Dear Servant Leader,

When I was sworn in 28 years ago, I remember a sense of overwhelm. Where do I start? What is most important? Twenty-eight years later, the answer is still the same. **RELATIONSHIPS.** Building them and fostering them.

Life is all about those relationships. Even life as a trustee. Nothing replaces that link to success. Now, we are not all the same. That’s a given. But we can all take a tiny step toward fostering relationships in our communities. Those relationships can then be parlayed into the bigger picture of keeping township government alive and thriving.

In 1991, I was introduced to the Indiana Township Association. Conferences gave me the opportunity to meet other trustees who shared my desire to be well educated and to do things correctly the first time around. At my second conference, into my life walked the man who would mentor me for the next 25 years. He had invested in his education and was ready to give back. He had proven his value to his community for many years and had an exceptional record of doing things right; of living the life of a servant leader; and of being compassionate about the job he was elected to do.

For 25 years, he was selfless in promotion of my growth. I don’t know if he chose me or if I chose him but before he passed, he told me how much he received and learned from me! His mentee! This confirmed in my mind that a relationship is a connection between two people from which both parties stand to lose or gain.

So, you will see intertwined in this booklet, that message. If you are looking for the keys to success, you will find them in one place. **RELATIONSHIPS.**

Now, turn the page. You will not only discover reasons that all of our members make me proud to be part of the ITA; but you will learn keys to success in becoming a leader in your community (or improving upon what you’ve already started).

My best to you,

Debbie
What is the definition of an Indiana Township Trustee?
A township trustee is an elected official in the local government of the U.S. state of Indiana. A township trustee administers a township, which in Indiana is the primary political subdivision of a county, and in common with most other state officials serves a term of four years."

What is the true definition of an Indiana Township Trustee?

Every Mayor is seen as a critical component of the community – Trustees are also vitally important, local government executive branch leader who can drive change, trust, and growth.

In order to fulfill both definitions of an Indiana Township Trustee, here are the Top 10 Best Practices for the Most Success:

1. Start your day by asking, ‘What can I offer the public today?’ ‘What do I have to give today?’
2. Practice transparency throughout all actions. Always remember that everything you do, and everything you create, belongs to the public. This means records, reports, meeting minutes, board minutes, and so much more.
3. This include your board members. No matter your role or how busy you get in your everyday job, stay in touch with the people you’re serving.
4. Know your community and county well. Know the key influencers, the organizations and the services that can help the people that you serve.
5. Educate the public on who you are, and what you do. Make it a priority to present to diverse groups in your community. Present to schools, clubs, and organizations.
6. Live by the motto “If we can’t help, we’ll connect you to the right person or group.”
7. Build relationships with your local media. They can be one of your biggest advocates for getting information out to the community.
8. Educate yourself, your board and your employees. Keep growing no matter how long you are in office.
9. Stay open to fresh ideas. Sometimes others have a better way of doing things.
10. Love everyone unconditionally -- employees, clients, your community.

**wikipedia**
Building strong strategic partnerships are essential to reaching trustee’s goals. When you can’t help someone, you need to know who can.

How can you build strategic partnerships? Understand and get to know:

- Social Delivery Agencies
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Event organizers
- Other county, city and town leaders (and other trustees in your own county)
- Church leaders

How do you maintain successful relationships with strategic partners?

- Look to “Be the Giver.” Always ask yourself, “how can I help this person or entity?”
- When working to give – there are 3 things people and organizations typically are seeking
  - Money or some other resource
  - Recognition. Private recognition is great - public recognition is even better!
  - Valuable Relationships. Making introductions between two people who will find mutual value in a relationship is free – and generates immense long-term value.
- Avoiding “The Takers” is key. Develop this skill and learn to do it gracefully.
- Keep showing up, even when the going gets hard – “You Must be Present to Win!”
- Be patient. Be consistent.
- If you can’t be there, send your team so you have a presence.
Before creating any marketing materials, it’s key to understand and confidently know your trustee ‘story’ and the ‘why’. This means having a clear and concise marketing message for the general public.

A successful marketing messaging combines education, facts, impact and an emotional appeal.

**Items to consider when creating your marketing message:**

- **WHO’S YOUR AUDIENCE** – who are you trying to impact with the message? Talk specifically to them.

- **START WITH THE STORY** – People forget facts but remember stories
  - Every story starts with a specific character (or group) who faces a specific problem.
  - Next, unfortunately, something happens to make the problem worse.
  - But the character (or another hero) steps up and fights the good fight, overcoming circumstances to win the day.

