



HEALTHY AGING INITIATIVE USE CASE EXERCISE

Creating Use Case document for your project can be helpful for your coalition to make sure that you keep the end-user of your initiative in mind as you plan. The four Minnesota pilots developed their use cases early in their planning.

The technique has been adapted from an exercise that software developers use to describe how their new product will be used by customers. It helps develop a shared vision for what you want to accomplish.

Here are the main elements of a Use Case:

Problem Statement: What problem will your project help solve?

Main Character: Give the person a name and some descriptive characteristics

Supporting Characters: Describe family members, neighbors, friends, and project members that will play a role in helping the main character.

Story: Imagine the person who will benefit from your project and the connections that initiative will provide. What are the living circumstances, the challenges, and needs her or she has.

Future Alternative: Be as specific as you can about how your main characters life will be better when your project is in full swing.

EXAMPLE

Problem Statement: Isolation and food insecurity for an elderly woman.

Main Character: "Ethel," 84-year-old woman

Circumstances: Lives alone in her home outside of town. Lacks reliable transportation.

Supporting Characters: Adult children, grandchildren, Chisago Age Well Community Connector, Second Harvest Heartland, neighbor, Humane Society, local youth

Story: Ethel spends her days alone in her house just outside of Lindstrom. The home has been very quiet, as her grandchildren live in the metro area and don't visit often, and her little dog has passed on. Ethel dislikes the solitude.

Although she is fairly mobile around the house, Ethel's children have convinced her to give up driving after a minor fender-bender a few months ago. Local transportation services are cost-prohibitive and lacking in reach. As a result, she can no longer attend church activities to see her friends, and more urgently, finds it nearly impossible to get to the grocery store for food.

Ethel leaves a message for her adult son, hoping he'll drive up to visit soon. She is lonely and her cupboards are getting bare.

Future Alternative: Ethel realizes she is low on food and calls the Community Connectors at Chisago Age Well. They refer her to Second Harvest Heartland for dietary assistance and ask about other needs that might be going unmet. She tells them that she'd like to attend church services more often, and they connect her with a neighbor who attends every week and is known for giving rides to other parishioners in

connect her with a neighbor who attends every week and is known for giving rides to other parishioners in his large van. Ethel strikes up a friendship with the neighbor, and he offers to bring her to the grocery store once a week.

The Community Connectors also sympathize with the loss of Ethel's dog. Although she cannot realistically adopt a new pet, she would like an opportunity to be around animals sometimes. The Connectors gives her the number for the local Humane Society, which is always looking for volunteers to feed and spend time with the dogs and cats at their facility. One of the workers even offers to pick Ethel up for a weekly shift. She loves making new friends and feeling a sense of purpose again.

Because Ethel misses being around children as well, the Connectors send her a calendar of events at the local schools. Ethel qualifies for free passes to sporting events and school plays. She and her neighbor become big supporters of the high school basketball team and the middle school drama club.