

NASCA 2018 Spring Conference - Minneapolis, MN - April 30-May 1

Evidence-Based Decision Making
Group Exercise Packet

**State of Nebraska
Center of Operational Excellence**

Background: Your group is the executive management team for the State of Whitaker’s Department of River and Waterway Inspections (DRWI).

The DRWI works with several other state departments, namely:

- Environmental Quality
- Health and Human Services
- Resources and Minerals
- Nature and Game

DRWI has a motto: “DRWI—A Strong Current of Team Work.” Working with these partners, DRWI inspects the state’s waterways for signs of pollution, drought, invasive species, vandalism, and illegal irrigation. Once found, DRWI refers the findings to the appropriate agency for investigation and adjudication. For example, a DRWI inspector recently found that Whitaker Creek had a colony of zebra clams, an invasive species known to discharge a chemical fed on by toxic algae. The inspector referred the find to the Department of Nature and Game who sent an investigator to follow up on the case. Nature and Game arrested an aquarium hobbyist for illegal dumping and then referred the case to Environmental Quality for further investigation.

Roles Needed

1. Executive Director.
2. Deputy Director – Business Operations.
3. Deputy Director – Regulations.
4. Administrator – Budget.
5. Administrator – Facilities.
6. Administrator – Personnel.
7. If more than six people, invent additional roles.

DATABANK

Comparative Data on DRWI and Partner Agencies

	River and Waterway Inspections	Environmental Quality	Nature and Game	Resources and Minerals	Health and Human Services	
State Funds	\$1,550,000	\$4,550,000	\$11,435,000	\$2,450,000	\$1,760,437,035	
Fees	\$3,750,000	\$14,333,000	\$75,000,000	\$456,000	\$111,678,000	
Federal Funds	\$0	\$6,545,000	\$4,210,000	\$5,670,000	\$2,390,000,421	
Location	Charleston	Charleston	Charleston (HQ)	Charleston	Charleston (HQ)	
Employees	103	238	254 (HQ)	34	2,000 (HQ)	
Office Space Used	8,343 sq ft	19,278 sq ft	20,574 sq ft	2,754 sq ft	162,000 sq ft (HQ)	
% of Available Space Used	100%	38%	85%	65%	100%	
Space Costs	\$11.50 sq ft	\$11.75 sq ft	\$17.11 sq ft	\$21.21 sq ft	\$13.45 sq ft	
Consultant Fees	<i>Used</i>	\$165,000	\$230,000	\$75,000	\$0	\$1,000,500
	<i>Budget</i>	\$200,000	\$550,000	\$125,000	\$25,000	\$1,575,000

Agency Mottos

River and Waterway Inspections	"A Strong Current of Team Work."
Environmental Quality	"A Singular Focus On Environmental Excellence"
Nature and Game	"Preserving the Natural Whitaker"
Resources and Minerals	"Stewardship for Today and Tomorrow"
Health and Human Services	"Making Lives Better Every Day"

Charleston Gazette

DRWI Case Awaits DEQ Phase
Sources say a determination and charges could be months away, depending on how many agencies are needed to find those responsible. Meanwhile, farmers suffer.

Whitaker Witness

DRWI, DEQ, Minerals Spend 3 Years on Case - - Now Nature Takes a Turn

The Lake Wilson case has been investigated by three agencies over three years. Now sources say a fourth agency, Nature and Game, needs to investigate. It could be another year before we have answers on the lake's future.

Valley Messenger

With Four Environmental Agencies, Do We Really Need Consultants too?

An environmental watchdog group raised the issue today during a capitol steps rally. The four main environmental agencies use consultants even though all agencies are fully staffed and fully funded. What are the consultants doing?

Step 1: Directive

-PRESS RELEASE-

Governor Announces “Whitaker Now Initiatives”

CHARLESTON – Today, Governor Sally Isabel announced the first set of what she is terming the “Whitaker Now Initiatives”. These efforts are aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of state operations while reducing budget expenditures.

“As of today,” Gov. Isabel stated, “I am reducing all state agency budgets by 1% for this budget cycle for state provided funds. I am empowering my cabinet members to make the decisions needed to realize this goal, without any reductions in force beyond normal attrition.”

The Governor’s plan also calls for prioritizing efforts to reduce the number of state agencies through mergers and reorganizations. She has also called for at least a 50% reduction in the use of consultants and significant reductions—upward of 75%--in the production of printed materials.

“At the end of the day, I want a leaner, more efficient Whitaker state government that surpasses the expectations of our citizens by providing unparalleled service,” Governor Isabel noted.

“I will be calling on my cabinet members to present plans for their initial steps in addressing the Whitaker Now Initiatives within the next 30 days. I want to see innovative, inspired plans that will provide momentum for reforming our state,” the Governor concluded.

Identify the situation and the constraints

Situation

Constraints

Step 2: Identify

Brainstorm: What are some issues that could be addressed?

Some Brainstorming Techniques

 Freewheeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group members call out their ideas spontaneously.• The scribe records the ideas as they are suggested.
 Round-robin	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The leader or scribe asks each member, in turn, for an idea.• Members may pass on any round.• The session continues until all members have passed during the round.• Ideas are recorded as in free-wheeling brainstorming.
 Slip Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The leader asks members to write down their ideas on small slips of paper, index cards or sticky notes.• The ideas are then collected and organized.

Step 3: Target

What issue will you solve? Why?

Step 4: Data

What data do you have? What data do you need/want?

Step 5: Understand

Based on the data, what is happening? What insights do you now have?

Step 6: Solutions

Brainstorm potential solutions.

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 Slip Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The leader asks members to write down their ideas on small slips of paper, index cards or sticky notes.• The ideas are then collected and organized.

Step 7: Decision

Make the decision and sketch out an implementation plan.

Step 8: Check

What are some metrics that might tell you if the decision is having the desired impact?

Step 9: Iterate

Assume your decision isn't working. What are some causes and solutions?