



Youth Community Connections
Minnesota's Statewide Afterschool Alliance

Key Strategies for Effectively Cultivating Corporate Support

Partnership with the Institute for a Competitive
Workforce, U.S. Chamber of Commerce



Overview

- Identify skills, knowledge and characteristics of a future workforce
- Steps for involving businesses
- Key resources for research



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Key Strategies for Effectively Cultivating Corporate Support

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Institute for a Competitive Workforce

An Affiliate of the
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Steps for Involving Businesses

- 1. **Contact** YCC, the Mentoring Partnership of Minnesota, or your local chamber of commerce.
- 2. **Learn** how we can help improve the youth workforce of your community.
- 3. **Assist** with an assessment of youth opportunities and needs in the area surrounding your business.
- 4. **Find** opportunities for the children of your employees to keep them engaged and your workers' minds at ease.
- 5. **Encourage** the development of new youth opportunities in your community.

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Contact - Enlisting New Partners

- Meet them where they are
 - Utilize existing business partners as a means to recruit new leaders into the fold
 - Former CEO/executives have many friends in the field.
 - It's also low-cost support and outreach.
 - Join your local chamber or participate in their events

Contact - Enlisting New Partners

- Elected officials can be great resources.
 - They are used to speaking with both educators and businesses. Utilize them as interpreters.
 - They have a stage they can use to grandstand for you.
 - They can be a key attraction to your events.

Learn – Key Points to Address

- There are several fundamental points you must address in making a successful pitch to a corporation (or elected official):
 - Who are you?
 - This must be the first question you answer.

Learn - Key Points to Address

- Why is this important? What's the need?
 - There must be a problem for every solution.
 - The problem must be in terms that matter to the corporation as well as the person.
 - Example: 2008 ACT test scores indicated only 56% of MN students are college-ready in math and only 40% in science.

Assist - Key Points to Address

- How do *you* solve the problem?
 - Once you've established the need, you must adequately explain how your programs turn things around.
 - Example: The correlation between high-quality after school programs and gains on math scores is twice as large as the gains from reducing class size.

Find - Key Points to Address

- How can the person in front of you help? (AKA, “the ask”)
 - Have a concrete ask in mind that’s appropriate for the person you’re talking to. If they aren’t the decision maker, ask if they could introduce you to that person.
 - Ask them – “What can I do to ensure your support?”
 - Be willing to work with them to meet your goals and theirs.

Find - Helping Them Help You

- Be creative in your ask for support. Money isn't always the best ask.
 - Are there many unused storefronts in your local shopping mall? That could be a great in-kind donation that will help reach children where they hang out already.
 - Asking for supplies, particularly from a manufacturer or retailer, can save your organization significant money, it comes at-cost to the corporation, and can provide positive, tangible exposure for their products.

Find - Helping Them Help You

- Do you have a printing or communications firm that is inclined to support you, but doesn't have cash to donate? Ask them to provide their services to you at-cost or free.
- Arm them with tools to advocate for you.
 - Create eye-catching, one-page documents and/or quick, pocket-sized reference cards that they can use when talking about your work.

Find - Sources of Funding

- There are three distinct corporate funding mechanisms employed.
 - Marketing: corporations might donate funds, goods, or services for positive PR and exposure
 - Corporate foundation: Typically have specific goals and missions for civic improvement, can be national or regional.
 - Regional/local corporate funding: Seek to improve relations in the areas they live and work

Find – Sources Funding

- Understanding the motivations of funding source will help you tailor your message appropriately and increase your odds of gaining support.
 - To have a chance at receiving support, you must meet the goals of the source.
 - Your ask and your message to a marketing department should be significantly different than to a foundation.

Encourage - Following Up

- Make sure you send a quick thank you note. It need not be involved.
- The thank you should include a short reminder of the problem and the solution.
- Offer to be a resource to them.

Encourage - Following Up

- Be persistent, but not pushy. Be patient, but not passive.
 - You may not get their support the first or second time around, or you may get minimal support. That doesn't mean give up!

Encourage - If Successful...

- If you do get a commitment for support:
 - Of course, say thank you!
 - Ask them if they'd like you to issue a press release announcing the efforts.
 - Thank them publicly whenever possible.
 - Give periodic updates on how their support is helping.

Encourage - If Successful...

- Make sure to keep the ball rolling.
 - Turn one-time support into indefinite support.
 - Never forget to communicate your success and never forget to make your supporters feel like it's *their* success.
 - Ask them to introduce you to their peers and let the cycle begin anew.

Remember to Use These Points!

- Employers need:
 - Critical thinking
 - Problem solving
 - Teamwork
 - Leadership
- Your programs provide all of these skills! Make sure you emphasize that!

Key Resources for Research

- Mott Foundation - www.newdayforlearning.org
- Afterschool Alliance - www.afterschoolalliance.org
- Partnership for Afterschool Education - www.pasesetter.com
- Center for Afterschool Education - www.afterschooled.org



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