

Client Perceptions of Change Agent Productions January – November, 2011

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Change Agent Productions is a social enterprise of the Y of Greater Long Beach Community Development Branch which began in October, 2007, with a grant from ZeroDivide. The program is currently funded by Beneventures Foundation. Change Agent Productions (CAP) is comprised of professional digital media artists who work alongside urban youth who have graduated from the Youth Institute to carry out professional media projects. CAP was specifically designed to provide challenging, positive youth and career development opportunities for low-income, culturally-diverse high school and college-age youth. CAP internships for youth are designed to build on the job skills training they received while in the Youth Institute and to help them more fully develop their business, academic, technical and social skills.

CAP primarily provides media services to community-based organizations and non-profits. Media services include video (documentaries, advertisements, public service announcements), graphics (corporate branding, brochures, professional reports, magazines), web (construction, layout, domain registration), audio-visual (on-site tech set-up and support, presentation and sound equipment), and training (movie-making, graphic design, media lab consultation, youth development). CAP has created marketing materials and a new, improved website that displays examples of its products and evaluations. In addition, they have advertised their services by exhibiting at local, state, national, and international, venues and conferences.

CAP Staff and Interns

For most of 2011, CAP employed two full-time Art Directors and two part-time Digital Media Artists. However, one of the Art Directors left the project in early October. A Logistics Coordinator was added to the project in July, 2011. This position is largely administrative and

assumed responsibility for invoicing, proposals, marketing and all internal paperwork. Three (75%) of the current CAP employees are Youth Institute alumni themselves.

Alumni from the Youth Institute (YI) must apply for internships with CAP by filling out an application, providing their grades, and completing an interview. This process helps the youth develop skills in obtaining a job. In the application, youth are asked the types of software and equipment they are most proficient with, the technology skills they would like to further develop, and how many hours per week they can work. They must also identify possible time obstacles, skills they hope to acquire, potential career fields and the relationship to CAP, and what they personally hope to accomplish through the internship. They are selected for projects depending on their skill sets, availability, interests, and acceptable grades. The effects of the project on youth are documented elsewhere. The purpose of this study was to explore client perceptions of, and experiences with, Change Agent Productions from January to November, 2011, the fourth year of the program.

Methods

Data Collection

Between January and November, 2011, CAP completed 46 jobs for 36 different clients. Eight (22%) organizations had multiple jobs (2 or 3) with CAP during this time period. CAP staff provided the research team with the contact information of representatives of all the organizations they worked for during this time period who agreed to be interviewed. Thirty-one representatives from 28 (78%) of the 36 organizations participated in this study (the contact people for jobs sometimes varied from a single organization). Five people did not respond to multiple attempts to schedule an interview or to complete an on-line survey, two contact people no longer worked for the organizations, and one person opted out of the research. Respondents

either participated in a telephone interview (79%) or completed an on-line survey (21%). The interview guide and on-line survey were identical. It is worth noting that when the contact person for more than one job was the same, some opted to complete a single interview or survey while others responded separately for each individual job. Youth worked as interns on 21 (46%) of the jobs. The majority (70%) of the work was done with organizations in Southern California, however, seven (19%) were in Northern California and four (11%) were out-of state (Colorado, Florida, Washington and Washington, D.C.).

According to CAP records, the gross revenue of the 46 contracts was \$342,411. The profit margin on the jobs ranged from 0% to 70%, with an average of 28%. The net profit was \$46,619 with an average net profit of \$1,013 per job. CAP provided a variety of services to clients and several of the contracts consisted of two or more types of services. Sixteen (35%) of the jobs involved filming or video production, 13 (28%) were technology trainings, nine (20%) were technology purchases, five (11%) were for audiovisual conference support, three (7%) each involved graphic design (logos, newsletters, etc), photography and replication of DVDs, and one (2%) each for curriculum development and to produce an animated greeting card.

