



Program Implementation

Martha Nall, Extension Specialist, Program & Staff Development, Ralph Prince, CES Advisory Leadership Coordinator, Jeanne Davis and Deborah Murray, Regional Program & Development Coordinator

The fifth topic in the program development series is *program implementation*. After needs are identified and program priorities are established, it is now time to implement the plans. For some it might be useful to look at the previous phases as developing a game plan for an athletic team. Just like pre-game preparation, they represent the time and effort that precedes “playing the game”. Program implementation is putting the game plan to work on the field.

From this point, the county staff, County Extension Council (CEC) members, and other citizens of the county have been involved in conducting a detailed situational analysis for the county. They have identified areas of need, program focus and set program priorities. Agents and council members have developed a plan of work with program logic models to guide their work the next four years. It is important to note that County Extension Council members have remained engaged with the program development process throughout every stage of development. Because of their extensive involvement they feel ownership of the program and will want to be involved in the implementation phase. CEC members may have particular interests and investments in the various MAP (Major Areas of Programming) activities of the Plan of Work and desire to be involved in some more than others. Forming MAP groups or design teams will help engage people where they most want to be involved. In addition, leaders and other professionals not on the Council may want to be involved in implementing the program.

As you develop your “game plan” for each MAP, consider these four elements in the program implementation phase: resource development, program management, marketing and collaboration.

Resource Development – For each program the available resources need to be assessed and a plan put into place to mobilize those resources or assets. This is one of the most important aspects of planning. Often we under-utilize our resources by simply asking “How much money do I have to spend?” Begin by asking a series of questions: “What do I need to get the job done, what are the local assets to get the job done, what are the external resources I need to tap into (University as well as other external resources) and how can I mobilize those to enhance Extension’s efforts?”

Not utilizing all available resources in an appropriate manner results in ineffective programs that do not produce desired outcomes. Spending big money on poorly thought out materials such as flashy, glitzy handouts or videos without any substantive educational value or information not pertinent to the audience will not produce desired results, will reflect poorly on you as a professional and will portray the organization as wasteful.

Resources are also people, places, knowledge, and things that can be mobilized to make our programs produce the desired outcomes. The available resources vary from community to community. Some of the most effective Extension programs have been conducted in limited resource counties where agents have effectively utilized talents of volunteers, resources of other agencies and capitalized on the assets of their communities. Do not underestimate a community's ability to promote change by tapping into its own resources.

Program Management - The activities and processes involved in the management of a program can be divided into four categories; human management, task management; fiscal management and risk management.

Human Management: The number of people needed to carry out program activities can vary from a very few to many volunteers. The people or human management component of program management is essential to effective program implementation and requires extensive planning and preparation. However, involving many people in the program leads to a greater impact and an expanded outreach for CES programs. If Extension programs are to effectively involve volunteers, a thorough understanding of the GEMS model of volunteer leadership will provide a comprehensive framework for program implementation. For more information on the GEMS model visit the following web site.

<http://www.ca.uky.edu/agcollege/4h/oldsite/gems/INDEX.HTM>

Task Management: This category of program management refers to the processes involved in actually doing everything you planned to do in the program. Adhering to the time line, meeting due dates for proposals, conducting educational programs and creating supportive educational environments are a part of program implementation. Knowledge and skills in educational theory and methodology, meeting management and organization and planning are essential.

Fiscal Management: The third category of program implementation is the management of fiscal resources. These will vary from program to program. Some may be funded through a grant or gift. Others may be a part of the county budget for Extension programs. In all cases, financial accountability is essential. Follow the guidelines in the County Extension Office Procedure Manual for utilizing financial resources. <http://ces.ca.uky.edu/manual/>

Risk Management: The management of risk is an important category for staff to consider when implementing Extension programs. Every precaution should be taken to provide a safe environment for participants, volunteers and colleagues. Youth protection standards and risk management strategies should be strictly adhered to. For information regarding the Kentucky guidelines and strategies see:

<http://www.ca.uky.edu/agcollege/4h/oldsite/YouthProtection/index.htm>

Volunteer insurance is a service of the Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service. The insurance, through the Corporate Insurance Management Association (CIMA), is available in three ways and provides coverage from July 1 through June 30, annually, but is available for purchase throughout the year. For current rates, benefits and detailed information, contact KCCVS at 502-564-0850 or 1-800-239-7404 or visit their web site at <http://chfs.ky.gov/dfrcvs/kccvs/>.

