

A yellow pencil with a black eraser and a sharp lead tip is positioned vertically on the left side of the image. The pencil has the text "NO 2 HB" printed on it. To the right of the pencil is a clear plastic folder or binder, which is slightly tilted. The background is a wooden surface with a vertical grain pattern. The text "Meritan, Inc." is centered on the folder in a bold, italicized black font.

***Meritan, Inc.***

Communications

By Jeff Weesner

# Overview

- Meritan is a complicated entity
  - The way we see ourselves
  - The way customers see us
- Our stable infrastructure helps consistency
  - Eliminate distance
  - Eliminate disparity
- External reach
  - Significant
  - Memorable

# Complicated?

- 501C(3), 1961, many services
  - HH, Med Foster Care, In-Home, Employment, disabilities...
- Payments
  - Government benefit, Gov program, Grants, Fee for Service, Donors
- Consumer or patient
- Buyer - Who decides?
- Regulator - audit with or without \$

# Less Complicated

- Balance
  - Services earn payment
  - Fundraise to provide service
- Corp vision, mission, values?
  - Elevator speech
    - Meritan provides health and support services from cradle to grave
    - <50 yrs
    - HH, Med FC, disabilities, Employment, more

# Infrastructure

- Materials, web email, internal email, networked offices, wireless laptops, in-house applications, external vendor applications, billing, HIPAA, HR - email/packets
- Computer request system, shared documents, P & P manual, employee manuals
- Accreditation
- Website <http://meritan.org>

# Web

- Public image, active content, means for research & donations
- A site does not drive traffic
- <http://YouTube.com>
- <http://midnightclassicbiketour09.eventbrite.com/>
- Social networking - listen, actively contribute text

# Corporate Entity

- Bosses - power, authority
  - Message vs. method
- Boards - oversight
- Committees / Task Force
- Two way, feedback
  - Surveys of all service consumers, employee, payers
- Transparency vs. Organization Need
- Lawsuits
  - structure adds defense, process
  - Cause is usually singular & personal

# External Reach

- Great products & services have to reach people
- PSA are often ads, newspaper classifieds for employees & foster families
- PR - paid assistance to push us to tell stories, deliver coverage
- News coverage - effective for good & bad
  - Wendy Thomas on Silver Bells, Senior center vs. GA
- Trade Shows, Fairs

# Personal Reach

- Employees participate in conferences, seminars, meetings, committees, State/service issues, professional associations...
  - Staff know the decision makers
  - Decision makers know Meritan
    - Referrals
    - Contracts
  - Stay current on industry trends & customer interests

# Asking for approval

- Accreditation
  - Credibility & standardization
  - Comply & gain individual approval
- Awards
  - credibility, PR
- Website is not a true *ask*
  - follow up, support decisions & opinions
  - means to process payment

# Making the *Ask*

- In-house grant writing
- Earn contracts, qualify & measure
- Foundation appeals
  - Durham, Assisi
- Fundraising Events
  - Silver Bells
  - Midnight Classic Bike Tour
- Individual/Group Appeals
- United Way
- Class event, “Will you ask your groups to include Meritan?” - Elise Bone