

Positioning CBOs for Success

Identifying your Competitive Advantage



Welcome to this Webinar Series



- Today: Competitive Advantage
- Tools for Strategic Decision Making
1/21/14 @ 1:00 ET
- Google Chat with experts on strategy
processes and tools 1/28/14 @ 1:00 ET



Elena Thomas Faulkner

Senior Consultant, John Snow Inc.



Lester Olmstead-Rose

Partner, La Piana Consulting

CBA@JSI



- Public health consulting company
 - Involved in HIV prevention and care since the beginning of the epidemic
- Capacity building assistance (CBA) provider
 - Monitoring and Evaluation
 - Organizational Infrastructure
 - Effective Behavioral Interventions
 - www.cba.jsi.com



La Piana Consulting

- www.lapiana.org
- Play To Win
- The Nonprofit Strategy Revolution: Real-Time Strategic Planning in a Rapid-Response World
- The Nonprofit Business Plan

Webinar Basics

- Interactive functions
 - Chat (for questions or technical issues)
 - Using pencil
 - Raise hand
- Open phone lines for discussion
 - Watch background noise



Poll



- Where are you located?
 - Northeast
 - Southeast
 - Midwest
 - Southwest
 - Rocky Mountain West
 - West Coast
- How large is your organization's annual budget?
 - Under \$1 million
 - \$1-2.9 million
 - \$3-10 million
 - Over \$10 million



Learning Objectives

- Understand how nonprofits compete and why identifying your competitive advantage is important
- Learn how to assess an organization's competitive advantage
- Identify tools that can help assess your competitive advantage

Poll: What does the word “competitive” mean to you?

- Proficient
- Cut-throat
- Viable
- Aggressive
- For-profit
- Other



Competitive Advantage

What is it?

- Different and Better
- Asset
- Process

How does it advance your mission?

Competition

Why “competition” is a useful frame for nonprofits

- It helps the organization and staff focus their energy and skill building
- It provides a framework for organizations to assess opportunities and address challenges

Competition

Why “competition” is a useful frame for nonprofits,
continued

- Funders are interested in effective use of resources
- It helps the organization be a better partner

Competitive Framework: Types of Competition

Direct

These organizations have the same market focus as your nonprofit—they do what you do (i.e., they have a similar program) within the same geographic area, for the same types of customers.

