

✓ Strengths & Challenges ✓

1. Employees ^{Knowledge & experience}
2. Local contact w/ clients
3. Cost efficient organization
 - little overhead to run office
 - a lot of conservation on the ground for amount available

4. Able to reach local clientele to provide education to all age groups = urban + rural businesses

5. Good partners & ^{good} delivery system for their programs

6. Having the District Act gives us a purpose and protection from being eliminated

1. continued ~~in delivering~~ in delivering programs - federal & state

1. Reduction of employee #s
2. Funding (lack thereof)
3. Legislators seem to be insensitive to our position ^{tired of hearing about our funding woes}
4. Difficult to "get our story out"

5. To find new funding sources

6. Differences in geography, resources, needs, etc. from county to county - hard to "fit" programs for entire state

7. Finding ways to educate non-partners, general public legislators

8. Need to educate directors, staff, & legislators of what is in the District Act

9. Some aspects of District Act may need to change, but opening it up could harm us. (Act limits us - i.e. can't levy taxes)

10. Inactive Directors

11. Delivery of LUC# was UNFAIR - Some LUC have 5 counties, some have up to 9 counties

12. Need employee benefits to maintain good (trained) employees

Programs & Employees

1. New Opportunities will be difficult to take on with lack of staff
2. Water quality is still a concern - NLRS is the current "buzz" word
3. Employees need to be trained better
4. Current employees' plates are full
5. Need to have & promote programs to help us be self-sustainable
6. Need active and interested Directors & employees
7. Need to foster good relations with NRCS (partner in office) and other partners
8. Education & System for ^{legal} protection of districts (Directors & employees) for entering contracts, etc.
9. ^{we have} Employees Knowledge & experience in delivery of programs - federal & state
10. Need to bring back ~~cost~~ cost share program back to ENTIRE state - not just priority areas
11. Need good employee benefits to maintain seasoned/trained employees

Brand & Image

1. Many clients & other agencies don't understand we are our own entity - separate from NRCS/USDA
2. Legislators don't know who we are, and what we do
3. There are District Directors that don't understand what districts do & what our responsibilities are
4. The full message of how much money we help funnel into the state is not reaching GOMB, governor, legislators, ~~the~~ general public, cost-share. Operations expenses vs. cost share/program delivery.
5. We should be perceived as an important ag organization that Illinois can't live without, but most people don't even know who we are.
6. "We are the ^{Best} Delivery system for local programs because we are the local people." Our directors and employees know the locals and locals have trust in us.
7. Perception issue - Clients associate us only w/ having cost-share (or not). Don't recognize other services we offer.

Brand
Common Message
Suggestion →

Governance & Partnerships

1. We have a real need for legal council to help ^{"look out for"} & protect districts when entering into partnership agreements
2. We need to be diverse with our communication avenues - Social media, website, public service announcements (radio/papers/newsletters)
3. Lack of employees & time is still an issue in being able to keep up w/ publicity (^{websites} social media) & getting our message out
4. Districts need to ~~be~~ understand accountability ^{to taxpayers} locally & to our partners - lack of accountability leads to demise of programs