  *HINT: Whomever you position as the ‘hero’ in your story, they will gain social goodwill in your listeners’ minds.*

- Strategically plan your stories to build the personal brands of your allies and yourself.

- Know your statistics / factual numbers, but use them to support your stories. Avoid sharing only facts.

- Answer the question, if someone does not know what a trustee does (and what a Township is), how can you explain it in a few short words?

- What success stories can you provide that show your impact?

- How can you retell your message to make people see how much you help, and to make them want to help your cause in return.

**How to use a marketing piece:**

- Make it as concise and engaging as possible

- Distribute it at events / booths

- Pass out when talking to different groups and organizations (i.e. schools, Lions Club, Rotary Clubs)

- Give to potential clients

- Always have available in your front office

- Use different versions of the marketing piece for advertisements

- Continuously reword your best talking points to keep content rolling on social media
Other items to include in a marketing piece:

- Images
- Services the trustee provides
- Your logo
- Testimonials (the shorter the better)
- Address / Contact / Hours / Social Media
- Township mission statement

PUBLIC RELATIONS 101

Any successful public relations strategy begins with a foundation of great relationships. Know the reporters and key media outlets in your area. Once you make contact, build that relationship on a consistent and continual basis. Understand what type of stories they are looking for and send them pro-active content.

Questions to ask reporters / media influencers:

- What kinds of stories are you looking for?
- How can I provide you the best content for your audience?
- What is your production schedule?
- What kinds of images would you like us to submit to you?
- What advice do you have for me when it comes to providing information and stories for you?

Local media outlets are always looking for great stories and often struggle to find daily, relevant topics. Here are a few ideas for content you can create and send:

- Success Stories (character overcomes obstacles)
- Unfortunate events stories (obstacles overcame the character)
- Upcoming events (reporters love to report specifics)
- Partnerships
Defining different types of media:

- **Earned Media:** “Free” awareness and publicity

  Earned media is not controlled by the actual organization or brand. This gives more credibility, less bias and makes the message more trustworthy.

  **Hint:** Stories are even more important when considering Earned Media. Remember, reporters spend more time looking for a “good story” than they do “good facts.”

  **Examples:** News story (print or tv), letters to the editor, social media posts from influencers, reviews

- **Paid Media:** Monetary transaction for awareness and exposure

  Paid media is controlled by the actual organization or brand. It’s a great way to drive traffic to a website, educate or build awareness for your brand. This is your chance to flesh out details or show impact to the reporters that may have been left out in your ‘earned media’. To get the maximum return on your spend, understand where your target audience is and use the modes of advertising to reach them

  **Examples:** Print or digital advertisements

- **Owned Media:** Thought-leadership, educational messaging that your organization directly creates

  Owned media is created by you -- you’re in full control. If someone finds your own content, they are typically the most engaged group, because their goal is to learn more.

  Because their goal is to learn more, ‘Owned Media’ is one of the few places where basic Facts and Details can play the most prominent role.

  **Examples:** Websites, white papers, blog posts, social media posts, case studies, statistics

A Kindergartner raises money and buys over 221 pounds of food for the Delaware Township Trustee Food Pantry (see Press Release on following page)
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JUNE 18, 2019

Fishers, IND -- Last week, the Delaware Township Trustee’s food pantry was blessed by Jayse Himmelberger, a kindergarten student at Harrison Park Elementary School in Fishers.

Jayse, along with other members of his class, were accompanied by teacher Sara Potter and several moms to the pantry for a field trip this past January.

“We think it is so important for students to develop a heart for serving others,” Ms. Potter stated. “We were hoping that we could partner with the Delaware Food Pantry on a service-learning project. We want to show students that even though they are little, they can make a BIG difference in their community and their world.”

This certainly was the case for young Jayse. After learning about service to his community, he told his parents that he wanted to sell his toys and buy food for the food pantry with the proceeds.

Jayse’s parents, Jamie & Heather Himmelberger, wanted to encourage Jayse’s spirit of giving and yet wanted to be certain that selling his toys was what their kindergartener really wanted to do. His parents had him go through his toys on his own and then waited a couple of weeks before selling the toys.

Jayse selected some of his best toys to be sold. His parents and grandma cheered him on by matching whatever he raised – which turned out to be $100!!

With the $300 to spend, Jayse was excited to head to the local Kroger store to purchase goods for the pantry. With the help of his dad, he selected a wide variety of food including snack bars, goldfish snacks, ravioli and soup equating to 221 pounds. Then, dad approached the manager of the store. After hearing the story of Jayse and his toys, the manager gave an additional $50 for use by the pantry.

