GUIDE TO ASSET MAPPING

What is Asset Mapping?

Asset Mapping is a tool that builds on the positive attributes of groups and their members by identifying the strengths that each individual brings to the whole. Mapping those strengths builds a stronger sense of community and belonging, encourages collaboration, and fosters more effective teamwork. Emphasizing assets instead of needs shifts the focus from transactional relationships, services, or programs to shared ownership.

Mapping can

- Make it easier to build upon existing assets to strengthen the group.
- Reveal the aggregated skills, strengths, and gaps of an entire team or community.
- Highlight the interconnections among its members

Why Use Asset Mapping?

Within a team or organization:

- To promote understanding of diversity.
- To clarify roles and responsibilities.
- To define and identify strengths and gaps in the team's abilities and what it has to offer as well as indicate the multiple relationships between organizations, etc.
- To deepen connection and build trust amongst team members.
- To understand and value each member's unique gifts and draw on those assets to advance the team's goals and support each other.
- To show interconnectedness across groups, (for example: when engaging in collaborative projects or dividing up responsibilities between groups)

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Mapping Individual Assets - Step by Step

Before you start:

- Define your goal – why are you doing this and what do you hope to achieve by conducting this process?
- Define who or what are you mapping:
  – Individuals
  – Teams
- Define what you want to do with the information collected
  – Improve collaboration
  – Define roles and responsibilities
  – Allocate resources for greatest impact
  – Identify what assets you are missing
  – Encourage individuals to help each other or ask for help

The process itself:

1. On individual sticky notes, have each person in the group write down their assets (you can color code the sticky notes):
   a. Knowledge
   b. Skills
   c. Unique experiences

2. Based on the identified assets and the goals of the session, ask each participant to share:
   a. What they might be able to contribute to the team
   b. What knowledge or skill they might be missing and would like to acquire
   c. What essential skills/knowledge are needed for individual or team success

3. On a flip chart, post the sticky notes in five groups: knowledge, skills, unique experiences, what you can contribute, what you are seeking. As sticky notes are posted, the facilitator can group similar answers together.

4. Ask:
   a. What stands out most to you? Are there any surprises?
   b. What are you curious about? Where do you want to dive deeper?
   c. What are our team strengths? What might we be missing?
   d. How might we use this information (specific plans and steps related to the initial goal)?

Individual Assets

AN ASSET – is anything that improves the quality of a team or organizational life. For our purposes we will categorize and map assets according to the following:

KNOWLEDGE – a field or subject area that you have expertise or knowledge in (i.e local Jewish history, the admissions process at a school, etc…)

SKILL – A skill used in your current role, or something you do often that you excel in (i.e. fundraising, grant writing, marketing, relationship building)

SPECIAL EXPERIENCE OR TALENT – A personal experience or ability not obviously connected to your role, but which may enhance your participation on the team (i.e. you lived in Israel, attended Jewish camp for many years, you bake challah, etc…)

Mapping Community Assets – Step by Step

When we focus on community assets (what we have), vs. our needs (what is missing), we are able to make connections between different parts of the community or organization, rather than provide services; create partnerships, rather than customer relationships; and ensure that people, not programs, are the solution to our challenges.

There are times when we want to map the strengths of an organization or network, not just the assets of the individuals that comprise a group. There are several reasons to do this:

- To clarify roles and build collaboration.
- To engage multiple actors and resources to address community-wide challenges.
- To build resilience in responding to change.

Before you start:

Define and share your goal – why are you doing this and what do you want to get out of it?

The process itself:

1. Divide into smaller groups (2 -5 people)

2. Hand out large sticky notes and markers

3. Ask each participant to generate a list of the organization's assets (you may want to have each small group focus on different types of assets: physical, organizational, social, etc.) and write each asset on a different sticky note.

4. Each participant shares with their group the assets they came up with, and the group discusses the assets and adds any others.

5. Each small group populates their section of a community map (See below)

6. All the participants come together to look at the map that was formed and asks themselves:
   a. What stands out most to you?
   b. Are there any surprises?
   c. What are you curious about? Where do you want to dive deeper?
   d. What are our strengths? What might we be missing?
   e. How might we use this information (specific plans and steps related to the initial goal)?
   f. How can the map help us position ourselves within the community?

Organizational Assets

In mapping the assets and resources of an organization or ecosystem (for example a single synagogue or network of Jewish social service agencies), we may look at these categories:

PHYSICAL CAPITAL – financial resources, buildings, infrastructures and environment

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPITAL – group culture, values and traditions

HUMAN CAPITAL – skills, knowledge, and qualifications aggregated across all members

SOCIAL CAPITAL – interpersonal relationships and the extent to which they are leveraged

Asset Map – School Example

Goal/Central question: How might we attract potential new students?
There are many ways to map out community assets, here is just one example (of a school):

Other includes:
Tzedaka Project
School trips
Our Purim celebration
End of year ceremony

Physical capital:
Our building
The playground
The vegetable garden

Organizational Capital:
Diverse
Openness
Creative
Respect each individual
Make everyone
feel they belong

Social capital:
Parent – teachers
Teacher – teachers
Teacher – students
Staff – parents
Future students
Alumni
PTO
Board

Human capital
Hebrew program
Accreditation

Other assets

Physical capital

Organizational capital

Social capital

Human capital