Instrument

The interview guide was created by the researchers in consultation with CAP staff and a review of the literature regarding social enterprise. The survey used both open and closed-ended questions. The interview investigated how clients first heard about CAP, the reasons why they selected CAP, their experiences in working with CAP, and suggestions for CAP improvement.

Results

CAP Selection Process

The most frequent ways these clients first learned about CAP was through relationships with the YMCA or its' staff or funders. Comments included, "Through a close association with the YMCA Youth Institute program. We provided substantial seed money for them to begin operations," and "From the Community Foundation. They have provided funding for the YI and have a long-standing relationship with Bob Cabeza and the Y." Examples of YMCA and staff relationships included, "I work for YMCA National. We were introduced to CAP in 2006 through the National Office's relationship with local offices," "Visited the program with an exploratory purpose. My boss is on the board for the Los Angeles YMCA," and "Relationship with Bob Cabeza. He is on the Leadership Committee of California Afterschool Network."

Ten (31%) had been referred by colleagues; "Through a colleague at LACOE," and "Through consultants doing logistics for a summit." Six (19%) had seen CAP at a meeting or event, "During a domestic violence meeting a few years ago on cyber-safety. Les came up to do a Internet safety training and he mentioned CAP," and "Attendance at conferences where Change Agent youth were doing A/V, videotaping the event, or interviewing participants for a video."

CAP Jobs

According to the client interviews, and as noted earlier, CAP provided a range of services and, often, provided more than one service or completed more than one job for an organization. Movie-making/filming was the most frequently (45%) provided service. Comments included, "They filmed videos for promotional purposes," "They filmed, photographed, conducted interviews and produced a montage film for the culmination of the conference experience," "To

film, edit, and produce final product DVDs of different projects,” and “We hired them to do a video for our website.”

Audio-visual and multimedia was the next most frequent (24%) type of service that CAP provided. Comments included, “This is the third event in two years that CAP has taken care of A/V for our main conference that happens twice a year,” “They set up audio, video, projectors, microphones, and wired the laptops for break-out sessions, and “We hired them to assist in the design of a media and digital arts lab.”

About 21% of those interviewed hired CAP to provide training. Comments included, “Hired to work with 20 high school students to make short commercials. They taught the use of equipment, how to film and edit and how to build up their story lines,” “Students trained in digital media, technology, creating public service announcements, cinematography, video cameras, GarageBand, and iMovie,” and “We hired them to do a presentation and workshop on youth media advocacy.”

CAP also joined with other organizations to provide services or promote joint learning. At least one of these was in-kind venture. Comments included, “Partnership with no monetary exchange. The YMCA is housing a project to promote the work of youth journalists. They gave us a place to hold workshops in exchange for CAP youth to learn more about journalism,” and “Joint Outreach Project. We hired former YI students who are now CSULB students to mentor kids coming into the YI. The program tries to empower kids which ties into what CAP does. Did extensive field trips to tie into their community and developed PSAs. We are renting space to do the program.”

Other services that CAP provided to clients over the past year included graphic design (“Very nice graphically-enhanced PowerPoint presentation”) and photography.

Reasons Why CAP Selected

Interviewees were then asked an open-ended question regarding the primary reasons they selected CAP for their job needs. Participants often identified more than one reason for their decision. One of most frequently cited reasons for hiring CAP was their expertise or high quality work (42%). Comments included, “They are on the cutting edge and a well-run program,” “They do quality work,” “polished, professional, excellent products,” and “talented people who produce good work.” A similar number (42%) of respondents said they chose CAP because they were also youth-serving organizations or valued that CAP employed youth or used a youth development framework. Participants said, “We like to support the leadership development they do with youth,” “It’s a great learning opportunity for youth to learn skills, meet people and interact with professionals. Youth play an important role in the conference; organizing, planning and behind the scenes with technology,” “philosophy of working with youth was the primary reason,” and “youth representation is consistent with our message about the importance of engaging and relevant youth programming, meaningful opportunities for youth participation and youth leadership.”