“Such a big heart for such a young boy,” said Trustee Driskell about the generosity of Jayse.

With donations from Jayse and other members of the community, the Delaware Township Trustee’s pantry is able to continue to provide food to those in need in the HSE school district. The hours of operation for the food pantry are Monday–Friday, 9am–4pm.

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Send a picture that supports the picture if you have one.
Kevin Evans

The most comprehensive, organized, and impactful plan we’ve observed also just might be the most scalable and easiest to duplicate across our state.

When Kevin Evans took over as Center Township Trustee of Clinton County, Indiana, the township’s office and reputation were both in tatters. For those in need lucky enough to find the office even unlocked and open, often found themselves turned away minutes later, usually without explanation. The office’s budget had almost 2 entire years worth of budget unreleased, the more than $1M surplus sitting in a checking account, not even collecting interest.

The office’s lack of responsiveness had fostered a reputation of neglect and disinterest. Many in the community were left questioning if organization really brought any value to their county at all.

Evans knew strong relationships would be critical to any turnaround effort. And he needed a way to rebuild those relationships quickly, and with a concerted effort in order to repair the Trustee Office’s reputation.

THE MAGIC OF THINKING BIG:

Kevin Evans brought in a nationally known professional speaker and hosted a series of day-long facilitations designed to engage and inspire better community collaboration.

By leveraging relationships with the local United Way, Chamber of Commerce, the Mayor’s office, and a popular local caterer, Evans was able executive directors and community leaders from 38 local service organizations to participate.

As Evans says, “A professional facilitator was key – and it had to be someone who could stay true to our vision while inspiring consensus and a commitment to the community’s greater good.”

STAGE I: IDENTIFY RESOURCES

With speaker, Thaddeus Rex, the first workshop Kevin Evans’s hosted focused on helping make sure each organization in the community was aware of the abilities, needs, and upcoming plans of every other organization.

In that first session, each of the 38 participating organizations were able to share their story, their scope of services, and their upcoming plans.
Through a facilitated process to focus their messaging, Thaddeus Rex made sure each organization was able to clearly state what they did (and who they served) in 2 sentences or less. Then a document was created listing each organization’s purpose, abilities, and audience.

This clarity not only made it easier to generate referrals from one organization to the next, but also brought to light several instances of competing services as well as areas of need.

**STAGE II: DRIVE COLLABORATION**

For Stage II, Evans had Rex lead a half-day facilitated discussion to drive deeper conversations and commitment between all participating organizations.

Those in need were able to find help faster. Several competing services were eliminated. And plans laid to fill gaps in service.

For instance, the community realized between all the churches, food pantries, and warm meals being distributed, there were 3 places to get food on Thursday, but none on Tuesday.

**STAGE III: BUILD A COORDINATED SERVICES SYSTEM**

Evans knew enthusiasm only lasts so long. To create systemic change, he had Rex build a carefully crafted presentation to build not only consensus, but enthusiasm for his new ideas.

This was the critical step, inspiring collaboration and persuading stakeholders to try something new. In the end, 38 organizations to join a new cooperative. The Trustee’s office is now a hub for all services in the community.

Now when someone comes into the Salvation Army, local homeless shelter, the local Baptist Church, or any of the other 38 participating organizations, they’re told to go to the Trustee first. The trustee performs a standardized intake interview with each family. A needs assessment is conducted, a case record created, and a HIPPA compliant release signed.

Now families can be sent directly to the services they need most. Coordinated services allow families more time for jobs training and job hunting. And the system disrupts abuse while holding clients accountable to interviews, job training and more.

United Non-profits enables multiple efficiencies:

A. Better serve the Public
   
   a. A single intake process serves all 38 organizations
   
   b. Within 90 mins they know if they qualify (waste less time)
   
   c. Clients referred directly where they need to go – no more guesswork
B. Better data  
   a. Track which services each client (and their family) receive  
   b. Track which services are being requested  
      i. Identify attempted system abuse  
      ii. Identify gaps in service faster  

C. Create a Hand-Up (instead of just Hand-outs)  
   a. Each client receives a gameplan  
   b. Hurdles to employment get addressed (daycare, transportation, jobs training, interview skills, etc…)  
   c. Hold clients accountable (Why didn’t you go to job training Tuesday??)  

D. Easier and more productive fundraising for participating organizations  
   a. Stronger results  
   b. Better data  
   c. Moving families out of poverty alloys reallocation of current funds  
   d. Engages donors and church communities in a way that drives engagement and generosity  

Thaddeus Rex says, "It’s easy to get people excited in a seminar, but getting them to adopt a new systems (and new habits) is much more important.  

