



## Do the Right Thing and Do it Right

The title of this brief article alludes to the two-part challenge human service organizations now face: how best to use their shrinking resources and how to do so without compromising quality. One need only consider a few examples to understand the magnitude of the problem. Churches, many of which provide extensive services to those in need, raised 3 to 5 billion dollars less than anticipated in the last quarter of 2008. California eliminated all state funding for a program designed to protect nursing home

residents from abuse, despite that more than 90% of nursing homes were cited for violations of safety standards including infected bedsores, medication errors, poor nutrition and abuse.

Half of the nonprofits in Michigan have reported significant drops in their financial support. Chicago's Meals on Wheels trimmed its budget by 35 percent. More than three-fourths of New York City cultural organizations reduced their budgets. School budget cuts in one community may force 6-year-olds to walk more than a mile and cross a four-lane highway to get to school.

### Do the right thing

Over time, organizations sometimes grow in areas that may not be central to their mission or a fundamental part of their core competencies. This can occur for any number of reasons, for example when new funding becomes available, when an influential board member expresses interest in a particular service or geographical location, or when organizations merge. Under current economic conditions, however, organizations must take a more focused look at what they can and cannot do, and do right.

While there are several ways to make decisions about the relative viability of particular programs or services, one especially useful model comes from the Wharton School of Business. The MacMillian Matrix provides a framework for evaluating programs on four criteria: fit, attractiveness, alternative coverage, and competitive position. Fit refers to congruence with the mission of the organization; attractiveness refers to financial strength; alternative coverage refers to the availability of like services; and competitive position to the relative strength in the community. By comparing all programs against the same criteria, decision makers can more systematically determine which programs to embrace and which to off load.

MacMillian Matrix		High Program Attractiveness: "Easy" Program		Low Program Attractiveness: "Difficult" Program	
Fit	Competitive Position	Alternative Coverage High	Alternative Coverage Low	Alternative Coverage High	Alternative Coverage Low
GOOD FIT	Strong Competitive Position	1. Aggressive Competition	2. Aggressive Growth	5. Build up the Best Competitor	6. "Soul of the Agency"
	Weak Competitive Position	3. Aggressive Divestment	4. Build Strength or Get Out	7. Orderly Divestment	8. "Foreign Aid" or Joint Venture
POOR FIT		9. Aggressive Divestment		10. Orderly Divestment	

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- [Do the Right Thing and Do it Right](#)
- [Ask the Expert](#)
- [New from Praesidium](#)
- [On the Road](#)
- [In the News](#)



[Print version](#)



[Send to a friend](#)



**Got this Safety Bulletin from a friend? Subscribe today!**



E-mail us at:  
[info1@praesidiuminc.com](mailto:info1@praesidiuminc.com)  
or visit:  
[PraesidiumInc.com](http://PraesidiumInc.com)

Note: This Safety Bulletin and the information and suggestions contained herein is provided by Praesidium as a courtesy to its many friends and clients. It is not intended to be legal advice. It is provided "As Is" and without warranty, expressed or implied. The reader assumes all risk for reliance thereon.

Communication is the key to any successful off loading of services or programs. Leadership must communicate with the board so they can contribute their expertise and support in the decision making process; with program constituents so they understand how and why the decision was made and what the organization has done to ease the pain and with other providers in the community so they can anticipate and respond to increased demand for their services.

### Do it right

Once an organization decides which programs are the “right thing,” it must also reinforce its commitment to “do it right.” A non-negotiable part of doing any program right is doing it safely. And the safety message must start at the top. Mike Graves, President of the YMCA of Delaware, is widely respected for his hard line stance on safety. His message to his staff: “*We will not compromise safety for a perceived lack of resources.*” And to back up his mantra, he empowers his employees to do what they need to do, including use resources, to keep the kids in his programs safe.

Take another example, landing tragically on the other side of safety. A CEO launched an experimental swim-video night, where parents could drop off their kids for a few hours and enjoy an adult evening while the kids swam and watched videos.

When the employee assigned to work the program asked her who else would be working with him, she replied that the budget wouldn’t support two staff for only a handful of kids. That night he sexually abused three of the children. Lack of funding was not a compelling defense when the case went to trial.

### Training impacts safety

CFOs often challenge training budgets during economic downturns despite that training is crucial to delivering the right services right, and perhaps even more so when people are asked to do more or to take on tasks for which they may be ill-equipped or inexperienced. A major insurance carrier recently authorized Praesidium to provide Armatus®, its on-line abuse prevention training, to a large foster care provider as a complimentary benefit to their insurance coverage. The CFO’s response: “*We don’t have time for any training. Try us again next year.*” Not only does this decision jeopardize the safety of those in care by depriving employees of the skills and knowledge they need to do their jobs well, it also communicates a terribly wrong message to employees and constituents.

We know that between 50% and 80% of occupational injuries are due to human error, much of which is caused by a lack of training. Contrary to the predictions of automation experts who once proclaimed that the work environment of the future would have only two employees: a dog and a human, with the human’s job to feed the dog and the dog’s job to bite the human if the human tries to do anything else, attempts at programming out the human component haven’t worked very well, particularly in the human services industry.

