

ORGANIZATIONAL POLICY

September 9, 2003 (v3.2)

COMPLETED STAFF WORK

How to Submit a Project or Action for Approval



Completed Staff Work (CSW) is the compilation of information on a suggested plan, project, action or emergency that is sufficiently complete to allow the approving body to make a fully-informed decision.

COMPLETED STAFF WORK

A CSW shall contain information necessary for the receiving body to understand the concept and to be able to make an informed decision. It must include:

- 1) A clear and well-documented statement of the **SITUATION** being addressed or the problem being solved by this project.
- 2) The **DATA** necessary to understand the proposal including full copies of all relevant documents rather than references to the documents.

Depending on the complexity of the proposal, the data can be brief or extremely detailed.)

- 3) Details of the **SOLUTION** being presented.

The solution must be detailed enough for the approving body to understand the scope of the proposal including finances and a timeline. Financial forms, if needed, should be completed and attached.

- 4) A **PERSONAL ENDORSEMENT** from the submitter.

The endorsement is the submitter's personal recommendation that the project should be approved.

- 5) A space for the **APPROVAL / DISAPPROVAL**. This page must contain a line for each approving body to sign.

CSW SUBMISSIONS

A CSW proposal must be submitted to the appropriate authority for approval of any proposed plan, project, action, suggestion or expenditure. This includes proposals by members to Committees, the Board of Directors or the President as well as all internal proposals including those from staff, contractors or Committees to the Executive Committee or Board of Directors.

DOCUMENTATION OF CSW PROPOSALS

A record of the approved submission should be filed in the Board records. Disapproval of a submission should be recorded in the Minutes of the Board of Director's Meeting in which it was disapproved. Once a submission is approved, the submitter is fully authorized to carry out the steps approved in the submission.

If the CSW included authorization to incur a financial obligation or to disperse funds, the attached form is considered approved and can be sent to the Bookkeeper for appropriate action.

If it is a long-term project, the “solution” section should include a method of reporting coordination activities. Reports should be sent to the Board of Directors (via any appropriate Committee) on the accomplishments of the project.

CHECKLIST & EXAMPLES

A checklist of what should be included in a complete CSW and some examples of how a CSW might be written are attached to this policy as Attachments #1 and #2 respectively.

Approved September 9, 2003
by the Board of Directors

History:

Sept 9, 2003	(v1) Original Publication Date
June 30, 2009	(v2) Revised to specify that the CSW applies to all proposals, including those from members, staff, contractors and Committees, and to combine the information previously issued in HSCG Policy of Sept 9, 2003, Completed Staff Work - Checklist and Examples (which is canceled as the information is included in this issue as revised).
Nov 12, 2009	(v3) Revised to include record of disapprovals in Minutes and to clarify wording and intent of document
Oct 7, 2013	(v3.1) Amended to include name changes
May 4, 2018	(v3.2) Minor changes and reformat.

CHECKLIST

Not every item listed below will be needed for every proposal, and some proposals may require more than is listed. The checklist is provided as a guide to determine what type of information you should include (and why).

Remember, the term “Completed Staff Work” means a compilation of information on a suggested plan, project or action or emergency that is sufficiently complete so that all the Board of Directors has to do is approve or disapprove it.

In order to be complete it must contain everything necessary for the recipient to understand the whole concept, see that this is a good choice and need no further information to approve (or disapprove) it.

SITUATION

The SITUATION being addressed or the problem being solved by this project.

The statement of the situation or problem must be clearly stated and documented where appropriate. This is “why” the project would be done.

- ◆ State the situation clearly
- ◆ Be sure to explain why it needs to be addressed

DATA

All of the DATA necessary to understand the whole picture.

This includes any research done to determine how and why this project would be the most workable way of addressing the situation covered in point #1 above. (Not every CSW will need every point addressed.)

