

Proposal to WCET

I. The Consultants



Salvatore Alaimo is an Associate Professor in the School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Administration, at Grand Valley State University where he has taught for eleven years. He has nine years experience working for nonprofit organizations including the Girl Scouts of Greater Atlanta and the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta. He has also consulted for nonprofit organizations on an ad-hoc, part-time basis for twenty years. Some of his past clients include:

- University of Georgia
- Georgia Ballet
- International Rescue Committee
- Latin American Association
- MOKA
- Benjamin's Hope

Professor Alaimo has published book chapters in *Handbook of Research on Nonprofit Economics and Management*, *Volunteer Administration: Professional Practice*, *Leadership in Nonprofit Organizations: A Reference Handbook*, and *Jossey-Bass Reader on Nonprofit and Public Leadership*. He also has published journal articles in *New Directions for Evaluation*, *Grant Professionals Association Journal*, and *Journal of Nonprofit Education and Leadership*. Professor Alaimo earned his PhD studying philanthropy at Indiana University and he also has a Master's in Urban Studies with a concentration in Nonprofit Management from Georgia State University.

Strategic Planning Experience

- Lead strategic planning processes for:
 - Council of Volunteer Administrators for Metro Atlanta as their President
 - United Way VIP Alumni Association as strategic planning committee co-chair
 - Atlanta Area Evaluation Association as their President
 - American-Nepali Students' and Women's Educational Relief (ANSWER) as facilitator
 - West Michigan Evaluators Network (WMEN) as their co-founder
- Participated in strategic planning processes with:
 - Girl Scout Council of Atlanta
 - School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Administration at GVSU
 - Rice University's Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership Strategic Planning Task Force
- Taught PA-643, Strategic Management and Planning (graduate course) for 10 years.



Neal Buckwalter is an Associate Professor in the School of Public, Nonprofit and Health Administration, at Grand Valley State University where he has taught since 2012. Dr. Buckwalter holds a Master of Public Administration degree (Brigham Young University – Provo, UT) and a PhD in Public Affairs (Indiana University – Bloomington, IN). His research interests are broadly related to citizen engagement with public organizations, and the balance between organizational and democratic values. Professor Buckwalter has published articles in *Public Administration Review*, *Public Finance Review*, *Children and Youth Services Review*, and *PM: Public Management*. He teaches students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Currently he serves as faculty adviser for the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) student chapter at GVSU, where he works to connect students to careers in local government.

II. Core Principle

Our core principle in working with clients is “Synergetic Relationships for Successful Results (SR-4-SR).” This approach embodies a partnership in working together to accomplish the goals and objectives of the assignment. This also means more specifically:

- The client does not absolve responsibility as a valuable resource necessary for the success of the assignment.
- Communication between consultant and client is regular, clear, concise and honest.
- The client helps ensure they receive what the consultant has promised in the contract.
- The client takes advantage of the consultants’ expertise, guidance, advice, coaching, etc., which is automatically packaged in the assignment at no extra cost.
- The consultant sincerely desires that the client be successful and makes an effort to maximize the value of the assignment. The consultant is available for limited consultation, if necessary, at no cost after the contracted assignment has concluded.

III. Background – The Consultants’ Understanding of the Assignment

Our understanding of this assignment is derived from:

- A portfolio analysis conducted by graduate students Alhaji Karim, Victoria Keenan, and Ryan Martin
- Meetings with WCET on January 13 and 27
- Survey results from Patrick Waterman

WCET desires to engage in strategic planning and seeks consultants to facilitate the process. The reasons include, but are not limited to:

- Revisiting the mission of the organization and establishing the value proposition
- Establishing stakeholder alignment in the work and conveyed value across the organization
- Establishing a new vision to set the future direction
- Developing a new, viable revenue mix
- Responding and adapting to changes in technology and citizen preferences
- Aiding an effective transition in light of the station manager’s pending retirement

Generically, the overarching purpose of strategic planning is to enhance an organization’s public value. For WCET, this means enhancing their public value to the communities they serve. In satisfying this purpose an organization can reap multiple benefits from the planning process which may include:

- Promotion of strategic thinking, acting and learning in its stakeholders
- Improved decision making
- Enhanced organizational effectiveness, responsiveness and sustainability
- Enhanced legitimacy and credibility
- Strengthened stakeholder relationships
- Increased stakeholder valuing of work and overall morale

These benefits can collectively transform an organization in a positive way, but they will only be likely if the organization engages in deliberation and invests the necessary time and energy into the planning process.