Twenty-seven percent of participants said they had primarily chosen CAP because of a recommendation from a colleague, “They came highly recommended,” “my colleague had a good experience with them,” and “They were recommended by a partner organization.” About 24% said they used CAP because of price, “They were cost effective,” and “They produce a quality product at a reasonable price.”

Eighteen percent of participants hired CAP because, at least in part, they were supportive of social enterprise, “They are a social enterprise, I appreciate the reason why they are doing what they’re doing. They provide training and generate income for a non-profit,” and “We

believe in the work they are doing; we want to support the program.” A similar number (18%) reported their selection was influenced by past experience with CAP or the YMCA, for example, “Already had experience working with CAP. It is important for us to keep business within the YMCA and CAP was technically capable of the job request” and “We had a good experience in the past and we kept in touch. We visited Long Beach a few years ago and have lots of respect for the program.” Three people noted that CAP was flexible or quick to respond while individual participants said the location was accessible and the CAP website.

Interviewees were also asked to rate the extent to which each factor on a list influenced their decision to hire CAP. The response categories were “Not at All,” “Somewhat,” and “Very Much.” Higher scores meant greater influence. As shown below in Table 1, similar to the open-ended responses, the three factors that most often influenced clients’ decisions to hire CAP was commitment to youth, staff skill sets, and that CAP supports important youth programs. The least likely factors to influence hiring decisions were positive referrals from past clients, samples of CAP work products, and the price/cost. There were no differences between how 2011 clients and clients from earlier years rated these factors.

Table 1
 Ranking of Factors that Influenced Decision to Hire Change Agent Productions
 (N = 33)

Response	Mean	SD
Organization is Committed to Youth	2.82	.46
Staff Skill Sets	2.82	.46
CAP Supports Important Youth Programs	2.79	.42
Personally saw CAP in Action	2.39	.83
Prior Relationships With the YMCA	2.30	.92
Price/Cost	2.21	.74
Samples of CAP Work Products	2.21	.86
Positive Referrals from Past Clients	2.09	.95

Client Experiences with CAP

Participants were then asked a series of questions regarding their work experiences with CAP. First, using an open-ended question, they were asked to describe their experiences, both benefits and challenges, with CAP. Participants had many positive things to share regarding their experiences with CAP. One of the most common (45%) positive experiences shared by participants was that CAP was very flexible and accommodating. Comments included, “They have a very can-do attitude. They do what it takes to get the job done and are receptive to requests. They are flexible and accommodate to meet the job demands,” “Very accommodating,” “They were extremely flexible with short notice,” “Change Agent staff are flexible, rapid, and quick to act,” and “They are flexible when it comes to timing, set-up, editing and feedback.”

About 32% of participants reported that CAP were collaborative team players or had strong interpersonal skills. These comments included, “Easy to work with,” “Worked well with

other consultants,” and “They were great; really friendly.” Thirty-two percent of participants also made comments regarding CAP being skilled, “Videographers were good,” “It is almost as if a conference organizer can turn the entire A/V piece over to them. The staff and youth facilitate a seamless conference experience for our participants and go above and beyond,” and “We believe they are very talented.”

Approximately 26% each of participants made comments regarding CAP’s professionalism. Comments included, “The staff is dynamic; they have a professional element,” “Worked with Kevin, Leo and Phyras. They were great, responsible, punctual, professional. It was the smoothest running thing of the event,” “Very professional, positive and hard-working; first to show up and last to leave,” and “Always on time.”

Twenty-six percent were very pleased with the inclusion of youth in the work or their ability to engage youth with their training, for example, “their work model, they train youth and hire the trainees. We want to copy their work model of hiring trainees in our community,” “living example of well-run youth development program,” and “It’s really incredible what they do there. Staff is very supportive of program. Students are engaged; they hold them to a very high standard which made it a great experience.”

About 23% of participants commented about CAP’s strong commitment to customer service and commitment to the job; “Committed to agreements and service,” “They were eager to please,” and “Excellent customer service.” Nineteen percent of participants commented on the good quality of CAP products, including, “Surprisingly good quality,” and “Quality products.” Five (16%) noted that CAP was accessible and communicated well with them during the project.

