

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT BOARD TRAINING

Facilitator's Guide

Prepared for:

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Table of Contents

Leadership	1
Leadership Questionnaire	14
Leadership Case Study	16
Teaming	18
Teaming Questionnaire.....	29
Teaming Questionnaire Scoring Form	30
Multi-Voting	31
Communications and Public Relations	32
Strategic Planning	48
Management & Governance.....	58
Board Assessment Questionnaire.....	75
Board Assessment Scoring Form	77
Parliamentary Procedure Questionnaire	79
Parliamentary Procedure Scoring Form	80
Ethical Behavior Questionnaire	81
Ethical Behavior Scoring Form.....	83
Financing & Fund Raising	84
Community Involvement	96
Community Involvement Questionnaire	111
Community Involvement Scoring Form.....	112

INTRODUCTION

In 1995 Rural Development's Office of Community Development asked our company to conduct a training needs assessment of the knowledge topics and skills that are required for success by those who serve as members of a Community Empowerment Board of Directors. Based on the replies to our questionnaire, we identified knowledge topics and skills for seven particular competency areas: Leadership, Teaming, Communications and Public Relations, Strategic Planning, Management & Governance, Financing and Fund Raising, and Community Involvement. We then created training materials for these seven competency areas and went out on the road to present training for board members in twelve different sites throughout the country. The response was generally favorable.

This year the Department of Agriculture is working with a constrained budget, and funds are not available for live presentations of the training. Yet there is a very real training need, since many individuals who have volunteered to be board members have no experience in carrying out the responsibilities of that role. To respond to that need and still operate within the confines of its budget, the Office of Community Development has asked our company to videotape the training. Once the videotapes are made, during April (1999), copies will be sent out to Rural Development Coordinators in the State Offices. In each state, the Rural Development Coordinator will schedule dates when local Community Empowerment Boards can view the videotape and undergo the training.

Dr. Cyril Svoboda of ASTEC will be videotaped while presenting the training in the above-named seven competency areas in the National Office. Board members will be expected to attend three Saturday sessions (one each in May, June, and July) where they will view the videotape along with a Rural Development representative and carry out the various activities that are part of the training. The Rural Development representative will act as a local answerer of questions raised by the videotape and facilitator for the group training activities. This document is written to assist those who will act as local "shepherds" of the Boards going through training.

It is never easy to be expected to step in and play a role for which you have been given no training. We know that you are not trained facilitators, but we also know that the Office of Community Development is counting on you to make the training go as smoothly and effectively as possible. To help you out a little bit, we have written this Facilitator's Guide to do two things:

1. share with you some background information about the items presented on the videotape, and
2. explain what you should do in facilitating the various activities.

That is what you will find in the body of this document. For each of the seven modules we give you some brief background information on the module itself, some background information on each page of the Participant Manual, and step-by-step directions for facilitating the training activities in each module. This information and directions will not make you facilitators, but I hope that they will make you a little more confident that you can do this job successfully.

Leadership Module

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

Background of the Leadership Module

FACILITATOR NOTES: Those who make decisions for a group are generally regarded as leaders of that group. A Community Empowerment Board makes decisions for that corporate entity, and, therefore, are the leaders of organization. Since many of the members of a Community Empowerment Board are individuals who have never before served on boards, they may not realize that their role is to be a leader. As a result, they may sit back quietly and let the more experienced members of the Board have their way. The *purpose* of this module is threefold:

- a) to help Board members recognize their call to be leaders,
- b) to show them the activities of a leader and how they differ from those of a manager, and
- c) to bring them to a point where they are ready to become active leaders on the Board.

Background of the Videotape Slides

Activities of a Leader:

The citation at the end of the list of activities refers to what I consider one of the best books on "Leadership." The authors, James Kouzes and Barry Posner, devote a chapter to each of the listed activities, discussing what is entailed in each activity and how each contributes to the overall image of a *leader*.

Most people, when given the task, can identify individuals they think of as leaders. But they are usually hard pressed to identify exactly what makes them leaders. This is the case because most people don't take the time to question what they mean by terms that they use in normal discourse. So they find it difficult to tell a person *why* they consider a person a leader, but they just feel sure that that person *is* a leader.

To help the Community Empowerment Board members become clearer about what makes a person a leader (and, therefore, what they should do to carry out their responsibilities as leaders of their corporate entity), we present Kouzes and Posner's list.

Search for Opportunities for Change and Improvement: A leader is rarely satisfied with the way things are. Instead, the leader regularly takes his/her nose off the grindstone and looks ahead into the future to envision how things could be. Leaders are change agents. They are never satisfied with the status quo, but believe that with a bit of effort things could be much better. Given this belief, leaders are the ones who have ideas or dreams about ways to improve a situation.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

Experiment and Take Risks: A leader is not afraid of failure, believing that failure is never the end of the road, but merely a stepping-stone to eventual success. During an interview with Thomas Edison, a young reporter asked the inventor how many experiments he had to conduct before he finally invented a light bulb that worked. Edison replied that he figured that it took nearly 10,000 experiments. "You mean that you failed 9,999 times before you finally succeeded," remarked the young interviewer. "Young man," Edison snapped, "I never once failed; I merely found 9,999 ways not to invent the light bulb!"

Envision the Future: A leader always has a future orientation, an eye for what might be. This is not an empty, wishful thinking for things to be better. The leader agrees with the saying: "If wishes were horses, beggars would ride." A leader doesn't just wish for a better future. Instead, he/she forms a *vision* of what that better future could be and has a general idea of how to get there. The situation of the future has a definite form for the leader: he/she can see what the changed situation looks like; he/she can feel it and knows exactly what it will be like to live in that better situation.

Enlist Others to Follow: An individual can be a leader only if he/she has people who are ready to follow his/her lead. Therefore, to be a leader, one has not only to form a vision of a better future, but has to persuade others to come along on the march to that future. This means that a leader has to be a salesman. The potential followers are the customers. The envisioned future is what the leader is selling. It is not enough for the leader to build a better mousetrap (i.e., vision of the future); he/she has to convince others that the envisioned future is better than the present and worth working for.

Foster Collaboration: A leader can not make the envisioned future real by him/herself. The leader negotiates with the followers over what steps they should all take to make it happen. No leader brings about a better future on his/her own: even Jesus Christ chose twelve special followers to spread the Good News. A leader realizes that a group of individuals, each doing their own thing, doesn't succeed like a team of individuals working together. Instead, the leader tries to create a cooperative atmosphere in which followers collaborate (work together) to build the future.

Empower Followers: A leader knows that people who never lift a finger to help themselves do not appreciate what others do for them. But worse, those who do not help themselves eventually make themselves incapable of helping themselves. The story (made into the movie entitled "The Admirable Crichton") makes this point extremely well. The wealthy employers of the butler, Crichton, were unable to cope when they were shipwrecked and found themselves on a primitive island. In the face of their dire situation, only the lowly servant was able to overcome their difficulties and ensure survival until they were rescued. We all seem to agree that: "Give a person a fish and you have fed him/her for a

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

day. Teach an individual to fish, and you have empowered that person to feed him/herself.”

Lead by Doing: A leader practices what he/she preaches; he/she walks his/her talk. A leader realizes that followers will do as he/she *does*, **not** just what he/she *says*. The Schoolmen who formed the first university for the Emperor Charlemagne maintained that the master teacher must **model** for his students the behavior he wanted to teach them. Otherwise, they concluded, the students will dismiss the words he pronounces as empty and not worth adopting. Jesus Christ, told his followers to judge would-be leaders by what they *do* (their fruits), not by their grand words.

Build Commitment to Action: A leader knows that there are three aspects in human behavior: the cognitive, the emotional, and the conative. The cognitive aspect refers to thoughts, opinions, beliefs, and information. Human beings make decisions and act based on how they interpret a situation or person. The emotional aspect refers to one's feelings, attitudes, and values. These, too, shape human behavior. We will do those things we like, avoid those we dislike, and expend energy for something that we value. The *conative* aspect refers to the will to act, to resolve, to commitment. Without the presence of this aspect, our behavior is about as effective as New Year's resolutions: quickly broken or never activated. The leader knows that if he/she wants to change things, he/she must make sure that followers have a commitment to the proposed change.

Recognize Contributions: A leader knows that to motivate his/her followers, he/she must reward the efforts of his/her followers. This reward need not be monetary. Several psychological studies have shown that people respond more often and strongly to public recognition than to monetary awards. The leader knows that it is important to recognize any and all efforts that are in the direction of the desired behavior. If a leader only rewards success, he/she runs the risk of making people wary of ever taking on a task unless it is a “sure bet.” On the other hand, a leader does not punish failure, because he/she knows that that can stop followers from ever volunteering for something at which they might not succeed. The leader focuses more on efforts than results.

Celebrate Accomplishments: Tom Peters (In Search of Excellence) reports that those organizations that he found to be “excellent” always take time out to recognize staff contributions and to celebrate accomplishments. Obviously, a leader knows that he/she must be sincere in doing this; people know when your actions are just “window dressing.” The cynic can dismiss this leader activity as “hokie,” but people seem to respond positively to certificates, plaques, and photo displays of themselves as “Employee of the Month.” Military leaders know how important is celebrating with the troops after they complete a mission.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

Activities of a Manager:

The activities listed on the overhead under this title are taken from a very good book on "Management." The author, Clay Carr, devotes a chapter to each of the listed activities, discussing what is entailed in each activity and how each contributes to the overall "persona" of a *manager*.

Most people, when given the task, can identify individuals they think of as managers. But they are usually hard pressed to identify exactly what makes them *good* managers. As we said when dealing with leaders, most people don't take the time to question what they mean by terms that they use in normal discourse. So they find it difficult to tell a person *why* they consider a person a manager, but they just feel sure that that person *is* a manager, and a good one.

To help Community Empowerment Board members become clearer about what makes a person a manager, we present Carr's list.

Structure the Job: A manager focuses on the day-to-day operations of the organization. It is his/her responsibility to decide how to accomplish the goals and objectives set by the leader. The leader creates the Strategic (long-term) Plan, while the manager creates the Tactical (short-term) Plan. The manager's job is to plan the daily activities required to attain the organization's objectives, to organize the staff and coordinate their activities, and to set priorities for what needs to be done and in what order. Managers are stabilizers, trying to keep the ship of state on an even keel and moving toward the next harbor. They don't like change, because change can put them off course or behind schedule.

Select Staff: A manager can not be expected to do it all by him/herself; a manager must choose a staff for support. Since the manager has to work with this staff day by day, it is his/her responsibility to find candidates for the jobs, interview them, and select those thought best. The leader should oversee this activity and offer appropriate advice, but should not step in and take over this activity. The manager should choose people who have the characteristics that he/she has pre-defined. It may be that the manager is looking for people who are *thoroughly qualified* for the job, *self-motivated*, and *congenial*. Or the manager may think that his staff ought to be *basically competent*, **but teachable**, as well as *responsible* and *adaptable* to a constantly changing environment. Whatever the characteristics chosen, the manager should select staff members with whom he/she can work well together.

Improve Competencies: A manager always has a present orientation, an eye for what is needed right now to succeed. That means that a manager has to watch the staff's performance and guide them effectively. A manager should be sure that the staff knows what has to be done and how to do it well. This means that the staff knows what is the present objective and the quality standards that are expected for successful attainment of that objective. A manager will be a

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

careful coach, rather than a critical judge. He/she will pay special attention to individuals who have recently gone through a major life transition, and help each staff member fit in and belong.

Correct Incorrect Behavior: A manager can not tolerate continual failure in his/her staff. If someone is not doing an activity correctly, the manager has to provide the feedback that changes that situation. When correction has to be given, the successful manager knows always to include some positive feedback with the negative: by telling people what they are doing well, in addition to what they are doing incorrectly. Correcting staff members should be done *in private*, not in front of the other staff members. A careful coach does not wait until the *right moment* to tell a player what he/she is doing incorrectly and how to do it properly. He/she intervenes *immediately* that he/she spots the incorrect behavior, lest the player forms a bad habit or thinks that silence means approval.

Motivate the Staff: A successful manager knows it is not healthy for employees to become dependent on his/her motivational efforts. In fact, the successful manager works to create a situation in the office in which the employees realize that what is best for the organization is *best for them*. They reach such a point by maturing beyond their response to external motivation (the manager's) to a response to their *own* motivational promptings. To accomplish this, the manager finds out which incentives his/her staff members respond to and presents them, letting the staff members *motivate themselves*. The manager rewards quality work and best effort, not mediocrity.