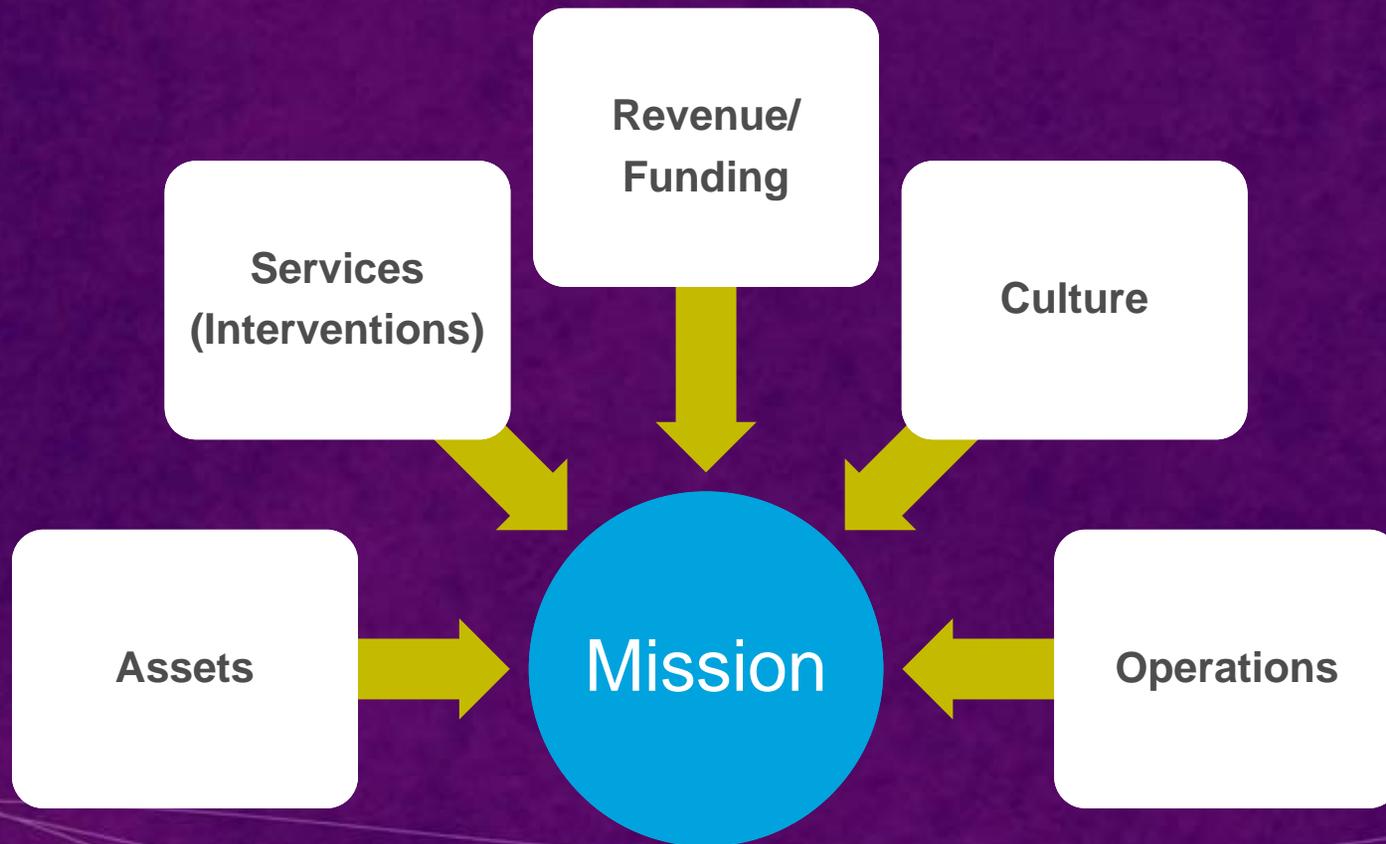
Substitutable

These organizations meet the same need that your organization meets, but in a different way.

Resource

These organizations do not compete with your organization for customers, but do compete for other resources such as funding, board members, other volunteers, paid staff, and media attention

