

Managing the Life Cycle of Your NGO: What's the Next Step?

Warner P. Woodworth, Ph.D., Professor & Social Entrepreneur
Brigham Young University (Warner_Woodworth@byu.edu)(801-422-6834)

Peter Jay Sorenson CMC, Consultant & Social Entrepreneur
GINKGO Enterprises (sorensop@earthlink.net)(817-313-1248)

Economic Self Reliance Conference
Economic Self Reliance Center, Marriott School of Management
Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah

Organizations exist
within the context of
broad systems of influence

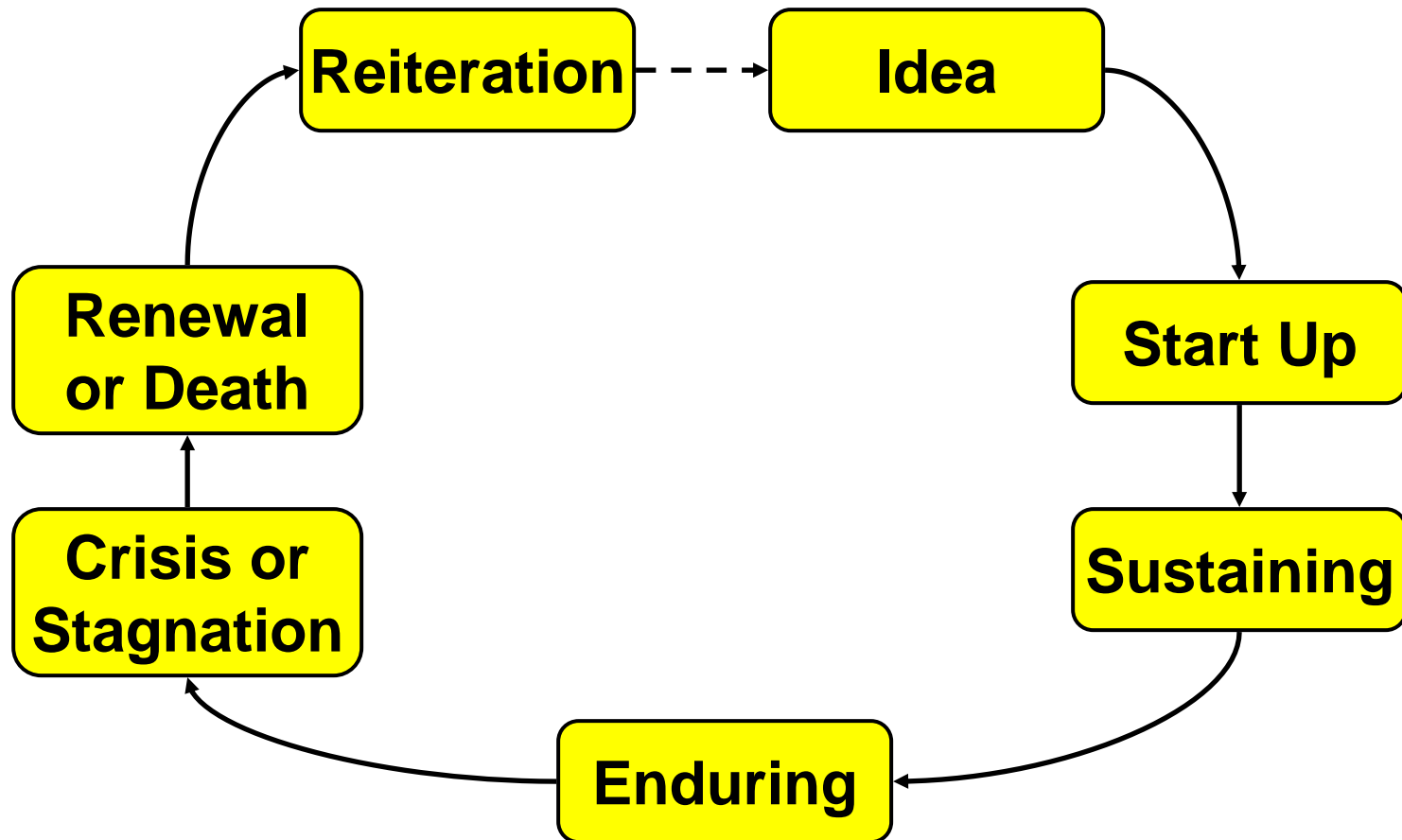
Factors + Change + Time = Life Cycle

- People Resources
- Financial Resources
- Physical Resources
- Competitors
- Customers & Stakeholders
- Regulators & Courts
- Economies
- Societies
- Markets
- Technology
- Crises & Disasters
- Human Behavior