Delegate Responsibility and Authority: A manager can not do it all him/herself. Eventually, he/she has to turn over to the staff some of the responsibility and authority for the work that needs to be done. Responsibility is a challenge to growth; authority is the ingredient needed for independence. Giving authority without the check of responsibility is an invitation to possible disaster. Individuals who have power without responsibility can become "loose cannons." Turning over *only responsibility* forces the staff to be dependent on the manager to make the final decision. So the successful manager delegates to people the proper mix of authority and responsibility to the extent that they are ready to exercise them --- with a stretch. Once he/she has delegated, the successful manager "keeps tabs" on how the staff performs. When they run into problems, the manager doesn't jump in, but let's the employees know they he/she is ready to assist when they need it. Otherwise, the successful manager lets them solve their own problems.

Support Your Staff's Activities: If a manager wants his/her staff to take on responsibility, he/she knows that they must be supported when they do it. Throwing a person who does not know how to swim into a pool is not the most effective way to teach swimming. It can be dangerous and the behaviors that are learned in desperation are not necessarily the most effective swimming behaviors. The successful manager supports his/her staff by means of a number

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

of activities. He/she provides them with the resources they need, or protects them from criticisms of others, or shields them from other managers trying to give them orders, or by praising them to his/her own boss.

Communicating with Your Staff: The successful manager is, above all other things, a good communicator. He/she is *open and honest* with the staff. Whatever is said is said *clearly and directly*. Good manager-staff relations are of the adult-adult type, not parent-child. The successful manager learns from the fact that we have two ears and only one mouth, and is much more ready to *listen*, rather than pontificate. When dealing with the staff, a good manager is a good salesperson, able to persuade them to act for the good of the organization. Lastly, the successful manager believes in feedback, so much so that he/she asks for it as well as gives it.

Leader and Manager Questions:

FACILITATOR NOTES: Against the background of the “Activities of a Leader” and the “Activities of a Manager,” we now want to help Community Empowerment Board members to understand the difference between being a leader and being a manager. While most adults have heard and used the terms “leader” and “manager,” they likely have never considered what is difference between the two. This can be important, especially an individual is asked to play either role. It is all the more important to grasp the distinction if an individual is expected to play both roles.

To help Board Members grasp the difference between “leader” and “manager,” we ask them to consider a number of rhetorical questions. We don’t necessarily want to hear the answers that they give to these questions. Their answers are really for themselves, to know the meanings they give to these terms and to help them play either role better as Board members.

Because we understand our thinking with better clarity when we write our thoughts down on paper, we ask the Board members to write out their answers to these questions. This may seem a burden, but it will prove very helpful for them.

1. Who do you think of as leaders? It is said that it is the followers that make a leader. So we might ask Board Members to consider individuals that they look up to and feel drawn to follow. The leaders they suggest may be religious masters, military generals, political activists, or business magnates. Leaders may be living or long dead. They can be male or female, old, middle-aged, or young. There are no right or wrong answers, since we are talking of individual preferences.
2. What was the chief leadership characteristic of the leaders you identified? When you think of any person you named as a leader, what comes to your mind that makes that person a leader? What kind of person was he/she?

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

What has that person said or done that inspires you to want to follow? What appeals to you about him/her? Answers to these questions may come more slowly, but take the time to answer them. If you are called upon to be a leader, you need to know how to behave. Your leaders will be your role models, if you can pinpoint their leader behaviors.

3. Who do you think of as managers? Everyone who works has encountered a manager. However, while managers are often found in a business or work setting, they can also be found in the home. Anyone who has watched a mother care for a houseful of children has seen a manager at work! Like leaders, managers can be of any age, gender, or ethnic group. And we may think of managers who are still living or who lived at another time in history.
4. What was the chief managerial characteristic of the managers you identified? When you think of any person you named as a manager, what comes to your mind that makes that person stand out as a manager? What kind of person was he/she? What does/did that person say that convinces you they are really a manager? As you found when you answered this same question about those you named as leaders, the answers to these questions may come slowly. You can see why we say that we don't have clear understanding of terms like "leader" or "manager" until we examine what we mean by them.
5. What are the differences between a leader and a manager? Look first at your list of chief characteristics of the leaders you named. Then review the list of the chief characteristics of the managers you named. How do the two lists differ? Since we use two different terms when we talk about individuals who lead or those who manage operations, we would not expect the two roles to have the same characteristics. So what does a leader do or say or how does a leader act that is different from what a manager does or says? Most people will say that there is a difference between being a leader and being a manager, but they will be hard pressed to spell out the difference.
6. Can the same person/group be a leader and manager simultaneously? If you have identified different behavior patterns for leaders and managers, you will realize that the same individual *could* display both of these patterns --- but not at the same time. When a person is being a leader he/she is not being a manager or vice versa. Now the same individual could demonstrate that he/she is both a leader and a manager, but that means that that individual wears two hats or plays two roles. One does not equal the other.

The important reason for asking these questions is to help the Board members to realize how they are to act as Board members. Should they be leaders or managers? Should they be both? If so, when do they act as leaders and when as managers? Being a Community Empowerment Board Member is not an honorary title. Individuals who have been asked to assume that position are expected to carry out

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

certain responsibilities. Which activities should they perform: the activities of a leader or those of a manager?

The Role of Leader:

In a Community Empowerment corporate entity, the Board of Directors plays the role of corporate leader. As such, each member of the Board is called upon *individually* to be a leader. That means that no Board member can sit back and let others control the Board or do all the work. If each Board member has listed the characteristics of leaders he/she admires, then each knows what is expected of him/her on the Board.

Earlier we listed the Activities of a Leader. Each Board Member should then have a list of activities he/she is expected to carry out while on the Board. However, individual Board members should exercise these activities cautiously. Board Members who have been members of Boards in other corporate entities should be careful not to take over the Board and assume full responsibility. Board members who are new to this position (never having been members of any Board before) should spend some time becoming familiar with what a Board does before trying to lead the pack. Board veterans need to make room for the new members and give them the opportunity to learn and exercise their new responsibilities. Members new to Board membership need to grow into their position.

The Role of Manager:

In a Community Empowerment corporate entity, the Executive Director plays the role of Manager, the one who has the responsibility of implementing the vision of the Board. The individual who has this position should take part in Board Meetings because of his/her special responsibility. During meetings, this individual should provide feedback to the Board concerning:

- the status of projects already underway;
- any difficulties that he/she are having carrying out Board decisions;
- potential problems that the Board needs to address.

The relationship between the Board and the Executive Director is important to the success of the corporate entity. The Board must carry out the activities of Leader, and the Executive Director must carry out the activities of Manager. In this cooperative arrangement, the Board must decide *what* needs to be done, *why* it needs to be done, and *when* it needs to be done. And the Board needs to communicate this to the Executive Director. But then it is his/her responsibility to decide *how* to make it happen.

Obviously, this relationship requires respect, trust, and the cooperation of both sides. The Board needs to respect the talents of the Executive Director, trust him/her to know how best to carry out its vision, and cooperate with, rather than counter, his/her efforts.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

The Executive Director has to respect the judgment of the Board, trust that the whole Board will work to reach consensus, and cooperate with its attempts to lead. Two dangers can exist: a) the Board can try to micro-manage the Executive Director and b) the Executive Director can try to carry out his/her own agenda.

Board as Leader and Manager:

It is possible that an Empowerment Community may not feel that it can afford an Executive Director. In such a case, the Board Members may have to play both the Leader *and* the Manager roles. This is extremely difficult, because each role has a different orientation. The Leader will be concerned with the *future*, with what could be; the Manager will be concerned with the *present*, with what is happening right now. The Leader will look for ways to change and improve the corporate entity; the Manager strives to keep the “ship of state” on an even keel throughout its journey. The Leader who has to think about what it will take to make a potential idea real (a Manager’s concern) may decide too early that the idea is not feasible. An individual who is continually worried about day-to-day operations will seldom lift his/her nose from the grindstone to envision the future.

If a Board has to play both the Leader and the Manager roles, then the members will have to be very conscious of which hat they are wearing at each time: looking to the future when wearing the Leader “hat,” and tending to the present when wearing the Manager “hat. This is most difficult. In fact, Scripture tells us that no person can serve two “masters;” that individual will love one and hate the other. That means that that person will make a decision to focus on one or the other. In fact, if someone on such a Board is really proficient at handling day-to-day operations, that individual should be appointed the Executive Director and allowed to carry out the responsibilities of that position. However, since this position is so demanding of time and energy, a part-time volunteer can not fill it for very long.

Activity I – How Do You Rate As a Leader?

FACILITATOR NOTES: Before the participants are given time to fill out this questionnaire, you should explain that it is strictly for their *private* benefit: no one else need ever see how he/she filled it out. Also, emphasize that this questionnaire can be kept by each participant and used from time to time to check on his/her level of leadership.

The Facilitator should know that the *purpose* of this questionnaire is to present the participant with eighteen statements about leadership behaviors and help them determine whether or not they practice these behaviors as Board members. The *assumption* underlying this questionnaire is twofold:

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

- a) if an individual is practicing all these behaviors, that individual is a great leader;
- b) if, on the other hand, an individual does not practice some of these behaviors, he/she knows what to work on to improve as a leader.

Share both the purpose and the assumption with the participants *after* they have worked through the questionnaire.

1 - Fill out the Leadership Questionnaire

You should walk the participants through the instructions that preface this questionnaire. Read the instructions with them, making sure that everyone understands what they are expected to do.

In the two-page table, this questionnaire presents eighteen (18) statements about leadership activities. To the right of each statement are five numbers in five columns. Circling "1" means that the reader "Never" does the activity described in the statement. Circling "2" means that the reader feels that he/she "Rarely" does the activity described in the statement. Circling "3" means that the reader feels basically undecided, because he/she does the activity about as "Often" as not. Circling "4" means that the reader feels that he/she does the activity described in the statement "Most" of the time. Circling "5" means that the reader maintains he/she "Always" does the activity described in the statement.

Now give the participants time to read each of the eighteen statements and record their reactions to each. You will find that some take longer than others, but try to give them at least **ten minutes** to complete the questionnaire. If one or two seem to be having a hard time, suggest that you read the statement with them, so that they can take their time deciding how to react to the statement.

2 - Identify Areas Needing Improvement

Once the participants have completed the questionnaire, tell them that they should now concentrate on any statement for which they circled a "1," "2," or "3." Any statement with one of those numbers describes a leadership activity that they are not doing on a regular basis. This identifies for them areas on which they need to work, **if** they want to improve their leadership effectiveness. However, stress for the participants that they ought to pay most attention to those activities described in statements for which they circled "1," since they are activities that they *never* do. When they have improved in those areas, they can turn their attention to those activities described in statements for which they circled "2." Finally, after they have taken care of those activities, they can concentrate on improving their leadership behaviors in those activities described in statements for which they circled "3."

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

You might want to emphasize that this questionnaire is really a means for them to remind themselves of what is expected of them as leaders. Leadership is a learned skill, and the activities described in the eighteen statements are the activities performed by leaders. Those who want to be successful leaders will do what those who are successful leaders do: these activities.

3 - Devise a Plan for Improvement

Suggest that for each activity that is circled “1,” “2,” or “3,” the participant could follow this procedure:

- a) Have the participants ask themselves *why* they do not “always” perform the activity or does not perform it “most of the time.” Explain that answering this question will uncover the constraint that is “holding them back” from performing this activity. Those who know what they should do, but don’t do it, usually find that they prefer to do something else instead. So, what is the “something else” that they prefer to do? And why?
- b) Now, try to have them think of two or three things that they could do to change their behavior. For each alternative they suggest to themselves, have them visualize themselves performing each new activity. Have them gauge how they feel with each different behavior. The one that seems most comfortable is probably the one they ought to adopt, if they want to change their leadership potential.
- c) Have each participant take some time (possibly 5-10 minutes) to propose a practical plan for changing their behavior. Ask them what they can suggest that will remind them of what they should be doing, how they ought to do it, and why.

4 - Make a Commitment for Action

The Scottish poet, Robbie Burns, told us that “the best laid plans of mice and men often go awry.” Explain that when we want to change our behavior, we have to do more than merely decide what we want to do and motivate ourselves to want to do it. Our best intentions will never be realized if we do not make a commitment to change, to do whatever it takes to be different. There is a saying: “If wishes were horses, beggars would ride.” The point here is that merely wishing for something does make it happen. We have to have the “will to act” on making it happen.

