

GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
OFFICE OF CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION
SPONSORED PROJECT INITIATION

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Date: June 8, 1979

Project Title: Seminar on Managing Economic Development Programs

Project No: A-2387

Project Director: R. B. Cassell

Sponsor: Office of Local Government Management Relations

Agreement Period: From 5/22/79 Until 7/15/79

Type Agreement: Ltr. dtd. 5/22/79

Amount: \$5,892.50

Reports Required: Final Report (LGMR Form 4 - "Post-Activity Analysis")

Sponsor Contact Person(s):

Technical Matters

F. W. Willis

Contractual Matters

(thru OCA)

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Richmond, Virginia 23205

Defense Priority Rating:

Assigned to: Technology & Development (School/Laboratory)

COPIES TO:

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Division Chief (EES)
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FINAL REPORT

Virginia Beach Seminar for City/County Administrators

General Comments

It is far simpler to highlight the negative features of any program than to stress the positive aspects. Nonetheless, this was a good group with which to work, most of them were well-motivated, and receptive to consideration of new aspects and ideas.

As in all programs of this nature, some people came who have little intention of attending many of the sessions, some are out of place in that they have no executive responsibility, and the like. Any formal program must be predesigned before a true cross-section of the caliber and knowledge of the attendees can be determined.

There always exists the real possibility of missing the target (either being on too high a level, or too elementary a presentation.) But after analysis of the evaluations, it appears that we did have the right mix, and offered enough for the vast majority of those who submitted evaluations.

For our part, a couple of things could have been improved: temperatures in the rooms were hard to adjust; we had the outlines in the wrong folders for the first morning session; one of the automatic tapes failed to work with the projector. These were small glitches indeed. More major was the fact that the hospitality room on the initial evening had no refreshments, and most of the crowd had to stand around and wait for the food line to be served. Also the competition from the beach, the pool, and the sun was an outside attraction.

As you are aware, we were under great time pressures to put together the keynote and panel presentation for Wednesday evening; considering the constraints, it went over quite well and set a good tone for the succeeding day and a half.

In sum, from the instructional and training point of view, this was a very successful session, and from the verbal comments offered at conclusion of the

seminar a quite productive one.

Overall Analysis

In conformity with the procedures and recommendations made at our May 30 planning meeting, we prepared for an audience of 70 or more participants. We, therefore, had to prepare sessions which would run concurrently in order that we could have smaller groups with which to work. The final solution was to give "Current Development Scene" and "Community Strengths and Weaknesses" in one room, while the other group was being exposed to "Marketing Your Locality" and "Tools Used by the Professional and Volunteer Developer".

This may have worked well for one group, but the sequencing of subject areas for the other group could not be in logical pattern. However, on the following morning both groups received essentially the same presentation on "Strategy and Implementation" and were drawn together for the final summary and wrap-up session.

Also, the changes from the more usual session outline into a question-raising and key issue type of presentation (as urged by the advisory committee) proved to be somewhat disconcerting to some of the participants. The training staff did not have much difficulty in adjusting to this method of approach, but comments from some of the attendees indicated something of a negative reaction.

Conduct of the Course

When we started on Thursday morning, we had about 32 in one session by mid-morning and 26 in the other. Afternoon attendance was down slightly (competition with the sand and surf was obvious). The maximum attendance we were able to tally was 58.

Despite much urging and reminding, however, we only collected 43 evaluation sheets. Some of these are incomplete and make scoring of the replies in a "yes"

or "no" context misleading.

Of the 69 shown on the original registration sheet, it appears that at least 12 did not attend the opening session which featured the keynote speaker and the panel of full-time professional developers.

As is always the case, the fact that a number were not in attendance at the start of the session contributed somewhat to initial confusion on the part of those individuals. Overall, however, the mechanics of swapping instructors and of keeping the participants interested and involved was not that difficult. From the point of view of the instructional staff, it was resolved with a minimum of problems.

Evaluation Responses

Keeping in mind the comment above regarding the fact that not all items on the evaluation were answered, a summation of the positive and negative features is presented.

Thirty-one of the 43 responses were positive about the results of the seminar; five were somewhat qualified, and only eight had negative reactions. On the whole, over 85 percent of the total responses were positive.