We believe there is potential for WCET to transform itself and its public value by taking advantage of the direction and state of society with regard to local news programming and community civic engagement. This is exemplified by the following quote:

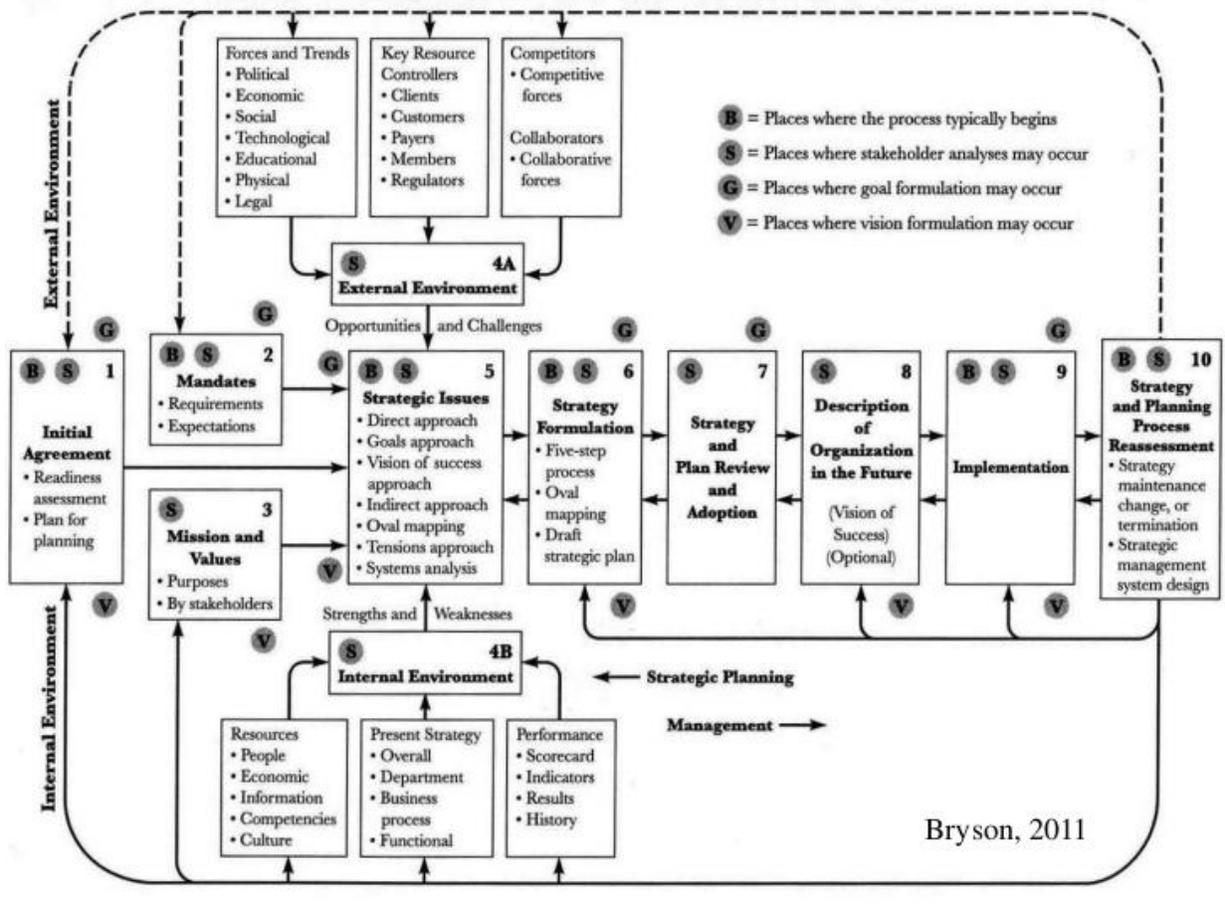
“There’s broad consensus that the market failure in local news is having devastating effects on civic participation and community welfare,” Galperin said. “But it’s more than an economic failure. It’s a social one, too. So, we need a holistic solution that’s broadly applicable but still adaptable enough to meet a community’s unique needs. That’s an info district. The process for setting up and governing a special district dedicated to local news and information requires the adoption of the best of journalism: community organizing, transparency, listening, and co-creation.” – Knight Foundation website