Aspects of an Organization to Consider

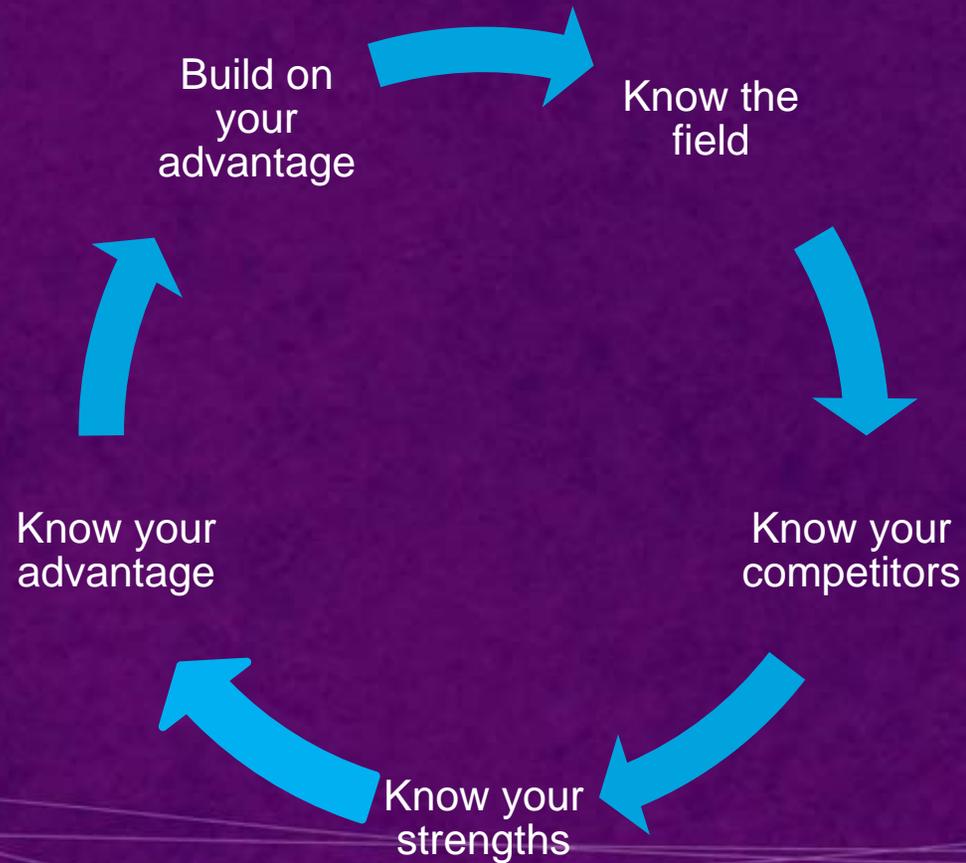




Chat

What strengths do CBOs need in the emerging HIV environment?

How to Identify Your Competitive Advantage



Key Steps

1. Work with internal leadership staff, board, and managers
 - Survey your field, consider competitors strengths
2. Consider your strengths: what strengths you have, then which of those are different and better

Key Steps

3. Test Your Hypothesis

- Interview funders, competitors, and community leaders
- Client feedback
- Talk with program staff and funders
- Look at your data

Key Steps

4. Finalize Competitive Advantage

- If multiple, prioritize to 1-2 competitive advantages that are most valuable for fulfilling mission and securing resources
- Adopt

Know the Field

- Must first be clear on what your “services”/“products” are; what established mission and current community need mean for your work
- Both in your geographic community and the service community, which may be broader than geography

Know Your Competitors' Strengths

- Culture & Operations
 - Low cost and/or high quality services
 - Customer service
 - Relationship with community
- Assets & Funding
 - Capital and/or endowment
 - Revenue base
 - Physical space, Location
 - BoD, Staff

Methods You Can Use

- Community mapping
 - Internet, resource directories, annual reports
- Information from staff who arrange referrals
- Key informant interviews
 - Community leaders
 - Funders with whom you have a high level of trust
 - Competitors

Open phone lines:

Which of these processes have you used to learn more about your competitors?

What was your experience?



Sample Key Informant Interview Topics

- What is your understanding of what we do?
 - What are our strengths as a partner/grantee/service provider?
 - Under which circumstances are you most likely to refer your clients to us?
 - What is our reputation in the community?
 - We think our most important strength is What do you think?
- 

Poll: What's your main competitive advantage?

- Quality of services provided
- Reach into the community
- Cost effectiveness
- Unique programmatic approach
- Other



Know your Strengths

From an understanding of your strengths,
you can better identify your advantage.

What if you draw a blank?

- What strengths can you build into an advantage?
- What partnerships might help you serve your mission?
- What does the market need?



