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Hayley Keys Rein
Hamilton College

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Agency Relations: Managing the Transition to Community Impact
at United Way of Broome County

BY

HAYLEY KEYS REIN
B.A., Hamilton College, 2009

CAPSTONE PROJECT

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State University of New York

2011

Kristina Lambright
Assistant Professor
Department of Public Administration
May 6, 2011

Fidaa Shehada
Assistant Professor
Department of Public Administration
May 6, 2011

Phill Ginter
Director of Allocations
United Way of Broome County
May 6, 2011

Executive Summary

An organization's stakeholders react to major vision changes in various ways. Although some may see the rationale behind changes and the potential for improvement, others will be more fearful and anxious. United Way of Broome County has experienced challenges with regard to historic partner agencies' apprehension and entitlement when implementing past vision changes. The research conducted in this study will help elucidate the challenges faced by other United Way organizations when transitioning to Community Impact model as well as the barriers to and factors promoting a successful transition. I conducted eight interviews with United Way representatives who have already completed the transition to Community Impact, using semi-structured interview questions. Through a qualitative analysis of the interview responses, I found that: a sense of entitlement of historic partner agencies is a common aspect of relationships between United Ways and historic partner agencies; most of the challenges United Ways experienced could be predicted before beginning the transition process; communication and allowing time for the transition are both essential in managing the transition to Community Impact; and some agencies' board members were less aware of the details of the change than agency executives. I have made several recommendations to United Way of Broome County based on my findings and a review of the academic literature on organizational change. These recommendations stress the importance of taking on the transition to Community Impact very slowly and deliberately, communicating the details and rationale behind Community Impact to historic partner agencies, giving historic partner agencies opportunities to be involved in the process toward Community Impact, and communicating with board members of historic partner agencies. These recommendations are intended to help ease the transition to the Community Impact system for the partner agencies as well as for United Way of Broome County.

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Introduction and Problem Statement

United Way of Broome County has a long history of providing financial aid to agencies throughout the community. Although the organization did not officially incorporate under its current name until 1973, other similar organizations that eventually merged to create the current organization have been present in Broome County since 1918. United Way of Broome County currently has thirty local partner agencies to which it distributes funding for programs, many of which have been working with the organization for many years. In fact, the five charter agencies associated with the Character Chest in 1933 remain partner agencies with the current United Way of Broome County. Several other current agencies became partners in 1939 and 1940 (“United Way of Broome County,” 2010a).

Because many of United Way of Broome County’s partners have associated with the organization for decades, they have experienced the great benefit that the United Way funding can provide. Historically, however, partner agencies were also wary of changes within the organization, and some agencies believed these changes could jeopardize their ability to receive funding for their programs. For example, beginning in the early 1990’s, distribution practices within the organization changed. Instead of requesting funding based on deficits the partner agencies predicted for the upcoming year, agencies were now required to request funding for specific programs (P. Ginter, personal communication, December 2, 2010). Also during this time, United Way conducted an assessment of community need, designating areas of action as high, medium, or low priority. Prior to this, each member agency had received funds based on past funding and the agency’s perception of community need. As part of the new system, United Way of Broome County only considered community need, rather than incorporating funding history (United Way of Broome County, 1992). An agency must prove with their grant

application, progress reports, and site visit that they are prepared to carry out a program effectively. These changes created unrest among some partner agencies who felt they were entitled to more funding than they had received (P. Ginter, personal communication, December 2, 2010); others expressed disagreement in the priority level which their programs received (United Way of Broome County, 1995).

It is important for United Way of Broome County to take into account this past tendency of partner agencies to be apprehensive about major vision change. Several years ago, United Way Worldwide began promoting a movement called Community Impact, under which local United Ways were encouraged to move beyond the traditional role of fundraiser and into the role of a community problem-solver, addressing the root causes of problems in the community. The Community Impact movement encompasses various important components, including stressing that funded programs provide measurable outcomes.

