



INTRODUCING PRO BONO ANALYTICS

Analytics is frequently discussed in newspapers, magazines, blogs, and even television advertisements. But, what is analytics, how can it help your nonprofit organization, and how can you get started?

The Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS), the world's largest professional society for advanced analytics, defines analytics as "the scientific process of transforming data into insight for making better decisions." INFORMS has recently launched Pro Bono Analytics, where analytics professionals who are willing to volunteer their skills are matched with nonprofit organizations that would benefit from analytical techniques.

Pro Bono Analytics (PBA) volunteers are experts at collecting and using data to create fact-based information to facilitate decision making. The following is a small sample of how analytics can help to address different business problems faced by nonprofit organizations:

1

BUSINESS PROBLEM

Measuring & Communicating Program

POSSIBLE ANALYTICS SOLUTION

Impacts are generally more complex than the number of people served by a program. PBA volunteers can help identify a program's fundamental objectives, metrics best quantifying these objectives, data needs and collection techniques, and how best to package this information for dissemination to donors and stakeholders.

2

Improving Operational Efficiency

Using tools such as process mapping and optimization, PBA volunteers can improve intake processes (who should be served), create schedules to better utilize staff and volunteer time, develop enhanced inventory strategies, and even determine optimal routes for deliveries of meals or other services.

3

Evaluating Critical Decisions Regarding Program Change

Through the use of decision analysis technics, PBA volunteers can help in the evaluation of difficult problems such as: should a successful program be altered or expanded; should a program be terminated; or, should a new program be launched?

4

Starting to Collect Data For Use in Analytics

PBA volunteers can act as "data coaches" to help design one-time surveys or on-going data collection programs; addressing a specific issue or building analytics capabilities.

Pro Bono Analytics' mission is to apply operations research and analytics techniques to help nonprofits that work in underserved communities or with underserved populations. If your nonprofit has a problem that would benefit from an analytical solution, or if you would like to explore possible projects, then please visit us at www.probonoanalytics.org to submit a project or contact the Pro Bono Analytics team at probono@informs.org. We look forward to hearing from you!