- ◆ All researched information should be clearly documented. Attach any necessary documents or references.
- ◆ Do not assume that the reader knows anything at all about the background or what has led up to this proposal. Even if there have been discussions about it, assume that all the people who will read and approve/disapprove this project have absolutely no prior information about it.
- ◆ If the project concerns a specific industry, include a basic summary of that industry. Again, assume that the people who will read and approve/disapprove the project don't have a clue about the industry. Certainly do not assume that they know what you know about it!

For example, if the project has to do with placing magazine ads, then include an overview of how magazine advertising works. If the project has to do with participating in an industry event, include information on the event, and who is holding it.

Here are some examples of information that could or should be included in the CSW (depending on the circumstances), and tips for information presentation:

- ◆ State the information specifically, not in general terms. For example, saying “the members want ... “ would be unacceptable. Saying “I spoke to 27 members and 21 of them want ...” would be appropriate.
- ◆ Lay out the “return on investment”. Will this project generate income? Goodwill? Fulfill a need of the members? What will the HSCG get back by doing this project? It doesn’t have to be money, but it does have to be something. Show what the least expected return might be and what the best return might be, and how you determine these items.
- ◆ Outline the potential costs. If an item will need to be purchased, then include the research done to determine the correct item and price. This means including at least an overview of the items and prices that were looked into and discarded as being unworkable or too expensive. (This will prevent duplicate work later when purchase orders are requested and/or approved.)
- ◆ What personnel will be needed to carry out this project? Will the personnel need special requirements (a master soap maker, an attorney, a public relations specialist, an accountant, etc)? Will this project be carried out by volunteers, or do the personnel expect to get paid? How will the personnel be recruited for this project? Are there already people who have agreed to actually do all the steps of the project?
- ◆ What are the basic steps of what needs to be accomplished to address the situation presented in #1 above? How were these steps decided upon?
- ◆ Are there any legal issues raised by this project? What are they? Have they been looked into and resolved? How were they resolved?
- ◆ Any other information necessary for the reader to make a fully informed decision whether to approve or disapprove the project.

SOLUTION

The SOLUTION being presented (the actual project details).

What is contained in the solution is what is being approved or disapproved. It is the step-by-step, detailed presentation of the proposed project. In order for the Board to authorize the project or action, it must be detailed enough to know exactly what will get done. Therefore, where applicable the solution should:

- ◆ Be very detailed with a complete step-by-step presentation of what is going to be done, by whom and when.
- ◆ Include a time-table for the parts of the project.
- ◆ Specifically state the personnel to carry out the project, and include a written statement of their agreement to take responsibility for the project and its actions. Provide a contingency in the event that specified personnel are unable to complete the project.
- ◆ If changes in the website are proposed, a statement from the webmaster that they are feasible and can be accomplished must be included.
- ◆ Present a budget for the project, including all expected costs and revenue.

- ◆ Include drafts of any written materials (i.e. letters to be sent, articles to be published, etc). If drafts are unavailable or can't be completed at this time, then a list of the documents that will be submitted later must be included. (This is to ensure compliance with copyright, trademark issues and the correct public relations positioning for the HSCG).
- ◆ Summarize any coordination that will be needed, with whom, and how this will be accomplished. This includes any website changes or additions that may be needed for the project.

As part of the solution, state what reports will be submitted on the progress (and ultimate completion) of the project, and who those reports will go to.

PERSONAL ENDORSEMENT

A PERSONAL ENDORSEMENT from the submitter stating:

- ◆ The project is in the best interests of the HSCG.
- ◆ That it fits within the mission statement and purposes of the HSCG.
- ◆ That if the project is carried out and completed as written in the proposal, it will accomplish the goals it is set to accomplish.
- ◆ It is not illegal in any way.
- ◆ It will not incur any financial obligation other than that listed out and clearly stated within the proposal.
- ◆ It's a good idea and it's okay to do it.

EXAMPLES

[Note: The following examples use completely made up information.]

EXAMPLE #1

Situation: The monthly payment for the website is due.

Data: Our website hosting fee is \$19.95. It is due on the 1st of the month.