United Way currently has eight action areas under which an agency's programs may be placed. These action areas, under the more traditional model of fund distribution, are not identical to those of other United Way chapters—some may have more or fewer areas, and others may choose to focus on different aspects of the community's need. United Way Worldwide is encouraging local United Ways to adopt the building blocks of education, income, and health instead of current action areas, in order to work toward a consistent mission, to "improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of communities around the world to advance the common good" (United Way of Broome County, 2010b). Many local United Ways have already completed the transition, and United Way of Broome County is also in the process of aligning its action areas to those of the Community Impact model. Doing so would mean agencies would apply for grant money for programs under the three categories, rather than the eight action areas.

United Way of Broome County has already conducted two surveys on other United Way chapters' experiences with the Community Impact model (P. Ginter, December 2, 2010). These surveys brought to light the advantages of using the new system, but also addressed its challenges, including those involving agency relations. On the preliminary survey, one chapter which had fully implemented the new system responded that although some nonprofits "saw this impact journey as a way to deliver better results to the community," and that this improved their relationships with those nonprofits, other agencies "met the journey with resistance" and these agencies continue to "speak poorly of [their] journey and [act] like a victim" (United Way of Broome County, 2009b). On the follow-up survey, when responding to the question "Which of these groups did you find to be the most resistant to the Community Impact Model," 69% of the 29 responders selected the member/partner agencies (United Way of Broome County, 2009a). Agencies which are supported by United Way funding are often worried that their programs will lose funding if United Way priorities change, and therefore their reactions must be taken into account when beginning a transition to a new vision.

Research Question

This Capstone project will address the challenges of implementing necessary organizational change that will affect partner agencies; how can United Way of Broome County ease the agencies' transition to the new system? This question is important to the local United Way because the agencies are an important stakeholder in any major transitions that the organization decides to undertake. The agencies are, in a way, a target population of the United Way, and an organization must work to address the needs of those that will be affected by changes. Other United Way chapters and other nonprofit organizations that serve partner agencies through funding will benefit from the lessons learned in this study, as will other service-

based organizations whose clients are affected by any major changes that they make. Vision changes are often necessary in order to best address changing community needs and circumstances, and these changes have a much better chance of being successful if an organization has strategies for easing its partner agencies through these changes while minimizing undue conflict.

Literature Review

As a result of a quickly changing world, organizations experience change on a continuous basis. Leaders must adapt their organizations' policies in order to keep up with changes throughout the nonprofit sector, including advances in technology, new approaches to service, constraints on finances as a result of decreased funding, changes in demographics, competition between organizations, and new standards and regulations. These organizational changes may be small and incremental or much more sudden and far-reaching. They may be prompted by decisions within the organization, or may be mandated by those outside the organization. No matter the nature of the change, those involved with the organization will be affected and will react in varying ways. The leaders of the organizations must learn how to best respond to the evolving environment and to their stakeholders so as to create the best atmosphere for the new policies to be successful (Kezer, 2001; Leban, Klein, & Stone, 2006; Nelson & Quick, 2006). This review of the literature will discuss the importance of change in organizations, the common barriers to success, and the ways in which an organization can manage resistance to the change.

The Importance of Change

Although organizational change is not always advantageous, it can often help an organization become more effective. Because of the increased competition for clients, grant

funding, and support from public donors, organizations must become as competitive as they can be (Susanto, 2008; Kezer, 2001; Nelson & Quick, 2006). Nelson and Quick write:

The forces affecting organizations today are very real and will only accelerate the rate of change. And whether organizations become victims or beneficiaries of the rapid change occurring in the world today will depend on how effectively leaders can detect and respond to the driving forces in their environment. (p. 11)

For example, organizations have begun taking advantages of the opportunities that social media can provide. Once some nonprofits begin reaching out to a new group of donors through social media, organizations that are not willing to seek donors through this venue will be at a disadvantage. Organizations must learn to evolve with the shifting landscape of the nonprofit sector, so they can keep up with their competitors (Susanto, 2008; Kezer, 2001; Nelson and Quick, 2006). In order to become more effective, organizations must often update or completely change their systems and policies. Stakeholders are frequently reluctant to accept the necessary changes; this presents other challenges and barriers to the changes for nonprofit administrators.

