COLLECTIVE+MIND

Welcome to Networks in Action!

We are a team of consultants committed to supporting networks, and the people who work for and with networks, to be more effective and impactful.

- We offer consulting, advisory services, strategic support, and diagnostic assessments to help networks accomplish their network's goals.
- We offer a community of practice and professional development for practitioners to build network management skills and capacity.
- We provide curated thought leadership, co-creation projects, and resources for networks and network practitioners.

Welcome! Please check in...

Name	Network/Organization	Where in the world are you today?	How are you feeling today?

Agenda for today

- Welcome and check-in
- Setting the scene (brief presentation)
- **What?:** Definitions (short breakouts)
- **So what?:** Implications (slightly longer breakouts)
- **Now what?:** Full group identification of key takeaways
- Closing

Network Operations: What?

What is your network's operational setup?

- Staff and volunteers, infrastructure resources to enable the network members to engage with national organisation; less resources to engage with each other
- A consulting/management firm for nonprofit associations and we handle operational needs for our clients
- An existing volunteer-based organization transitioning to a network approach.
- Work through volunteers
- Just started setting up networks in a large organization and facing operational challenges such as contracting community managers

Network Operations: So what?

What operational challenges do you struggle with?

- Knowledge management (7)
- Communications (4)
- IT/digital infrastructure (4)
- Network administration (3)
- Human resources (3)
- Fundraising/donor management (3)
- Convening/meeting support (2)
- Legal infrastructure (2)
- Accounting/financial management (1)
- Grants/contracts management (1)

Network Operations: Now what?

How do you currently meet your operational challenges?

- Time is the biggest challenge. We handle it with setting a fix date for regular meetings and whoever can attend, attends
- Joint fundraising initiatives; partnerships/collaboration/consortia etc, to share responsibilities for meeting and servicing meetings.
- High touch manual workarounds
- Internal processes to keep members in the know about policies, practices, etc (where to find things), but we should make them more robust
- Professional and organizational development
- We are supported by memberships and small donations. We could be more effective if we attracted more income. Since we're all-volunteer there are things that don't get done or don't get done well, if no volunteer steps up. Technology is not our forte. Wish we had help with our communications technology, especially.
- Outsourcing
- Test and crash...and learn

Questions? Reflections?

Network Operations: What?

How they operate, the functions they have
How a network operates - defined in different ways for different parameters for a network - e.g. how the network communicates within itself, how it recruits members, etc. - a few possible answers to this question

Slide 7 - heart of the operation of the network - seems like a reasonable prioritzation of issues - odd and reassuring to see that folks are having these same issues

Surprised that donor management and fundraising weren't more towards the top - perhaps recognition of network stewards providing resources

Knowledge management and communications are at the forefront of what folks seem to be struggling with

Who are we asking this question to? Connections between rankings of challenges and different types of setups as well as who is responding based on where they're positioned in the network

Continuous challenges to share info, get info from one part of hte network to another

Top 3 focused on supporting the network - the others are more about the organizational setup and managing/sustaining it

Network Operations: So what?

Who can do these things for a network? Do you need staff?
Staff changes the game for a volunteer network - requires others systems, resources, etc.

What if one entity steps up to support specific operations or host the network?
How do you share information if one organization hosts it?
Hosting a network can solve some problems and create others - maybe bottlenecks, conflicts of interest, issues of accountability
Where is the capacity that can be leveraged and how can we access it
- Internal to the network (via members)
- Or outside of the network – Hosting, staffing, outsourcing

Network Operations: Now what?

Better communications tools - e.g. find people within the network that can support

How did this go?

Please take our <u>very brief feedback survey</u> – **thank you!**

Upcoming Opportunities

Introduction to Network Management – **January 11th at 1pm US ET**
- Join us to learn about and discuss effective network management practices and skills

Network Needs and Leads - **January 18th at 1pm US ET (30 min)**

Introduction to Networks – **January 25th at 1pm US ET**
- Learn about what networks need to be effective and impactful

Networks in Action on Conflict Resolution - **February 15th at 10am US ET**

Check out our weekly newsletter for new content and opportunities!