

Best Practices in Community Development & Recreation

RTM 300

Key Questions

- What are best practices?
- How are they determined?
- What are the implications for recreation organizations?
- What are the implications for community development and recreation?

Best Practices

- Sometimes referred to as Best Practices, Exemplary Practices, Business Excellence.
- Benchmarking is a management tool that involves the pursuit of best practice examples

Benchmarking

- Historic practice
- Business practice
 - ♦ Xerox Story
 - ♦ 1979
 - ♦ Competition's machines

Benchmarking Definition

- Xerox: “a continuous, systematic process of evaluating companies recognized as industry leaders, to determine business and work processes that represent ‘best practices’ and establish rational performance goals” (Cross & Iqbal, 1995, p.4; Zairi, 1998, p.13-14).

Benchmarking

- *"**Benchmarking** is the process of identifying, understanding, and adapting outstanding practices from organizations anywhere in the world to help your organization improve its performance."*
- Benchmarking is a process of thinking, evaluation, and planning.

Benchmarking Survey

Jarrar & Zairi (2001) - global survey of 227 organizations in 32 countries

- **worldwide use:**
 - ♦ across various communitiy sectors/ gov/ ed/ industry
- **significant benefits:**
 - ♦ improving quality
 - ♦ increasing speed of service
 - ♦ improving processes
 - ♦ understanding customer requirements
 - ♦ setting internal standards
 - ♦ influencing strategic decision- making process
 - ♦ managing & deploying resources more effectively
 - ♦ improving personnel management
 - ♦ changing leadership style within the organization.

Benchmarking involves Others

- Internal versus competative benchmarking
- Who performs the program service very well and has process practices that are adaptable to your own organization?
- Who is the most compatible for you to benchmark with?
- Will they be inside or outside your field?

A Challenge of Benchmarking

Community orientation versus Competition

- Sharing of information because of the sensitivity of proprietary information (Camp, 1989; Spendolini, 1992).
- Non-controversial issues such as facility management, human resource practices, and industrial policy issues are often benchmarked.
- Common goals and professional support

Information Gathering

- A comprehensive benchmark study or an informal information gathering expedition?

Informal Systems

What do you think?

- Professional conferences?
- Professional networks?
- Email List Serve?
- Web site postings?
- Phone call?
- Site tours?
- Books and articles?

Formal Information Gathering Steps

Deming Cycle / Edward Deming

- Four steps
 - ♦ Plan
 - ♦ Do
 - ♦ Check
 - ♦ Act
 - ♦ The model is presented in a circle, which means that benchmarking is a continuous process.
- Rigor of evaluation instruments and tools

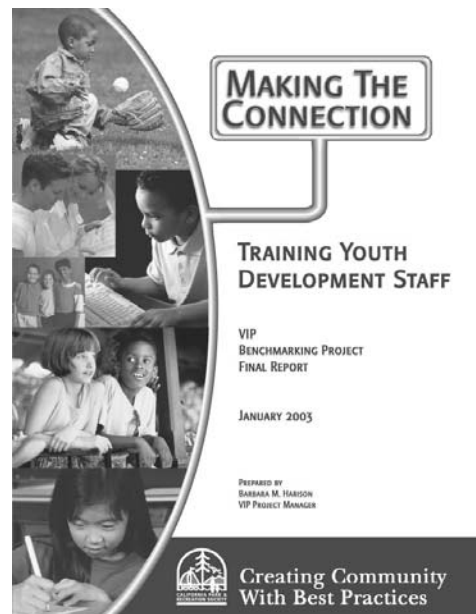
Recreation Agencies

A few examples

- **Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department** conducted a comprehensive evaluation study of the Oklahoma state parks system from 2003 to 2004
- **Washington D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation:** a benchmarking analysis of urban park districts is one of the major components of its 2005 Master Plan

Benchmark Report

- **California Recreation and Parks Society**



Discussion Topic

- What system would you put into your professional development plan?
- What are the benefits of the more formal benchmarking or best practices study?

Other references

- *Reference:*
 - ♦ *Yating Liang Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation at Missouri State University - article CPRS.*
-