Barriers to Change

In many cases, organizational changes have improved organizations' effectiveness and ability to fulfill their missions. According to Leban, Klein, and Stone (2006), however, up to 72% of change efforts end in discouraging results. Oftentimes, this is the result of organizations failing to prepare for the change enough for it to be successful. There are many important aspects of change readiness, but one of the most important is gaining an understanding of the varying opinions of stakeholders, or those affected by the proposed changes and working to create a situation that takes these opinions into account.

Although some stakeholders will support the proposed change, it is difficult to appease all of those affected. Stakeholders may resist moving away from the existing systems for many reasons. First, human beings are naturally comfortable with the status quo, especially when they are using a system that made them successful in the past (Leban et al., 2006; Trader-Leigh, 2002). It is difficult to change peoples' well-established habits, and the possibility of improvement in itself does not often ease their fear of the unknown future (Nelson & Quick, 2006; Ashford, 1988). Stakeholders may also fear that their organization's effectiveness may actually suffer, or that their own productivity or success will be threatened as a result of the changes (Nelson & Quick, 2006; Kezer, 2001). Another reason for stakeholders' resistance to change often occurs when an organization experiences a series of change initiatives that have resulted in major cost to the organization or failure. Stakeholders can quickly become cynical about future changes, and it is difficult to create enthusiasm after this cycle has begun (Leban et al., 2006). With organizations experiencing these and other barriers to change, it is essential to gain knowledge from failed change initiatives and understand how to best recruit stakeholder support. Leaders of organizations should expect that there will be resistance to their planned changes and should prepare their organizations to overcome this resistance as well as they can.

Overcoming These Barriers to Change

In managing the human factors related to organizational change, several authors stress the importance of planning ahead (Proehl, 2001; Leban et al., 2006). Proehl (2001) provides a series of questions that an organization should address prior to implementing the changes:

- What actions will be taken to deal with communication—before, during, and after the change?
- What steps will be taken to involve the members in the change effort?

- What will be done to address the emotional responses of organization members?
- What new skills, knowledge and attitudes are needed to make the change?
- What incentives will be created for organization members to make the change? (p. 25)

An organization that seeks to understand what the reactions to the change will be before implementing changes will be have a higher likelihood of success.

Various literature points to the importance of communication in managing resistance to change. Administrators should educate stakeholders about the details of the changes, and, even more importantly, the rationale behind these changes and how they align with the organization's mission (Proehl, 2001). This will allow them to understand why the proposed changes will benefit the organization. Furthermore, providing timely communication will help to prevent unfounded fears and potentially damaging rumors (Nelson & Quick, 2006; Trader-Leigh, 2002; Leban et al., 2006). It may also be beneficial to inform stakeholders about the possible negative consequences of implementing the changes. This will allow stakeholders to gain a greater understanding of the changes; stakeholders will experience less fear once they are aware of the reasons for the changes and how they will be affected (Nelson & Quick, 2006; Leban et al., 2006). Another benefit of promoting communication between the organization's leaders and the stakeholders is that it will promote a culture of trust (Nelson & Quick, 2006).

A final important method of achieving stakeholder support for planned changes is to allow them to participate in the change process (Nelson & Quick, 2006; Trader-Leigh, 2002; Argyris, 1994). According to Ashford (1988), "feelings of control or mastery play an important role among coping resources" (p.21). If an organization can engage stakeholders to improve the work that it does, or to improve the community, it has a better chance of receiving support for the needed changes. Stakeholders will gain a sense of ownership of new policies or systems, and as

they overcome their fears of the change, their commitment and engagement will provide for a greater chance of success (Gilley, Godek, & Gilley, 2009).

These methods of increasing stakeholder acceptance of the change are effective in many cases. Argyris (1993) notes, however, that they may not always be successful, and may result in undesirable consequences in some organizations. For instance, a stakeholder may see an administrator's efforts to include him or her in the change processes as coercive, whereas another organization might receive a much more positive reaction from stakeholders when utilizing the same strategies. Argyris' point makes it clear that administrators must be aware of the differences between their stakeholders and take care when deciding how to approach them about the changes. They must also be prepared for the fact that their best efforts may not be well-received by the stakeholders.

