

Practical Tips for growing your project

Set the scene:

The Boaz story:

Stage 1: Conception / Planting the seed & incubation

- **What? (Clear Vision)– end destitution (and mission) by providing accommodation**
- **Where? (geographical area) – Manchester conurbation**
- **How? Provision of accommodation (and support) by hosting, housing.....**
- **Who? Volunteers or staff? Who do you know?**

Stage 2: BIRTH & Infancy / initial sprouting & rapid growth

- **Often a response to a need**
- **Often practice precedes policies**
- **Often one or two doing everything (some things that are out of their comfort zone / not in their skill set)**
- **Trial and error / Lots of trials and lots of errors!**

Stage 3: CHILDHOOD - consolidation / evaluation / careful nurture / watch it doesn't run off / can easily get gangly

Be prepared to prune if you want a tree that lasts and bears fruit

Project evaluation – awayday – outside consultant – strategy for growth & analysis of needs

Stage 4: ADOLESCENCE: Established, quite strong, semi-mature but not entirely self-sustaining! Can be well known and worthy of respect. Much more difficult to ignore. Bearing fruit

Stage 5: ADULTHOOD / MATURITY: you can let go! Delivered, fully self-sustainable into the wide world. Tree won't fall unless there's a heck of a storm – well rooted and stable.

1. Know your vision and work out your mission strategy.

- You can't do everything. What is core, and what is peripheral?
- Find out who else is doing stuff? Unless it's really bad, don't duplicate! Fill gaps, don't get in the way of good services.
- Don't take on lots of different things – you will do some badly. You can't do everything.

2. Don't wait until you have all the funding to get started

- You may still be waiting in the next century
- People support things they can see, not some concept

3. Plan well

- If necessary, bring someone in to help
- A business or strategy plan does not need to be very long-term. Over 3 years is a bit of a waste.
- It should be a flexible, working document.
- Build in regular planning sessions

4. Communicate the vision

- Where will your supporters come from? Target productive areas – don't waste time on hot air merchants and barren areas. **KNOW YOUR SUPPORT BASE.** Who do you know? Who will be most receptive?
- Build the links. Relationships take time but produce a lot of fruit. No-one likes a cold caller!
- Network even when it takes you away from other things. You can't afford NOT to!
- Talk about it, write about it, blog it, actively seek an audience
- Good quality website, good quality newsletter.
- No-one becomes a supporter by osmosis!

5. Build a team

- Better to have nobody than anybody. Nobody is easier to work with! That applies to both staff and trustees / management team.
- Work out exactly who you need next.
- Choose trustworthy people who buy into the project 100%. Compatibility is more important than ability, but skill-sets are also crucial, as well as personality.
- Illustration – apprentice: ideas alone are not enough.
- Ideas person + designer + marketer + receptionist + office manager + finance person
- Charity jobs website
- Absolute key posts are **fundraiser** and **finance person**
- Find volunteer specialists for specialist jobs
- Different is beautiful (and essential); CREATOR, SUPPORTER, STAR, MANAGER, PROCESSOR, TRADER,

6. Appreciate your team and supporters

- Saying thank you and asking for feedback encourages loyalty
- Build in breaks for the team

7. Release others to step up: don't do it all yourself

- Support the team members, but allow them to take on new things, even if that means the possibility of failure
- Only monkeys should be paid peanuts.

8. Schemes can be financed as well as fundraised for.

- Consider social investment as an option
- Seek a balance in your funding: too much trust funding can be disastrous

9. If you aren't willing to take a risk, don't start!

- Risks don't have to be foolhardy, they can be calculated.
- People always support what they can see.