Merely mouthing “Amen” to exhortations to change our behavior does not change us; we have to *resolve* to stop the old behavior and adopt the new behavior. This is a deeply personal decision. We can’t excuse ourselves because others don’t do the behavior. We have to determine why we do the old behavior and decide whether or not we want to push ourselves to adopt the new behavior. Obviously, if we do not feel strongly enough about the new behavior (or if we don’t see how the old behavior is holding us back), we will not make the necessary commitment to change.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

After everyone has had a chance to develop their plans and make their personal commitments, you might want to engage the whole group in a discussion of their role as *leaders* in their community. To stimulate this discussion, you might ask the following questions:

- a) Do you agree with the statement that as Board Members you are to be leaders?
- b) Do you personally see yourself as a leader? If not, why?
- c) Do you agree with the list of leader activities presented on the videotape and in the questionnaire? If not, what activities do you consider leader activities?
- d) Is the Chairperson of the Board to be the only leader? Are the members of the Board meant to merely be “rubber stamps” agreeing with the Chair, or is each member expected to work together to provide coordinated leadership?
- e) Do you agree with the claim that it is necessary to make a real commitment to change behaviors that are not “leader activities?”

Activity II – Leadership Case Study

FACILITATOR NOTES: Before you hand out the Leadership Case Study, tell the participants that the case study is strictly fictional, though it is based on real experiences with non-profit Boards. If the details of the case study seem to strike home, that is because it deals with human behavior. Human beings on Boards often act the same way as portrayed in the case study.

You should know that the *purpose* of this case study is to present the participants with a leadership problem and to engage them in group problem solving. They should read the scenario described in the case study and then try to suggest *why* there is a problem and *what* would be required to solve that problem.

1 – Read the Case Study

Ask the participants to read the Case Study on their own. As we said with the previous activity, individuals will read at their own rate. Don't rush them. Give them as much time as they need to read through the whole story. Although the story was written using fairly basic English, be prepared to explain any words that some may not know, if they will admit to not knowing.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

2 – How would you deal with this situation?

The first thing that you should do is have the participants break up into small groups, usually no fewer than three and no more than five to a group. If necessary, have the groups move to different parts of the room, so that the discussions within one group won't interfere with those of the other groups.

Tell them that you will move around the room to facilitate their discussions as needed. Ask each small group to pick one of their members to act as secretary to record the major points of their discussion and to report them to the large group.

Suggest that each group start their discussion by addressing the questions listed on the second page of the case study. Encourage them to range beyond these questions, if they feel that they have other points that they prefer to discuss about the case study.

3 – Does the Case Study have relevance for your Board?

When the groups have had about fifteen to twenty minutes to discuss the case study (if they need that much time), bring them together as a larger group and have the secretary of each small group report the highlights of his/her group's discussion.

Then, ask the participants whether they thought this case study was *relevant* to their own situation. Could they see how such a thing could happen in their group? (**NOTE:** Last year when I asked groups to read through this case study, I received comments such as: "I thought you had never been in our community before! If you wrote this case study, it sounds as though you were a fly on the wall of our Boardroom." If your groups tell you anything like that, tell them that this case study was written based on typical human behavior. The scenario in the story could happen anywhere, because human beings are pretty consistent.

4 – If so, what can you do about it?

If the groups admit that the case study sounds relevant, ask each of the small groups to spend five to ten minutes to discuss what they think they could do to:

- a) prevent such a situation from developing;
- b) deal with it, if it does happen;
- c) solve the difficulty without hurting the feelings of those involved.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

Attachments:

Leadership Questionnaire

Leadership Case Study

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

In the table below you will find a number of statements related to different leadership activities. Register your reaction to each statement by circling one of the numbers to the right of the statement. The meaning and abbreviation of each number are as follows:

- 1 = I **Never** Do This (N)
- 2 = I **Rarely** Do This (R)
- 3 = I Do This As **Often** As Not (O)
- 4 = I Do This **Most** of the Time (M)
- 5 = I **Always** Do This (A)

STATEMENT	N	R	O	M	A
1. When a question arises during a Board meeting, I prefer to listen to the ideas of my fellow Board members before I make up my mind.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Whenever we have a problem, I try to focus on finding a solution, rather than looking for someone to blame.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I am prepared to "do whatever it takes" to help the Board accomplish its tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I think that the Board as a whole, not just certain individuals, should share in the credit for Board successes.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I communicate openly and honestly with my fellow Board members.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I have worked with my fellow Board members to create a vision, with which all can agree and can make a commitment to attain.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I try to contribute to a cooperative, rather than an individualistic or competitive atmosphere, on our Board.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I actively try to identify potential candidates for the Board who are capable and willing team players.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I try to take an active part in brainstorming sessions to generate possible solutions to Board problems.	1	2	3	4	5
10. During Board meetings, I ask questions that make my fellow Board members consider the issue more thoroughly.	1	2	3	4	5
11. When individuals or groups on the Board have some conflict, I try to act as a neutral mediator to resolve the disagreement.	1	2	3	4	5

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

12. I look for ways to make Board functioning more efficient and productive.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I always want to know what resources will be needed <i>before</i> a project gets under way, rather than allocate them as they are needed.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I always try to get my fellow Board members to set priorities on Board objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I take an active role in training new Board members in the skills they will need to make a useful contribution.	1	2	3	4	5
16. From time to time I suggest that the Board conduct a customer satisfaction survey in our community.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I try to demonstrate by my actions on the Board that I have made a commitment to continuous process improvement of Board functioning.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I frequently ask my fellow Board members for their suggestions for improving the way we operate.	1	2	3	4	5

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

LEADERSHIP CASE STUDY

The meeting of the Franklin-Jefferson Enterprise Community Board had just come to a close, and the Board members were putting on their coats and saying "goodnights" to one another.

Audrey Connor, the Board President, and Jim Stedman, the Executive Director, were involved in making final notes for their records. When both had finished, they were the only ones in the Boardroom.

"I really feel frustrated, Jim, and I don't know what I can do about it."

"About what, Audrey? The meeting went pretty well this evening. What's bothering you?"

"Well, we have a great Strategic Plan that has some really exciting goals, but I don't see how we will ever do all the work that they require if everyone doesn't pull their weight. I am talking about the four Board members who never speak up at the meetings, don't volunteer to take responsibility for any project, and generally act like 'bumps on a log'. What can I do to get them more active?"

Jim was trying to think of something to suggest, but before he could get it out, Audrey continued.

"We have that project that the people in the community suggested. You know, the one that would bring the doctors, nurses, insurance and financial people together to discuss ways to provide health care to the folks who can't afford it. That's a real problem, but you and I can't do that and all the other things we have on our plates. If we could get Jack Pallone and Helen Trucker to break out of their stupor and take this project on, we might see some real progress."

"I would really like to see them and Harry Browne and Jake Panfield get their teeth into one of our projects, but I can't seem to get them off dead center."

"Well, Audrey, do you think that instead of asking them to volunteer, you could just assign them to a project? Perhaps if you tell them what needs to be done and by what deadline, but leave the 'how' to them, it might work."

"Jim, do you remember what happened when I tried pretty much that same thing with the Youth Center project? Jack and Harry did nothing for over a month, and had no ideas about how to get started when I asked them how things were going. They wanted me to tell them what to do every step of the way. It probably would have been better if I just did it myself, but I didn't have the time or energy. I don't know what to do. They are really tough nuts to crack."

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE LEADERSHIP MODULE

Discussion Questions:

- Why do you think these four members are not taking an active role?
- What could be done to energize them?
- Who has the responsibility for getting each Board member to become part of the team?
- What would you do?

Teaming Module

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE TEAMING MODULE

Background on Teaming Module

FACILITATOR NOTES: We have a Module on Teaming because human beings come into this world as *individuals*, **not** as team players. People have to learn to work together on a team. So we present some ideas and skills that Board members can use when working together.

Background on Videotape Slides

Teaming Atmosphere

When people come together in a group, they create various *dynamics*, i.e., forces that influence their behavior. One of these dynamics is the general *atmosphere* or climate that the group creates for itself. This atmosphere determines how the group wants to work on attaining its goals. There are at least three different kinds of atmospheres that a group might create for itself: individualistic, competitive, and cooperative. Each will have its own particular strengths and weaknesses. The group should be aware of these and create the atmosphere that is best for whatever it is trying to accomplish.

The **individualistic** atmosphere is described by the phrase “Every man for himself.” The strength of this atmosphere might be that each individual member is free to pursue his/her own interests. That might be personally satisfying to the individual and it might be quite motivating. However, the greatest weakness of this atmosphere is that it is *disintegrative*, i.e., it *prevents* a group from coalescing. In an individualistic atmosphere, there is no guarantee that all the individuals will march in the same direction. Individuals pursuing their own interests are chasing individual goals. As well, individuals usually invest strong feelings of attachment to their own thoughts, beliefs, and values. A group that is a team bands together to pursue a common goal. In an individualistic atmosphere each individual will hoard their resources for their own use. In a team, members are expected to contribute their resources for the good of the whole. A group **will not** become a team in an individualistic atmosphere.

The **competitive** atmosphere is described by the phrase “Zero-sum game.” The strength of this atmosphere might be that each individual can be more strongly motivated to “win all the marbles.” Some individuals need to be in a competitive atmosphere to become involved in an activity; other individuals can be turned off by a competitive situation. The greatest weakness of this atmosphere is that it is *limiting*, i.e., what the group can accomplish depends on the goals/interests of the “winner,” whoever can persuade the group to pursue his/her goals/interests. The common goal of a group working in a competitive atmosphere is the goal chosen by one individual and imposed on the group. In a competitive atmosphere a group might be *called* a team, but it is really a composition of the “winner” and the rest who pursue his/her goals/interests.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE TEAMING MODULE

The **cooperative** atmosphere is described by the motto “United we stand, divided we fall.” The strength of this atmosphere is that it enlarges the focus of the group. Instead of having a series of isolated, individual views, a cooperative group can develop a view that combines the views of all the members. A cooperative group can pool the strengths of its several members and support their weaknesses. In a cooperative atmosphere, the different talents and perspectives of the members are valued and utilized. The greatest weakness of a cooperative atmosphere is that it is *demanding* and can be *time-consuming*. All the members have to get to **know** one another and their capabilities; they have to develop a **respect** for one another; and they have to learn to **trust** one another. All of this takes time, time that could have been spent doing some task. However, a cooperative atmosphere **is** the climate in which a group can become a team.

A Team Building Requirement

What has to change to convert a group of individuals into a team? It should be obvious that the atmosphere has to change from one that is individualistic and/or competitive to one that is cooperative. The members of the group have to undergo a change of mind and a change of heart. They have to understand that the problems facing the group are larger and more complex than any one of the members can solve alone. They have to realize that competing with one another actually weakens the group by forcing the members to view their problems only from the viewpoint of the “winner.” They have to prefer a team effort, rather than individual effort. They have to take a long-term view of what they are trying to do, rather than a short-term view. They have to learn to balance their focus on solving the immediate problem with a concern for developing *all* their members into problem-solvers. This requires what is called a “paradigm shift,” a change of viewpoint, concepts, values, and beliefs.

This “mind shift” does not come easily; people have to work at it. Consider what has to happen to change young children who are first learning to play some sport. In the beginning each child wants the ball, wants to make the play on his/her own. To become a team player, each child has to understand the need to play his/her position in his/her section of the playing field. Each child has to accept the need to pass off to other team members, rather than trying to score every time he/she touches the ball. They have to learn to respect and trust one another on the team, and decide to pool their capabilities for the good of the team. They have to believe that their success depends on playing together as a team, rather than being merely a group of “grandstanders.”

Teaming Beliefs

To become a team player, an individual has to *value* team effort over individual effort, *even his/her own*. This individual has to overcome his/her automatic egocentrism of seeing and valuing things from his/her point of view. He/she has to get to know, respect, and trust the other members of the team, i.e., become convinced that every other member of the team brings something of value to the table. Each member of the team has to

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE TEAMING MODULE

believe in him/herself, convinced that he/she has something of value to offer the team. All team members have to keep the lines of communication open and the flow of information moving to all other team members. Everyone has to know the “game plan” and focus on getting it done.

We select values that are consistent with our *beliefs*. If I believe that “The best way to solve this problem is by all working together,” I will value teamwork and try to be a good team player. If I believe that “Every one of us on this team has something of value to offer,” I will be concerned that everyone has a chance to make their contribution. If I really believe that “Our success as a team depends on the quality of our communications with one another,” I will be concerned about our communications and do my part to keep the lines of communication open between me and my teammates. If I believe that “To meet our responsibilities and make good decisions, we all need to be well-informed and we need to hear from every member,” I will make sure that I don’t keep information about our efforts to myself. If I see individuals who seem withdrawn during a Board meeting, I will try to engage them in our discussions.

