Introducing the Stratton County Parks Case

• Agenda
  – Describing case and instructions
  – Working in teams
  – Deliverables
  – Making budget presentations
  – Q&As, time to work in your teams
Welcome Week Case Exercise

“Stratton County Parks”

1. Introduction - Goals
2. Why A Parks / Budget Case?
3. Overview of Case Study
Welcome Week Case Exercise
Stratton County Parks

Why a Parks / “Budget” Case?

- Topical & Current (& Real)
- “Accessible”
- Broad Applications
- Budget Discipline (Time & Money)
Welcome Week Case Exercise
Stratton County Parks

Case Overview

• You (your team) are the Director

• 10% Budget Reduction from current

• County Park system has 5 parks + administration

• Each park has its own challenges (& opportunities)

• Have to make everything “fit”
Welcome Week Case Exercise: Stratton County Parks

Documents Provided:
- Group Exercise / Background Information
- Budget & Financial Information (Tables)

Background Information on Stratton County

Overview of Park Agency
- Five County Parks
- Administration
- Operating Budget, Staffing and Revenue
- Park User Demographics
Welcome Week Case Exercise
Stratton County Parks

Final Thoughts

• Assignment: Recommended Actions (10% Budget Cut) – Be Specific and Real

• Limited Time, Limited Information, Ad Hoc Work Groups -- Get Used to it

• “It’s All About the Budget” – Get Used to That, too (can’t do it if you can’t pay for it)
Working in Teams
Keys to Effective Teams

• Clear roles and responsibilities

• Communication

• Harnessing your diversity
Running Team Meetings

• Set an agenda
• Arrive on time and be prepared
• Designate a facilitator
• Designate a note-taker
• Dangers
Maximizing Participation

- Classic brainstorming
- Exploration, ideation, selection
- Step ladder method
Why is this Important?

• MPA competencies and job interviews

• Group evaluation due on Aug 30, the first day of PAD 507
  – Submit to Blackboard, electronically only
In Your Groups

• Get to know each other (personal, professional, education, academic, family)

• Discuss previous group work experiences

• Share contact info and set a meeting schedule for the week
Deliverables
Deliverables

• Individual Memos (Professor Purcell)

• Group Presentations (Professor Fossett)

• Group-work Evaluation (Professor Rubin)

• Due: Friday Morning 8/25 on Blackboard
Deliverables Standards

• Assignments will be graded
  – Grading Rubrics on Blackboard
  – Presentation Evaluations

• Presentation Standards
  – Questions answered
  – Presentation quality

• Memo Standards
  – Answer questions
  – Consistency & Completeness
Deliverables

General Thoughts

• Do not leave things to the last minute

• Know your audience

• Avoid jargon

• Get to the point quickly

• Budgets are just “scorecards”
  – think more broadly
Deliverables
Individual Memos

• Length
  – No more than 2 pages
  – Plus supporting charts

• Content
  – Answer the questions!
  – Remember managers’ attention spans
  – Follow the formatting from Monday night’s Memo Writing Workshop
  – Keep the language simple and jargon free
  – 1st paragraph - Outline the situation
  – 2nd Paragraph – Make your recommendations
  – Remainder - Support your recommendations
Review of Welcome Week
Blackboard Site
MAKING BUDGET PRESENTATIONS
Deliverable:
PowerPoint Group Presentation

• Presentations: Friday Morning 8/24
• Answer all the questions!
• No longer than 15 minutes
  – Rehearse – you will be cut off
  – Use slides to support your recommendations
• Every group member participates
• Wear business dress
TYPICAL PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATION

• Complex, technical information

• Structured format in front of superiors

• Audience has short attention span
AUDIENCE

- Lots of things on plate—yours is only one
- Limited knowledge of details/ability to absorb numbers
- Very short attention span
- High risk of MEGO (My eyes glaze over)
- Listening with bottom half of brain
- Mostly concerned with how recommendation affects them
SUMMARIZE FIRST

• Not like paper, where summarize at end

• Strong intro critical to get audience’s attention

• Say what going to say, say it, say you’ve said it
STAY WITH BIG PICTURE

• Focus on overall picture

• Don’t describe every number

• Let people ask questions
KEEP IT SIMPLE STUPID (KISS)

• Hearing’s not as efficient as reading—can’t replay

• Make it clear the first time
GET VISUAL

• Limited capacity to absorb numbers

• Don’t make people write down numbers—have handouts of your presentation

• Charts/graphs may work better than tables
COMPARE

• Need context for recommendations—are changes big or small?

• Compare to last year and baseline—what would cost to do same thing as last year
THINK ABOUT THEATRE

• You’re giving a performance, so think about your “character”

• Pay attention to subtext—everything but the words
  – Appearance/costume
  – Body language
REHEARSE

• 15 minutes isn’t as long as you think

• Things don’t sound like they read

• You may come across different than you think you do

• Be self-critical—tape performance if you have the equipment
NO EDITORIALIZING

• You’re not the decision maker here

• Don’t want to be seen as being biased

• Avoid advocacy language— “slashed”, “eviscerated”, etc

• Be prepared to defend yourself
Questions?

Good luck!

Have fun!