Eighteen responses indicated challenges with their CAP experience. The most frequently cited concern (N = 6, 33%) was that the job took longer than expected; “The

turnaround time for the final product took longer than expected,” and “Scheduled the training several months late.” Five (28%) commented about lack of communication or inaccessibility including, “When initially setting up the training, I spoke with one person and a couple of days before the training, the trainer was changed and there was a lack of communication to the new trainer; small details regarding logistics were not communicated properly. We did not receive everything that was agreed upon and paid for. Overall, we felt that we were not a high priority for them,” and “There was an accessibility factor. I had to chase them down; email and call, whereas with other places, I get an immediate response.”

Three (17%) participants made comments about some CAP staff needing to improve their skills; “Skill sets of staff were uneven. Half were highly skilled while others needed more support from the highly skilled staff. The less skilled staff affected each group,” and “Not fully developed comparison skills.”

Two (11%) participants each said they encountered challenges regarding lack of follow-through; “The challenge was not fully comparing the list of changes we requested. We would have to ask them to make the changes again;” and attention to detail, “Small details were not communicated;” and that the final product was lacking in quality. “One participant each shared that they had encountered challenges with the “business end” (invoicing), unclear staff roles, lack of experience and professionalism, distance, and speaker disturbance while filming.

Client Ratings of CAP Service Delivery

Participants were then asked to rate CAP on various aspects of service delivery. The categories were 1 “Poor,” 2 “Fair,” 3 “Good,” and 4 “Excellent.” As shown in Table 2, clients rated CAP strongest in the service delivery areas of commitment to the job, inclusion of youth in work, professionalism and responsiveness. They were rated lowest in promptness, billing

practices, ability to meet job deadlines and organization. However, on average, all of the ratings fell between “good” and “excellent.” Clients from 2011 rated CAP somewhat higher in responsiveness, $t(74) = 1.97, p < .05$, than clients from prior years.

Table 2
Client Ratings of Change Agent Productions’ Service Delivery
(N = 33)

Customer Service Area	Mean	SD
Commitment to the Job	3.82	.46
Inclusion of Youth in Work	3.75	.51
Professionalism	3.67	.60
Responsiveness	3.67	.60
Customer Service	3.59	.76
Follow Through	3.59	.76
Staff Initiative	3.58	.56
Final Product	3.55	.74
Job Quality	3.53	.67
Communication	3.52	.67
Organization	3.45	.56
Ability to Meet Job Deadlines	3.44	.84
Billing Practices	3.42	.85
Promptness	3.39	.75

Client Perceptions of and Interactions with CAP Professional Staff

Twenty-one (64%) participants answered this question since others thought they had covered this content in the earlier question. Client perceptions of CAP staff were overwhelmingly positive. In particular, participants were impressed by the personal and professional characteristics of staff including their interpersonal skills and job expertise.

Staff are really creative. When faced with a challenge, very quick to problem-solve. Very good at seeing possibilities. Great skills. Positive attitude to do anything.

Very friendly, professional and were flexible to our needs. They were incredible help-great partners. A pleasure to work with and were extremely generous with product. They were positive and hard-working-first to show up and last to leave. It was a beautiful experience. They are committed to their agreements and service.

Everything was positive. They are very responsive even with the short timeline we gave them. They were accommodating to changes made in the project. They were aware of what the client wanted.

Phenomenal – top flight. Bob is an icon in youth development programming. Les is terrific. They are positive problem-solvers and great people.

Kevin, Leo and Phyras were in a good mood, fun and organized. They were on time. They often checked-in. I loved working with them. They were responsible and had integrity.

They were very knowledgeable in digital media technology and spoke in ways that allowed for the understanding of the least sophisticated. They were dedicated, confident, responsive, and followed through. They engaging in workshops with the kids and worked effectively on the proposal.

All of my experiences have been totally positive. I consider the staff to be cutting-edge leaders in the after-school field. The understanding and leadership they bring to youth work is strongly coupled with their technical knowledge and professional skills.

