**Putting technology know-how in the hands of Non-Profits**

# Technology Support:
# When Do You Need Outside Support

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# Topics

◆ When Do You Need Support

◆ What Type of Support Do You Need

◆ How to Find Support

◆ How to Make the Most of Consultants

# When Do You Need Support
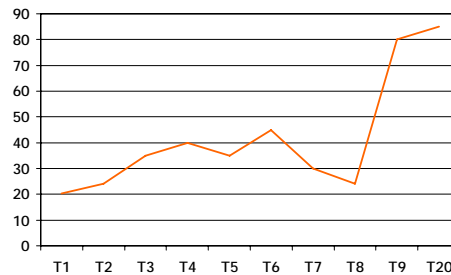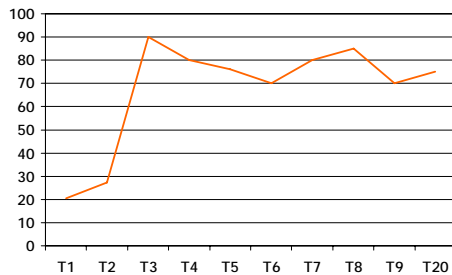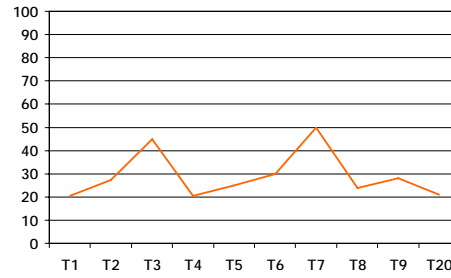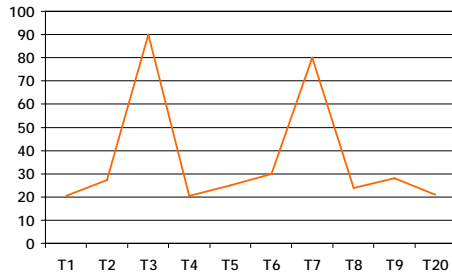
# Reasons Support Is Needed

- ◆ Staff Augmentation

- ◆ Efficiency

- ◆ Subject Matter Expertise

- ◆ Fresh Ideas

- ◆ Objectivity

# Supporting Peak Load

# Inefficiencies of Task Switching

◆ "Each employee spent only **11 minutes** on any given project before being interrupted and whisked off to do something else. What's more, each 11-minute project, was itself **fragmented into even shorter three-minute tasks** like answering e-mail messages, reading a Web page, or working on a spreadsheet. And each time a worker was distracted from a task, it would take, on average, **25 minutes to return** to that task."

*-From Meet the Life Hackers. Clive Thompson, The New York Times Magazine. October 16, 2005*



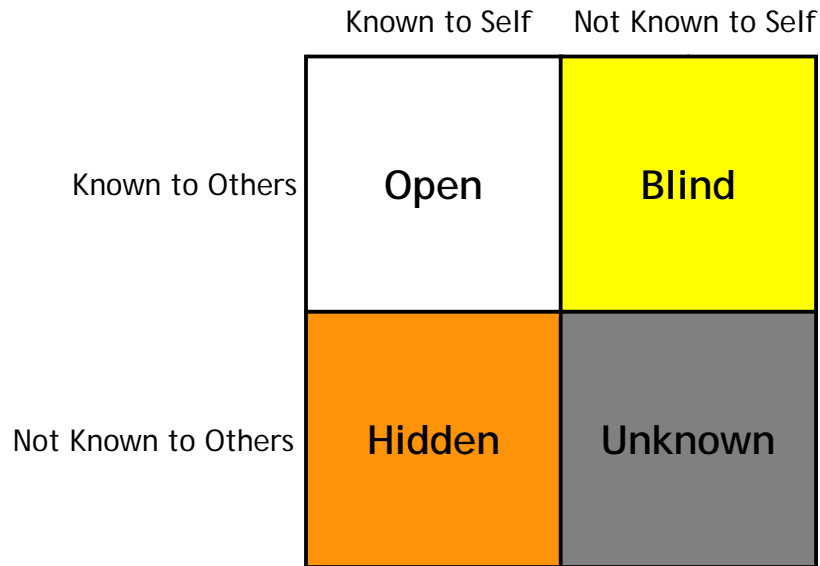Process Time = End Time - Start Time

- Task Duration, Multitasking with 10 Projects
- Task Duration, Multitasking with 4 Projects
- Task Duration, Multitasking with 2 Projects
- Task Duration, 1 Project Only