And it was key they know Evans isn’t inserting himself to build stronger Trustee but to build a stronger Community.  

George Washington was our inspiration. He turned down requests to become king and sent his own standing army back home. He didn’t want to be President, and only did it to unify the 13 colonies. Then he stepped down after only 8 years, starting a tradition of peaceful transition of power we still have today.  

He did it all to turn 13 colonies into the United States, to help protect freedom for them all. This is a Trustee’s gift to give, to lead many organizations and their services to work together as the United Non-Profits.  

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**PHASE IV: PUBLIC AWARENESS**  

All this is possible precisely because the Trustee is a publicly elected executive. When a Trustee and their Board members share a strong vision, The Township Office is capable of rapid change. It can drive many new innovations in public service.  

On the other hand, all it takes is one election to bring it all grinding to a halt.  

Perpetuating the system will require strong Trustee leadership. We need to make sure the public knows everything today’s Trustee has created so tomorrow’s Trustee’s will be held accountable to the same standards.  

Along the way, we’re educating the public on the value and importance of the Township Trustee’s office. Because driving more aware voters will drive more engaged communities.  

UPDATE:

- The United Non-Profits of Clinton Count (Indiana) launched Jan 1st, 2019.
- As of May 15th, 2019 (5.5 months into the program)
  - The Center Township Trustee’s office had generated $119,000 in savings as a direct result of the United NP
  - 12 families completely off services
  - The other 38 participating organizations have all realized similar efficiencies and cost savings
- As word spread, more organizations asked to join the United NP
- 56 organizations in Clinton County are now part of the United Non-Profits
- Voters have stronger awareness (of Trustees and Townships) than ever before
- All 56 participating organizations now meet quarterly to continue making improvements

Lisa Pierzakowski

In her fifth year serving as the Center Township Trustee of LaPorte County, Indiana, Lisa Pierzakowski is a shining example of using your passion and position to make a real difference.

UNCOVERING ROOT CAUSES:

When Lisa began her role, she quickly realized that no effort was being made to hold clients accountable, nor to resolve the root causes of the individual’s need for assistance. Lisa saw this as a critical challenge. She believed the trustee should be helping people discover and remedy the particular circumstances that were causing them to continually need assistance. The goal is to eventually defeat the cycle and become self-sufficient.

It was time to make a change. What did this look like? If a client is unable to pay their rent, her office will work to discover the underlying reason why he or she is struggling to fulfill this responsibility. Whether the answer is a lack of budgeting skills, unemployment, or a drug addiction, Lisa and her team will connect the client with resources to remedy that problem long-term. The goal of this approach is to truly get to the root causes, not just the symptoms.

TWO PART INTERVIEW APPLICATION PROCESS:

Lisa then implemented a two-part interview application process.
When an individual comes to the trustee office, they are interviewed by a staff member and then told to return another day. They go through the same interview with a different employee. The two staff members then share the information they gathered with Lisa, and make a decision on the kind of assistance this client will or will not receive.

This two-part process has proven beneficial for both the client and the trustee. First, a client may open up more to one interviewer more than another. By requiring two rounds of communication, it helps them get a more complete picture. This improves their clients’ success rate. The process tends to help keep all staff members on the same page as well. Now they are, taking care of people who really need the help, and it helps them avoid taking care of the people who are using and abusing the system.

Lisa knows the responsibility is to make sure taxpayers’ funds are being used for the right purpose. This is why Lisa puts an emphasis on holding clients accountable, teaching vital life-skills, and making connections with people and organizations in the township. Furthermore, networking with many agencies has helped tax dollars go even further.

From Lisa’s perspective, connecting, sharing and learning from other trustees, township staff and constituents is crucial for growth and success.

**Frank Mrvan**

Frank Mrvan is the Township Trustee in North Township in Lake County, Indiana. He is responsible for serving approximately 180,000 people. When Frank took over as township trustee, the community was more than ready for new and collaborative improvements.

**ADDRESSING MENTAL ILLNESS:**

Frank recognized a need for updated mental health services. Mental health issues often were a root cause of unemployment and addiction. Frank organized a mental health provider to work in the office two times a week, and began linking clients to additional local mental health services.

**ATTACKING SEX ABUSE:**

Another impactful program Frank and his team implemented is the 'No More Secrets' campaign. After learning that Indiana is second in the nation for the number of sexual abuse cases reported, the trustee office brought together a panel of related organizations to speak on the topics of body safety, predatory behavior, and internet safety to children at local schools.