For expediting further review by the Office of Local Government Management Relations, we have separated the evaluation responses into three groups: those which indicated an opportunity to apply information and techniques from the seminar immediately or within 6 months, those sometime in the future, and the few negative reactions. The key to the training course, and perhaps to the evaluation response, is the potential application, we are convinced.

The positive responses indicate good to excellent reaction to the first two questions, usually feel more qualified, and indicate the course was very relevant or somewhat so as far as local conditions are concerned. A subset of these are

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Virginia Beach Seminar for City/County Administrators

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"somewhat in the future", found the seminar good, are somewhat more qualified but a little less enthusiastic or receptive.

On the positive side, 36 felt the benefits from the seminar met their objective in attending, and the same number learned from the seminar. More importantly, at least 31 indicated that they could use the acquired knowledge immediately, or within six months, and five more sometime in the future. This appears to be the key to the application of the shared knowledge and information.

Other interesting conclusions are that at least 15 thought the attendance at the seminar made them qualified, to a great extent, to participate in economic development activities in their communities, and another 26 to a more limited extent. Twenty-one told us the seminar was very relevant to their situation and another 20 indicated it was somewhat so.

Thirty-three found the instructional level a good combination of both theoretical and practical (only nine indicating it was inadequate on the practical side). At least 12 rated the session "excellent" and another 23 "good."

Data on responses by categories:

Did the contents meet your objectives: 36 yes

Did you learn what you wanted: 36 yes

Are you better qualified: 15 to a great extent; 26 somewhat

Was the session relevant to your situation: 21 very; 20 somewhat

Was the level: 33 good combination of practical and theoretical
9 inadequate on the practical side

How do you rate the seminar: 12 excellent; 23 good; only 7 fair to poor

Did you like the methods of presentation: 38 yes

Are the materials distributed useful: 41 yes

Can you use the acquired knowledge: 25 immediately; 9 within six months;
9 sometime in the future

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Virginia Beach Seminar for City/County Administrators

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Rating of elements of the seminar:

Formal presentations: 8 of great value, 29 relevant
Association with others: 13 of great value, 27 relevant
Association with speakers: 9 of great value, 25 relevant

Were these seminar elements judged adequate or desirable:

Length: 30 yes
Sequence: 26 yes
Methods of instruction: 25 yes
Effectiveness: 17 yes
Was keynote and panel useful: 31 yes

Rating of instructors (combining excellent and good) would have DeBellis and Cassell in top spots, followed in order by Pendleton, Dodson and Collier.

In terms of physical conditions, 38 endorsed the Inn for lodging facilities, 41 for conference facilities, and 35 for eating and recreational aspects.

Among the more pertinent comments were the following:

"Very valuable program -- easy to believe -- glad I came"
"Program meaningful"
"Very good -- many important techniques discussed"

and the following negative remarks:

"Too 'canned' -- not researched Virginia situation" (That statement is in error.)
"Seminar not motivational"

Little attempt has been made to analyze the future subject areas; but two received more than one endorsement: Financial Management (suggested on at least six returns) and Nuts & Bolts of Economic Development (mentioned three times).

Summary

Our commitment was to prepare and deliver a training seminar under the "Managing Economic Development Programs" title. This seminar was designed "to provide the CAO's and their key assistants with knowledge of the economic development process"; to explain how the private sector and the local government administrator interact in that process; to delineate the roles of both the public and private

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Virginia Beach Seminar for City/County Administrators

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sectors; and to show how to employ development tools and techniques.

This was resolved by presenting sessions on (1) the current development scene, (2) how to analyze community strengths and weaknesses, (3) the procedures for marketing the community, and (4) tools which both professional and volunteer developers use. These were followed by concurrent sessions on local development strategies and implementation.

The training sessions were preceded by a late afternoon keynote and panel program for which, as the contractor, we eventually assumed responsibility for putting together. The final program segment was a summary and a wrap-up session in which the highlights of the various elements were related with the focus on what is possible for the public administrator to accomplish, the variables that affect those conditions in which he or she may be operating, and what areas the administrator ought to expect other parties or organizations to be responsible for.

Handout materials were selected which could best illustrate certain aspects. It is anticipated that most, if not all, of these handouts will serve as reference points in the future for the administrators and other program attendees.

In retrospect, the Georgia Tech team prepared and delivered the program on economic development in accordance with the advice and guidance of the planning team and LGMR staff which was most supportive throughout the preparation and delivery phases. Although it is sometimes difficult to assess the net results while at the same time acting as participants, our conclusion is that the program was sound and effective; we trust that it will prove to be productive as time passes.

Office of Local Government Management Relations
Commonwealth of Virginia

TRAINER/CONSULTANT POST-ACTIVITY TIME SHEET: TRAINING
AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Each Trainer/Consultant engaged in this Activity must fill out and sign a Time Sheet to be returned to the designated LGMR Staff Representative within thirty days of completion of the Activity along with LGMR Forms #4 and #6 (if applicable).

For use only with TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES:

Activity Preparation and Evaluation Time:

Date	5/30	6/5	6/6	6/11	6/12	6/13	6/15	6/29	
# Hours	8	4	4	8	8	4	4	4	

Activity Delivery Time:

Date	6/13	6/14	6/15					
# Hours	4	8	4					
# Participants								

This form is to be returned along with LGMR Forms #4 and #6 (if applicable) within thirty days of completion of the Activity to:


LGMR Staff Representative:

F. W. Willis, Jr.

Office of Local Government
Management Relations

P. O. Box 654

Richmond, Virginia 23205

Submitted by: 

(Signature)

7/5/79

(Date)

Georgia Institute
of Technology

(Institution)

(404)

894-3843

(Phone)

Client Organization: VCPD

Activity Dates: June 13-15, 1979

Location: Mariner Resort Inn

Virginia Beach, Virginia

#: 79-1.43

Office of Local Government Management Relations
Commonwealth of Virginia

TRAINER/CONSULTANT POST-ACTIVITY TIME SHEET: TRAINING
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For use only with TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES:

Activity Preparation and Evaluation Time:

Date	6/9	6/10	6/13	6/15					
# Hours	4	4	4	4					

Activity Delivery Time:

Date	6/13	6/14	6/15					
# Hours	4	8	4					
# Participants								

This form is to be returned along with LGMR Forms #4 and #6 (if applicable) within thirty days of completion of the Activity to:


LGMR Staff Representative:

F. W. Willis, Jr.

Office of Local Government
Management Relations

P. O. Box 654

Richmond, Virginia 23205

Submitted by: 

(Signature)

7/6/79 Georgia Tech 404/894-3843
(Date) (Institution) (Phone)

Client Organization: VCPD

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Location: Mariner Resort Inn #: 79-1.43
Virginia Beach, Virginia

OFFICE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT RELATIONS
Commonwealth of Virginia

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For use only with TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES:

Activity Preparation and Evaluation Time:

Date	6/6	6/7	6/8	6/12	6/13	6/15			
# Hours	4	4	4	4	4	4			

Activity Delivery Time:

Date	6/13	6/14	6/15						
# Hours	4	8	4						
# Participants									

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LGMR Staff Representative:

F. W. Willis, Jr.
Office of Local Government
Management Relations

P. O. Box 654

Richmond, Virginia 23205

Submitted by:

(Signature)

6/18/79 Go Tech (404) 874-3876
(Date) (Institution) (Phone)

Client Organization: VCPD

Activity Dates: June 13-15, 1979

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Virginia Beach, Virginia

Office of Local Government Management Relations
Commonwealth of Virginia

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For use only with TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES:

Activity Preparation and Evaluation Time:

Date	5/28/79	6/2/79	6/3/79	6/12/79					
# Hours	4	4	6	2					

Activity Delivery Time:

Date	6/13/79	6/14/79	6/15/79					
# Hours	4	8	4					
# Participants								

This form is to be returned along with LGMR Forms #4 and #6 (if applicable) within thirty days of completion of the Activity to:


LGMR Staff Representative:

F. W. Willis, Jr.

Office of Local Government
Management Relations

P. O. Box 654

Richmond, Virginia 23205

Submitted by: 

(Signature)

7/10/79

(Date)

(804) 427-4541

(Institution)

(Phone)

Client Organization: VCPD

Activity Dates: June 13-15, 1979

Location: Mariner Resort Inn

Virginia Beach, Virginia

#: 79-1.43