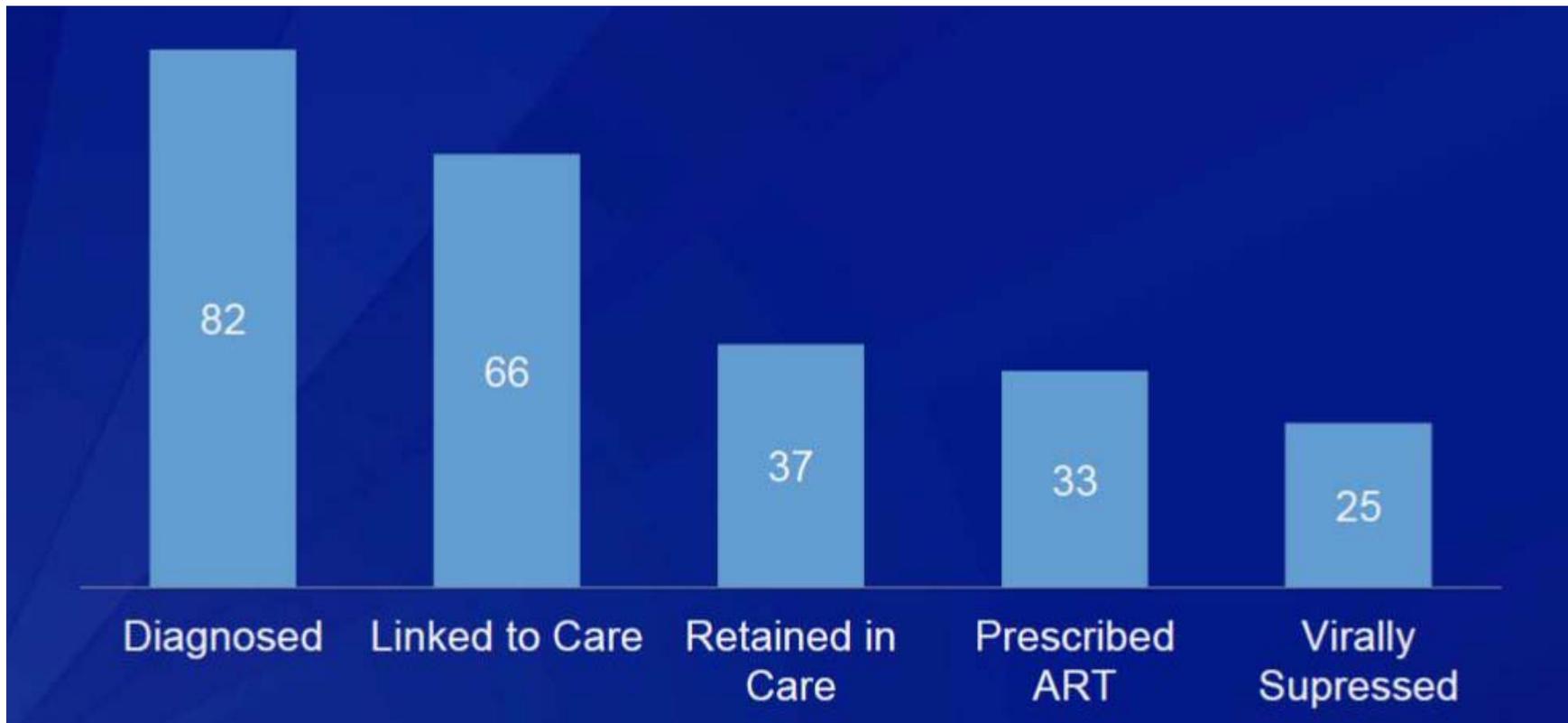
Now, what strengths do you think are needed by CBOs in the current HIV environment?

Organization or Program?

- How is your competitive advantage expressed in your various programs?
- Do you have program-specific competitive advantages?

HIV Care Continuum

Out of the more than one million Americans with HIV:

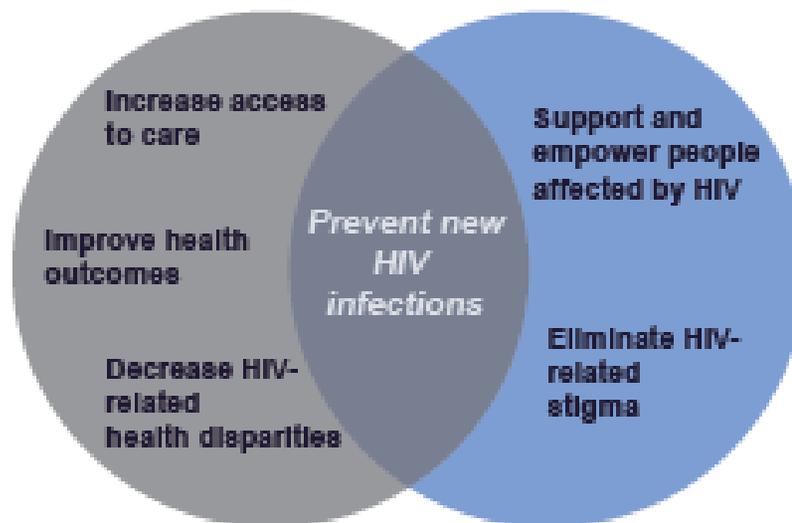


Rashad Burgess, MA, Chief and Luke Shouse, MD, Medical Officer
CDC National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention; Division of
HIV/AIDS Prevention: Capacity Building Branch.