Although the ways in which stakeholders will react to upcoming changes cannot be completely predicted or controlled, administrators can take action to give their policies the best chance to succeed. In order to do this, organizations must work to create an atmosphere where stakeholders receive communication about upcoming changes and are able to participate in how these changes are created and carried out. These efforts will oftentimes pave the road for successful implementation of changes that will allow for more effective fulfillment of their missions.

Methodology

The literature on organizational change points to several key factors that may facilitate a successful change or hinder an organization's ability to manage a change. United Way organizations face a challenge when choosing to implement the Community Impact model, as many historic partner agencies are accustomed to previous systems and are reluctant to change.

In order to understand the ways in which United Way organizations worked with their historic partner agencies during the transition to Community Impact and to develop strategies to ease the transition for United Way of Broome County and its partner agencies, I collected data through interviews with various United Way representatives.

Data Collection

I conducted interviews with representatives from eight United Ways throughout the United States in order to gain insight into the effects of the transition to Community Impact (specifically, the change to funding programs based on the Building Blocks of Education, Income, and Health) on historic partner agencies. I chose to focus on representatives of United Way organizations, rather than representatives from United Way of Broome County member agencies, as I was particularly interested in the strategies that had been used to ease this particular transition to Community Impact, with which United Way representatives are more familiar. I selected the potential participants from a list of respondents to a previous survey on Community Impact carried out by United Way of Broome County in 2009. Each of the chosen respondents had already begun (or completed) the process of implementing the Community Impact model at this time, and each respondent to the survey noted they would be willing to be contacted with further questions.

On the previous United Way Follow-Up Survey (2009), one of the questions posed to the respondents asked how the organizations rated the impact of the move to Community Impact on agency relations. Respondents chose between “negative impact,” “no impact,” “slight positive impact,” “moderate positive impact,” and “very positive effect.” I chose to focus on four United Ways who noted that the change had had a negative impact on agency relations, and four United

Ways who noted the change had led to some degree of a positive impact on their relationships with agencies.

In order to gain knowledge that would be most applicable to United Way of Broome County, I chose to interview United Way organizations that are most similar to the local organization. I matched the survey respondents to a list of benchmark United Ways, provided by United Way of Broome County; these organizations are most similar to United Way of Broome County in size, campaign revenue, and community structure. Five of the organizations meeting the previously stated qualifications were listed in the benchmark list; for the other three research subjects, I chose organizations that had similar campaign revenue and community size to United Way of Broome County. In order to ensure the validity of the data, I conducted interviews with representatives who had experience with the organization's transition to Community Impact—this included representatives from the organizations' Community Impact or Community Investment departments. These representatives gave their verbal consent prior to the beginning of the interview and were informed about their rights as participants in human subjects research. I guaranteed their confidentiality in my written work, presentations, and class discussions.

Because I needed to gain an in-depth understanding of the factors involved with Community Impact and the organizations' historic partner agencies, I chose semi-structured interview questions. The interviews lasted for approximately thirty minutes, and the questions focused on the organization's experiences with historic partners in the past, their preparations for the transition to Community Impact, and the partner agencies reactions to the changes. The interview format allowed for a much more in-depth understanding of the factors at work than surveys with closed-ended questions would; this is a strength of the chosen method.

Data Analysis

Using a thematic analysis of the written transcripts of the eight interviews, I compiled the data and identified common themes between the interviews. I divided these themes into three categories: barriers to a successful transition, factors promoting a successful transition (in the organizations that I interviewed), and suggestions to further ease the transition (Appendix B). This format helped me note themes that the organization representatives felt were relevant in creating an ideal situation to implement the change to Community Impact, as well as what they believed could have been improved in their own approaches to change with regard to their historic partner agencies. The similarities in responses indicate that the themes are important in creating an atmosphere where a United Way can successfully guide its partner agencies through a transition to Community Impact. A comparison to these key concepts to the topics found in the literature surrounding organizational change supports the results of the thematic analysis.

Limitations

An important limitation of this type of analysis is that the group chosen to be interviewed is not necessarily representative of all United Way organizations. This group is a sample chosen from a group that chose to respond to a pre-existing survey (which has an unknown sample size). Secondly, it would be difficult to get all viewpoints on the subject of how this organizational change affects partner agencies without asking a much broader sample of participants. Because the interview questions address a topic that could be considered sensitive, representatives may have also been wary of answering questions completely honestly. Finally, if it had been feasible given my time constraints, I would have liked to also interview representatives of United Way partner agencies, in order to gain a broader understanding of their understanding of United Way transitions and relationships.