IV. Role and Scope of the Consultants' Services

Approach

We will draw from John Bryson's *Strategy Change Cycle* (shown below) to perform this assignment. The entire cycle will not be implemented because: 1) it already has largely driven the work of the graduate students in their portfolio analysis; and, 2) it is not a fit for WCET being an almost all-volunteer driven organization that will soon go through staff transition. However, we will still incorporate components of the cycle whenever timely, relevant, and feasible, and they will follow the recommended sequencing of the model.

Strategy Change Cycle



Process

1. WCET will first form their strategic planning team. We recommend the same stakeholders who have participated in the past few meetings, including volunteers who have shows on the station. **We also recommend adding 2-4 additional community members who are people who currently view WCET and/or use their services and those who do not.** A variety from the three communities is preferable but not required. These perspectives will be important for our discussion on value proposition.
2. We will facilitate four 2-hour meetings that need to be scheduled. Our initial recommended sequence is as follows, subject to change due to the progress of our discussion and use of time:
 - a. Meeting 1 – Introductions, overview of the process, mandates and mission
 - b. Meeting 2 – Review of existing SWOC Analysis (changes and additions), establishment of strategic issues
 - c. Meeting 3 – Strategy formulation with SMART check, Vision
 - d. Meeting 4 – Implementation and action plan

Please note:

- We may request that some committee work be performed between meetings if necessary in preparation for the next meeting.
- Meetings will be recorded and used to write the final report/plan.

Tangible Deliverables

- Facilitation of four (4) 2-hour planning sessions
- A final report including:
 - Results of planning sessions
 - Strategic plan (co-authored with some client input when necessary)
 - Recommendations

V. Timeline

As discussed in our January 27 meeting, WCET expressed the desire to conduct the four meetings over a two-month period. The reasons stated were to maintain stakeholder enthusiasm and momentum, and to enable WCET to implement part if not all of its plan before staff transition at the end of the year with Allan's retirement. The planning process will play a big part in the hiring of Allan's successor.

The scheduling of the four meetings can be done once WCET has formed its strategic planning committee. We estimate beginning this process in March and concluding it in early May with the delivery of the final report/plan. This timeline is estimated and subject to change based on the following factors:

- Time required to complete all work, including reports, meetings, etc.
- Availability of consultants
- Availability of WCET stakeholders and the timeliness of information provided to the consultants necessary to complete the work

VI. Agreement

The Consultants (Salvatore Alaimo and Neal Buckwalter) agree to perform the services and provide the deliverables outlined in this proposal. The Client (WCET) agrees to compensate each Consultant in the amount of \$750 (\$1,500 total) plus \$.50/mile each for their services. This compensation (\$1,500) plus mileage is due upon the delivery of the planning document . The Client understands that the progress of the study outlined in this proposal is subject to the contributions of the participating stakeholders and the time allotted for the process of the work, and the Consultant is held harmless for the results of the work.

We, the undersigned, understand the contents of this agreement and agree to its terms.

Consultant – Salvatore Alaimo

Client – WCET

Consultant – Neal Buckwalter

Date: _____

Date: _____