http://www.pdinstitute.com/soapbox/soapbox.html

# Expertise – JoHari Window

| | Known to Self | Not Known to Self |
|---|---|---|
| Known to Others | Open | Blind |
| Not Known to Others | Hidden | Unknown |

# Approach to Organizational Change

Strategy

Process

Holistic Approach
To Organizational
Change

People

Technology

# Creating a Technology Plan

1. Establish a direction

2. Assess your resources

3. Define your needs and explore solutions

4. Document priorities in a plan

5. Get funding

6. Implement the plan

http://www.techsoup.org/howto/articles/techplan/page2720.cfm

# When Not to Hire a Consultant

◆ To do a job your own people can do
  – Even if it's easier to get money for consultants than for headcount, your staff doesn't have time, or it's easier to go outside than find the resources inside.

◆ To repeat the failures of the past
  – If it never seems to work out with consultants, it might be that the root causes are a little closer to home.

◆ To take you to an unknown destination
  – Bring consultants in to help you figure out where you need to go. But don't ask them to take you there before you've figured out just where there is.

# What Type of Support Do You Need

# Typical Types of Support

- Staff Support

- Manufacturer or Vendor Support

- Reference and On-Line Resources

- Volunteers

- Temporary Staff

- Consultants

# Determine the Type of Support

♦ **What support do you already have?**
- Unrecognized staff skills
- Manufacturer warrantee and support lines
- On-line resources and reference materials

♦ **Do you need to hire?**
- More than 15 computers, you should consider hiring a part-time or full-time system administrator.

♦ **Is a volunteer appropriate?**
- Achievable task less than 20 hours over 2-3 months

♦ **Can a consultant meet your needs?**
- Common projects include: installing a network, creating a website or building a database.

http://www.techsoup.org/howto/articles/consultants/page1418.cfm?cg=searchterms&sg=consultant

# Staff vs. Consultants vs. Volunteers

| Staff | Consultant | Volunteer |
|---|---|---|
| Maintenance | Long-term | Short-term |
| Mission Critical | Urgent | Flexible |
| Baseline | Funded | No Funds |
| Ad hoc | Definite Scope | Achievable Tasks |
| Monitoring | Follow-Up | Execution |
| Generally Available | Scheduled | Variable Schedule |

# Staff vs. Consultants vs. Volunteers

- **Creating and managing a relational database** is almost always **too big** a project for a volunteer.

- **Interactive and time-sensitive web sites** now require a **greater time commitment** and follow-up than a volunteer can support.

- Volunteers are typically required to commit to **twenty hours of work over two to three months**.

http://www.techsoup.org/howto/articles/volunteers/page2736.cfm

# How to Find Support

# Finding Support

- ◆ Board and Funders
- ◆ Professional Networks
- ◆ TechSoup.org
- ◆ TechAtlas.org
- ◆ N-TEN (Nonprofit Technology Enterprise Network)
- ◆ TechFinder
  - – http://www.techsoup.org/techfinder/index.cfm
- ◆ Global eriders
  - – http://www.eriders.net/
- ◆ Grassroots.org
  - – http://www.grassroots.org/do/Tools

# Making the Most of Consultants

# Tips for Effectiveness

- ◆ The person is as important as the company
- ◆ Analyze the problem before the solution
- ◆ Clearly define the objectives
- ◆ Identify billing parameters upfront
- ◆ Monitor progress and "spend" rate
- ◆ Align to support and maximize time
- ◆ Agree to disagree
- ◆ Budget time to review work products
- ◆ *Communicate*

# Thank You