Five (24%) participants indicated having had a challenge with staff, three of which were related to a lack of communication, one due to turnaround time, and one due to a quality issue in the final product. Comments included, “The challenge was that we had to hunt them down. We didn’t want to bug them but had to follow up with them a lot,” “Would not give us a timeline,” and “One challenge was due to two-way accountability; the completed project was missing some of the nuances that the client was looking for.”

Perceptions of and Interactions with CAP Youth

Next, if appropriate, participants were asked about their project interactions with youth interns. Thirty-seven youth interned with CAP during this time period and 70% of the study participants had youth involved on their projects. The comments regarding the youth were very positive. The youth were described as professional, committed, skilled, collaborative, knowledgeable, and excited to be involved.

Found them to be very engaging and they take the project very seriously. I am amazed at their skill level which goes back to the idea of instilling responsibilities. They are not coddled, CAP says, "Here's what we're going to do, you are responsible." If you expect more from kids you get it.

We had 13 different youth for the week and they were all very responsive, responsible and took care of things we hadn't thought of.

They were very knowledgeable, excited, able to work effectively to deal with challenges, and implemented things well. Installation and solutions were creative and effective.

They are always excited about the job and eager to meet or exceed expectations.

The CAP youth represented themselves with professionalism and obviously have pride in their accomplishments and work. Many offer inspiration to our youth-serving clientele because the CAP youth are themselves success stories. They always get the job done (often times understanding the technology much better than adults). It is obvious that they are meaningfully engaged, dedicated, and, most importantly, they enjoy their work and the camaraderie they get from the Youth Institute and CAP.

Eight (35%) noted some challenges related to working with the youth. The primary area of concern noted was that sometimes the youth did not have the skills necessary or that they could benefit from more adult support. Comments included, "There was a CAP youth who may not have been clear on how to assist," "Youth did not have skill sets to teach as trainers. They were shooting from the hip. It didn't flow or make sense," and "One group of CAP students was articulate, organized, skilled, motivated and confident with the equipment. The second group

was more passive, not as confident as group leaders. They needed more support and supervision to make sure they got work done.” A couple of participants thought the youth should ask more probing questions to clarify what the client wanted or “Their work is sometimes very ‘creative’ and geared toward a young audience when it should be a little more sophisticated and traditional to appeal to an older audience.”

Likelihood of Future Use

Thirty-one (94%) participants said they would be very likely, and two (6%) said they would be somewhat likely, to hire CAP again and to refer others to CAP in the future.

Table 3
Hire CAP Again or Refer to Others
(N = 33)

	Mean	SD
Would Hire CAP Again	2.94	.24
Refer Others to CAP	2.94	.24

Suggestions to Improve CAP

Participants were then asked an open-ended question on how CAP could improve client experiences or their organization. Twenty (61%) participants made suggestions for improvement while the remaining reporting everything had gone well, for example, “Keep going in the direction they are taking, they are doing great,” and, “No additional suggestions due to easy communication, respectful approach, and they work well under pressure.” The most frequent suggestion for improvement was the need to improve communication between CAP and clients (30%). Some of these comments also indicated that it would be useful to have a point person responsible for each project so communication would be simplified. Comments included, “Need much better communication and planning ahead. Client needs to know when things are

scheduled ahead of time. There should be one point person; we probably had ten during this process,” “Informing clients about orders can escape them sometimes,” and “Designate one point person during the process and more description/clarification of staff roles and who to contact for what.” A few clients also saw the need for additional pre-project meetings to ensure that CAP staff were adequately prepared or better understood what the client actually wanted in the end product. As one client said, “More organization in pre-planning to avoid miscommunication.”