Community Empowerment Board Type

When we use the word “team,” we usually mean a “self-directed team,” i.e., one that decides what its problems are, the best way to solve these problems, the resources that will be allocated to their solution, and the time frame within which things must happen. But there are many different types of self-directed teams. Within an organization we may find different types of teams based on some specific organizational process. For instance, in an organization we can find *functional teams* that will carry out specific functions and produce a particular product or service. The top-level managers and the Chief Executive Officer will make up an *executive management team* that provides oversight and guidance to the rest of the organization. Those managers and supervisors in the lower-echelons of an organization may make up a *middle management team*, responsible for providing consistent supervision through the various divisions of the organization. An organization that is intent to improve its processes continually will probably have a *process improvement/re-engineering team* to ensure that the organization is adapting to its changing environment. Organizations that are anxious to maintain market share will have a *research and development team* to identify changing customer needs and create products or services to satisfy them. For every initiative that an organization launches, it will have a *project team* to initiate, plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate the undertaking.

A Community Empowerment Board matches the characteristics of the executive management team-type. Board members are not usually members of the implementation team, which consists of the Executive Director and his/her staff. Therefore, Community Empowerment Board members are to be the organization’s leaders, providing it with oversight and advice concerning mission-related efforts. They are responsible for creating and updating the organization’s Strategic Plan, giving all members of the organization a sense of where it is heading. They shouldn’t become involved in the day-to-day operations of the organization, but should oversee its activities. They are

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE TEAMING MODULE

comparable to the coaching staff, observing processes, assessing their efficiency and effectiveness, and offering advice for their improvement

Stages of Team Development

Since becoming a team is a learned behavior, groups will become teams over time, maturing through a series of stages. Human beings develop and mature through the series of stages we call infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age. In a comparable fashion, teams grow through the stages of forming, storming, norming, and performing. Usually a team will move from first stage to last, and then continue functioning in the final stage through its life. However, it is possible for a team to lose its corporate memory (because of too great a turnover of its members) and have to recycle through the stages again.

In the **forming stage**, team members start out in a “honeymoon period,” when everything looks promising and motivation is high. If the team members have never worked together before, they start with *positive assumptions* about one another’s capabilities. This is the period called “first fervor,” when members are sure that they will be successful accomplishing the goals and objectives of the organization.

As the team begins to experience difficulties in overcoming problems and in working with one another, it moves into the **storming stage**. Things that had been overlooked during the honeymoon now become irritants or, even worse, cause for dissension. The team runs into situations that it has no experience in handling as a team; often team members blind fall back on old, individualistic behaviors. They often find themselves doubting the capabilities or motivation of other members on the team. Skepticism leads to cynicism and then to antipathy.

If the team recognizes its “fall from grace,” it might take steps to cure its ills. At this point the team has moved into the **norming stage** during which it will begin to develop procedures for practicing what Daniel Goleman, in his book Working with Emotional Intelligence, calls the “five simple secrets of success:” rapport, empathy, persuasion, cooperation, and consensus building. They start to establish rapport between one another; they begin to look at problems from the viewpoint of others; they try to persuade one another, rather than shout one another down; they look for ways to collaborate with one another; and they begin to develop methods for building consensus. At this point, they are truly a team.

Having learned how to work together, the team now moves into the **performing stage**. The members have become comfortable with one another: they know and accept one another’s differences. They understand how to communicate with one another, how to deal with disagreements, and how to get things done. The members of the team form a bond and assume a group identity. Everyone is given a chance to have his/her “say,” but all are willing to go along with the majority.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE TEAMING MODULE

FACILITATOR NOTE: Now, stop the tape and do the following exercise. Then come back to the tape.

Activity I – Teaming Questionnaire

FACILITATOR NOTES: Explain to the participants that, while they will individually fill out a questionnaire on teaming, you will then work with them to come up with group scores. The *purpose* of this questionnaire is to give the Board a means for assessing their teaming behavior and identifying areas in which they could improve as a group. While this questionnaire is given as part of the training, it is our hope that they will keep copies of this form and use it from time to time to check on themselves. Remind them that as a team, they can fall into bad habits that can cause their team to deteriorate. They need to keep a check on their functioning.

1 - Fill out the Teaming Questionnaire

You should walk the participants through the instructions that preface this questionnaire. Read the instructions with them, making sure that everyone understands what they are expected to do. They should find this format familiar, since it is generally the same as the one used in the Leadership Questionnaire.

This questionnaire presents ten (10) statements about teaming activities. To the right of each statement are five numbers in five columns. Circling “1” means that the reader “Strongly Disagrees” that the team does the activity described in the statement. Circling “2” means that the reader “Disagrees” (without strong feeling) that the team does the activity described in the statement. Circling “3” means that the reader feels basically “Undecided,” because he/she feels that the team does the activity about as often as not. Circling “4” means that the reader “Agrees” that the team does the activity described in the statement most of the time. Circling “5” means that the reader “Strongly Agrees” that the team always does the activity described in the statement.

Now give the participants time to read each of the ten statements and record their reactions to each. You will find that some take longer than others, but try to give them at least **six to seven minutes** to complete the questionnaire. If one or two seem to be having a hard time, suggest that you read the statement with them, so that they can take their time deciding how to react to the statement.

2 & 3 – Compile Group Scores

After you have given the participants time to complete the questionnaire, you will need to gather the numbers that they circled for the ten statements so that you can compile group scores for the Board(s) that they represent.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE TEAMING MODULE

- a) If you have multiple Boards represented by the participants at your site, you will need for each different Board a copy of the blank scoring form found at the end of this section of the Facilitator's Guide. You will probably need to write the name of the Board at the top of the form.
- b) Give the scoring form for each represented Board to one of the members from that Board and ask him/her to find the first blank column under the heading "Participants." Now have that individual enter his/her scores (i.e., the numbers he/she circled for each statement) in that column for the next ten lines down.
- c) When the first individual has entered his/her ten numbers in his/her column, ask him/her to pass the form to the nearest participant from his/her Board. That individual will enter his/her ten scores, and then pass the form on to another member of his/her Board in the room.
- d) When all the participants from the represented Boards have entered their numbers for the ten statements, take the form and compute an average score for each statement. Add the numbers on each line and divide by the number of participants who have entered their numbers on that form. The result is the average score for that statement.
- e) When you have computed the averages for each statement, post the results on a flipchart sheet and ask the members of each Board to gather around their Board's average scores.

4 – Board Members Review the Average Scores for Their Board

- a) Explain to the members of each different Board that any scores *below* "3" indicate an area in which the Board needs improvement if it wants to be a successful team. The ten statements of teaming activity represent behaviors that successful teams perform.
- b) Point out that any statement with a score lower than "3" indicates that a majority of the Board members **disagreed** that they perform that activity "most of the time." The lower the score below "3" the stronger the conviction of the Board that they "hardly ever" perform the activity described in that statement.
- c) On the other hand, any statement with a score *greater* than "3" indicates that the majority of the Board members **agreed** that they perform that activity "most of the time." The higher the score is above "3" the stronger the indication that Board members believe that they perform the activity described in the statement "almost always."

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE TEAMING MODULE

5 – Analyze the Problem Areas and Propose Actions for Improvement

- a) Suggest that the members from each different Board represented at your site now discuss the “problem areas” uncovered by their answers to the Team Questionnaire.
- b) Use the questions listed under Number 5 on page 24 of the Participant Manual. Ask the members of each Board to determine, for each “problem area,” the exact nature of the problem: what behavior does the majority perform instead of the activity described in this “problem area?” Can anyone suggest why the majority doesn't perform this activity? Try to determine how critical the problem is. Does it require immediate action?
- c) Now, have them think of two or three things that they could do in the *near-term* to change their behavior. For each alternative they suggest, have the members project the probability that the suggestion would have real success.
- d) Have them propose two or three things that they could do in the *long-term* to change their behavior. Try to move them toward a practical plan for changing their behavior.

Team Decision-Making

As an executive management team, a Community Empowerment Board will have to make decisions from time to time. If the Board has let its Chair be an authoritarian leader, the Board members will merely act as a “rubber stamp” confirming the decisions already made by the Chair. But if the Chair sees him/herself as a Team Leader, then he/she will work with the Board to make decisions through a consensus-building process. All members will be surveyed for any problems that they believe the Board needs to consider. During the Board meeting, they will all *discuss* each problem on the agenda. If the various members suggest possible solutions that conflict with one another, the members will have to *bargain* with one another to reach a solution with which they all can live. As a result of their bargaining explorations, the Board members will make *compromises* so that they can reach some kind of agreement on the issue under discussion. As is always the case in “win-win” negotiating, both sides will have to *collaborate* with each other to come up with a solution to satisfy the concerns of both.

Decision-Making Tools

When we talk about decision-making here, we really mean “problem solving and decision-making.” Throughout its term, a Board will encounter problems on a regular basis. As the Board members work to solve these problems, they will likely consider multiple alternative solutions. After discussing these possible solutions, the Board will

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE TEAMING MODULE

then have to decide which solution they should implement. They might want to use techniques that other teams have employed successfully.

A problem is often defined as the gap between some *present* state of affairs and the *desired* state. For over two thousand years, philosophers and academics in our culture have maintained that the most important first step one can take in problem solving is **problem identification**, i.e., figuring out exactly what *is* the problem and determining its most important components. The reasoning is that if we can't identify the problem properly, we can hardly know what would be an appropriate solution. We Americans have a tendency to become quickly impatient with this step, wanting to get into action. But "action for the sake of action" could not only be a waste of resources, it *could* make the problem worse than it was. The questions on page 27 of the Participant Manual for "Problem Identification" are suggestions for beginning to examine the problem.

In addition to these questions, we might ask: "How important is the problem?" "What is the source of the problem?" "What are the major dynamics causing the problem?"

Brainstorming

In Problem Identification, a group tries to think of as many aspects of the problem as possible, so that it can then come up with alternative solutions that it might implement. When we try to generate a bunch of ideas about anything, we often experience "writer's block." Either we just can not get started or we find our ideas drying up after two or three suggestions. To help groups overcome this difficulty, we suggest the thinking aid called "Brainstorming" to help them create as many ideas as possible in the shortest time possible.

Any group can use "Brainstorming," either formally or informally. If the group chooses to be *formal*, each member of the group takes his/her turn in suggesting an idea. This can force shy members to take part, but it also puts them under pressure if they have nothing to suggest. If the group choose to be *informal*, everyone throws out ideas as they come to each member. This can create a more relaxed atmosphere, but the more outspoken members can tend to dominate the process.

FACILITATOR NOTES: When you facilitate a group during brainstorming sessions, make absolutely certain at the outset that everyone in the room understands the subject that is being "brainstormed." Then take care to:

- Accept very idea suggested without any critical comments *by anyone*;
- Capture every idea suggested;
- If you have to shorten it, ask the creator if your shortened version captures the original idea;
- Don't worry if the ideas seem to be tagging onto one another; if this is a problem, someone in the group will notice it and come up with a different idea;

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE TEAMING MODULE

- Work quickly; don't let the group pause for long periods;
- When no one has suggested any idea for thirty to forty-five seconds, bring the proliferation phase to a close and move into the refinement phase.

Multi-Voting

Team members who are new to the group may defer to those who have more experience, who claim a certain authority, or who are more outspoken. To help a new team to avoid these problems, suggest that they use the Multi-voting technique when trying to make a selection from a large pool of possible choices. It may be that the team is trying to settle on a solution to a particular problem from a list that it has just generated during a brainstorming session. Or it may be that it can not decide the order in which to discuss a number of problems on its agenda.

Multi-voting was developed to help a team make choices with which the majority can identify. If individuals in a group feel that choices are made because certain members speak more forcefully or louder than others, they will not be invested in the choice. The more shy members on the team will probably prefer not to confront the outspoken or the member who assumes control of the group. Instead, they will withdraw from taking part in team discussions, because they feel that it makes no difference: they will not be listened to. Multi-voting ensures that every member of the team has chances to speak out on each issue under discussion, to express a preference for a particular choice, and to have that preference count as much as the next person's preference.

