



Envisioning the Future International

A virtual resource center for non-profits worldwide.

November 12, 2010
Volume 1 Issue 1

139 McPhail Street, Winnipeg, MB R2L 1N2 izacharias@envisioningthefutureintl.ca (204)668-9505

<http://envisioningthefutureintl.ca/>

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 People to Invite to Your Non-Profit Strategic Planning Session
- 1 Website Launch
- 2 First Trailblazers Articles Published
- 3 EFI Online Store Launched
- 4 Guest Bloggers Speak Out
- 6 5 Tasks Your Non-Profit Should Hire a Consultant to Do

Our goal is to provide non-profits with the resources needed to be successful in achieving their goals.

People to Invite to Your Non-Profit Strategic Planning Session

Your strategic plan will only be as effective as those whom you invite to participate in the process. In fact, sometimes, it is even a good idea to set up more than one planning session in order to avoid diluting the ideas by having too many interest groups involved in the same session. So plan well, which groups it's okay to clump together and which ones you should have a separate session for.

In my experience, the best plan for strategic

Please see [People to Invite...](#) on page 5

Website Launch

On September 24, 2010, we launched our new website. It is a virtual resource centre for non-profits worldwide. <http://envisioningthefutureintl.ca/> Our goal is to provide non-profits with the resources needed to be successful at achieving their goals. In our preliminary discussions with non-profits, they said they wanted to: be able to connect with other non-profits, learn about best practices, be able to ask questions of each other when encountering a new challenge, find out what other non-profits are doing in their own communities, learn about the latest trends and activities that are happening in the

Please see [Website Launch](#) on page 4

First Trailblazers Articles Published

In October, we featured the “Spark” organization as our first “Trailblazer” on our website. Spark is a capacity building organization in Winnipeg, Manitoba that connects non-profits and professional service providers together to reduce the costs for non-profits in hiring professional services.

<http://envisioningthefutureintl.ca/membership/trailblazers/spark-the-canadian-ccd-network%e2%80%99s-capacity-building-service-for-community-organizations/> (NOTE: You must register as a member to reach this article. Membership is a free service.)



Geoff Ripat and Julio Rivas of Spark

“I’m glad you (Spark) are here, because now I don’t feel so alone.” - quote from non-profits about Spark.

During the last two weeks of October, we featured Geoff Ripat and Julio Rivas of “Spark” in the “Trailblazers” section of our website. They both talked about what inspires them to do the work that they do and the impact it is having in the non-profit sector in Winnipeg Manitoba.

Our November Trailblazer is Wayne Helgason of Social Planning Council of Winnipeg. Wayne is a pioneer in the community development sector and recently announced his retirement. Read the article to find out about the impact he has had in his community.

<http://envisioningthefutureintl.ca/membership/trailblazers/wayne-helgason-a-living-legend/>

Do you know someone working in the non-profit sector that is making a tremendous impact on their community? Then why not nominate them to be featured as an upcoming Trailblazer. To do this email izacharias@envisioningthefutureintl.ca .

Please put “Trailblazer” in the subject line of your email.

EFI Online Store Launched

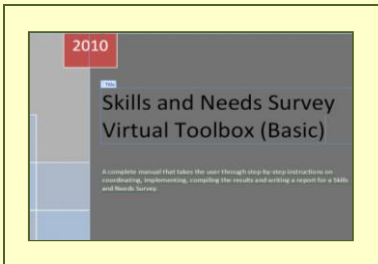
On October 14, we launched our online store.

The products we have developed have come from the recognition of the needs of non-profits, especially when they are going where they have never gone before.

In it you will find “Non-Profit Templates” and our “Virtual Toolbox”. Our non-profit templates provide the words so you don’t have to. Executive Directors and people working in the non-profit sector are busy and we recognize that. The time you save by not having to create something for yourself, is valuable time you could spend doing other things that need to get done.

Our first Virtual Toolbox is the “Skills and Needs Survey Virtual Toolbox”. This product provides basic, skills and needs survey, an instruction manual for the coordinator of the survey, a training manual for volunteers, results compilation templates and instructions and a report writing template. This is designed especially for grassroots community organizations and small non-profits who just don’t have the money to hire a consultant to do the work for them. Visit our store to learn more about these two products. To find out more about our consulting services in Winnipeg, visit <http://envisioningthefutureintl.ca/find-savings/our-services/>

“Our non-profit templates provide the words so you don’t have to.”



Cover of the “Skills and Needs Survey Virtual Toolbox (Basic)”.

Did you know that Envisioning the Future International (EFI) also offers consulting services in Winnipeg?

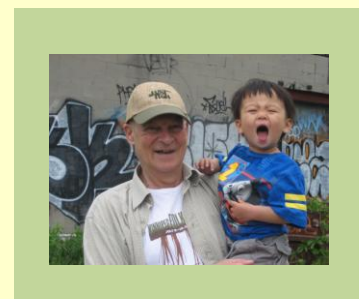
EFI’s consultants, have over a decade of experience in the non-profit sector. We offer Board development, Staff training, Proposal writing, Program evaluation, and Strategic planning, just to name a few of our services.

If you need a consultant, contact us at (204) 668-9505 or email us at izacharias@envisioningthefutureintl.ca

Guest Bloggers Speak Out

Our “Guest Blogger” section of our website is a new addition. Last month we featured the writing of Paul Chorney of “Food Matters Manitoba”. Paul has worked in the non-profit sector for most of his career and now focuses his efforts on food security issues and has been on the frontlines of improving the food system in Manitoba for over five years.

