



## "Practical Problem-Solving Advice for Publishers"

### Twenty-Two Questions to Ask to Evaluate New Product Development for Associations

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**Quick Read** These twenty-two questions are designed to help you evaluate the performance of your organization's new product development function. These questions have evolved out of the many publishing audits I have conducted for associations and my own years of experience as an association executive.

**AREAS COVERED:** Metrics, People, Creativity, and Group Dynamics, Volunteer Members, and Decision-Making and Accountability

#### **METRICS**

- What are your organization's annual goals for new product development?
- What metrics should you use to measure the rate of new product development?
- As you budget, what percentage of your income do you anticipate from new products?
- What is the actual contribution of income, as a percentage, from new products less than one- year old?
- What is your return on investment in new products?

#### **PEOPLE, CREATIVITY AND GROUP DYNAMICS**

- Is there a "silo mentality" in your organization that impedes information sharing that could result in new products?
- How do you stimulate creativity in your staff?
- How do you recognize creativity? Reward creativity?
- Do you ever brainstorm opportunities for new product development? How often?
- Is there any formal mechanism for brainstorming?
- When was the last time you had a staff retreat dedicated to product development?
- How do you track new ideas? Is there a central repository of ideas?
- Are there any financial incentives to reward staff for developing new products?
- How do you leverage your advantages as a membership association to increase new product development?

#### **VOLUNTEER MEMBERS**

- What is the role of volunteers in new product development process?
- Do you have position descriptions for chairs and editorial board members?

- What decision-making do volunteers have in new product development?
- How do you use your volunteers as a source of fresh ideas for new product development?

## DECISION- MAKING ACCOUNTABILITY

- Who is responsible for new product development in your organization? What are the title(s) of these individual(s)?
- How do you evaluate the performance of this person?
- Do you have current criteria for screening new product ideas?
- Do you have a clearly defined process for new product development?

### Also of Interest

A-19, *New Venture Screening for Associations: A McHugh Select*, 2017, 3 pages

PD-12, *McHugh's Tips for Fostering Creativity in Your Organization*, 2017, 4 pages

A-21, *Why is there so Much Siloing in Associations? A McHugh Select*, 2017, 2 pages

PD-20, *Why Don't Some Nonprofits Maximize their Product Development? A McHugh Select*, 2017, 3 pages

PD-21, *Pricing Digital Content: A McHugh Select*, 2017, 2 pages

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Association and Nonprofit Publishing is a closed LinkedIn group and is open only to publishing managers, editors, librarians, and association executives. Association and Nonprofit Publishing Group's purpose is to establish a forum that will provide helpful information to our members. Our intent is to educate and inform our members on the publishing business *without blatant sales pitches and spam*. Association and Nonprofit Publishing

### About John B. McHugh

John B. "Jack" McHugh is a 40-year veteran of the publishing business. Jack has worked as an executive for Houghton Mifflin, Wadsworth, and Saint Mary's Press. Jack is also an experienced association publishing executive. For seven years, he was Publisher and Director of Programs at the American Society for Quality and for a two-year period, he served as the Interim Publisher at the Project Management Institute. He is a member of the ASAE Advisory Board for Publishing, Communications, and Media Issues and Practices.

Jack's specialties include association/nonprofit publishing, book publishing, executive recruiting, journal publishing, rights and permissions, new ventures, organizational design, and social media strategy and policy.

McHugh and Liz Novak, of IAPD, are co-authoring a series of papers on **Networking Techniques**. Jack Mc Hugh is also the manager of the LinkedIn™ group, **Association and Nonprofit Publishing**.

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