ROAD MAP FOR ESTABLISHING YOUR TIME BANK

These steps do not have to be done in a linear way. It’s a journey and things can unfold organically.

STEP 1: PREPARING FOR YOUR LAUNCH
This is about planning and gathering the tools and resources that you will need before starting your TB Exchange.

Recruit Initial Members – Who is coming with you on this journey?
- Get 5 to 10 committed people together to talk about creating an exchange
- Need a variety of skills and interests in your group – networkers, someone who loves computers, people who like to do events and fundraisers, social service or nonprofit experience, a bookkeeper, marketing ideas and creations, grant writing, good people and telephone skills

Establish a Group Vision Or Mission Statement – Why are you on this journey? What’s your purpose?
Spend time dreaming and visioning about how your Exchange would cultivate friendships and respond to community needs.
- What is the greatest concern in your community now? Is it unemployment? Transportation? Medical care?
- What population comes immediately to mind for membership? Would that be elders? Young families? Everyone?
- Vision/mission statement – communicate to membership and to potential funders

Create an Organizational Structure – What type of legal entity will you set up?
- Options include: start as a “club”, for-profit business, or find a fiscal sponsorship or become your own non-profit 501c3.
- Important issues to keep in mind as you make this decision are tax, legal and insurance requirements.
- You’ll need an EIN (Employer Identification Number) to open a bank account for your TB. If you have a fiscal sponsor, ask them about having a separate bank account or if all expenses are to be paid through fiscal sponsor.
- Ourworld recommends that an Exchange be part of a 501C3 organization, or become a C-3 on their own because the barter-tax issue is more clearly separated from the market (cash) economy.

Identify Leadership, Decision-Making, Roles and Responsibilities – How will the organization be governed and managed?
- How are you going to make decisions? Consensus or Robert’s Rules of Order?
- Who will process new member applications?
- Who will help answer questions about the TB? About the database?
- Will you have paid or unpaid staff/coordinator?
- No Coordinator and leadership group shares responsibilities?
Necessary Materials, Tools & Information – What do you need to take with you on the journey?

A. Become familiar with the Exchange Database and the Administrative aspects of the software
   - Learn how to: create a member profile, post offers and requests, and record an exchange.
   - Try out the demonstration models of the hOurworld software see the Member Demo and the Admin Demo. This will help you prepare for launching your time bank.

B. Locate an Office and/or Meeting Space
   - Look for free/donated office with a phone and computer. It can be a place of worship, a social service agency, an empty storefront, or the back space of a business.
   - If you can’t find office space, then find a meeting space that you can use on a regular basis. Consider any barriers to participation when selecting a location.
   - Having an office space gives you a community presence and foundation from which to build your Exchange.

C. Raise Startup Funds
   - Funds are needed for: printing flyers and other marketing materials for your time bank; internet and web site hosting; office supplies; and hiring a Coordinator
   - Ways to raise $: membership donations; have a yard sale; write a grant.

D. Create Marketing Materials and a Community Presence
   (copies of SFTB materials are in packet)
   - Develop an organizational logo and create a website
   - Membership & outreach materials – application, handbook, brochures, flyers, etc.

STEP 2: LAUNCHING AND SUSTAINING YOUR TB EXCHANGE – (Key elements)

- Build Up Your Membership
  - Do you have enough members to officially launch? When do you launch? There is no magic number for launching.
  - How do you get more members? Ways include:
    - Conduct presentations to get more members; monthly potlucks.
    - Participate in community events (i.e. healing fairs, farmer’s market, Earth Day)
    - Write press releases, and do interviews on local TV and Radio stations
    - Have an annual celebration or meeting/conference

- Develop Ways to Facilitate Quality Members Exchanges
  - Now that you have officially launched/are open for business, how do keep you get people exchanging?
    - Provide ongoing training and member care -- new member orientation, buddy system; train coordinator(s) to do so
    - Offer member engagement opportunities, such as monthly member potlucks, annual meeting, group activities (i.e. potluck at SF Com Farm, Earth Day project or yoga class)
How will provide access to information and maintain regular communication with membership about events, policies, IRS ruling, etc? Use e-newsletter, e-blasts, handbook, new member orientation

How do you handle conflict among members or how to negotiate exchanges, and empower members to do so?
- For example – a time bank doesn’t show up for their exchange or is late; a TB member doesn’t respond to your request; or you’re not comfortable having a person in your home the first time. These are just examples of possible scenarios that could arise.
- Who will handle this? Coordinator or leadership group?
- Refer back to the Core values;
- Do you need to create a policy?

Diversifying the membership – age, economic, neighborhoods, ethnicity, skills, and talents. Ask your members to help with this (i.e. ask their plumber or dentist to join TB)

Carrying out Administrative Tasks and Day-to-Day Operations
- Who is responsible for:
  - Processing new member applications
  - Checking references
  - Managing the TB finances and bookkeeping
  - Developing policies, i.e. a social fund, or going into debt or cash reimbursements in exchanges

Create a team to help with certain activities (comprised of staff, leadership and other TB members)

Implement Member Feedback Loop
- Important to keep communications flowing between Leadership group/Coordinator and membership – update on leadership activities, new events, press coverage, etc.
- Are you meeting the needs of your members?
- Are there any gaps in member needs/offers/requests
- Evaluate the satisfaction of member exchanges
- Use this information for creating goals and priorities; and helpful for grant writing
- Annual member survey or coordinator does interview with member at time of annual renewal

Identify Ways to Sustain Your Time Bank – financially and people-wise
- Create an annual budget and review it monthly with actual income/expenses
- Ask for membership donations, grant writing, selling a product(s) i.e. TB t-shirts; put on an annual fundraising event
- Review the need for paid or unpaid staff; advantages and disadvantages to both
- Rotate leadership group

Created by Santa Fe Time Bank, 2010