

# Added Value

Timely Info from Karen Eber Davis Consulting

Spring 2004

## What Is Success? Beyond Outputs, Outcomes and the Bottom Line

How do you measure the success of your organization? In part, you probably use **outputs**. Outputs measure quantities like the number of hours of counseling completed, shows presented or customers served. In the past decade, much of the nonprofit world added **outcomes** to their success measures. Outcomes are the benefits your program provides for participants. Benefits vary, but they include people gaining new knowledge, better skills and improving attitudes. Taking positive actions or changing their condition like going from being homeless to housed are other examples of real world benefits. Such outcomes can be an informative success measure. What's more, project outcomes are essential when you seek competitive funding.

Another measure of success is your **bottom line**, that is, whether you come out in the black. Almost every group has several people who associate your success with money. And who isn't grateful at year-end to have bills paid and reserves for the tasks ahead? However, if you only measure outputs, outcomes and the bottom line, your organizational life may be one tiring seesaw ride—create outputs and outcomes, run out



of money, cut programs, find funds, create outputs and outcomes and down and up, again and again.

Consider this example. You work at an art organization that provides abstract art classes to youth with a high-risk of school failure. This year you provided 20 classes (outputs.) Cost were covered by a grant and individual donors (bottom line.) After the classes, the youth improve their grade point averages (outcome.)

For donors and your board, these results may be adequate. However, there were more. A press contact with the local newspaper resulted in a two-page spread covering the program. This and other publicity

*(Continued on page 2)*



Karen Eber Davis Consulting helps people turn good ideas into exceptional, funded ventures. Since 1994, the firm has helped hundreds of organizations, including social service, education, religious, arts, environmental government and healthcare institutions, to improve the services they offer to their customers and strengthen their organizations.

(Continued from page 1)

resulted in 50 people being added to your mailing list, 7 people volunteering to help and the treasurer adding three checks for \$50 and one for \$3,000 to your bank account. There was also an overall increase in your organization's credibility substantiated, in part, by the standing ovation the youth received at a school board meeting.

Besides outcomes, outputs and the bottom line, this group successfully increased its **resources**, including volunteers, the mailing list, press contacts and credibility. They also grew **capacities**. Staff and volunteers learned to work with high-need teenagers. The publicity specialist learned to provide intriguing leads to the press. An administrative assistant mastered how to secure contact information by the telephone. A board member experienced the rewards involved in calling donors to thank them for their gifts and volunteered eagerly for this task again. Finally, beyond the student's outcomes, the **mission** of the group moved forward. Hundreds of people in the community learned that art has the power to change lives and that this organization has the expertise to do it.

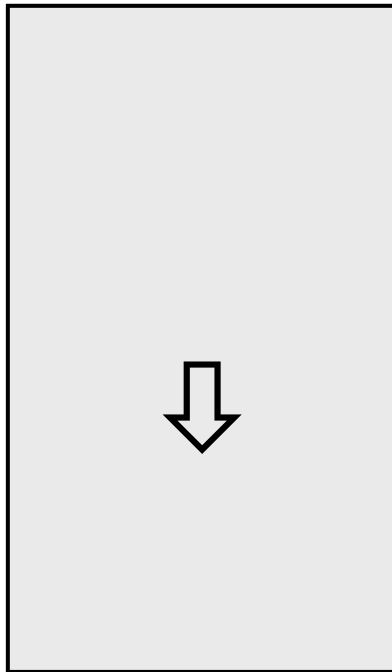
As you can see, this organization's programming enhanced many of its resources, forged new connections and furthered its mission with the youth and the community. In fact, these successes, afford the organization the ability to move from the seesaw world of survival toward the calmer waters of sustainability.

So how do you measure your organization's success? The first purpose of this article is to prompt your thinking about the components of your success. Fortunately, you are probably already creating a lot of successes. You may or may not be measuring them. Measuring helps, as Tom Peters' states, "What gets measured gets done."

The second reason for this article is to ask you to share your success measures or components—that is to list what your organization has found to be essential for your success, so others in the nonprofit community can learn from your experiences.

Please fill in the attached survey. Mail it to: P.O. Box 15464, Sarasota, FL 34277; fax it to 941-924-6153; or email your answers to [kedconsulting@att.net](mailto:kedconsulting@att.net)

In mid-May, we will randomly pull one response from the returned surveys. This selected organization will receive a \$100 operating grant. Thank you for participating, and best wishes. We will share the results of this Success Survey in a future issue of *Added Value*.



Thank you

"An investment in knowledge  
always pays the best dividends."

*Benjamin Franklin*

# Announcing the Newest Editions



*Local Sources* is an easy-to-use, in-depth grant reference for Charlotte, Manatee and Sarasota counties. The text contains information about individual grant programs, including deadlines, contact information, application requirements, board members and amounts given.

To be included in *Local Sources*, programs generally made local decisions, had local offices, offered local funding, funded multiple organizations and, in the case of foundations, owned assets that exceeded \$250,000.

What's new in the this edition of *Local Sources*?

- Updates for every funding resources allowing you to work with the latest information
- 18 new programs plus 6 new grant programs
- A total of 118 local area funding resources

The companion edition, *More Local Sources*, contains a list of 232 funders who do not meet the size or other criteria in *Local Sources*, but are still interesting to many development offices.

What's new in *More Local Sources*?

- Updates on these funders, with an additional 24 more listings than the past edition
- 30 programs never identified in previous editions

Ordering information below.

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## To Order or Request Information

name \_\_\_\_\_ organization \_\_\_\_\_  
street \_\_\_\_\_ city \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip \_\_\_\_\_  
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Please contact us regarding:  developing programs  planning,  grants or  other \_\_\_\_\_

For orders, please enclose a check made out to: Karen Eber Davis Consulting for the total amount.

Mail to P.O. Box 15464, Sarasota, FL 34277. Telephone: 941-924-4860. Prepaid only.

# \_\_\_\_\_ of copy(ies) of *Local Sources* at \$95 each. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_ of copy(ies) of *More Local Sources* at \$30 each. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_ of copy(ies) of *How to Run a Great Meeting* at \$6 each. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_ of copy(ies) of *How to Enlist Great Help* at \$6 each. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Handling and shipping. \$ 4.50

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**Total enclosed:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_



P. O. Box 15464  
Sarasota, Florida 34277  
941-924-4860 (phone)  
941-924-6153 (fax)  
kedconsulting@att.net

## Seven Ways the New Edition of *Local Sources* Can Add Value to Your Organization

1. If you can find just *one* new grant program, where you can form a relationship, your investment will be repaid many times over.
2. Working with current information, you can create a great shortlist of programs with an interest in your cause.
3. You can retrieve the names trustees and contacts of programs for your fund-raising efforts.
4. You can use it as a reference when someone advises you to seek grants from a specific source.
5. You can learn about recent grants collaborators and competitors received.
6. You can identify changes in procedures and the appropriate amount to request.
7. You can have access to sources you probably didn't know existed. The variety of programs will help you expand your grant project ideas.

You can win a \$100  
operating grant  
for your  
nonprofit!

To enter,  
complete  
and return  
the enclosed  
survey.