FACILITATOR NOTES: You should know that multi-voting does not ensure that everyone's choice will be the group's choice. What this technique does ensure is that everyone will have a chance to play a meaningful role in making group decisions. Those who have been on Boards before, or those who have been a part of the community's power structure, may not like this technique, because it is based on the principle of "One man, one vote." It is our hope that by introducing this technique at the beginning of the Board's existence, this technique might be adopted as "our normal way of doing business."

Activity II – Group Problem Solving

FACILITATOR NOTES: The *purpose* of this activity is to give participants a chance to apply the decision-making tools that were presented on the videotape. If the participants at your site represent multiple Boards, you will need to have each different group sit in a different part of the room (so they don't disturb one another). Make sure that each group has flipchart sheets on which to record their suggestions and voting results. Unless you have colleagues who can help you facilitate these groups, you will need to move from group to group facilitating their use of these tools.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE TEAMING MODULE

Once you have them in their groups and ready to begin the activity, help them to choose a problem on which to work. If they can't think of a suitable problem, have them use brainstorming to come up with a list of possible problems they could work on during the activity. If they do that, have them use multi-voting to select the one that the group as a whole wants. You may fear that this will take too much time, and it may! But it would be a useful exercise in using at least two of these techniques.

1 – Applying the Problem Identification Technique

Have the group take about **ten minutes** to discuss the following questions that are taken from the videotape and this guide:

- What is the present state of affairs?
- What is the desired state of affairs?
- Why is the present state unsatisfactory?
- What would it take to bring about the desired state?
- How important is the problem?
- What is the source of the problem?
- What are the major dynamics causing the problem?

2 – Applying the Brainstorming Technique

Ask the group(s) to take about **ten minutes** to brainstorm possible solutions to the problem that they worked on in the previous step. Have them spend between **five and seven minutes** on the proliferation phase suggesting any possible way to solve the problem, no matter how “off the wall” the suggestions may be.

3 – Eliminating the Unfeasible

Now have the group(s) take about **three to five minutes** to refine their suggestions by eliminating those that are totally impractical for whatever reason: lack of funds, lack of personnel, lack of time, etc.

4 – Applying the Multi-Voting Technique

Hopefully the group(s) will have a list of twelve or more suggestions remaining after completing the previous step. Help them through the process:

- a) Ask them individually to vote on “one-half plus one” of the choices that are on the list after refinement. For instance, if there were twelve choices on their list, each member would vote for the top seven choices from the twelve.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE TEAMING MODULE

- b) Then, record their votes in turn using the scoring form attached to this section of the Facilitator's Guide. As a participant gives you his/her preferences, put a "7" on the line on which that individual's first choice is found. Put a "6" on the line on which the second choice is found, and so on for the rest of that individual's choices. Do the same for each of the other participants.
- c) After taking all their votes, add up the numbers on each line. The seven lines with the highest numbers are the seven choices for the group. (**NOTE:** if there are any ties, count the tied items as two of the seven.)
- d) Then vote on "one-half plus one" of those seven the same way, coming up with the top four.
- e) Then vote for the top one from the winning four. This is the group's choice.

5 – Evaluating These Techniques for Use in Board Meetings

When participants have had a chance to apply these techniques, have them discuss their relevance to their meetings. If they conclude that any particular technique is not for them, get them to explain why. Play the Devil's Advocate and ask whether they considered some of that technique's most valuable benefits. For instance, some members may feel that Problem Identification can cause "analysis paralysis" by encouraging people to study a problem to death. Again, others may think that Brainstorming is a waste of time, because so many of the suggestions made are "off the wall." Or others may feel that Multi-voting is too cumbersome, what with all the voting, compiling average scores, and paring the list down gradually.

Let them speak their opinions, but then ask them what technique they would suggest be substituted for Problem Identification, Brainstorming or Multi-voting. If they reject Problem Identification, ask them how else they could ensure that they truly understand the problem so that they can come up with the best solution. If they don't like Brainstorming, ask them how else they could generate many different potential solutions to the problem. If they reject Multi-voting, ask them how else they could develop a consensus choice so that everyone felt that their preferences at least had a hearing before the majority ruled.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE TEAMING MODULE

Attachments:

Teaming Questionnaire
Teaming Questionnaire Scoring Form
Multi-Voting Scoring Form

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE TEAMING MODULE

TEAMING QUESTIONNAIRE

In the table below you will find a number of statements concerning your Board's performance on various teaming activities. Register your reaction to each statement by circling one of the numbers to the right of the statement. The meaning and abbreviation of each number are as follows:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)
- 2 = Disagree (D)
- 3 = Undecided (U)
- 4 = Agree (A)
- 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)

STATEMENT	SD	D	U	A	SA
1. Our Board works as a team because all the members have shared goals, works together, and all derive some benefit from their membership on the Board.	1	2	3	4	5
2. At each Board meeting, Board members should assume a "no nonsense" attitude and get right down to work as soon as everyone is clear about the goals of the meeting.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Board members see both laughter and silence during Board meetings as healthy signs that the Board is working together comfortably.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Members of our Board believe that collaboration is better than compromise.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Our Board believes that conflicts between Board members can be good in the long run, as long as Board members understand how to resolve them.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Our Board believes that if Board members are to arrive at Board meetings on time, it has to make it an explicit requirement in its Policies and Procedures Manual.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Our Board leader uses Board meetings as occasions to make announcements to the rest of the Board members.	1	2	3	4	5
8. All of our Board members are committed to reach consensus when making decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
9. During Board meetings, our members encourage each other to express his/her opinions on each topic under discussion.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Our Board is concerned about keeping all our stakeholders informed of Board activities and decisions.	1	2	3	4	5

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE TEAMING MODULE

TEAMING QUESTIONNAIRE SCORING FORM

STATEMENT	PARTICIPANT																AVERAGE
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
1. Our Board works as a team because all the members have shared goals, work together, and all derive some benefit from their membership on the Board.																	
2. At each Board meeting, Board members should assume a "no nonsense" attitude and get right down to work as soon as everyone is clear about the goals of the meeting.																	
3. Board members see both laughter and silence during Board meetings as healthy signs that the Board is working together comfortably.																	
4. Members of our Board believe that collaboration is better than compromise.																	
5. Our Board believes that conflicts between Board members can be good in the long run, as long as Board members understand how to resolve them.																	
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7. Our Board leader uses Board meetings as occasions to make announcements to the rest of the Board members.																	
8. All of our Board members are committed to reach consensus when making decisions.																	
9. During Board meetings, our members encourage each other to express his/her opinions on each topic under discussion.																	
10. Our Board is concerned about keeping all our stakeholders informed of Board activities and decisions.																	

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE TEAMING MODULE

MULTI-VOTING SCORING FORM

<u>Suggestion</u>	<u>Ratings</u>														<u>Average</u>	
1)																
2)																
3)																
4)																
5)																
6)																
7)																
8)																
9)																
10)																
11)																
12)																
13)																
14)																
15)																
16)																
17)																
18)																
19)																
20)																

**Communications
and
Public Relations Module**

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

Background on the Communications and Public Relations Module

FACILITATOR'S NOTES: This module has two parts: the first deals with communications and the second deals with public relations, two skills that do not come automatically to human beings.

Not only do Board members have to learn to act as *leaders* and *team players*, but they also have to learn how to *communicate* better with their colleagues and the community they serve. Some individuals may protest that they have known how to communicate since they were children. It is true that, unless they have hearing difficulties, children can *hear* and learn to interpret speech sounds. And, usually at an early age, most children learn to *speak*. By the time they have completed first or second grade, many of them have also learned to *read* and *write*. But speaking, writing, and hearing do not equal communications; they are merely *means* of expressing our ideas or attending to those of others. To communicate with another, we have to engage in a "give and take" that leads to *understanding*. To do that we have to learn to express our own ideas as clearly as possible, listen to the other as he/she expresses his/her ideas, and then respond to the other. The word "communications" means "to become one with another in the exchange of ideas or feelings." The purpose of the first part of this module is to help Board members know what communications entails and give them some techniques to improve their *listening*.

Organizations in the public sector often do a poor job of public relations, i.e., telling their story to their audience. Many seem to think that if they do their job well, the word will just naturally get out. This attitude flies in the face of the saying: "If you don't blow your trumpet, no one will do it for you." However, there is a more important reason for emphasizing the importance of public relations to Board members. If the human mind does not have information about something, it will often fill that "vacuum" with rumor and suspicion. This is why it is so important that a Community Empowerment Board get its story out on a regular basis: to stop rumors and suspicions that can stifle cooperation and continued support. The purpose of the second part of this module is to help Board members know why public relations are so important and to give them the skill of writing simple press releases.

Background on Videotape Slides

The Cost of Poor Communications

Individuals tend to value *product* activities more than *process* activities. This may be due to the fact that we can often put a price or value on products, whereas we often take the process for granted. For that reason, it seems important to point out how much poor communications can cost an organization. Communications is a process skill that is vital to the creation of a sound product. If communications break down, productivity, morale, and work satisfaction will deteriorate. Because of this, we can understand why

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

psychologists say that technical problems are not as costly as “people problems.” Given the complexity of human communications, it is not surprising that so many things can pose potential problems. To help the participants understand these several different sources of problem, we present a communications model and describe what can go wrong at each step in the process.

A Communications Model

Models are handy because they allow us to take a complex topic and focus on a limited number of components and their inter-relationships. The communications process cycles between a “Sender” and a “Receiver.” The former sends a “Message” to the latter, who completes the cycle by sending back “Feedback.” Those are the four important components of the communications process.

The model presented on the videotape distinguishes five activities done by either the “Sender” or the “Receiver.” The “Sender” has first to form a perception or interpretation of what he/she chooses to send to the “Receiver.” Then the “Sender” has to select the particular codes for expressing his/her perception. The codes are then transferred to the “Receiver,” who receives them and, hopefully, makes sense of them. Ideally, the “Receiver” then completes the cycle by making a response to the “Sender,” which can start the whole process over again.

Each activity in this model has limitations that can pose potential problems for the success of the communication. The point of presenting the communications model is to give the participants a handy framework on which to pin the potential problems that both “Sender” and “Receiver” must watch for. If they want to discuss the model, its components, or its activities, you should assure them that none of this is meant to be exhaustive in explaining communications. There is much that could be added about human communications.

Perception

Immanuel Kant, the great German Philosopher, maintained that no one deals with reality *as it is in itself*, but only as it appears to him/her. This is not to say that people judge only on appearances, but it is to say that we do not take in data from the world directly. Instead, we pass all data through a series of filters, which causes us to interpret the data in particularly individualistic ways. This is why several people who are present in the same place and all see the same event can come up with quite different versions of what happened. Perception is not just becoming aware of something, but interpreting the meaning and importance of that thing.

Have you ever played the parlor game in which someone whispers a five-sentence story in someone’s ear and then says to “pass it on?” After this story is passed to everyone in the room, the last person speaks aloud the story. Usually everyone in the room breaks out laughing when they hear how the story has become distorted from what they heard. It is

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

not that the story is too long or too involved. Instead, this happens because no one really hears what has been said, but how they interpreted the story they heard.

When you take in data you pass it through three filters: a) your background and experiences in *your Past*, b) your anxieties and pressures you feel in *your Present*, and c) your expectations and goals in *your Future*. Everyone has a different Past, Present, and Future because everyone interprets the events of life in an individualistic, personal manner. This can help to explain how twins can grow up in the same family, in same neighborhood, in the same timeframe and yet make quite different interpretations about their family, their neighborhood, or their life. One could conclude that he/she was dealt a poor hand, while the other could wonder at how blessed he/she has been.

Psychologists point out that each individual comes into this life with a tendency to deal with life from his/her own point of view." They call this tendency "Egocentrism." We see different forms of egocentrism. Children at a very early age think that what they see, hear, feel, taste, or smell is what *everyone* experiences. Adolescents show a form of cognitive egocentrism when they conclude that no one in their right mind could come to a conclusion different from their own. Adults who travel to the different culture for the first time often display a value egocentrism when they can not understand how anyone could like the food, customs, or lifestyles found in the place they are visiting.

Coding

When someone has formulated the message he/she wants to send to another, that individual has many different codes from which to choose. The "Sender" has to be very clear about his/her purpose. If his/her intent is to inform, he/she will choose to express the message in a way quite different than he/she would use to entertain, persuade, or convince the "Receiver." The "Sender" should be concerned to use a language and vocabulary that the "Receiver" understands. The "Sender" must also be sure that the style he/she uses to express the message fits the message, whether it be formal or informal.

