Appendix C
PUBLIC PROBLEM STATEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUE RESEARCH

Many if not all of the organizations or programs that you work with were developed self-consciously in response to a "public problem. "You may have learned about this through your investigation of the organizations’ or programs’ history.

A good problem statement does the following:
Concisely states a situation that needs to be changed
States who/what is affected
Quantifies the problem
Addresses a public issue related to the organizational needs/purposes

Write a public problem statement for your organization. Consider the following:

Causes
Why does the problem exist?
What makes it a "public" problem?
Is there more than one cause?
Are the causes interdependent?

Consequences
What are the consequences of the problem?
How many people does it affect?
Are there political, cultural, & economic effects?

Methodology
Describe how you went about gathering the information used to establish your problem statement.
What were your sources (reports, interviews, internet, newspapers, etc.)?
How were members of your organization or community involved in developing the statement?
How broadly is this recognized as a public problem?
How does the organization frame the reasons for the existence of the problem?
How does the organization frame the problem as a public problem?
How does the organization frame the causes of the problem?
How does the organization frame the consequences of the problem?

After writing your brief problem statement, write a 5- to 7-page paper describing the "public problem" in depth. Conduct a literature survey and include what the literature suggests about causes and consequences of the problem. While the problem statement may define the problem in somewhat generic terms, your paper should detail the local realities of the public problem, and include how local developments, laws, and social conditions impact how the problem is locally manifested.

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