

**Outcome-Focused
Self Assessment**
*for
Pro Bono, Pro Se Assistance &
Other Small Legal Assistance
Programs*

Presented by The Resource for Great Programs
Equal Justice Conference
May 9, 2008

The Resource Methodology
Five Steps to Success

1. *Identify Your Beneficiaries*
2. *Identify Results Important to Beneficiaries*
3. *Gather Useful Information*
4. *Use the Information to Achieve Better Results*
5. *Identify Ways to Tell Your Story*

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Step 1

◆ **Identify Your Beneficiaries**

- *Clients, Customers, Recipients*
- **Other Stakeholders**
 - ✓ *Staff*
 - ✓ *The Board of Directors*
 - ✓ *Members of the Private Bar*
 - ✓ *Legislators and other Government Officials*
 - ✓ *Social Service Agencies*

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Step 2

◆ *Identify Results Important to Your Beneficiaries*

➤ *Intermediate Results....*

- ✓ *Increased Access to the Civil Justice System*
- ✓ *A better understanding of legal rights/responsibilities*
- ✓ *Increased flow of dollars for low-income families*
- ✓ *More affordable housing*
- ✓ *Protection from Domestic violence*
- ✓ *Strengthened Referral Systems*

➤ *Ultimate Results that Deliver on Mission....*

- ✓ *Full Access to the Civil Justice System*
- ✓ *Social Justice for All*
- ✓ *Seamless Network = Strong Support for the Low-Income Community*

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Step 3

◆ *Gather Useful Information*

➤ *Contact a sample of clients*

- ✓ *Client surveys by mail*
- ✓ *At conclusion of helpline call*
- ✓ *Follow-up interview by phone*

➤ *Run focus groups*

➤ *Apply benchmarks*

➤ *Collect results for individuals/families*

➤ *Observe pro se litigants in court*

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Step 4

◆ *Use the Information to Achieve Better Results*

➤ *How are we doing?*

- ✓ *Make the data work....Monitor progress toward goals*
- ✓ *Listen to stakeholder feedback*
- ✓ *Acknowledge staff/volunteers good work*

➤ *How can we improve?*

- ✓ *Identify opportunities to build upon results*
- ✓ *Strategize on meeting special population needs*
- ✓ *Assess training and technical assistance needs*
- ✓ *Test new strategies: What works? What doesn't?*

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Step 5

◆ Tell Your Exciting Story About Results

The Message...We:

- Deliver Solutions
- Make a Difference in People's Lives
- Improve the justice system
- Are effective partners in addressing community needs
- We Fulfill our Mission....Aligned with Yours

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We Get Results....

- ◆ Over 10,000 Individuals Benefited from Direct Representation
 - 1,675 people obtained, preserved, or increased food stamps
 - 2,728 people obtained/maintained custody of children
 - 2,420 people had their shelter preserved
 - 2,248 people obtained bankruptcy protection
 - 1,378 people obtained protection from domestic violence.
- ◆ Dollar Benefits Achieved for Clients – Total \$7,169,077
 - Social Security, SSI Benefits: \$6,221,984
 - Other Federal Benefits: \$391,838
 - Unemployment Compensation: \$4,050
 - Family Law - Child Support: \$258,763
 - Family Law - Alimony: \$900
 - Affirmative Judgements: \$45,739
 - Other Benefits: \$245,803

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Economic Impact on Communities

Economic Impact on Communities
Federally-supported benefits and grants brought into local communities by LSNV provide income and jobs for working Virginians.



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Practical Application of the Methodology

◆ *Results-Focused Assessment for:*

- *A Helpline*
- *A Pro Se Assistance Center*
- *A Pro Bono Project*
- *A General Civil Legal Aid Program*
- *A Technical Support Project*

MidPenn Legal Services “Help is on the Line” Project

- ◆ *The Beneficiaries*
- ◆ *The Anticipated Results*
- ◆ *The Useful Information*
- ◆ *Results Improvement*
- ◆ *Message Delivery*

Our vision is a single phone number providing a gateway for clients...to all of the resources of MidPenn Legal Services

Step 1 - The Program's Key Beneficiaries

- ◆ *The Low-Income Communities*
- ◆ *Community Stakeholders, including:*
 - *Social service agencies*
 - *The judiciary*
 - *Faith-based organizations*
 - *Employers*
 - *Private bar*
 - *Local government and legislators*
- ◆ *The Program*

Step 2 – The Anticipated Results

- ◆ *Increased access to expert legal advice & counsel*
- ◆ *Better deployment of advocate expertise*
- ◆ *Increased program capacity*
- ◆ *Strengthened and expanded partnerships that increase program visibility*
- ◆ *Identification of special population needs*

Step 3 - The Information Gathering Process

- ◆ *Individual client statistical data*
- ◆ *Client satisfaction surveys*
- ◆ *Follow-up client interviews*
- ◆ *Focus group meetings with stakeholders*
- ◆ *Helpline outcomes data*
- ◆ *Client wait time*
- ◆ *Baselines as performance indicators*

Step 4 - Efforts to Improve Results

Examples...

- ◆ *Map the geographical distribution of clients*
- ◆ *Analyze numbers/types of emergency cases*
- ◆ *Tweak the Helpline using objective feedback*

Step 5 - Share Success Stories

We Make a Difference...

Invest in our proven strategy!

- ◆ *Acknowledge staff's great work:*
 - *In the website*
 - *In the annual report*
 - *To the Board of Directors, funders, partners, other stakeholders*
- ◆ *Grasp opportunities to build upon accomplishments*
 - *Seek new partners and funders*

5,709 people benefited from legal advice and counsel. Thousands are empowered to help themselves.

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Our Methodology is about RESULTS

- 1. Identify Beneficiaries*
- 2. Identify RESULTS*
- 3. Gather Information*
- 4. Use Information to Improve RESULTS*
- 5. Share Your Successes*

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