“What If…”
Building an Effective Education Program

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What If…

Every person in your community believed that water was **THE** most important resource and that your organization was **THE** most important organization in your community?
Great idea Greg but how in the world do we get there?
At SAWS, we believe that Education is part of the solution.
Following a Well-Defined Roadmap

Before you can truly be successful with any Education program, you must always have the end destination in mind—begin with the end. For SAWS, this means beginning with **FOUR KEY QUESTIONS**.

At the end of the day:

1. **WHY** are we doing what we are doing?
2. **WHERE** is our program going (or needs to go)?
3. **WHAT** is our program producing?
4. **HOW** do we know it is working?
WHY?

- Is the starting point for strategic direction
- Is the beginning place for any launched program
- Has to be the foundation for leadership decisions

Why do we exist? Why should we do this?
WHERE? Losing your way

- Public water utility educator
- Environmental Conference
- Grassland/Ecology Symposium
- Native Prairie Festival
- Grass planting/plant removal
WHERE?: Losing Your Way

The process of becoming “lost”—in other words, your department or program or even the entire organization not doing what it is tasked with doing—inevitably comes from misdirection:

1. Misdirection from an outside influence: Is there someone around you with a political agenda, gut feeling or pet project that is trying to lure you in? What about the enticement of a new and potentially impactful funding source that could get you off track?

2. Misdirection as an inside job: This occurs when we forget why we are doing what we are doing. Eventually personal interests and agendas (our “hobby horses”) replace focus and direction.
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WHAT? Your Product
WHAT? Tires or Tennis Shoes?

• Some might believe they are creating tires.
• Some might say they were assembling tennis shoes.
• Some might explain they are manufacturing trash cans.

“What are you trying to produce?” That’s why it is so important to begin with the end in mind.
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How? Quality of the product

• Is it just a spare?
• Is it doing what it is supposed to be doing?
• How do we know?
SAWS used this questioning process (which we call INCITE) in the creation of our education department over 20 years ago.
WHY do we exist?

To help our customers understand that SAWS plays an important role in their lives.
WHERE are we going?

Moving our students from knowledge to action.
WHAT are we producing?

A water literate student who exhibits the C.O.R.E. characteristics.
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HOW do we know?

They will exhibit the DNA of a Water Literate Student-C.O.R.E Characteristics

- **Community:** Students understand their place and value in the community.

- **Ownership:** Students take ownership of water resources in the community. They identify water resource issues affecting their community and develop skills necessary to actively propose and implement solutions.

- **Responsibility:** Students understand the necessity of water to the health and growth of a community and take personal responsibility to care for this important resource.

- **Engagement:** Students proactively engage in opportunities to increase their awareness, knowledge, skills and stewardship of water resource issues facing the community and carry-on the process by sharing with others in their circles of influence.
HOW do we know?

C.O.R.E. Score
A survey tool asking four key questions used to measure the C.O.R.E. characteristics in both local students and educators.
So ask yourself…

- Do I know **WHY** I am doing what I am doing?
- Do I know **WHERE** our program is going (or should be going)?
- Am I clear about **WHAT** our program is producing?
- Am I confident in **HOW** it is working?
“Just because a group of people has a bunch of boards, hammers, and nails does not mean they are building a house or anything recognizable. Some leaders think they are doing their job because there is a lot of hammering going on.”

-Laurie Beth Jones
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