Findings

After analyzing the interview data, I noted several common themes in the results of the analysis, which I used to guide the development of several findings that are relevant to the initial research question: how can United Way of Broome County ease their historic partner agencies' transitions to the Community Impact system? These findings reflect common challenges that the organizations experience when working with partner agencies during a transition. All United Way representatives noted that they experienced some degree of entitlement from their historic partner agencies. Most organizations were able to predict the challenges that they would face while moving to Community Impact, and all respondents believed that communication was essential in creating a more ideal situation for the transition. Finally, many of the United Ways I spoke with noted that agencies' board members were not always as aware of the upcoming changes as the agency staff were.

Finding #1: A sense of entitlement of historic partner agencies is a common aspect of relationships between United Ways and historic partner agencies.

All United Way organizations participating in interviews noted that their agencies felt some degree of entitlement to receive United Way funding. Many underscored this concept in their responses, noting that entitlement a major issue that must be addressed with implementing the change to Community Impact. Interestingly, six of the United Ways interviewed felt that their relationships with their agencies had either returned to their pre-Community Impact state—or that agency relations had improved. Since all United Way organizations experienced some degree of agency entitlement during the change, the entitlement did not seem to be a marker of whether or not a United Way successfully negotiated the transition.

Three of the respondents noted that, while the historic partner agencies' needs should be addressed throughout this whole process, United Ways should move forward with the process and understand that a great deal of the agency uneasiness (or in some cases resentment) will be temporary. One of the respondents noted: "It was a difficult transition, but other funders are asking them for the same things. They are realizing that it puts them in a better position to be competitive." According to a different respondent, "I don't think relationships have been affected in a long-term negative way. For the most part, we are coming through the process and agencies are learning that we have to make it work. It looks like it has opened up more dialogue—us understanding what they do."

Finding #2: Most of the challenges experienced in the transition process, with regard to relationships with partner agencies, can be predicted before beginning the transition process.

Organizations faced various challenges throughout the transition, with regard to their historic partner agencies. Seven of the respondents, however, noted that their organizations predicted the main challenges that they would face. Although one United Way was surprised by the amount of resistance to the change and contention from historic partner agencies, most were met with the challenges that they were expecting from the agencies. This is important to note, because United Ways can begin preparing for these challenges and decide how to best manage them prior to instituting the changes.

Four of the United Ways sought the expertise of their historic partner agencies throughout the planning process, whether in work groups or advisory groups. Although one United Way organization did not receive agency support, even though the agencies had a stake in the process to Community Impact, involving the agencies in the process was beneficial in most

instances. Two respondents noted that the agencies gained a greater understanding of Community Impact and how it would affect their work.

Finding #3: Communication is essential in managing the transition to Community Impact.

Involving the partner agencies in the transition process was one way in which United Ways used communication to ease agencies through the changes. All United Way representatives were in agreement with regard to the importance of communication. Three respondents noted that some partner agencies were not completely clear on the details of Community Impact, despite various United Way educational efforts; these representatives still believed that communication lessened the fear of the changes. One respondent noted that “change is difficult, and you can’t communicate too much. We made sure agencies understood not just ‘this is what we’re doing,’ but also ‘this is why we’re doing it.’” Five other respondents noted the importance of detailing the rationale for the change as well as communicating throughout the process. United Way executive directors and other representatives held group meetings for the agency executives, visited the agencies to touch base, and called agency representatives to see if there were questions and concerns. Two of the United Ways mentioned that they maintained positive relationships with local press sources and provided them with up-to-date information about the transition.

Finding #4: Organizations that allowed more time for the transition were more successful in maintaining relationships with their agencies.

