

## Assignment Five Discussion Page

### Online Learning

#### OL 342 Project Architecture: Planning for Impact.

<https://csd-i.org/ol-342-adapting-climate-change/>

#### This week's resources:

Class Home Page

Assignment Five Homework Assignment

Magee Project Example Assignment 5

Field Guide: Capturing Compelling Stories from the Field

<https://nonprofit.csd-i.org/capturing-compelling-non-profit-stories/>

Field Guide: Capturing Compelling Photos

<https://nonprofit.csd-i.org/field-guide-capturing-compelling-photos-from-the-field/>

#### Assignment Five: The Compelling 2-Page Fact Sheet

Donors are busy and have a dozen proposals sitting on their desks waiting to be read. As enthusiastic as you may be with a lengthy proposal you have written, handing it to a donor may not be the best way to start off your first meeting: It will just look like more work to them. [Anyway, if a donor is interested in your project, they will usually have their own proprietary forms that you will need to fill out. Their forms will typically become your final submission].

Something that I have found is a good alternative is to hand them a 1 ½ or 2 page clearly organized document: a fact sheet. They can scan it for 30 seconds or a minute, and quickly get a good understanding of your project. Properly done, they will also get a sense of your organizational capability.

This document needs to cover the nuts and the bolts of the project – and it needs to be compelling. The need statement needs to be negatively compelling and your proposed solution needs to be positively compelling. Each one of the fact sheet's sections may only be a paragraph long, but they need to carry within them a compelling story line.

A compelling story paints a picture that makes the reader feel 'I was there'. It can be a heart-wrenching story about an event in the day of a family suffering extreme poverty, or it can be a heart-warming story illustrating something wonderful that happened to a family as a result of your organization's work. The best compelling stories illustrate a single, human-centered image that supports the theme of your work, and is interwoven with human emotion: something readers can relate to with a sense of urgency and immediacy through joy or sorrow.

It is the human side of what we have worked so hard in this course to systematize. It is the thing that pulls at a donor's heart strings. It is the soft, intangible part of the project. It is what your impact statement is written about. It is why we are in development.

In the field, the story collector's job is to find a compelling story. The Ten-Seed process was an ideal opportunity for compelling stories, and if you look through your notes and photos you will find that you already have a collection of positive and negative story lines that you can choose from to use in your fact sheet.

#### Examples of positive compelling story lines

An illiterate father who hadn't let his son attend school is invited to an NGO-led teacher-training workshop on math. Afterwards, he confided that he didn't know what math was, but now that he sees its daily usefulness, he will encourage his son to enroll in school.

An illiterate family has their third grade daughter read them stories at night after dinner—opening a window to a new world and expanding future opportunities for the family through their literate daughter.

Through small but consistent earnings from NGO assisted sales of her textiles, a poor woman was able to increase family income enough to allow her to daughter attend school. Now, 16 years later, the daughter is preparing for her legal bar exams.

A woman learned about the importance of nutrition in her children's physical and cognitive development, and through micro-enterprise savings, was able to buy the small lot next door to plant a healthy vegetable garden and to raise chickens for improving her children's daily nutrition.

## **Writing your fact sheet**

The two hardest things about writing are getting started and being too self-critical early on. So just start writing and don't worry how it sounds. When you have a first draft down on paper, read back through it and fix the obvious spelling and grammar problems. Then put it down, take a one-day break, and revisit it when you can approach it with a fresh mind.

Enjoy the process of playing with ideas, moving some things around and embellishing others. When you are happy with the outcome, have someone else read it. Something that is clear as day to an author may not be clear to another reader. Another person's comments can be very valuable in helping us to get our message across.

Here comes the tough part: inside of your fact sheet lives its essence. It is now time to pare it down by removing extra information and getting to its bare-bones essence—the focused message that you want to convey to your donor. If you have trouble with this, find someone in your office with good editorial skills to help you.

Look back through your photos and find two or three that represent a person, a theme or a concept within your fact sheet. The photos should be your best people shots: sharp, simple in composition and colorful. The photos should complement and illustrate the message that your story is conveying.

If your donors have their hearts warmed and feel that you captured the essence of their mission in your project design, you will have a greater likelihood of developing a partnership. They should also be impressed with this well organized, professional presentation and sense that you would be a good organization to work with.

## **Donor Appointments for Week 6**

### **Identifying potential NGO partners, and donors that you can share this working project proposal with.**

This week we will need to identify 2 INGOs and 2 donors that we could partner with – and then make an appointment with one of them. How do we find donors?

### **What types of donors are there?**

- Governmental offices
- International Governments (embassies)
- International Government offices of cooperation (USAID, EU)
- Local Foundations
- International Foundations (Ford, Kellogg)
- Individual Donors (Local & International)
- International NGOs looking for local partners to help implement projects

### **Ongoing identification**

- Newspaper Articles
- Google Alerts: Your country
- Idealist.org Alerts: Your Country
- Networking with Colleagues
- Emailing lists with Colleagues
- RFPs (Requests for Proposals)
- A collection of websites in "Favorites" in Internet Explorer
- Keep a database of this information with contact information, keywords, specialization, grant size in Excel or Access
- Foundation Center
- Get on the invitee list to formal receptions (INGOs, embassies)
- Your country's governmental offices
- Telephone directory

### **Getting started**

The Assignment Five Homework will guide you the process.