Transfer

Every message has two parts: the *cognitive* and the *emotional*. The cognitive part of the message contains the facts, ideas, or opinions the "Sender" expresses by means of the verbal "codes" he/she has chosen. The emotional part of the message contains the feelings, attitudes, beliefs, and values the "Sender" expresses by means of the non-verbal tone, intensity, and force in he/she uses in expressing the message. These two parts should be consistent. Otherwise, the "Receiver" will get a "mixed message" and not know which part is true. Interestingly, when a "Receiver" is presented with a "mixed message," he/she usually accepts the emotional part as the true part. Daniel Goleman, in his book Emotional Intelligence explains that whenever new data comes in, we react

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

emotionally to the data before we try to understand the idea in the message. So, if someone said "I'm NOT mad!!!" we would suspect very strongly that that person WAS mad.

Reception

In this step the "Receiver" takes in the Message, passing it through his/her filters and making an interpretation of what makes sense to him/her. Not only does the "Receiver" take in the Message, but he/she will also make a judgment concerning its truth or falsity. Just as the "Sender" could forget that the Message he/she is expressing is a perception, so can the "Receiver" conclude that what he/she made of the Message is what the "Sender" intended.

The "Receiver" usually does not take in the Message word-for-word *as it was said*, but as he/she interprets it. Because all of us are to some degree egocentric, it is easy for the "Receiver" to assume that his/her interpretation is what the "Sender" intended when creating the Message. Having made that assumption, the "Receiver" may next become the "Sender" and create a Message of his/her own. Very often we can see two people who are talking *past one another* instead of talking *with one another*. It is obvious to us that neither one is listening to the other, but both are just firing off their shot when they get the chance. For successful communication to take place, the "Receiver" must interact with the "Sender's" Message and make some kind of response related to that Message. Otherwise, we do not have dialogue, but merely two monologues.

Response

If the "Sender" does not receive any feedback from the "Receiver," he/she may conclude that the Message was heard, understood, and *agreed with*. In our culture, this would not be an unjustified conclusion. We have all heard, and probably agree with, the saying that "Silence means consent." Of course, the "Sender" may conclude, instead, that since the "Receiver" did not make any response, he/she either did not hear the Message, or did not understand it, or did not agree with it. Any such conclusion would probably cause the "Sender" to retry the Message or to support the original Message with other arguments. Without feedback, the communications process can digress in directions never intended or break down totally.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

The Need for Active Listening

It is important to emphasize the difference between *hearing* and *listening*. Hearing merely means that I have become aware of some sound. Instinctively a baby will demonstrate a startle-reaction when it hears the sound of a human voice. That seems to indicate that humans have a built-in tendency to attend to the sound of speaking; we have an instinct for hearing human sounds. But merely hearing someone does not say that we have understood what that individual said. Imagine that you were in Ethiopia and heard someone call out. You would hear that sound, but because you probably don't know the Ethiopian language, you could not listen to that sound. That would mean trying to make sense of what was said.

So, we have an instinct for hearing, but we have to learn to listen. We have to learn how to make sense of what is said to us. Merely knowing the language is not enough to guarantee that we will make sense of a statement. We have probably all heard stories of someone in a foreign country trying to use the language and causing the native speakers to howl with laughter. Very often it happens that the novice speaker used a term that was not only not the right word, but one that has an indecent meaning. We laugh at comedians who use words incorrectly (but intentionally) in their monologue, because we expected to hear certain, correct words and heard something close, but incorrect. So we have to hear and understand what is said to us, but we also have to make sure that what is said fits the topic, the situation, or the intention of the speaker.

Six Active Listening Techniques

The following six techniques can make the "Receiver" who uses them a better listener. These are techniques that affect all steps in the Communications Model we discussed earlier. It is likely that all the participants will already know about and appreciate these techniques, but it never hurts to repeat and emphasize them. Just knowing them does not guarantee that a person will use these techniques. However, if an individual wants to improve communications, he/she will make sure that they use all six of these techniques continually.

Attitude

Wise men in Hindu and Buddhist cultures believe that we should assume the attitude of the "Observer," rather than that of the "Judge" to maintain peace of mind. They reason that the attitude of "Judge" causes us *to be judged*. This seems to be the idea of the admonition in the Bible: "Judge not and thou shalt not be judged." The attitude of the "Observer" lets life (or conversation) just happen; the "Observer" is more interested in watching where things are going, rather than trying to tag everything with judgments of

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

something's worth, truth, or beauty. The attitude of the "Observer" is especially fitting when we recognize our limitations in this life.

Attention

One of the rudest things we can do to another is to try to attend to him/her **and** to something/someone else at the same time. If we do not give the speaker our total attention, we are communicating (possibly unconsciously) that we value the something or someone else more than we value the speaker. In our busy life, we often find that we try to do two or more things at once. But doing this when communicating with human beings can cause a real deterioration in our relationships with them. Misunderstandings between individuals can happen for many reasons. For instance, the speaker may not have expressed him/herself clearly or did not choose the right words. But misunderstandings that are caused by our lack of full attention to what the speaker is saying are inexcusable. The fault is totally ours.

Request

Many students resist asking questions, because they are afraid that they will look or sound foolish, stupid, or obsequious. But they miss the opportunity to let the speaker know that they are listening. Unless the question sounds negative (e.g., like a "put-down" or a condemnation), it is usually a sure sign that the "Receiver" is working with what the "Sender" has expressed. Of course, speakers who are unsure of themselves or the truth of what they are saying may interpret questions as personal attacks. But we usually dismiss such behavior as neurotic. Individuals who are relatively self-secure usually appreciate questions: they indicate that the audience is *listening*.

Restate

You have probably been in a meeting in which one or another of the participants start talking before the current speaker has finished. When I see that behavior during team-building and communications workshops, I stop the meeting and announce a change of rules. From that time on, no one can begin to speak after a speaker has finished until that individual has summarized what the last speaker said *to his/her satisfaction*. This is called "The Echo Game," and it is not something that we ought to make as a rule in our meetings. Having to summarize each speaker can slow things down terribly. But it is a great teaching device. Often the "next" speaker will do his/her best to summarize the last speaker, and then express frustration because now he/she has forgotten what he/she wanted to say. It seems rather obvious that the "next" speaker would not have been listening to the last speaker if the summarizing rule had not been imposed. Instead, the "next" speaker would have been thinking about what he/she wanted to say when the last speaker finished. Restating the gist of the speaker's message clearly communicates that the one making the restatement *was* listening.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

Interpret

The previous technique focuses on the cognitive part of the Message. This technique of "Interpreting" focuses on the emotional part. Some may wonder why we should be concerned about the emotional aspects of the Message. The cognitive part of the Message tells us what the speaker thinks; the emotional part tells us what the speaker feels about the Message. Both parts are important for us to understand the Message fully.

The emotional part of the Message is expressed by the non-verbal characteristics in his/her voice or "body language." Sometimes the two parts can run counter to one another. At such times, the "Receiver" should mention to the "Sender" that the Message seems "mixed," that the cognitive and the emotional parts seem to contradict one another. This gives the "Sender" the chance to modify the emotional part of the Message to make it consistent with the cognitive part. In any case, the "Sender" knows that he/she is being listened to.

Agreement

The "Receiver" who maintains a judgmental attitude will likely focus on those parts of the Message with which he/she disagrees. This keeps the "Sender" on the defensive and threatens to destroy communication. Focusing on the areas of agreement between the two parties promotes successful communications. In fact, when the "Sender" and the "Receiver" focus on what they agree with, they feel a certain unity. This growing feeling of oneness can be the basis for trust and respect, even if there are parts of the Message on which they disagree.

Communications Activity

FACILITATOR'S NOTES: As a facilitator, you have to be concerned with how well the discussion progresses, not with what points are made. Watch to see whether everyone has a chance to speak out. If any participant seems to be withdrawn, ask that individual what he/she thinks about the process being discussed. (This is called "gate-keeping" and is an important function of a group facilitator.) If any of the participants seems to "hog the floor," interject that he/she has made a good point, but turn to the rest and ask them what they are thinking. Be careful not to add your own "two cents" to the discussion. You should not be a discussant, but should remain a neutral facilitator.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

1 – Discuss the five processes of the Communication Model

NOTE: You might want to create a flipchart page on which you list the five communications processes in large block letters: PERCEPTION, CODING, TRANSFER, RECEPTION, RESPONSE, on separate lines. When it comes time for this discussion, you can post that page so all can see it. This will serve as an aid to keep the discussion focused on these five processes.

- a) Ask the group to spend two or three minutes discussing the difficulties that they could imagine that they might have with each process.
- b) On a separate flipchart sheet with the title of one of these processes, list the difficulties they suggest. Be sure to include everyone in the discussion.

2 – Brainstorm potential solutions to the difficulties

At this point you should have five separate sheets: each one entitled with the name of the communication process and containing the difficulties the group suggested. Now you want the group to suggest different things they could do as a group to help them avoid falling into the difficulties listed on the sheet.

- a) For each process, make another flipchart sheet with the name of the process and the word “Solutions” right below the title.
- b) Ask the group to review the difficulties listed for the first process and suggest different things that they could do to avoid each difficulty. Copy their suggestions down on the flipchart sheet for that process.
- c) Work through the other processes in the same way: review the listed difficulties and suggest possible things they can do as a group to avoid these difficulties during their interactions as Board members.
- d) When your group has finished its discussion of all five communication processes, assign someone the task of taking the flipchart pages and typing them up so that all participants (and other Board members not present for the training) can have a copy.
- e) Suggest that someone convert their list of difficulties and solutions into posters that they hang in their Board Room to remind themselves of what they need to do to ensure successful communications.
- f) Congratulate them on their accomplishments, but warn them that the hard part comes next: putting these “good ideas” into practice.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

3 – Discuss the six techniques of active listening

NOTE: You might want to create a flipchart page on which you list the six active listening techniques in large block letters: ATTITUDE, ATTENTION, REQUEST, RESTATE, INTERPRET, AGREEMENT, on separate lines. When it comes time for this discussion, you can post that page so all can see it. This will serve as an aid to keep the discussion focused on these six techniques.

- a) Ask the group to spend two or three minutes discussing each of the six active listening techniques presented on the videotape.
- b) On a separate flipchart sheet with the title of one of these techniques, list behaviors that individuals might perform that show that they are not using these techniques. Be sure to include everyone in the discussion.

4 – Brainstorm possible “triggers”

At this point you should have six separate sheets: each one entitled with the name of a different active listening technique and containing the behaviors the group suggested. Now you want the group to suggest ways that they could “trigger” reminders to themselves to perform the listening technique on the sheet's title.

- a) For each listening technique, make another flipchart sheet with the name of the technique and the word “Triggers” right below the title.
- b) Ask the group to review the behaviors listed for the first listening technique and suggest different things that they could do to remind themselves of the technique they should be using. Copy their suggestions down on the flipchart sheet for that listening technique.
- c) Work through the other listening techniques in the same way: review the listed behaviors and suggest possible things they can do as a group to remind themselves of the technique they should be using during their inter-communications as Board members.
- d) When your group has finished its discussion of all six listening techniques, assign someone the task of taking the flipchart pages and typing them up so that all participants (and other Board members not present for the training) can have a copy.
- e) Suggest that someone convert their list of behaviors and “triggers” into posters that they hang in their Board Room to remind themselves of

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

what they need to do to ensure successful communications.

- f) Congratulate them on their accomplishments, but warn them that the hard part comes next: putting these “good ideas” into practice.

5 – Discuss the relevance to the Board

When the group has finished its discussion of the active listening techniques, review what they have accomplished in this activity:

- Listing difficulties that they could encounter in the five communication processes;
 - Suggesting solutions that they could use to overcome or avoid those difficulties;
 - Listing behaviors that would show they are not using the six listening techniques;
 - Suggesting “triggers” they could pull that would remind one another of the listening technique they should be using.
- a) Now have them spend ten minutes discussing what kind of a difference these communication processes and listening techniques could make for the success of their Board’s communications.
 - b) Try to get them to make a commitment to implement the solutions and to use the “triggers” that they have suggested.

The Need for Public Relations

In this age of “spin doctors” the term “Public Relations” probably conjures up images of nicely worded untruths or slickly packaged lies. But these images are probably more applicable to some forms of advertising or marketing. Public Relations is not advertising or marketing, but “the business of helping the public have a correct understanding of and a positive regard for an individual or organization.” The purpose of public relations is to give the public true and edifying information about someone or something.