Five (25%) made suggestions were related to the business rather than the creative side of CAP. These comments indicated the need for more documentation of project agreements including the use of intake forms and project checklists as well as a better system for invoicing and handling paperwork. Echoing earlier statements, some participants indicated the need to ensure a shared and clear understanding of the project vision. Comments included, “An intake form would be helpful in understanding how the request is being managed and who is doing the training,” “An itemized checklist at each phase of the project would be helpful for the client and CAP to monitor what has been approved to be able to move forward with the project,” “Be more aggressive and effective in closing business opportunities,” and “Divide the capacity of the business versus creative aspects of the business. It was great to speak to someone who was creative but they could not handle fiscal paperwork, billing and invoicing. A management person to handle paperwork would be great.” On a related note, a few clients also were concerned that CAP sometimes missed deadlines or were unclear in establishing project timelines.

A few participants said that CAP staff needed to pay more attention to details on the projects, for example, “They could review things a couple of times before turning in the final project.” One each suggested CAP should develop a portfolio with more products to showcase

their capabilities when they make presentations, send two files of pictures (recommended and others), purchase bigger speakers for ballrooms, and allow clients more time to review the project. One participant also thought CAP should have youth wear matching shirts to make them easier to identify and to serve as a marketing tool for the business.

Conclusions

This study explored client perceptions of CAP during its' fourth year of operation by interviewing 33 representatives from organizations that had completed contracts with CAP during that time period. CAP completed 46 jobs during this time period, more than double that of its first year of operation, and a third more than during its second year. Given the staffing reductions and position changes, as well as the increase in the number of jobs and its reliance on youth, it was very encouraging to see the positive feedback provided by the vast majority of clients who were interviewed for this report.

Similar to prior years, and in keeping with the CAP business plan, most of the organizations served were community-based, non-profits or non-profit professional or advocacy organizations, however, CAP also contracted with a few foundations and even for-profit organizations. About one-quarter of the contracts were with Ys, again underscoring the value of a social enterprise having a national network to which they can market their services and generate business. However, the percentage of work done for other Ys did decline from the last reporting period. As in prior years, clients were most likely to have had first heard about CAP because they or their organizations had prior relationships with the YMCA or its staff. However, a higher percentage learned about CAP through recommendations from colleagues or foundations. While some clients had done prior business with CAP, most were first-time users. Thus, CAP appears to have moved beyond its immediate social network to serve a broader

group. This is important for a social enterprise since it is likely that broadening its range of clients will be necessary to sustain the business over time (Prewitt, 2007). In addition, garnering new business through recommendations and repeat business indicates that providing high quality services and products can enhance business opportunities due to word-of-mouth marketing and satisfied customers.

Reasons for Hiring CAP

Regardless of whether asked through an open-ended question or in response to a prepared list, two of the three most salient and highly rated reasons participants gave for hiring CAP were their own organization's commitment to youth or the fact that CAP supported important youth programs and enhanced the career abilities of vulnerable youth. As found in the past, clients often expressed the desire to support businesses that provide meaningful youth and career development opportunities to urban youth particularly since a couple wanted to replicate the model. According to Young (2007), some organizations are more willing to purchase goods and services from socially-oriented businesses. Thus, the youth social enterprise aspect of the business should continue to be a strong selling point for CAP to highlight in both marketing materials and during pitches to potential clients. The current inclusion of youth pictures and evaluation reports on the CAP website may provide credibility and evidence that the program is benefitting the youth which may prove inviting to some clients.

Although the social enterprise aspect played an influential role in the hiring process, these clients rated staff skills sets as equally important in their decision-making and frequently indicated the expertise and experience that CAP brought to their projects. Thus, it is critical to recognize that social enterprises must employ skilled workers in order for the business to thrive. The value placed by these clients on staff skills may be due to the fact that agencies CAP worked

with did not have access to the specialized technology and media skills or the type of specialized training CAP was able to offer. CAP, as envisioned, appears to be filling an important business niche and offering services that are attractive to and needed by its target population.

Client Experiences with CAP

Overall, these clients reported being very pleased with CAP staff, their working relationships with CAP, and the products generated by CAP. CAP staff was often described as committed, flexible and accommodating, collaborative and interpersonally-skilled, highly skilled, and professional. Indeed, some of these clients were “repeat business” or used them on more than one job during this time period. Among these, the positive relationships and experiences with staff helped bring them back again. This information suggests that the staff has the interpersonal, creative and technology skills needed to fulfill contractual obligations of CAP. About 60% of the clients were so happy with staff that they had no challenges to report.