Another important theme found throughout the responses was the importance of allowing enough time for a successful transition. Those organizations that were most successful in managing their relationships with their agencies noted that they took a very slow approach to the transition and communicated the changes to the agencies throughout the process. These three

agencies underscored that this gave the agencies time to adjust to the upcoming changes, and lessened the chance of active resistance. When the United Ways moved to Community Impact, seven respondents noted that they were faced with agency programs (or agencies) that no longer fit their priorities or outcomes. These organizations were understanding of the fact that this is a difficult situation for an agency to be in, and six respondents noted that they were careful to give the agencies time to adjust their programs, apply under different outcomes, or prepare for the loss of funding. Five of the United Ways stressed the importance of meeting personally with these agencies that would be losing funding very early in the process, before the agencies heard the news from other sources. Two of the United Ways noted that they set aside some funds to be used as transitional funding for programs that no longer fit the priorities and would be phased out of the allocations process.

Finding #5: Although executive directors at agencies were generally aware of the changes and how they would affect the grant-seeking process, some agencies' board members were less aware.

Although communication with agency executives was extremely important in creating an ideal situation for change, the most common response among United Way representatives when asked how they could have improved upon their transition referenced communicating with board members as well. Four respondents noted that, although they were eventually successful in bringing across the changes associated with Community Impact and its potential effects to executive directors and other leaders employed by the agencies, the agencies' boards of directors did not always have the same understanding. According to one respondent, "We were only communicating with executive directors, not with their boards. I would suggest that you have very regular communications with boards all along the way. Some executive directors kept them

posted, some not. It was mostly board members who didn't know the facts of the changes and were most upset about them."

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, I have made four recommendations to United Way of Broome County as they prepare to make further changes toward Community Impact.

Recommendation #1: Take on a transition to Community Impact very slowly and deliberately, informing historic partner agencies of upcoming changes along the way.

Respondents noted that allowing substantial time to prepare for and implement Community Impact gave their historic partner agencies time to gain an understanding of Community Impact and to prepare for the changes. The literature further supports this claim; various authors noted that organizations who do not prepare for change are unlikely to be successful. I recommend that United Way of Broome County begin to prepare for major changes to allocations practices and priorities about a year in advance, allowing for time to address any unforeseen issues. Proehl's (2001) set of questions may provide a basis for understanding how the changes will affect the historic partner agencies, and will allow United Way of Broome County to be prepared to address challenges: "What actions will be taken to deal with communication—before, during, and after the change? What steps will be taken to involve the members in the change effort? What will be done to address the emotional responses of organization members? What new skills, knowledge and attitudes are needed to make the change? What incentives will be created for organization members to make the change?" (p. 25)

Preparing for the upcoming changes well in advance will allow United Way of Broome County to communicate with partner agencies throughout the process. This way, agencies will be better able to come to terms with how the changes will affect them and their programs. Those

with programs that may not fit updated United Way priorities will also have time to make modifications in their applications or to seek alternate funding sources.

Recommendation #2: Communicate the details and rationale behind Community Impact to historic partner agencies continuously, using multiple methods.

One common theme throughout the interviews was the importance of communication with partner agencies. United Way of Broome County should communicate the details of Community Impact throughout the planning and transition process, stressing the rationale of the changes and how partner agencies will be affected. I recommend a variety of formal and informal meetings, including a preliminary informational sessions about the changes, “brown-bag lunch” sessions in which agencies can ask questions and voice concerns about the changes throughout the process, and individual meetings with agency representatives. Agencies will also be more accepting of the changes if they understand the reasons for them; United Way of Broome County should be specific about why the changes are necessary. For example, the organization should describe how any changing priorities are in the best interest of the needs of the community, and how these needs were assessed. Agencies who feel that they understand all details of upcoming changes will be less apprehensive about the transition and may be more willing to provide constructive opinions about the changes.

Recommendation #3: Give historic partner agencies opportunities to be involved in the process toward Community Impact and to voice their concerns about the process.

Several of the respondents noted that their organizations benefitted from involving partner agencies in the planning process. Although it is impossible to satisfy all stakeholders when implementing the change to Community Impact, United Way of Broome County should seek out agency input during the planning process. Not only will doing so provide opportunities

for open communication, it will also allow for a variety of viewpoints to be included. It is important to understand how the changes will impact the agencies' work, and a Community Impact system that takes agencies' viewpoints into account will have a better chance of being successful. I recommend that United Way of Broome County create an advisory board during the early stages of the planning process, including representatives from various local agencies. Representatives that choose to participate in the planning will retain a sense of control over the direction in which the United Way is moving and will have a stake in the success of Community Impact.

Recommendation #4: Communicate with board members of affected historic partner agencies throughout the entire transition process.

Decision-makers at partner agencies must be aware of the changes and their implications in order for the transition to Community Impact to be successful. One of the most common ways in which United Way representatives thought they could have improved their own transitions was to communicate not only with agency executives, but also with the boards of the agencies. I recommend that United Way of Broome County seek to educate board members of historic partner agencies throughout the process through personal contact at agency board meetings. In this way, the United Way can help ensure that all parts of an agency's leadership have the same understanding of the upcoming changes.

Conclusion

A common theme throughout the interview responses was the importance of implementing the necessary changes, with the understanding that they would benefit the community in the long run. Agencies will not always be accepting of major changes, and some United Ways will have an easier transition period than others based solely on the culture of the

community and prior relationships with agencies. It is important to note that most of the contention between United Ways and their agencies was resolved after the transition was completed and both parties adapted to the changes. United Way of Broome County should be prepared for some fear, or even resistance from agencies; however, by using the above recommendations, the organization will be better prepared to create an ideal atmosphere for change.

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Appendix A: Interview Instrument

1. Please tell me about your United Way and community.
2. Describe your current fund distribution process?
 - How did you go about developing your local priorities? Do you use the building blocks of Education, Income, and Health?
3. Tell me about how your relationships with partner agencies have been, historically?
 - Have many of the partner agencies been working with you for many years?
 - In your experience, has entitlement been an issue?
4. When did you start the transition to the Community Impact system?
5. How did historic partner agencies react to the changes to Community Impact, initially?
6. What were some methods you used to ease the agencies through the transition?
 - To what extent do you feel that these were effective?
7. What were some unexpected challenges to working with the historic partner agencies during the transition period?
8. How do you think your relationships with the historic partner agencies have been affected as a result of the transition to the Community Impact system?
9. What have you learned from the process?
 - What methods will you use again if you face future changes?
 - What will you do differently?
10. Do you have any other insight to add about how your transitions affected the historic partner agencies?
11. Do you have any questions for me?

Appendix B: Thematic Summary of Interview Findings

<u>Category</u>	<u>Pattern</u>	<u>of Response</u>
Barriers to a Successful Transition		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agencies' sense of entitlement - Anger about loss of program funding - Fear of losing more funding in the future - Lack of agency understanding about Community Impact - Agencies understood the theory behind CI, but not what it meant for them in practice - In a small community, solidarity between agencies. Fear or miscommunications spread quickly - Lack of communication between directors of agencies and their boards about realities of CI
Factors Promoting a Successful Transition		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transparency and communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Agencies informed of planned changes well in advance o Detailed changes and potential effects o United Way representatives were specific about new requirements of agencies and how to be successful o Ongoing conversations with agency representatives o Described rationale for new system and how it would help the community and agencies grow stronger o Provided written notification/detailed description of changes - Accounting for the needs of agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Agency representatives invited to participate in advisory or work groups to help prepare for new system o Provided transitional funding for programs that no longer fit the priorities o Reserved some funding to fill gaps in allocations - Gained support from community news sources - Implemented the change process slowly, and planned well in advance

Suggestions to Further Ease the Transition

- Ongoing communication with agencies' boards
- Consider the needs of the agencies, but spend equal time considering how not implementing the system will affect the community
- Know that while some agencies will accept the changes more willingly, there will be others who are more resistant
- Understand that a great deal of the resistance is temporary

Appendix C: Human Subjects Research Review Approval

Date: March 2, 2011

To: Hayley Rein, MPA

From: Anne M. Casella, CIP Administrator
Hum an Subjects Research Review Committee

Subject: Human Subjects Research Approval
Protocol Number: 1637-11
Protocol title: *Managing Agency Relations Through the Transition to the Community Impact System at United Way of Broome County*

Your project identified above was reviewed by the HSRRC and has received an Exempt approval pursuant to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulations, 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) .