For the first part of November, our guest blogger is Brendan Reimer of Canadian Community Economic Development Network. Brendan writes about “Making Waves Out of Ripples”. Brendan is a well known to the CD/CED community and is a leader in making positive change in the sector.



Paul Chorney and his grandson Jonah

Do you have an insightful story to share?

Are you interested in becoming a guest blogger?

Contact us at izacharias@envisioningthefutureintl.ca .

Please put “Guest Blogger” in the subject line.

Guest Blogger articles are changed every two weeks presently.

Website Launch from page 1

non-profit sector. We heard your voices and will over the next few months be adding new sections to address these issues that we haven’t already addressed.

For people visiting the site, there is a free non-profit template download available at <http://envisioningthefutureintl.ca/membership/free-stuff/> .

(NOTE: You must register to reach this section, registration is a free service)

See People to Invite... from page 1

consultations works in this way:

Make the target population consultation open to everyone - The best way to ensure you hear a variety of perspectives is to invite your clientele and any other stakeholders from the community who might have an interest in participating. This keeps the process open and transparent and gives the entire community an opportunity to provide feedback.

- **Keep Board members separate**
- By this I mean, invite your board to attend the public sessions with your clientele, but encourage them to hold back their comments and input until they have their separate consultation, in order not to dilute the voices of the clientele.
- **Staff member consultations should be done separately** - Your staff have a unique perspective in that they know the organization from the inside, and so to get the most benefit from their input, it is best to have that consultation separately because they will offer ideas on how to improve the processes within the organization.

- **Group funders and partner organizations together** - In one of our strategic plans, we combined our funders and partners and the results were fantastic. Funders are more aware of your organizations challenges than you often think they are. Our funders offered vital ideas on what issues our organization should be addressing in upcoming years. The good part about including your partner organizations is that they can attest to the challenges your organization is facing, and it is good both for the funders to hear partner organizations' perspectives, it is equally as valuable for partner organizations to hear funders' perspectives.

**Questions about the
Non-Profit Sector?
Visit our website
and get your
questions answered
in our Q&A Section.**
<http://envisioningthefutureintl.ca/>

See People to Invite... from page 1

5 Tasks Your Non-Profit Should Hire a Consultant to Do

In the non-profit world, there are many things that organizations can do for themselves, provided they have the knowledge and time to do so. The reason most non-profits hire consultants to handle certain tasks for them, is because it provides an arm's length perspective and ensures that all parties involved feel that their voices have been heard.

Even for those non-profits that have the capability of doing the tasks themselves, some tasks can be quite time consuming. This means staff must do this on top of all of their other work. Still other tasks don't allow the person doing the task, if a staff member, to participate in the process.

There are some specific tasks that non-profits should hire a consultant to do for them, and not try to do for themselves. These tasks are:

- **Develop a strategic plan** - While many organizations may have the tools and expertise to do this for them. Having someone within the organization do the strategic plan means that person isn't participating. Also, should there be any conflict involved in the development of the strategic plan or its implementation; this

could be magnified as a result of doing it in-house, as participants don't feel an unbiased person put together the plan.

- **Board Orientation and Board Development** - A consultant can clearly lay out the rules around roles and responsibilities of board members, as well as define conflicts of interest and explain the processes that the board must follow in specific circumstances. This is not always easy for an Executive Director to do. After all, it's pretty hard to be the one to tell your boss how to do their job. Also, when the information comes from a consultant who has nothing to gain by providing misinformation, boards often take it far more seriously than they do from their own Executive Director.
- **Policy development** - Often the amount of work that goes into creating an organization's policies, especially if they are a new organization and are only beginning to develop their policies. A significant amount of staff time can be spent on trying to develop those policies faster than the organization is

See 5 Tasks Your Non-Profit..... From Page 6

- changing and growing. If the organization hires a consultant to develop their policies, a consultant can usually offer them some options in the wording of and implementation of policies. Again, if this process comes from outside the organization, it is often more easily accepted than if it is done in-house.
- **An analysis of internal organizational processes** - Sometimes organizations need to do an analysis of how effective their internal processes are, and how they can be adjusted or updated to better serve the needs of the organization. This is the type of work that is ideal to hire a consultant to do.
- **Develop a Change Management Plan** - Change is difficult for

everyone. Some people adjust better and faster to change than others. Insiders in an organization may wish to speed up the change process because of other influences, or slow down the process as a result of staff reluctance. A consultant's job is to come in and analyze through consultations with the board, executive director, management team and staff, what the best timeline for change is, and how to best approach those changes.

NEED A CONSULTANT?

Call Envisioning the Future International at (204) 668-9505
Or email

izacharias@envisioningthefutureintl.ca



**Envisioning the
Future International (EFI)**
"Helping organizations plan their futures"

Envisioning the Future International
139 McPhail Street
Winnipeg, MB R2L 1N2

Phone:

(204) 668-9505

E-mail:

izacharias@envisioningthefutureintl.ca

Website:

<http://envisioningthefutureintl.ca/>

Looking for information on how to do something in the non-profit sector?

EFI's "Helpful Links" offers links to articles about how to do Fundraising, Human Resources Management and Social Media.

<http://envisioningthefutureintl.ca/membership/helpful-tips/>

(Note: You must register as a member to access this information. Membership is free.)