These presentations prompted 73 brave children to come forward and share that they were currently or had previously been victims of child sexual molestation. The success of this program was used to help pass legislation that changed Indiana policy. Now, each school system in the state is required to provide an hour of approved curriculum which covers these important topics.
ABOUT AUTISM:

Frank also initiated a partnership with the Indiana Autism Society and the Lake County Autism Society. Together, they created a curriculum to present at police stations that educated officers on how to approach and manage individuals on the autism spectrum. They then distributed de-escalation kits to put in each police car. The kits are filled with objects that could potentially calm or distract an individual with autism and help relieve the situation. They then hosted a symposium for around 180 special needs children where the police department presented on what to expect if a policeman was coming (focusing on possible triggers including lights, loud sirens, etc.). After the presentation, a bracelet or shoe clip with a unique number were distributed to each child. In the event that an officer encounters a child on the autism spectrum who is wearing one of these bracelets, they can look up the number and receive the child’s emergency contact information and calming mechanisms.

The innovative programs that Frank has implemented during his time as a trustee has made an incredibly meaningful impact on the community. Frank encourages other trustees to continuously build connections with local organizations, and to search for voids in the community.

Ed Morales

FOR RURAL TRUSTEES – STILL ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS:

Ed Morales is beginning his third term serving as the township trustee of Porter Township in Porter County, Indiana. Ed has been faced with a unique set of challenges in his role. The area Ed serves is very rural, with no municipalities. As any rural trustee can tell you, providing services to a 100% rural population requires even stronger relationships and cooperation. It actually can become an opportunity for the Trustee’s office to handle issues often managed by a municipality.

For instance, in rural areas, residents are responsible for managing a lot of their basic services, such as drainage, sewage, water, power and gas lines.

Although Ed’s office does not actually provide the services, they actively help residents connect with county commissioners and state legislators, and operate as a sort of advocate for the residents to ensure they all have adequate access to some of these basic services. Although conducting this kind of work may be outside the scope of a trustee’s minimum legal requirements, Ed said his office’s success begins with the belief that the first role of any trustee is to serve the needs of their community. They step up and assist because it provides a service his constituents truly need.

RELATIONSHIPS:

Building strong relationships with county commissioners and other elected officials is a crucial step in order to get these jobs done. Even though he’s well aware of the value partnering with external community organizations can bring to a trustee office, building these connections is admittedly tougher for small townships. In rural areas like this, there are almost no nonprofit organizations, churches, or other resource offices based within their community.
Although this reality can be frustrating to deal with at times, Ed’s key to success is actively venturing outside his comfort zone. By building relationships with other elected officials, and partnerships with larger agencies in nearby municipalities (even those headquartered in other Townships), he’s been able to build meaningful networking connections and derive huge benefits for his constituents.

Additionally, large landowners, business owners, and other influential constituents can be very important relationships to develop.

Ed has a couple simple steps to success:

1. Put politics aside – every relationship is valuable, regardless of their political affiliation
2. Build relationships with key stakeholders who can benefit your constituents – even if those stakeholders are outside your borders
   a. County Councilors, state legislators, and other local government leaders
   b. County-wide and state-wide service providers
   c. Executive directors and board members of nearby non-profits
   d. Large land owners, business owners, and other influential members of the community

If approached creatively, your biggest problems often can inspire your greatest strengths. Being entirely rural, Ed has no municipal hub for community connections within his Township. But this weakness has created an opportunity for Morales’s Township office to become a hub, and his office is now able to drive and influence many of the area’s most important conversations.

Turning Lemons into Lemonade indeed! Well done Ed Morales!!
Working with you. Working for you.

The Indiana Township Association, Inc. is a statewide, nonprofit organization established in 1891 to support Township Government in Indiana.

OUR MISSION

To secure for township officers and office holders full recognition and enjoyment of their rights to administer their responsibilities in a just and professional manner; to secure the tools necessary for them to fulfill their obligations as public servants; and to strengthen and extend our form of Township government in such a way as to provide to the citizens the services they are entitled.

Current Indiana Township Association Board:

2019-2020 ITA OFFICERS

Frank Mrvan, President | Marilyn K. Walker, Vice President
Ralph Flowers, Treasurer | Sarah Gnagy, Secretary
John Henry, Immediate Past President

AREA DIRECTORS

Bryce Coryea, East Central | Kevin Evans, West Central
Mark Messick, Central | Lisa Pierzakowski, North West
Jane Linker, North East | Christian Rust, South East
Steve Anderson, South West