staff can easily access and share this key information, they can provide more comprehensive, timelier, and higher quality services. This builds greater trust with clients and leads to improved outcomes. To augment our personal contact and knowledge of our clients, a new database will empower us to see and analyze real-time client data. This will improve individual service delivery and help us understand and predict important trends in our overall service delivery approaches."

Adapted from Writing a Winning Grant Proposal by Marc Osten, Susan Myrland, Katrin Verclas.

Act

Write your technology project below:
List some of the outcomes of this project (from your logic model):
Practice drafting a case statement you could use to show a funder the value of the project, leading with community outcomes or how it will help you meet mission:
Thought prompts: How will this project enable better outcomes in your community? How will it help you deepen or broaden the reach and impact of your services? Improve quality? How will it help you be the BEST at delivering on your mission? Think people *&* outcomes *first, then how technology supports them.*

Act

Where to Look

Once you have a compelling case statement that connects technology directly to program and community outcomes, it's time to consider your targets. Grants for technology are elusive and there are not many self-described "tech funders" out there. Consider the following targets:

- Start with current funders – they are already invested in your success
- Issue area funders (ex: youth, homeless, arts, etc.)
- Funders who support training or capacity building
- Funders interested in innovative solutions to problems
- Individuals, major donors, or board members who value technology
- In-Kind funders (but beware of TCO of donated technology!)

Questions to Ask Yourself

When you are crafting your grant proposal, double check the quality of your request by asking yourself the following questions:

- Is it too expensive?
- Is it too complicated?
- Is it too much to do at once?
- Does it clearly relate to my mission? Have I made that connection explicit? Is it linked to clear & measurable program outcomes?
- Does it relate to the grant maker's goals?
- Did I clearly articulate the need, the risk, & a sense of urgency?
- Have I shown how we'll sustain it so we won't be back in three years?
- Have I reached out to any known contacts at the funder to discuss it?

Adapted from *Technology Grantseeking: Building a Case for Support* webinar by Cynthia Adams of Grantstation (www.grantstation.com)

Act

More Tips When Requesting Funds for Technology

DO:

- Ask current funders
- Lead with mission & programs
- Relate to funder's issue areas & community outcomes
- Use a technology plan to show you've done your homework
- Include a plan for training to show your investment in making tech work
- Highlight any previous tech successes you've had, no matter how small
- Outline in action plans your specific, realistic and measurable goals
- Follow directions!
- Ask for adequate funding; budget for the Total Cost of Ownership
- Include formal letters of support from project partners/collaborators/funders
- Show that you have diversity of funding, including your own investment
- Break big projects down into smaller phases and tasks with realistic timelines
- Show that you are ready to be proactive and get out of the "Break-fix" mode of managing your technology

DON'T:

- Give out a tech shopping list!
- Expect the funder to understand how the technology will support your mission, programs & services
- Make them guess how you came up with the budget – be clear, share assumptions
- Get creative on format for the proposal– if it says 1 page, submit 1 page!
- Ask for less than you need, thinking you're more likely to get the money if you don't ask for as much
- Include vague or unrealistic goals about how tech will improve your org
- Rely solely on donated equipment or volunteer tech support
- Talk about technology right away and muddy the waters with "geek speak"
- Ask one funder for everything!

What other tips do you have for requesting funds for technology?

Act

Strategies for Implementing Your Tech Plan

Implementation is where many well-intentioned planning efforts fall flat on their faces. We get through the planning, celebrate, and promptly file the "plan" away on a shelf, never to see the light of day again.

The plan is only worthwhile and valuable if you implement it! Consider the following advice to help ensure your technology plan becomes the living, evolving, technology roadmap it was intended to be! What other strategies would you add based on your experience?

Consider board adoption

In order for any value to be reaped from technology planning process, the organization *must* integrate the goals and projects outlined in the plan into their larger organizational plans and success metrics, create action plans, and monitor implementation. A key way to ensure the tech plan is properly resourced and executed is to have it adopted by the board. Consider presenting your completed technology plan to the board and having them approve and adopt the plan, and commit with you to see it through.

Share the final plan with your staff

Once you have board adoption, you should consider a similar presentation to your whole staff to inform them about upcoming changes to technology, how they can help, and how they will be impacted. Change management issues will start now if they haven't already!

Implementation Advice from a CRM Migration

"Throughout migration and implementation, I reminded my colleagues of the 3 stages of a database migration: **Oh yes! Oh no! Ok**. Here are some variations of my messages to staff:

- Preparation will include time-consuming grunt work, such as you reviewing & updating spreadsheets.
- The migration will take longer than we think. And then longer than that.
- We will enjoy improved systems, not perfect systems.
- It will take time, practice, & some false starts to effectively integrate the new process into workflow."

Source: nten.org/article/how-can-you-ensure-a-quick-and-easy-culture-change-hint-you-cant

Act

Develop an implementation plan

Use your Logic Models for certain projects to help you complete an implementation plan, but don't forget to include all the projects (since you only completed logic models for a handful of your projects). An implementation/action plan per project will help keep you on track.

Steps to develop your implementation plan

My Tech Plan

Sec 5 – Implement-ation, Timeline…

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1. Designate a tech planning project manager person who takes overall ownership for making sure others stay on task and the plan gets completed (more than just a "cheerleader"), and you may also want to assign a "project lead" for each individual project.

2. Break each project down into smaller milestones

3. Map milestones to a calendar

4. Identify tasks that need to be completed to achieve each milestone

5. Identify who will be responsible for completing each task by when

6. List the resources needed to complete each task

7. Start working with the plan and meet regularly to refine as needed, keep momentum, and keep tabs on progress

Technology Action Plan for: _____

Tasks	Responsible Party	Date to be completed	Required Resources	Success Metrics (*we'll know we're done when…*)

Act

Tips for Success

- Set appropriate and realistic expectations – technology change does not happen overnight and managing expectations is a key part of change management.

- Create your implementation plan with an eye towards identifying and achieving early and frequent successes – "low-hanging fruit" or "quick win" projects help you gather and maintain momentum!

- Beware of "Analysis Paralysis" – there are many choices when it comes to technology. Identify what you need and shop around, but don't get too hung up on small price differences or various options.

- When you set up your timelines, set milestones for successes and natural stopping points for self-reflection on what has been achieved and where to head from there. At those milestones, check in: Is everyone in agreement?

- For organization-wide changes (such as rolling out a new process or new software system): Set target dates and goals, get buy-in from all staff, and work toward those goals together.

- Pilot any new process first to leave room for changes and to learn best practices

Find Ways to Keep Technology Planning Discussions Going

- Create a technology advisory group to periodically review how IT is working for the organization. Better yet, include technology staff at the strategy/planning table on a regular basis. In short, discuss it more than once every 3 years!

- Find ways to hear tech ideas on a regular basis – from staff, board, or peer leaders

- When IT needs or suggested projects are raised, ask "So what?" or "Why does it matter?" In other words: *"How could that impact our mission or stakeholders?"*

- Incorporate technology as a regular item at board meetings and discuss it no less frequently than at your board's annual goal setting meeting. If you are working on a strategic plan, include technology as part of it.

Act

Use the "At-a-Glance" executive assessment

Twice a year, ask…

- Is my technology…
  - Stable and secure?
  - Meeting agency needs?
  - Causing excessive frustration or complaint?
- What are we doing to advance our mission through technology?
- Is tech responsibility in the right places?
- Are there trends I should pay attention to? What are private businesses adopting?

Act

Notes on the Act section:

Act

Notes on the Act section: