New Program Decision Quiz

Deciding whether or not to pursue a new opportunity can be daunting. Sometimes it’s tempting to just follow your emotions because the project is important to those you serve; other times it can be compelling to follow the money, even though the fit may not be the best for your organization.

Take this quiz to see whether this new project is something you should seriously consider.

Rate your answers from 1 (Poor) to 5 (Excellent) on these criteria:

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| Ranking | Criteria |
|  | Program Delivery |
|  | Mission Fit – Does this project fit well with your current mission? Is it a natural extension of what you already do? |
|  | Overlap with other organizations – Who else provides similar services? Are they meeting the need? Would you be able to provide something that is missing, or are you duplicating services? |
|  | Staff and Facility – Do you currently have available staff and facility space to carry out the program? Or will you need to add staff or space? Does the funding opportunity provide adequate funds for expansion? |
|  | Experience – Does your organization already have experience with this type of program? How great will the learning curve be? |
|  | Tracking Data – Does your organization have the ability to track the outcomes of the project required by the funder? Will it require additional software or hardware purchases? |
|  | Financial Opportunity |
|  | Direct Costs – Does the funding opportunity adequately cover all direct costs? |
|  | Indirect Costs – Does the funding opportunity adequately cover all indirect costs, such as staff time for planning and preparation? |
|  | Start‐up Costs – Does the funding opportunity adequately cover costs needed to get the project started? |
|  | Cash Flow – Will managing the cash flow of the project run smoothly? Or will you need to use other resources to cover costs until the funding arrives? |
|  | Financial Tracking ‐ Do you have adequate financial systems to track the funder’s requirements for this project? Will this project trigger an audit when you might otherwise not need one? |
|  | Other Considerations |
|  | Relationship Opportunities – Does this project provide you with an opportunity to deepen a relationship with a key partner(s)? |
|  | Positioning Opportunities – Does this project provide you with an opportunity to position your organization in a way that you had been looking for? Will this project enhance your leadership position in the market or contribute significantly to your brand? |
|  | Comments: |
| Scores: |  |
| 0-24 | Take it slow: There are a lot of variables here that are calling this project into question for you. Should you decide to proceed, make sure the compelling reasons are crystal clear to everyone involved. |
| 25-48 | A definite maybe: This is the middle ground where there may be some substantial positives and substantial negatives to consider about proceeding with this project. Take off your rose‐colored glasses and be sure you’re making the right decisions for the right reasons. |
| 48-60 | Full Steam Ahead: There is a lot of alignment between your organization and this project. Unless some red flag is apparent, you should seriously consider pursing the project. |