The reason for doing this is to counter what happens when the public lacks true and edifying information about that someone or something. I have formulated the truism that “the human mind does not tolerate a vacuum; in the absence of information about something, the human mind will very often fill that vacuum (of information) with *rumor and suspicion!*” That rather cynical conclusion seems to find enough foundation in

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

experience to lead us to accept the whole statement. If people know that an individual associated with an Community Empowerment Board has gone off on a trip, and if they are given no information about the purpose or outcome of that trip, they will often begin to suspect that the trip was a “boondoggle,” a waste of taxpayer’s money!

On the other hand, if they know the reasons for taking the trip or the accomplishments made during it, they will talk with one another knowingly and approvingly --- the very objective of public relations. And who has the responsibility for supplying that information? Obviously, the responsibility belongs to the someone or something that is the subject of interest. It can not be assumed that the public will know the information untold or that they will regard the subject with approval for no known reason.

We have a saying that “You have to blow your own trumpet, because no one will do it for you.” That implies that we can not assume that someone else will tell the public about us and what we are doing, no matter how worthy. We and we alone have that responsibility. A Community Empowerment Board can not assume that the public will know what it is facing, what it is attempting, how it is faring; it must supply that information to the public on a regular basis, through a communications consultant or directly. The Board members can not assume that because they are well-known folks in a small rural area, everyone will know what they are about. They won’t, unless they are told. That is why we need public relations.

Three Public Relations Techniques

There are various ways a corporate entity can get its story out to the public. It can satisfy a *visual* person’s need for information by different informational fliers, brochures, or handouts. These need not be slick, but they need to tell the true story of the problems the organization is encountering, the efforts it has expended, and the accomplishments it has made. It can satisfy an *auditory* person’s need for information by various auditory releases: audiotapes, radio interviews, or lectures in churches, schools, or wherever large groups of the public congregate. It can satisfy a *kinesthetic* person’s need for information by making guest appearances at meetings where the public can ask questions and get straight answers, or by manning a booth or table at conferences or fairs where the public can “press the flesh.” No one of these is best. We have to use every means at our disposal.

On the videotape, three techniques were mentioned: interviews on radio or television stations, articles for publication in local newspapers or in a newsletter, and a press release. Because of the limited amount of time available to deal with public relations techniques, the press release was chosen for a deeper explanation.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

The Parts of a Press Release

In the Washington, DC area, those companies that want to do business with the Federal government will respond to Requests for Proposal (RFPs) that are issued on a regular basis. No company ever gets into that game thinking that it will be successful on every proposal. The competition is too strong for that. In fact, the general “rule of thumb” is that they expect **one** contract for every **ten** proposals they submit. And this is something that a Community Empowerment Board should expect for their press releases: not every one that they write and send to newspaper, radio, and television editors will make it to the public. But enough will to justify continuing the effort.

The Board members have to realize that every press release used in a newspaper or on a radio/television news show is *free advertising*! If they investigated the cost for newspaper, radio, or television advertising, they would soon see that writing a press release is cheap by comparison. And it is easy to do. If a Community Empowerment Board has access to a computer and good word processing software, a template of a press release could be stored on the computer and used whenever a press release had to be written.

The paradigm shift that is required of Board members is moving away from thinking that nothing they do is really that important or interesting and moving towards seeing the relevance of their efforts for their audience. They have to realize that the public does not know what they know, and if they are not told, they will form opinions anyway! A flurry of press releases at least lets the public know that the Community Empowerment Board is busy, if not always successful. Remember that in every message there are two levels: the cognitive (information) and the emotional (impression). Frequent press releases tell the story, but also can create a favorable impression in the mind of the public.

The Announcement Statement

Students in any beginning Journalism course are introduced to the term “Wh-question.” These are the questions in English that begin with the letters “wh,” such as “Who,” “What,” “Why,” “When,” and “Where.” Students who are producing an article are taught to write an opening sentence that answers these five questions. That is the idea underlying what I have called the “Announcement Statement.” This statement is meant to give the reader as much information as possible in single sentence. If this is all that the reader scans, at least he/she picks up this much information about the topic addressed in the release. If the reader is interested in the topic being addressed, this sentence will give basic information and possibly tempt the reader to look for more information.

FACILITATOR'S NOTES: Later when you are helping your group write a press release, be sure to tell them that there is no perfect order in which the “Wh-questions” should be addressed. The order presented on the videotape was just one that seemed good at the time the Participant Manual was being put together. But English is so

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

versatile that these questions can be put in almost any order and still make an understandable sentence. A lot depends on the topic being addressed and what things the writer wants to emphasize in the “Announcement Statement.”

The Elaboration Statement

If the “Announcement Statement” has intrigued the reader, then the “Elaboration Statement” now proceeds to give more information about the topic addressed in the “Announcement Statement.” Beginners may want to tell the reader more about the answer to the “What” question. For instance, in the videotape the “Elaboration Statement” tells more about the “What,” i.e., the training that was mentioned in the “Announcement Statement.” But the “Elaboration Statement” could have said more about the “Who” question, perhaps listing the names of the members of the Board who took the training. Or the “Elaboration Statement” might have told the reader more about the “Where” question, pinpointing the name of the building where the training took place. It will all depend on what the writer wants to emphasize in his/her message.

Regular “Boilerplate” Text

In the videotape, suggestions are made about what this “boilerplate” text ought to include. Again, this should be standard information about the Empowerment Community that would tell the completely naïve reader the essential story. Again, there is no formula that can be devised to help you determine what you want people to know. Rather obviously, they ought to know *what kind* of organization your Empowerment Community is: e.g., non-profit, “grass-roots” based, composed of citizens who volunteer their time and energies in different roles in the organization. People might want to know *why* the organization was formed and the vision that it has for the long-term future of the community serves. The reader (or radio listener or television watcher) might want to know *how* this corporate entity is funded, or *where* its offices are located, or *when* it was formed, or *when and where* its Board of Directors meet. Information that answers these kinds of questions are what we put in the paragraphs of “boilerplate” text.

When a press release is sent out to a newspaper, to a radio station, or to a television, not only should the writer not expect that every release will be used, but he/she should also not expect that every sentence in the press release will be used. Editors will use the release if they have space (or broadcast time) that needs to be filled. If one of them decides to use the release, he/she will use as much of the release as space or time will permit.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

Press Release Activity

FACILITATOR NOTES: The *purpose* of this activity is to give participants a chance to try out the suggestions presented on the videotape for writing a press release. If the participants at your site represent multiple Boards, you will need to have each different group sit in a different part of the room (so they don't disturb one another). Make sure that each group has flipchart sheets on which to record their press release. Unless you have colleagues who can help you facilitate these groups, you will need to move from group to group facilitating their writing efforts.

1 – Select a press release topic

FACILITATOR'S NOTES: Engage the group in brainstorming (and possibly multi-voting) to come up with a topic for the press release. For your own information, the topic could deal with something that just happened to the Board or to the Empowerment Community. Examples might be:

- The awarding of the initial grant
- The selection of an Executive Director
- The formation of an alliance with another corporate entity
- The approval of a community-based proposal
- The successful attraction of a new business to the community

After sufficient time to include everyone's idea(s), have the group come to consensus on which topic it will use for writing the press release.

2 – Write the “Announcement Statement”

a) On a flipchart sheet, list the five “wh-questions:”

- Who
- What
- When
- Where
- Why

b) Have group members answer each of these questions about the topic that they selected in the previous step.

c) Record their answers on a flipchart sheet under the title of the question being answered.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

3 – Write the “Elaboration Statement”

- a) Have the group decide which of the “wh-questions” it wants to elaborate on.
- b) Now have the group suggest what other things ought to be included in the “Elaboration Statement” (it might be a paragraph). Record their suggestions on a flipchart sheet.
- c) Have the group suggest the wording for the sentences required to express the ideas they just proposed.
- d) Work with the group to decide the order in which the different sentences should come in the final “Elaboration Statement.”

4 – Determine the content of the “Boilerplate” text

- a) Remind the group of the possible questions that could be answered by the “boilerplate” text suggested in the videotape and above in this guide:
 - What is the Empowerment Community?
 - Why was it formed?
 - When was it formed?
 - What are its goals and objectives?
 - When and where does the Board meet?
 - Where is its office
 - Who are members of the Board?
 - Who is the Executive Director?
- b) Have the group decide at least three topics that they want to have in the standard “boilerplate” text they can use in all their press releases.
- c) Ask the group to suggest what information they think ought to be included for the three topics that they just agreed should be addressed in their “boilerplate” text.
- d) Get volunteers or groups of volunteers to take one of the topics and write a paragraph presenting the information the group decided should be included in the “boilerplate” text.
- e) Now have the group compose the “Announcement Statement,” the “Elaboration Statement,” and the “boilerplate” text into a press release

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

that could be sent to newspapers, radio stations, and/or television stations in the general area.

5 – Share your press release with others

FACILITATOR'S NOTES: This part of the activity calls for some flexibility. Possibly at your site participants represent Boards from different communities. Or it may be that the participants at your site are all from the same Board. The following suggestions try to accommodate either situation.

- a) If you have multiple groups at your site, someone from each group can read the press release that his/her group created to the large group.
- b) Have participants from the large group comment on each press release after it has been read out.
- c) If your site has members from only one Board, have the participants explore the different places to which they could send their press release. Be sure that they include both print and sound press.
- d) Before you conclude this activity, have the participants take about how difficult or easy they found the task of writing press releases.
- e) Have each Board suggest how frequently they propose to write and distribute press releases.

Strategic Planning Module

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE STRATEGIC PLANNING MODULE

Background of the Strategic Planning Module

FACILITATOR NOTES: In the past, only those who were in top-level management of an organization engaged in strategic planning. In fact, the typical strategic plan was created by “three guys in a smoke-filled room in an ivory-tower.” In the 1990s, however, business and government organizations decided to involve more representatives of the staff in the planning process. The Government Performance and Results Act of 1992 suggested that representatives of an agency’s audience be included in the process. It is not surprising that the Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community Initiative would look for “grass roots involvement” in the membership of the Community Empowerment Boards.

A difficulty arises because many of the members of these Boards have never before engaged in strategic planning. Therefore, we include a module in this training the *purpose* of which is to make individuals aware of the parts of a Strategic Plan and to give them a chance to make a “first pass” at creating a Strategic Plan for their group. We are **not** suggesting that a group can create a fully developed Strategic Plan in only an hour together, but we do believe that it can make a good initial version in that time.

Background on Videotape Slides

Why Strategic Planning?

Different groups will have their own particular reasons for creating a Strategic Plan. A Community Empowerment Board has to create one *as part of its requirements for qualifying* for the Title XX grant. But given that constraint, members of Community Empowerment Boards should realize that there are many other reasons why it makes so much sense for them to take time to create a solid Strategic Plan and to update it periodically.

The reasons listed in the videotape are just a few of the possible reasons that an organization might have for creating a Strategic Plan. It is important that each Board reviews these reasons and comes to some consensus on why it is important to create and maintain an updated Strategic Plan. The most basic reason for any group or individual to have a guiding plan is found in the saying: “If you don’t have a plan, you will end up working someone else’s.” Individuals and organizations that do not have a plan end up being *reactive*, rather than *proactive*; they are carried along by the flow of day-to-day occurrences, often into situations that are not pleasant or beneficial.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE STRATEGIC PLANNING MODULE

Who Must Do Strategic Planning?

If our company wants to secure a loan from the bank, we will be asked for a copy of our "Business Plan." If we decide to approach venture capitalists for possible investment in our company, we will need to have a current Strategic Plan to show them. In the private sector, no one is interested in pouring resources into an organization that does not know where it wants to go and how it plans to get there. This is just a fact of life in doing business today in our country.

In the public sector, we have seen in the last decade a movement to require strategic planning of Federal agencies. Various laws have been passed that require them to create a Strategic Plan and submit it to Executive and Legislative bodies for evaluation. Only those agencies whose Plans pass this examination will qualify for their budget appropriation. We might say that this is the "Age of the Strategic Plan."

Against this background, it is not surprising that all Community Empowerment Boards are required to create and maintain an updated Strategic Plan. Since the Federal government is granting taxpayer money to Community Empowerment entities, it wants to know that:

- each entity knows where it wants to go,
- what it has chosen as paths to get there, and
- how the outside observer can tell how close the entity is to attaining its planned objectives.

The Components of Strategic Planning

FACILITATOR NOTES: The following components of a Strategic Plan have been taken from the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). The Office of Community Development of Rural Development has not included all these components in the model that it promotes to Community Empowerment Boards. Nonetheless, we include these components so that the Board members can see what other groups are including in their Strategic Plans. If nothing else, it is the *purpose* of this section of the training to cause the participants to examine these components and to determine to what extent they are included in their organization's Plan.