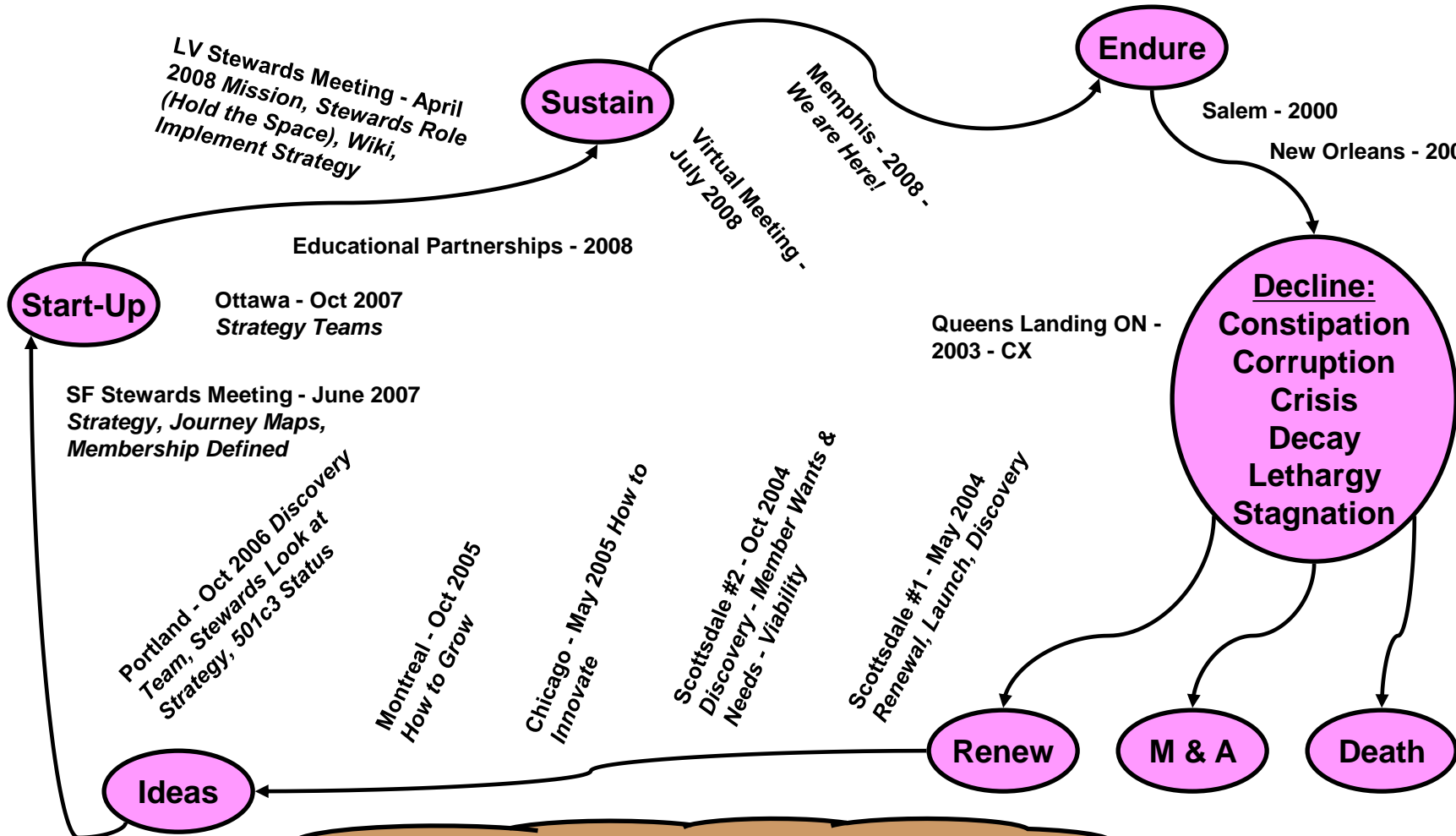
*All these factors
change over time*

*One way to conceptualize
The impact of these
changes on organizations
is with a Life Cycle Model*

Stages & Transitions of the Life Cycle of NGO's



STS RT Historical, Hysterical Organizational Lifecycle Diagram



STS RT Origin: 1988
 Tavistock-Lewin Connection:
 Orillia: 1985 & Gerrards Cross: 1949



Issues - Questions - Body of Work

Blank rectangular area for notes or content.

Blank rectangular area for notes or content.