An exempt status signifies that you will not be required to submit a Continuing Review application as long as your project involving human subjects remains unchanged. If your project undergoes any changes these changes must be reported to our office prior to implementation, using the form listed below:

http://humansubjects.binghamton.edu/2009_Forms/012_Modification%20Form.rtf

Principal Investigators or any individual involved in the research must report any problems involving the conduct of the study or subject participation. Any problems involving recruitment and consent processes or any deviations from the approved protocol should be reported in writing within five (5) business days as outlined in Binghamton University, Human Subjects Research Review Office, Policy and Procedures IX.F.1 Unanticipated Problems/adverse events/complaints. We also require that the following form be submitted:

<http://humansubjects.binghamton.edu/Forms/Forms/Adverse%20Event%20Form.rtf>

University policy requires you to maintain as a part of your records, any documents pertaining to the use of human subjects in your research. This includes any information or materials conveyed to, and received from, the subjects, as well as any executed consent forms, data and analysis results. These records must be maintained for at least six years after project completion or termination. If this is a funded project, you should be aware that these records are subject to inspection and review by authorized representative of the University, State and Federal governments.

Please notify this office when your project is complete by completing and forwarding to our office the following form:

<http://humansubjects.binghamton.edu/Forms/Forms/Protocol%20Closure%20Form.rtf>

Upon notification we will close the above referenced file. Any reactivation of the project will require a new application.

This documentation is being provided to you via email. A hard copy will not be mailed unless you request us to do so.

Thank you for your cooperation, I wish you success in your research, and please do not hesitate to contact our office if you have any questions or require further assistance.

Cc: file
Kristina Lambright

Anne M. Casella, CIP
Administrator, Human Subjects Research Review

Appendix D: Preliminary E-Mail to Interview Subjects

Dear (Name of United Way Representative),

My name is Hayley Rein, and I am a Master's of Public Administration student at Binghamton University. This semester, I am working on my Capstone project, and I was hoping that you might be interested in participating in a voluntary interview as part of the research for my project.

Last summer, I was an intern at United Way of Broome County. The organization is planning for a transition to the Community Impact system, and during my time as an intern, I became interested in how this transition might affect relationships with Partner Agencies. I have studied the responses from an existing survey of other United Ways, conducted by United Way of Broome County, and I am contacting some of the respondents who noted that they would be willing to answer follow-up questions.

I would like to ask you some questions via telephone about your own experiences with the transition to Community Impact, and its effects on your Partner Agencies. If you decide to participate in the interview, you are not obligated to answer all questions, and may stop at any time. Furthermore, I would be happy to provide a copy of my final project to United Way of _____, so that your organization is able to see the results of my research. Your responses will be anonymous in my written work, presentations, and discussion about the topic with supervisors and colleagues.

If you have any additional questions about my research, I will be happy to answer them. Would you be willing to set up a time for an interview? Ideally, I would like to conduct the interviews throughout March or early to mid April. Thank you for your time; I hope to hear from you soon!

Best,
Hayley Rein

Appendix E: Verbal Consent Script

Hello, Mr./Ms. _____. This is Hayley Rein from the MPA department at Binghamton University. Thank you for agreeing to set up this interview with me. Before we start the interview, I need to tell you about your rights in order to obtain informed consent.

I have contacted you for an interview because you are a representative of a United Way organization that has agreed to be contacted with further questions regarding the transition to the Community Impact System. Through my research, I hope to gain insight on how this process affects long-term, historic partner agencies, and to provide recommendations to United Way of Broome County on how to ease their own transitions.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice your further relations with United Way of Broome County or with Binghamton University in any way. If you decide to participate, you are not obligated to answer all questions, and may stop at any time.

If you agree, I would like to ask you some questions about your own transition to Community Impact, with regard to your partner agencies. Your responses will be anonymous in my written work, presentations, and class discussions. Only I will have access to your identifying information, such as your name and organization name.

If you have any additional questions later, I will be happy to answer them. If at any time you have questions concerning your rights as a Human Research subject, you may call Binghamton University's Human Subject's Research Committee at (607) 777-3818.

Do you have any questions about the research project? May I proceed with the first question?