Map your services against the care continuum

National HIV/AIDS Strategy

Cascade AIDS Project



Our Work

Prevent new HIV infections

- Axle
- CHATpdx
- Condom distribution
- Hotline
- Pivot
- +alk
- Speaker's Bureau

Increase testing

- Blackbuster
- Hotline
- Pivot HIV/STD testing
- Testing for All
- Test Where You Live

Link newly-diagnosed patients to care

- CareLink
- +alk
- Referrals from testing

HIV Infected

Diagnosed

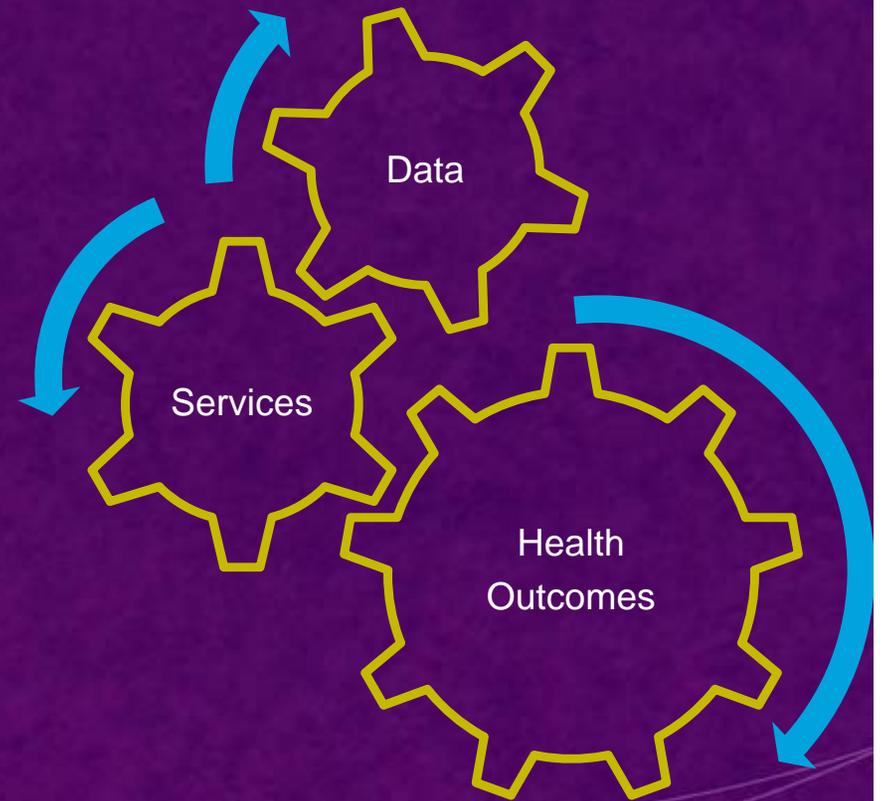
Linked to care

Be able to demonstrate and communicate the value of services provided

“Our clients love us”

VS

“Insured clients choose us over
for-profit alternatives because we
offer comprehensive health and
well being services”



Common Pitfalls for Assessment Process

- Not checking “assumptions” about your/your competitors’ strengths
- Not involving diverse enough perspectives
- Failure to establish a “safe” environment to tell the truth



Chat

What first step will you take to assess competitive advantage?

Next Steps

- Use the Competitive Advantage worksheet for one or two Continuum of Care steps
- Participate in the webinar on 1/21
- Bring your observations/questions to the google chat on 1/28

Competitive Advantage Worksheet

Identifying Competitive Advantage along the HIV Care Continuum

Worksheet

Complete this worksheet for each of the stages in the HIV Care Continuum.

Question Area	Continuum Stage Addressed (choose one) __Diagnose __Link to Care __Retain in Care __Viral Suppression __Maintain on ART
What is our role in this stage? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address informally • Address via a formal program/effort • Provide through a defined partnership • Refer to other agencies • Don't address 	
What are our core strengths in this area?	
Do others provide these services? (Direct competitors) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What organizations/efforts? • To what target populations? 	
In what way are other providers exceptional in providing the service? ¹	

¹ If no one else provides the service, note what your weaknesses/challenges are. Consider your approach, your competence with the target audience, accessibility of your services in terms of geography, hours, or language; data gathered on program effectiveness, etc.

Wrap-Up

- Your observations
- Questions
- What additional information/resources on this topic would be helpful?



Other Resources

- JSI CBA: cba.jsi.com
- La Piana Consulting: www.lapiana.org
- Play to Win
 - <http://www.lapiana.org/insights-for-the-sector/insights/strategic-planning/books.aspx>
- Mind Tools competitive advantage page
 - http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_STR.htm#adv

Thank You!

Lester Olmstead-Rose

Olmstead-rose@lapiana.org

Elena Thomas Faulkner

elena_thomas@jsi.com

Please complete a quick evaluation using the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/GQLHNDS>

