Decision Matrix Technique

Many variations on Decision Matrix tools are available to you.  For variants on the technique presented here, refer to Tague, Nancy R.  **The Quality Toolbox**.  ASQ Quality Press.  Milwaukee, WI.  1995, 122-126.  If you are a past participant of Strategic Planning, you may have this book in your office.

A decision matrix can help your county office determine which issues are most important and most relevant for you to address through educational programming.  The results of your decision matrix exercise should answer this question for you: "Which issue should we work on?"

Steps for you to follow in the exercise:

1) Give each person who is part of the decision matrix discussion a list of the issue statements your county office situational analysis resulted in.

2) Decide which criteria are important to your county office in terms of addressing issues in your community.

   Some examples of criteria that your county office might use appear below.  You do not have to use these criteria, but you can if you want to.  Use what your office agrees upon, even if it is not represented here.  Try to narrow down the list of criteria to five or fewer of the most important criteria for your county office.  Decide which of the criteria you value the most as a county office.

   Example 1
   Potential to use educational programming to make the greatest possible positive change in our community

   Example 2
   Potential to use educational programming to help those who need it most in our community

   Example 3
   Potential to use educational programming to uniquely meet a community need, not duplicating the services or programs other agencies or organizations offer

3) On a dry erase board, chalkboard or poster, write the issues from the issue statements down the left side.  Write the criteria across the top.

   Or you could use MicroSoft Excel to create your matrix.  It might resemble this:

| | Criterion A | | | | Criterion B | | | | Criterion C | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Sue | Jim | Bob | Ann | Sue | Jim | Bob | Ann | Sue | Jim | Bob | Ann |
| Issue A | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Issue B | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Issue C | | | | | | | | | | | | |

3) Have each person rank each issue according to how well it meets each listed criterion, using 1 for "best meets criterion", 2 for "somewhat meets criterion" and 3 for "least meets criterion."

   Make sure that each person ranks each item, using each rank number only one time. Deviating from this guideline could confuse the meaning behind the rankings.

4) Determine how each issue fares relative to meeting each criterion. Which issue got the greatest number of 1 for "best meets criterion"?

   Your county office might decide to pursue the issue that gets the greatest number of first ranks, or you might decide to use this information to spur group discussion about how the other issues fared in your decision matrix.