Where is Your NGO in the Life Cycle Model of Organizations?

What Evidence Do You Base that on?

Idea Stage

- **Something impresses upon your mind**
- **An opportunity exists**
- **An idea is kindled**
- **It works on your heart and mind**
- **You discuss it with others**
- **You are propelled forward by your optimism, idealism and desire to help and serve**
- **You form an alliance with a few others**
- **It begins to be practical - a plan is born**
- **You experiment and at least part of it works**
- **You press forward with trepidation**

Adventure Giving - Ben Nolte

"Adventure giving" grew out of an LDS RM's experience having served a mission in Brazil. He started a sport fishing business, taking U.S. sportsmen on high adventure fishing trips to the wild and woolly region of Brazil's Amazon Basin. This for-profit venture then evolved into humanitarian service. The founder, Ben Nolte, followed his passion for adventure and international development by starting a tour operation called Big Amazon Fish. After completing his MBA, he realized that as a social entrepreneur he could launch a partner, non-profit organization, which is called AdventurGiving.org. It links humanitarian missions with adventure expeditions and socially minded travelers. The organization plans, creates, and implements one day to one week humanitarian projects in Amazon villages in Brazil. It is creating an on-going standard of best management practices for sustainable travel and sustainable humanitarian projects. Nolte is now exploring expanding his operations beyond the Amazon to countries like Peru (Machu Picchu), and Kenya (Masai Mara).

Given the early start-up process of this NGO, what will Nolte have to do to move through the lifecycle and transition to the next stage of NGO development?

See: www.BigAmazonFish.com

Start Up Stage

Key Questions:

- How do you move from idea to action?
- People talk to people and a “head of steam” is created
- How many people are required?
- What does the necessary network of relationships look like?
- How should the network of relationships expand and evolve?
- What definition of purpose, vision, and mission is necessary?
- What financial or material resources are required?
- What is the strategic, marketing, tactical plan?
- Can you repeat it?

Governance Issues

Incorporation

By-Laws

Board of Directors

Tax Issues

Financial Systems

Auditing

Paid Staff

Policies, Procedures, & Practices

Sustaining Stage

This move is from being able to repeat the body of work several times to creating an infrastructure that will support ongoing operations. This means cycling through at least one shift in purpose and mission and one cadre of leadership.

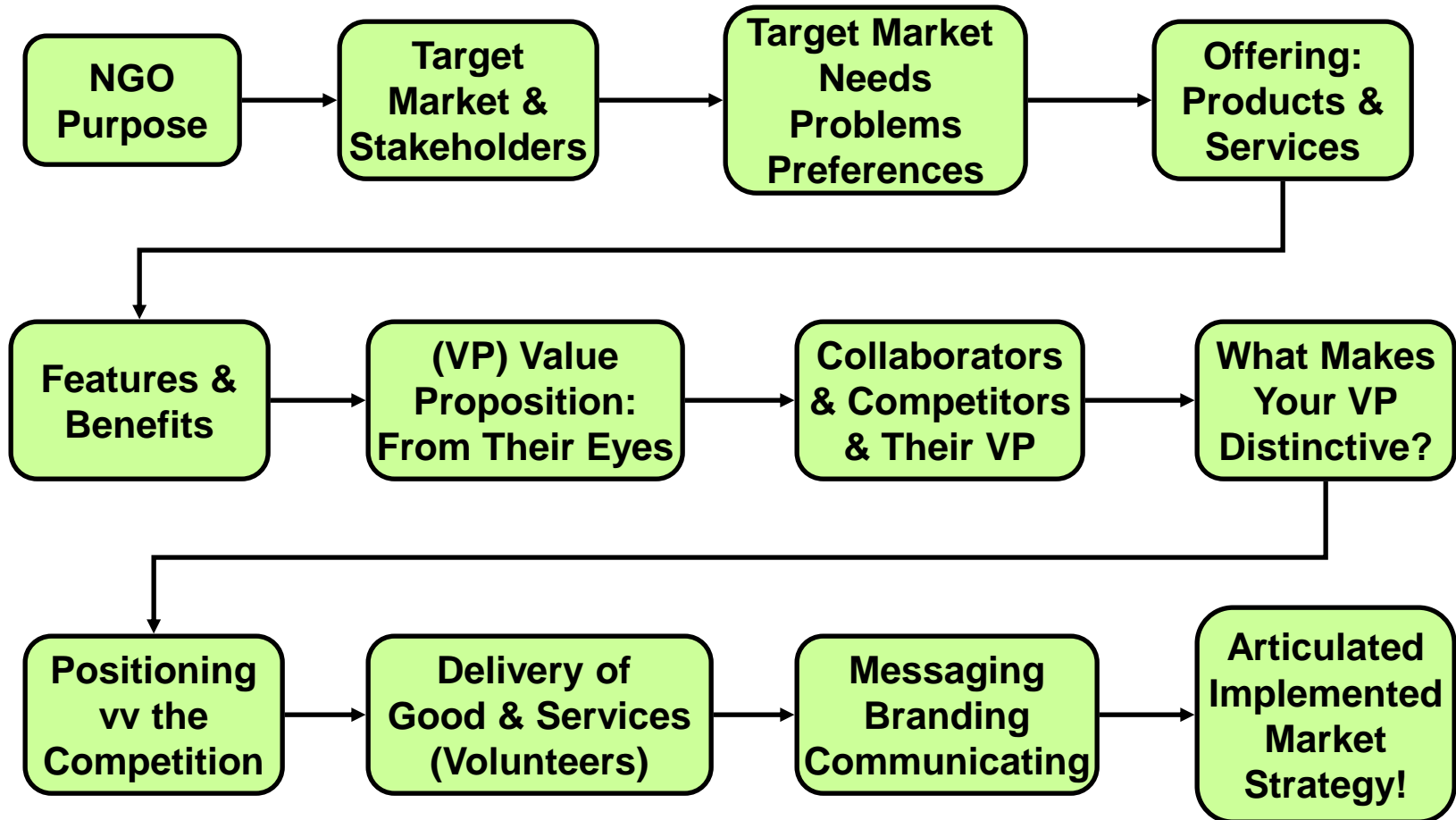
- **Shift & refine purpose**
- **Change leadership group of NGO at least once**
- **Do it once! Do it several times!**
- **Build an approach that is repeatable!**