Marketing - Marketing is creating an awareness of the organization and its programs. Marketing is not something extra and additional to normal programming. Rather, *marketing is normal programming*. The way in which we deliver educational programs can add to the positive image we want people to have of the Cooperative Extension Service. When planning educational programming, it is important to think in advance about “getting the word out”, publicity, usage of names/logos and web-site resources.

In planning any program, it is recommended that a timeline and goals be established in order to meet program expectations. Be sure to build in enough time to advertise the educational event(s) to clientele, the public and appropriate key decision- makers. Mail-outs, electronic delivery, county website, display boards, community room postings and media outlets, etc. are all important sources for delivering programming announcements. It is important to use the recommended guidelines and templates for marketing Extension programs. These resources are found on the College of Agriculture, Internal Site Index, “Publishing and Marketing Resources” web- site: <http://www.ca.uky.edu/MarketingResources/Index.php>

All printed materials, exhibits, news releases, etc., prepared and used with the public should contain the proper marketing logos for consistency. With new technology and resources available, we need to make every effort to have professionally prepared and designed materials using the logos and marketing ideas. Remember, forethought and consideration should be given to portray a professional image *both in content and appearance* in regards to programming.

Collaboration – Working with other agencies, organizations and groups is a part of the Extension philosophy. Whether coordinating a health fair or serving on an economic development coalition, Extension seeks to bring people together and link resources. The National Network for Collaboration defines collaboration *as a process of participation through which people, groups, and organizations work together to achieve desired results.*¹ (<http://www.uvm.edu/extension/community/nncol/>) Extension professionals engage in many levels of relationships represented in the following five levels: networking, cooperation, coordination, coalitions, and collaboration. Each level involves a slightly different purpose, structure and process for working together. In every level, people come together because

¹ Bergstrom, Arno, et.al, *Collaboration Framework...Addressing Community Capacity*. Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service, US Department of Agriculture, 1995, page 2.

of some commonality, some relationship that is perceived as beneficial to each groups' purpose or vision. Figure 1, at the end of this publication, illustrates the differences in the purpose and degree of commitment of each level in working together. As you see many of our networks are causal, providing resources with very little personal commitment. Whereas, collaboration is a long-term commitment with shared visions and the development of interdependent systems to address issues and needs.

Program implementation often involves creating the linkages with other individuals, organizations or agencies to more effectively and efficiently address the identified need. However, it should be noted that not all major areas of programming will have local groups interested in addressing the need. For more information on collaboration see the National Network for Collaboration web site. <http://www.uvm.edu/extension/community/ncco/>

Figure 1 Community Linkages - Choices and Decisions

Levels	Purpose	Structure	Process
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Dialog and common understanding * Clearinghouse for information * Create base of support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Loose/flexible link * Roles loosely defined * Community action is primary link among members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Low key leadership * Minimal decision making * Little conflict * Informal communication
Cooperation or Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Match needs and provide coordination * Limit duplication of services * Ensure tasks are done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Central body of people as communication hub * Semi-formal links * Roles somewhat defined * Links are advisory * Group leverages/raises money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Facilitative leaders * Complex decision making * Some conflict * Formal communications within the central group
Coordination or Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Share resources to address common issues * Merge resource base to create something new 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Central body of people consists of decision makers * Roles defined * Links formalized * Group develops new resources and joint budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Autonomous leadership but focus in on issue * Group decision making in central and subgroups * Communication is frequent and clear
Coalition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Share ideas and be willing to pull resources from existing systems * Develop commitment for a minimum of three years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * All members involved in decision making * Roles and time defined * Links formal with written agreement * Group develops new resources and joint budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Shared leadership * Decision making formal with all members * Communication is common and prioritized
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Accomplish shared vision and impact benchmarks * Build interdependent system to address issues and opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Consensus used in shared decision making * Roles, time and evaluation formalized * Links are formal and written in work assignments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Leadership high, trust level high, productivity high * Ideas and decisions equally shared * Highly developed communication

Source: Community Based Collaborations- Wellness Multiplied 1994, Teresa Hogue, Oregon Center for Community Leadership

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Educational programs of the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service serve all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, or national origin.