



Conducting a Community Needs Assessment

No matter what segment of the community your organization resides in, an annual community needs assessment is a must. In a world of increasing competition, the internet has made it possible to purchase products and services from anywhere in the world, you must have a clear understanding of what your target market wants.

In this white paper, we will use the target market to define the audience your organization works with, as a nonprofit organization, this will be who you serve, as a for profit this will be who you sell to.

In order to conduct a community needs assessment, you must first clearly define your target market. In the last year, have any changes occurred within this market? Are you serving any new demographics? Have sales or requests for services declined or increased?

Once you know who your target market is, then you can begin to identify the needs of this market. Are you fully meeting their needs? Have you had requests for services or products you normally would not have? Are there any holes, or unmet needs, in the market that would make sense for your organization to fill?

Now that you have a list of unmet needs, it is time to complete the assessment. You must first determine if your target market believes these are indeed needs. Next, you must ask your target market how they would like these needs met. From this work, you can ask your target market what they feel the best solution is to meet their needs. This will provide you with the framework necessary to clearly move forward and create services and products that are truly needed and wanted.