How does all this apply to your organization?

- **What is your “body of work?”**
- **How do you describe it?**
- **How do you measure it?**
- **What is your approach?**
- **What infrastructure is in place to support both the repeatability of the approach and learning from experience?**

Participative Action Research Tools & After Action Review

NGO Marketing Strategy



Participatory Action Research & After Action Review

Morphing Temporary Project Teams

Setting Up Your Season:

- Assessment, Selection, & Development

Day To Day (MTPT Level):

- Daily & Weekly Huddles & Team Meetings
- CD Dialogue with Team Leaders
- After Action Reviews

In Season Reflection Learning & Coaching (Country Level):

- Weekly PSDM Coaching Telephone Calls (ED to CCD)
- Weekly Country Reports
- ED & Board In-Country Visits
- After Action Reviews

After Season Reflection, Learning, Feed Forward (Institution Level):

- NGO Partner Evaluations
- Board Working Sessions & Board Meetings
- Annual Reports

Enduring

Enduring means that you move from an ad hoc, month-to-month, year-to-year operation to having the systems, procedures, and relationships in place to ensure a steady flow of funds and people. Without becoming a monolithic, ossified, constipated bureaucracy.

- **How have you codified and documented your approach to the work and learning about the work?**
- **How do you bring new people into the organization and into the work?**
- **How do you follow up and learn from experience?**
- **What specific practices do you use to retain flexibility, agility, and adaptability?**

Crisis or Stagnation

You are here because the passion disappeared or was crushed by bureaucracy, tradition, founder's recalcitrance, or market shift.

Start over again:

- **Hold fast to what works**
- **Cast away what does not work**
- **Re-examine core ideology, theology, culture**
- **Re-define the “minimum critical specifications” that must be in place to move forward**

This is a time for clear-eyed realism!

“Face the brutal facts, thrive!”

Collins, Jim, “In Recession, face brutal facts, survive,” USA Today, 27 November 2001, Page 15A

Renewal or Death

If you do not recognize that you are in a crisis or stagnation you will probably die. If you are lucky you will find a merger or acquisition partner. If not you will disappear and will only exist in the folds of your memory or in the archives of the state.

These times will test your meddle and push you to the furthest extent of your ability to endure ambiguity and hardship.

Can you overcome your denial and muster the courage to face the hard realities?

- **What are the hard realities?**
- **How do I obtain and retain a workable perspective?**
- **How can I plot a course action that will rekindle that which was?**
- **Do I want to pay the price of going through renewal?**

Reiteration

- **You can recycle through the life cycle steps to get back on solid ground.**
- **Feed Forward the valuable lessons that have been learned in this go-around**
- **How much passion did you and do you have?**
- **Do the outcomes you achieve make the prices you have to pay worthwhile?**

