

Project management

Project management
Advocacy in Neurology

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1

COI

W. Struhal

- Board membership: Lilly, Boehringer
- Payment for lectures: Abbvie, Ever, Pfizer
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M. Rados: none

W. Grisold: reference to his script

2

What is advocacy

- A process or activity through which a positive change for patients can be achieved
- This process can be direct or indirect
- The process of advocacy should be driven by an altruistic element

3

Examples

- Advocacy projects can range from micro (e.g. organizing patient information meetings in a hospital)
- Over meso projects (e.g. national projects)
- To macro projects like providing a new standard procedure for treatment of a specific disease on an international scale

4

How to start a project

- Define your vision
- Who is the target for your project
- Assessing your Resources
- Making a schedule

5

Vision

- At the start of a project it is imperative that you clearly define your goals and envision ways to achieve these goals
- A well defined vision will help you (and your team) to last through times of opposition and even failure because you have an understanding of what your ultimate goal is and how important it is

6

Ways to create your vision

- Back casting
 - This is a technique in which you starting at the result and trace your steps to the start. In this way you create your path towards your goal
- Recreating projects which are already successful can help you create your vision at a similar scale (review if the initial project is applicaple to your circumstances)

7

Ways to create your vision

- Evaluation of the size of the project is an important step in realizing its execution.
 - Goals which are to big could be planned as a „higher altitude goal“ (project concerning the next 2-5 years)
 - Completing several smaller projects can lead to achieving a higher altitude goal

8

Defining goals (S.M.A.R.T.)

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Realistic
- Timely

9

Specific

- Your project needs to answer the questions: who, when, where and what.

- E.g.: My goal is to create a counselling group for ALS patients by 2021 in my hometown.

10

Measurable

- You need a marker by which you can tell your goal is achieved.
 - E.g. getting national or international certification for your department in a certain field.
 - Lowering the complication rate of interventions in your hospital,...

11

Attainable

- In this step you can review if the objective is feasible and reachable with ones resources.
 - If not maybe the goal can be reached through a substep or divided into smaller projects (see higher altitude goals)

12

Realistic

- This part in your project evaluation deals with a similar problem as the step before and looks at the assessment of how realistic it is to reach your goal.
 - Are you the right person to achieve these goals?
 - Do you need assistance from some other group outside your influence?

13

Timely

- Lastly the goals should be reachable in a timely manner and therefore follow a schedule.
 - Schedules need to deal with deadlines by which you and your team finish certain tasks/goals/projects

14

Scheduling

- Account for delays in the initial scheduling
- Update timetables to account for delays after circumstances have changed

15

Defining goals

- S.M.A.R.T.
- Processing into smaller subgoals and milestones
- Setting up a timetable
- To do lists

16

To do lists

- Create an inbox on the list
 - This is the place for new tasks which may arise while working on the list
- Week list
 - Start with 10 items
 - When finishing with the list early in the week you can work on further tasks from the inbox

17

To do lists II

- Avoid having tasks on the list for too long
 - Otherwise this will lead to frustration
 - If a task is too big you may need to make it a project and divide it into smaller tasks
- While finishing a task think about the next step which is needed and write it down as a task
 - This reduces time used to rethink different parts of the project

18

Dealing with procrastination

- Procrastination happens mostly when faced with smaller seemingly unimportant tasks
- Try to make working on your tasks a habit
 - Connect it with a certain day of time or activity

19

Making room for creativity

- Be ready to take notes on new ideas or ways to accomplish goals
 - For this purpose a small notebook (pen and paper) or your cellphone/computer should be at hand when thinking about the project.
 - Try to organise your notes
- Avoid making organisation and taking notes a timeconsuming task!

20

Target audience

- Depending on your target audience the resources at your disposal may change or reach different levels of importance
- Tailor your message to the target audience
 - Reaching fellow neurologists will be easiest through journals
 - Whereas communication with a young subgroup of the general public will most efficiently be achieved through social media

21

Resources

- Time
- Finances
- Information
- Peer resources
- Media
- Online resources

22

Communication

- With your team (this is where the most essential need for communication takes place, between you and your team members)
- The public
- Your target audience
- Media

23

Team management

- Clearly communicate goals, milestones and time schedules to your team members
- Conversely when goals change/timetables are delayed keep the communication flowing with your team (important for motivation!)

24

Communication

- Clear and focused message
 - Avoid jargon
 - Keep it simple and short (Elevator pitch)
- Transperancy
 - Be mindful of the independance of your project
- Engage relevant media channels

25

PR Tools

- Traditional media
 - Print
 - Television
 - Radio
- „New“ media
 - Websites
 - Social media
 - Blogs

26

Traditional Media

- Media contact lists (keep updated)
- PR Kits
- Press conference (consider online)

27

New Media

- Websites (Hospital, Associations,...)
- Social media
 - Twitter, Facebook
 - In certain settings Youtube and Instagram
- Blogs
 - Not independant and objective
 - Important for influencing opinion, distributing info

28

Failure of projects

- Errors in communication (to target audience, media, peer resources, your team...)
- Bad cooperation
- Scheduling errors
- Leadership failure

29

Failure of projects II

- Putting a project on hold
 - In circumstances where certain goals are not attainable for a time (saves resources, not just financially but also from a team perspective)
- Abolishing a project
 - In case a project can not be realized at all
- Review failures just the same as successful projects to learn for future projects

30