

**NEW ENGLAND GRASSROOTS  
ENVIRONMENT FUND**  
*2009 NEGEF & TAC Grassroots Retreat Materials*

## **BUILDING YOUR ORGANIZATION**

Key tools that will strengthen your group

- **Purpose, mission**

A mission answers the question: Why does your group exist?

An effective mission statement is:

- concise
- inspirational
- motivational
- informative,
- and even emotional.
- The mission clearly states the purpose of the organization. It is forward-thinking, positive, and describes success. It reflects the organization's values, and clearly describes why the organization exists.
- A powerful mission statement attracts donors, volunteers, and community involvement. It helps the organization and its stakeholders to verify whether the group is doing its intended job and making the right decisions. It provides direction when the organization needs to adapt to new demands, helps the group to stay true to its primary purpose, and serves as a touchstone for decision making during times of conflict.
- A mission statement should be referred to continuously. It should be a living document and reassessed on a regular basis and not simply tucked away in a binder or used only for a grant application. It should be present everywhere: on letterhead, brochures, the Web site, and other official documents.

Sample of NEGEF's Mission statement:

*"The mission of the New England grassroots Environment Fund is to energize and nurture long-term civic engagement in local initiatives that create and maintain healthy safe just and environmentally sustainable communities."*

- **Vision, where do you hope to go in the future what will it look like?**

A vision statement is:

- A vivid idealized description of a desired outcome that inspires, energizes and helps you create a mental picture of your target.
- It could be a vision of a part of your organization, or the outcome of a project or goal.
- Vision statements describe outcomes that are five to ten years away, although some look even further out. It is a compelling image of the future
- A vision should be tied to/connected a group's mission statement

Sample of NEGEF's vision:

*"We envision New England as a place where every citizen is Inspired and empowered to participate in creating these communities – the places where we live work and play."*

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- **Goals more specific to the groups mission what you wish to accomplish from your efforts**

Goals can motivate and increase commitment in your group and represent the groups consensus, not one persons opinion. Goals are often done as part of a group's strategic plan as a group becomes more formalized as an organization.

Set goals for your organization together as a group:

- Brainstorm
- Prioritize
- Plans for action and objectives
- Action and follow through, then develop more new goals

Example:

1. A goal could be to increase and improve membership
2. An objective from that goal could include setting up a committee to work on recruitment and outreach etc
3. The committee could then brainstorm ideas and set up an action plan

- **POP Purpose, Outcomes and Process**

Before taking on any new action, try using POP in your group decision making process. Ask yourself the following three questions:

- Purpose: Why is it important?
- Outcomes: What is to be gained? (or: What do we most need to accomplish?)
- Process to be used: How will we accomplish the outcome?