Solution: Approve payment of \$19.95 for website hosting for this month.

Personal Guarantee: This is okay.

EXAMPLE #2

Situation: Member Hilda H has been a stellar member and helped with numerous projects. She deserves some recognition for her activities.

Data: Hilda H has been a member for 14 years. During that time she has:

- ◆ Signed up 63 new members
- ◆ Written 11 articles for the How-To Library
- ◆ Helped out at 4 different conferences, doing registration and vendor liaison
- ◆ Donated 34 bars of soap to various projects

Hilda will be at the next conference. It would be nice to give her some recognition for all she has done. The Conference Chairman has agreed that there could be time within the program for a special awards ceremony (the Conference Chairman has not been given the name of the member yet).

Various places and award items have been priced. There were several options, but the best for price and aesthetics is an etched glass vase, with writing commemorating the award. This can be purchased for \$69.95, including etching. An additional \$14.25 will be needed to box and ship the award.

In addition, a written award, which Hilda could use in a press book or put on her wall, would be appropriate.

Solution:

- 1) Award Hilda H the "Membership Excellence" Award. Award to be given to her at the next conference, including an award vase and printed certificate.
- 2) Authorize \$69.95 for the vase and \$14.25 for a box and shipping. The checks to be cut when invoices are received.
- 3) Vase to Read: Hilda H. Membership Excellence Award 2007. Printed certificate attached; needs to be signed by all the Board Members.

Personal Endorsement: This would benefit the HSCG, is not contrary to any existing HSCG Policy and is okay to do.

EXAMPLE #3

Situation: Six people have expressed interest in proposing projects, but they need help and coordination in getting everything together. We don't have a Special Project Submission Committee to help them.

Data: Members Ann A., Betty B, Cindy C, Dottie D, Eliza E, and Fran F have all started researching special projects to be done for the HSCG. They each need some help in getting everything together. A Special Projects Submission Committee would be able to help them, allowing the Board to work on existing approved projects and HSCG management activities.

Member Zelda Z has said that she is willing to take on a committee to help people with special projects, and member Wanda W has agreed to help. They both said that they can find another person or two to help. Both Zelda and Wanda are very familiar with the Completed Staff Work theory and can help members in assembling their proposals. Brief bios for Wanda and Zelda are attached.

A Special Projects Submission Committee wouldn't require any additional funding as both Wanda and Zelda would be volunteers and any addition committee members would also be volunteers. In the future a small budget for copying and mailing may be necessary, but it is not required to get started.

It should be made policy that all Special Projects are approved by the Special Projects Approval Committee before being sent to the Board for approval.

In order to keep the members informed of projects in the works (so they can help or contribute if they want) a "Special Projects" webpage should be created and maintained on the Members Only Website. The webmaster has agreed to put up a page and post the information submitted by the committee.

Notification will need to go out to all the members letting them know of the new committee and its purpose. An announcement should also go on the Announcements (Home) page of the website and to the Yahoo Group.

The Special Projects Committee will report directly to the Board.

Solution: Establish a Special Projects Submission Committee within the HSCG. The purpose of the committee would be "to assist members in compiling submissions to get approval for special HSCG projects."

Appoint Zelda Z as the Chairman and Wanda W as the co-chair. Authorize them to get 1 – 3 more members (and submit them for approval).

Get the content for the webpage to the webmaster so it can be posted. Content for the Special Projects page is attached [attachment #1].

Once the web page is posted, send out the attached announcement in the next e-newsletter. [Attachment #2] and post an announcement to the home page of the Members Only Website [attachment #3 contains the exact text].

The committee will send a report to the Board twice a month with information on what projects are being worked on.

COMPLETED STAFF WORK - ATTACHMENT #2

[Note: In this example, the actual text and content referred to in the solution would be attached to the CSW so it could be approved at the same time.]

Personal Endorsement: This project is in the best interests of the HSCG and will assist in achieving the mission statement and purposes of the HSCG. It's not illegal, can be done and won't incur any financial obligations. It is okay!