

# September:

La Montanita and Accountable Empowerment:

*Using Results-Based Accountability to Achieve the Cooperative's Ends*



## BOARD STUDY INSTRUCTIONS

**SYNOPSIS:** In this Board Study, participants will explore opportunities for using results-based accountability to achieve the Cooperative's Ends. Key goals of this Board Study include:

1. *Exploring the language of accountability*
2. *Assessing data currently being collected, analyzed, interpreted, and reported by staff*
3. *Identifying opportunities for further data collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting that are linked to the Cooperative's Ends*
4. *Identifying challenges and opportunities for reporting to the community (telling the Cooperative's "story")*

## BOARD STUDY MATERIALS

Key elements of this Board Study include the following:

### **A) ACTIVITY**

- **A Tool For Choosing A Common Lanuage - produced by Clear Impact**
  - *Goal: This handout could be used as a great tool for constructing a common meaningful glossary for the Cooperative to always refer to. Steps to complete the activity include identifying the: 1) Framework Idea, 2) Common Labels for Each Idea, 3) Modifiers, and 4) Chosen Word or Phrase.*

### **B) GUIDE**

- **The Results-Based Accountability Guide - produced by Clear Impact**
  - *Summary: The Results-Based Accountability™ Guide uses and is based upon concepts and materials developed by Mark Friedman, author of Trying Hard is Not Good Enough (Trafford 2005) and founder and director of the Fiscal Policy Studies Institute. The RBA Guide is a tool for leading or facilitating a group in the use of RBA in decision making. The RBA Guide is designed to be used as a*

*roadmap with which to navigate the complete RBA decision-making process, step-by-step.*

### **C) DATA COLLECTION**

- **La Montanita Ends Report (2015) - produced by Clear Impact**
  - **Summary:** *This report is prefaced with the Interim General Manager's letter to the Cooperative, stating his compliance with the Board's Ends Policies. These policies describe the desired outcomes for all of the Cooperative's activities. This report provides measurements that quantify the Cooperatives' progress in meeting these outcomes and the successes experienced in 2015.*
- **Coop Cafes 1-3 (2015) - All Notes**
  - **Summary:** *This handout includes all of the ideas that were expressed at all of the different tables participating in Coop Cafes 1 through 3. The handout includes a list of both "Star Ideas" and "All Ideas." The prompting question reads as follows: Given the changing world, how can the coop meet community needs in the coming decade?*

### **D) TOOL**

- **Healthy Community Assessment Tool - produced by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**
  - **Description:** *The Healthy Communities Assessment Tool (HCAT) ranks each city neighborhood on more than 40 social, economic, and physical factors important to community health. Users can examine how their own neighborhood performs on each factor and compare neighborhoods on their overall ranking of core indicators from the Healthy Communities Index (HCI). The tools provide a standard, comprehensive, and practical approach to measuring the most important determinants of health at the neighborhood level. Understanding and tracking these measures can help cities determine the range of policies and programs necessary to help improve community health and residents' quality of life.*

### **E) SELF-ASSESSMENT**

- **Excerpt from "Trying Hard Is Not Good Enough" by Mark Friedman**
  - **Description:** *This one page handout outlines a series of questions that organizations can use to assess their implementation of their results-based accountability strategies. To complement the Cooperative's existing self-evaluation (completed individually by each Board member), this*

*self-assessment could be used as a tool for the group to conduct a more group-oriented evaluation of themselves.*

## **TAKEAWAYS**

1. While financial reporting that includes numbers on comps, sales, and budgets is a great tool for describing the financial status and evolution of the Cooperative, finding ways to *interpret* those numbers is even more important for telling the Cooperative's story to the larger community.
2. Accountable empowerment can only be achieved under the following conditions:
  - a. Clear expectations are set
  - b. Authority is assigned unambiguously
  - c. Expectations are checked to be sure they are being met
  - d. Individuals/departments/the organization as a whole is responding appropriately