The primary challenges related to staff noted were focused on missed deadlines and lack of communication. Although CAP was rated between “good” and “excellent” on every service delivery aspect, they were rated lowest on promptness, billing practices, meeting deadlines, and organization. It will be interesting to see if the addition of the Logistics Coordinator helps with these concerns in the future given his administrative role. However, it is important that staff ensure that promised completion dates are realistic and determine the amount of work that can be done in a given time period, since many jobs, often requiring diverse skills, are juggled at the same time. It should also prove beneficial to keep in close contact with clients and let them know right away if there is a need to change time lines. Ensuring open communication and a quick response to concerns may also prove useful. Having the number of staff needed to produce quality products and meeting the increasing demand will be critical for CAP. As CAP moves

toward sustaining a social enterprise, one of the most challenging tasks they are likely to face is in determining the balance between a reasonable workload and the time and staff that are necessary to produce high quality work and high levels of customer communication and satisfaction.

The majority of the clients were also pleased with the quality of the work CAP produced, an essential component of maintaining a successful social enterprise. Since reputation is essential to maintaining a successful business, the positive word-of-mouth and high quality products that CAP generated should contribute to sustainability efforts. Given that almost all of the participants said they would very likely recommend CAP to others and use them in the future, it appears that more business will be generated from those clients who were most satisfied. Staff should be encouraged to continue and even improve their commitment to quality and meeting client expectations as this should result in repeat business and recommendations to others. Project timelines should also be carefully reviewed so that sufficient time is allowed for quality production. In addition, work should be carefully proofed.

Although youth did not work on all projects, those clients who worked directly with interns rated and spoke, for the most part, very highly about these experiences. Many noted the professionalism, commitment, knowledge, and excitement youth brought to the projects. Youth were seen as program assets as well as positive role models for other youth, and CAP was sometimes seen as a model for how organizations can effectively work with youth. CAP's ability to integrate youth into so many diverse work environments is noteworthy. The feedback on the skills youth brought to projects provides additional support to the notion that CAP is fulfilling its social mission in helping youth gain workforce skills. About a third noted some challenges related to working with youth. These concerns were primarily related to their skill

sets and the need for additional adult supervision and support while working. It appears that some CAP interns might benefit from additional training and practice in presentation skills. It may also prove helpful, as interns are working on their skills, to ensure enough staff is available to effectively teach and direct youth while they are on the job.

Suggestions to Improve CAP

About 61% of the participants made some type of suggestion regarding how CAP might improve as an organization. The most frequent focused on the need to improve communication between CAP and the clients. The feedback here suggests it may be beneficial for CAP to identify a lead person for each job to aid in communication. It might also be useful to have more pre-planning meetings to ensure that CAP staff understands what it is the client wants from the project. Ongoing communication with the client about the status of the project including challenges should also prove beneficial. About one-quarter suggested the need to improve the business side of CAP including the use of intake forms and project checklists as tracking and monitoring mechanisms. Many of the comments regarding business concerns appear to be related to the reasons CAP decided to add the Logistics Coordinator; as a proactive way to address these concerns which have been noted in past reports. Having the business aspects taken over by someone should provide creative staff with more time to focus on quality, attention to detail, and communication as appropriate.

In conclusion, CAP appears to have established itself as a strong, responsive social enterprise, capable of producing quality work and meeting the needs of diverse contractors. Overall, clients were very positive about their interactions with CAP staff and youth and the projects that resulted from their collaboration. CAP staff was seen as experts in their field and their job commitment and interpersonal skills were highly valued. Clients were also attracted to

and impressed by the organization's involvement and training with youth. It appears that CAP should continue to focus on strengthening its organizational infrastructure including business practices, promptness, communication and staying committed to high quality products and services.

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