Humans can defeat even the best engineering efforts at keeping them safe. Sheet metal fabricating machines used in the automotive industry provide a classic example. They crushed the left hands of countless workers who adjusted the sheet metal with their left hand while lowering the two-ton press with the other. Engineers changed the design of the press, requiring workers to simultaneously push two overhead buttons, thereby keeping both hands out from under the massive weight of the press. The response: workers systematically duct taped down one of the buttons so they could continue to adjust the positioning of the sheet metal—and lose a hand. Similarly, when organizations have installed video cameras to monitor employee or visitor behavior, they’ve found them broken, taped over, or ignored.

The answer of course is to keep training alive and well so employees know what to do and how to do it. And now especially, if you want people to get more done or different done, you have to teach them how.

### Managing training resources

A CEO recently shared with us a discussion he had with his Director of Training



**We see things  
your employees  
might not.**

### About Praesidium

With over two decades of experience, Praesidium is the national leader in abuse risk management. We offer a full range of risk management and loss control products and services to help you protect those in your care from abuse and to preserve trust in your organization.



**PRAESIDIUM**  
Our passion. Your protection.

Visit us today at  
[PraesidiumInc.com](http://PraesidiumInc.com)  
or call **817.801.7773**  
to learn more about  
our services.

who was lamenting spending training dollars on employees who subsequently left. His response was, “*Sure that’s a problem, but a worse problem is if you don’t train them and they stay!*” Do more with less is today’s charge and the path is leading away from resource hungry approaches such as face-to-face teaching with its lack of scalability and more to a mobile technology model. On-line training has seen dramatic improvements over the past few years, integrating both technological advances and closer adherence to proven principles of adult learning theory. And this generation of workers comes far more comfortable with, and equipped to learn by, on-line approaches than did their predecessors.

Making sure that supervisors help employees transfer what they’ve learned on line to on the job, in real time and often, motivates employees, maximizes training effectiveness, and keeps everyone doing the right thing right. And it only takes a few minutes of supervisor time now and then.

Finally, providing training in brief but frequent intervals also cuts down on time off-the-floor. For example, one health care organization makes training available on-line in three-minute intervals so nurses and behavioral health technicians don’t leave patients unattended, while Praesidium offers Mini-Minders<sup>®</sup>, brief tailored safety bites transmitted on demand or at random times via Twitter, email, or text message for instant consumption and application.

### Conclusion

There are no easy answers to effectively delivering more services with fewer resources. However, compromising safety is not an option. Keeping the safety message coming loud and clear from the top and providing timely efficient training can help your employees and volunteers keep those in their watch safe.

## Ask the Expert

### Question:

Should our summer camp counselors be allowed to “Twitter” campers or invite them as friends on their social networking pages, like Facebook or My Space?

### Answer:

For sure, social networking sites have changed the Internet and how people communicate. So of course, most of your campers will either have a page on one of these sites or will at least know how to use a site. It is tempting for counselors and other adults to use this form of communication with youths because it seems to be the easiest way to reach them. One of the risks, however, is that an inappropriate relationship could develop between a camp counselor and a camper, behind the scenes, privately. The camp could be liable for failure to adequately supervise the camp counselor in this situation. Praesidium recommends that all organizations establish a policy to govern electronic communications. [Contact us](#) for a sample policy statement.

**To learn more** about Praesidium’s upcoming webinar on **How to Use Social Networking, Safely**, contact us at [info1@praesidiuminc.com](mailto:info1@praesidiuminc.com).



### Expert: Angelique Dale, J.D., Praesidium Safety Analyst

Angelique specializes in the study and prevention of sexual abuse in schools. After graduating with honors from the University of Texas, Ms. Dale obtained a law degree from Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law. She is licensed to practice law in the State of Texas.

Got a question about preventing abuse in your programs? Email us at [Experts@PraesidiumInc.com](mailto:Experts@PraesidiumInc.com) and watch for an answer in the next Safety Bulletin!

## New from Praesidium

### A Day at Day Camp

A Day at Camp is the newest addition to Praesidium's extensive library of on-line courses, Armatus®. This course takes your staff through a typical day at camp. Along the way, they learn how to identify and manage high-risk situations like bathrooms, swimming, unstructured times, and field trips. They also learn to keep their boundaries with campers clear and what to do if they see something that looks suspicious or inappropriate. Your employees and volunteers can log on anytime to complete a course, and you can log on anytime for proof! Best of all, you'll know they've completed the training they need, just when they need it

## On the Road

### Conferences, Workshops and Speaking Engagements:

- Bi-Annual Meeting of Praesidium's Religious Board | May 14–15 | Dallas, TX
- Workshop: Current Issues in Risk Management for Catholic Dioceses | May 21 | Fort Worth, TX
- 2009 CMSM National Assembly | August 5–8 | St. Louis, MO

## In the News

- On a recent school holiday, an organization offered a one-day "camp" for youngsters out of school. Not anticipating a high turnout, the organization staffed the camp with one adult counselor and a 16-year-old counselor-in-training. After free-time in the afternoon, the counselor noticed that the restroom door was locked. She knocked. The counselor-in-training opened the door. In the room with him were three 3-year-old boys. When asked what was going on, the counselor in training replied, "I just wanted to be alone with them."

What next steps should the organization take? [Contact us](#) to learn the essential steps for responding to situations like these.