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**ESC Peer Sharing Call – February 1, 2018**

**Organizational Visibility: How do clients, funders, volunteer applicants find ESC affiliates to connect with us?"**

Participants: Craig Kowalski (ESCC) Presiding, Felicity Palmer (ESCSC), Darlyne Koretos (ESC-US), Ulea Lago (ESCNE), Julie Crockford (ESCNE),Anne Saffer (ESCT)

Darlyne Koretos: Sees this as no different than any aspect of marketing. You should have a marketing plan, including five points: What are your challenges, what do you want to achieve, how do you want to get there, cost/timing/plan, measure your results. If you are doing something all the time, and letting people know about it, you will be visible. Social media is important, at least Facebook and LinkedIn, and update them 3 times a week. Don’t start something if you’re not going to keep it up. Blogs on your website can be very effective. How do you want to be known? Leverage the ESC-US brand. Interview clients after you complete a project and share what you get out of those interviews. (Case histories) – Send those out to everyone you can.

Felicity Palmer: 18 months ago, they had a volunteer consultant do a competitive analysis, interviewing former clients. Those clients felt that ESCSC was not visible enough and needed to get more exposure. They also learned that their own clients did not know the range of their services. They responded by ordering a pull-up banner that listed bullets of their services. They saw an immediate response. Seconded the social media concept. They are using Facebook and Twitter, less so on LinkedIn. They have created LinkedIn groups of their graduates. They refreshed their marketing materials. Having a really good graphic designer who understands nonprofit budgets is very useful. They use a folder with letter-size inserts that detail their services, which are in a format which they can edit in-house. Encourage ESC staff and board to participate more in externally-facing opportunities, put their hand up, do presentations etc.

Craig suggested asking your consultants to update their own LinkedIn profile to show that they are an ESC volunteer. He also said updating your posting on Volunteer Match brings you back up to the top of the list.

Anne Saffer: She is getting volunteers from LinkedIn through a partnership it has with Volunteer Match. Over the winter break she employed three college students to help her build a data base. They pulled organizations from GuideStar and sorted them by size, community, etc. and they now have over 1000 nonprofits in their data base. They are offering nonprofit staff training and got 60 responses for grant-writing, with at least 25 new to them. What data base software did you use? Collecting it on Mail Chimp and will move it to Sales Force. Do you charge for your trainings? They are charging $50, using Brown Paper Tickets, and finding them very easy to work with. The processing fee adds $3 to the attendee cost. Brown is very responsive. Do you pay your interns? Yes. She gets them from Handshake, which places students. She paid $15 per hour, met them once and they worked from home. She works with Chambers of Commerce in their area to promote trainings. Some Chambers may do nonprofit events. They presented monthly using a consultant to present on a topic. This gets them their Chamber membership for free.

Paul: Some things that worked: 1) awarding 1 free project (and announce winner) gets our name and product line out in front of a large audience several times, during promotion; 2) find way to be on agenda at other nonprofit events (offer to do intros or invocation; etc.) 3) announce project completions (client and consultant team, but not details of project to respect confidentiality.)

Craig: Publicize each project in your newsletter. Send volunteers to events even if you have to buy their ticket, and encourage them to introduce themselves. He sees value in emphasizing our affiliation with a national network, in terms of building credibility. Darlyne reminded us to have ESC-US on your website.

Felicity said their website needs a bit of refreshing now that their print materials have been upgraded.

Re social media: Do most handle it as a staff function? That seems to be the case. Felicity said they have a coordinator who does most of their social media. They also use an intern. It’s important that an intern or volunteer really understands their style, terminology, etc. Darlyne recommended Hoote Suite which can post pre-prepared stories on Facebook by a schedule. Julie mentioned another organization which gets lots of volunteers posting, which makes them look like a larger organization. She has just hired a part-time communications coordinator. They are doing a free workshop on getting your story straight.

Felicity said they don’t have a formal marketing plan but that is an item in their strategic plan goals. This will come in sequence among a number of steps they will be taking. Darlyne asked if they have a photo library. They have created testimonial videos, sometimes just a 30-second standup interview of someone at an event. They’ve also made longer videos of clients telling their story of being an ESC client and put those up on sites and embed in their emails.

Darlyne recommended a book she has found: Breakthrough Nonprofit Branding.

Craig thanked Paul for taking notes. Darlyne will post them on the website. We are working on a way to gather materials so people can look at them during these calls. Dates are set for this year’s calls but we are still receiving topics. Craig will circulate the intake list to gather any more topics anyone may have.

Future calls: First Thursdays of April, June, August, October, December, all 2:30 pm ET.