Audience

Each organization serves its own extensive audience consisting of Customers (External and Internal), Partners/Cooperators, and Stakeholders. It is important to identify the service-related *needs* of members of these four categories, so that you can be sure that your products/services address those needs and satisfy them. As well, it is important to

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE STRATEGIC PLANNING MODULE

know the *interests and concerns* of your audience members, so that you can “tell them your story” in public relations communiques that are pertinent. Lastly, it is very useful to identify the *resources* that your various audience members can bring to the table to help you attain your mission.

External Factors

When military commanders are planning an operation, they always consider both the *opportunities* and the *threats* to the mission of the operation. An Community Empowerment Board can (and should) do the same thing by considering the possible opportunities and threats that could possibly block it from meeting the responsibilities stated in its Mission Statement. Members of the planning team ought to consider the opportunities and threats that may arise in various categories: Physiological, Political, Economic, Social, Technological, or Functional. The reason for trying to project these “future possibles” is to give the organization a chance to develop proactive strategies that it could implement if they should occur. Obviously, the Community Empowerment Board members will want to be able to counter any threats that constrain the attainment of their entity’s mission and to exploit any opportunities that may arise.

Internal Factors

Any organization has *strengths* and *weaknesses* because of its organizational culture and operational philosophy. An organization’s culture can be found in four major categories: 1) task support (i.e., whether and to what extent members feel they are supported in their efforts to achieve their mission); 2) task innovation (i.e., whether members feel encouraged to look for and implement new ways to perform mission-related operations; 3) social relationships (i.e., to what extent members are encouraged to deal with one another on a personal basis); and 4) personal freedom (i.e., whether and to what extent members feel free to march to the beat of their drummers). An organization’s operational philosophy can be found in its *values*, especially its *instrumental* values (i.e., how they like to get things done). For instance, the Air Force proclaims in its Strategic Plan that airmen work toward their mission with “Integrity,” “Service before self” and “Excellence in all we do.” We encourage organizations to identify their most cherished values and then incorporate them into an organizational logo. This logo becomes a “badge” that tells the world what the organization values in doing business.

Identifying an organization’s *strengths* and *weaknesses* and the *opportunities* and *threats* it expects to encounter is called “SWOT Analysis.” The results of this analysis will influence the choice of the Objectives on which the planners think the organization ought to work. Planners would want to choose Objectives that are both mission-oriented and that capitalize on an organization’s strengths, eliminate its weaknesses, contain potential threats, or exploit available opportunities.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE STRATEGIC PLANNING MODULE

Vision Statement

This is a statement of an organization's *long-term goal*, the "Impossible Dream" that members of that organization share in common. This vision has to be compelling enough to motivate members of your organization to strive for it despite the difficulties they encounter during day-to-day operations. An *external* vision will describe what that organization is trying to create for its customers. By contrast, an *internal* vision will describe the kind of organization that the Board is trying to create. Organizations often make the mistake of writing a lengthy, flowery statement. Ideally, the vision statement should be brief (i.e., no more than nine words) and should describe "the world you are trying to create by being in business." Whether your vision is external or internal, you should select the three or four most important words in the Vision Statement and make them into a motto (e.g., "Partnering for a better future").

Strategic Planning Activity I

FACILITATOR'S NOTES: The *purpose* of this activity is to give participants a chance to create a "first cut" of a Strategic Plan using the first few components presented thus far in the videotape. If the participants at your site represent multiple Boards, you will need to have each different group sit in a different part of the room (so they don't disturb one another). Make sure that each group has flipchart sheets on which to record their Audience, External and Internal Factors, and Vision Statement. Unless you have colleagues who can help you facilitate these groups, you will need to move from group to group facilitating their writing efforts.

1 – Identify Members of the Board's Audience

- a) Take four flipchart pages and entitle them "External Customers," "Internal Customers," "Partners/Cooperators," and "Stakeholders." Mount the first one on the easel.
- b) Ask the group to suggest different types of "external customers" for the Community Empowerment entity. Copy down their suggestions on the page.
- c) Now, do the same for the other three categories of the Audience. At the end, you should have four pages with a number of instances of members of the four categories of the Audience.
- d) Have the group determine which category they want to work with (perhaps the shortest one). Facilitate a brief (five to seven minutes)

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE STRATEGIC PLANNING MODULE

brainstorming session during which the group suggests the “needs,” the “interests,” the “concerns,” and the “resources” of the category chosen.

FACILITATOR'S NOTES: If the participants feel that they can not make any suggestions about the needs, interests, concerns, or resources of the category they have chosen, they should realize that they may need to become more knowledgeable about that part of their audience. If they *are* able to identify a good number of things during this activity, tell them that they need to do the same for the rest of the categories of the Audience at some time in the future.

2 – Brainstorm Likely External Factors

- a) Ask the group to take about **five minutes** to brainstorm possible external factors that could hamper their activities in pursuit of their Mission. Be sure to remind them not to make any evaluative judgments about the suggestions during this proliferation stage.
- b) Now have the group take about three to five minutes to refine their suggestions by eliminating those that are really unlikely.

3 – Brainstorm your Internal Factors

- a) Ask the group to take about **five minutes** to brainstorm possible internal factors that could hamper their activities in pursuit of their Mission. Be sure to remind them not to make any evaluative judgments about the suggestions during this proliferation stage.
- b) Now have the group take about three to five minutes to refine their suggestions by eliminating those that are really unlikely.

4 – Create a Vision Statement

- a) On a fresh flipchart sheet, write the words: “A world in which” at the top.
- b) Ask the participants to fill in the blank following the word “which” by describing what they think their Community Empowerment Board should be working for in the long term.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE STRATEGIC PLANNING MODULE

- c) To help them, you might ask them:
- Who will enjoy their envisioned world?
 - What will those lucky individuals be able to do that they can not do now?
 - Are there any particular constraints on their ability to enjoy this vision?
- d) When you have worked through the group, try to bring them to consensus on a statement (no more than nine words) that expresses their vision.

Mission Statement

This is a statement of an organization's purpose, i.e., why it is in business. Our method for writing a mission statement is to write on a flipchart the words: "[Name of organization] exists to:" and then ask members of the planning task force to supply three or four bulleted statements of the organization's major responsibilities to its audience. Start each bulleted item with a verb. Finish the items with words that say "what" your group plans to do as part of its mission. We find it helpful to work with task force members to brainstorm a series of possible bulleted statements. Then we use the technique called "multi-voting" to reach consensus on the three or four most preferred statements.

Finally, we work with the task force to decide the order of priority in which the approved statements should be listed in the mission statement. This helps the organization later to make decisions concerning allocation or utilization of resources. To make such decisions, management should check the proposed allocation/utilization of resources against the responsibilities described in the mission statement.

Goals & Management Initiatives

There seems to be some semantic controversy concerning Goals and the next item, Objectives. What some call Goals others call Objectives and vice versa. We have adopted what we believe are the "majority" definitions. For us, Goals are "ends" that an organization sets for itself, despite the fact that they are *usually unattainable*. Goals are usually unattainable because they are so broad and enduring that they can not be attained, even by year-long effort. For instance, an organization might set as a goal to "Maintain good public relations with the community." While the organization might make great strides toward this Goal in the coming year, it will still remain as a legitimate Goal that has not been fully met. It would be a legitimate goal year after year.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE STRATEGIC PLANNING MODULE

How many Goals ought an organization have? The answer to this question depends on the resources that the organization has available. If the number of individuals who are willing to work on the Goals is limited, the organization ought not to have many Goals. Otherwise it will find itself spread too thinly: trying to do too much with too few or too little. We believe that an organization ought to have one Goal for each of the bulleted responsibilities found in its Mission Statement. If an organization has Goals that are not mission-related, it may be expending resources on “bell and whistle” ends, i.e., things that might be “nice to have,” but are not essential to the mission of the organization.

In addition to mission-related Goals, an organization ought to have one or two Management Initiatives, i.e., ends that are very like Goals, but are related to the organization's infrastructure and/or employees. An organization ought to have Management Initiatives that improve its operational efficiency, product quality, or the competency level of its staff.

While Goals and Management Initiatives are enduring, an organization does not always have to have the same ones in each successive Strategic Plan it produces. If an organization decides that its mission has changed, then its goals would change to be consistent with its new Mission Statement. On the other hand, even if a Mission Statement has not changed, an organization may decide that it wants to meet its responsibility (to a bulleted item in the Mission Statement) in a different way. Thus, it could change Goals without a change in Mission.

Objectives

From our point of view, an Objective is an *attainable approximation* of a Goal. Whereas a Goal will endure throughout the timeframe of the Strategic Plan (e.g., one to five years), an Objective is usually of shorter term (e.g., six to nine months). If a Goal is to “maintain good public relations with the community,” one Objective might be to “Create a tri-fold brochure for distribution throughout the community,” while another Objective for the same Goal might be to “Present a series of ten briefings to different groups in our community.” Very often an organization will conduct a project to attain an Objective. For this reason project management authors define a project as “an undertaking with a definite beginning and end carried out to attain a specific objective within a set timeframe and budget to pre-defined standards of quality.”

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE STRATEGIC PLANNING MODULE

Performance Measures

Performance Measures or Benchmarks are markers that can be used to determine whether an organization has attained an Objective or is on course to attain it. Typically, we attach Performance Measures (one or more) to an Objective, rather than a Goal. We don't expect to attain a Goal, but we definitely expect to achieve an Objective.

We can distinguish three types of performance measures:

- Output Measures (results that can be quantified, e.g., “number of proposals to be evaluated and awarded during the year” **or** “number of families who obtained safe, sanitary, and decent housing in the next twelve months”);
- Outcome Measures (results that are qualitative, such as “improvement in community relations); and
- Constraint Measures (requirements that find their way into a project's schedule, budget, or specifications). “In the next twelve months” would be a *time requirement* for the Objective to which it is attached. “Safe, sanitary, and decent housing” would be an *acceptance requirement* for the Objective to which it might be attached.

Strategic Planning Activity II

FACILITATOR NOTES: The *purpose* of this activity is to give participants a chance to create a “first cut” of a Strategic Plan using the components presented in the videotape. If the participants at your site represent multiple Boards, you will need to have each different group sit in a different part of the room (so they don't disturb one another). Make sure that each group has flipchart sheets on which to record their Mission Statement, Goals, Management Initiatives, Objectives, and Performance Measures. Unless you have colleagues who can help you facilitate these groups, you will need to move from group to group facilitating their writing efforts.

1 – Create a Mission Statement

- a) On a fresh flipchart sheet, write the words: “The [name of Empowerment Community] exists to:” at the top. Below these words, draw three or four bullets.
- b) Ask the participants to suggest different things that their Empowerment Community exists to do. Put each suggestion after a bullet. Try to get them to use a verb with a noun phrase after the verb

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE STRATEGIC PLANNING MODULE

- (e.g., “improve housing standards throughout Franklin County”).
- c) After they have exhausted their ideas, get them to pick the top three or four statements that will make up the Mission Statement.
 - d) When they have made their choices, ask them to indicate which is the most important responsibility, the next most important, and so on.
 - e) When they have finished this activity, write out the final Mission Statement and tape it to the wall of the room you are working in.

2 – Create Mission-related Goals

- a) For each of the bullets in the Mission Statement, have the group suggest a Goal that they could set to meet the responsibility expressed therein.
- b) If necessary, reword the Goals so that they begin with a verb.
(**NOTE:** Since verbs are “action words” we want to emphasize the activity that they will perform to work toward the Goal.)
- c) When they have suggested a Goal for each bullet in the Mission Statement, write out the Goals on a flipchart sheet so that they can see them all together.

3 – Create One or Two Management Initiatives

- a) On one flipchart sheet, print in block letters the title “Employees;” on another sheet print the title “Operational Efficiency.”
- b) Take the first sheet and have the participants suggest a Management Initiative that they think would be important for improving the competency or productivity of the Empowerment Community’s staff.
- c) Help the group to decide on a single Management Initiative under the title of “Employees.” Write the one they select on a separate sheet under the title “Management Initiatives.”
- d) Do the same for the category of “Operational Efficiency.” When you have a single Management Initiative for that category, put it on the sheet with the “Management Initiatives” title.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE STRATEGIC PLANNING MODULE

4 – Create Two or Three Objectives

- a) For each Goal and Management Initiative, have the group suggest two or three Objectives that they could set to approach achieving the Goal or Management Initiative.
- b) If necessary, reword the Objectives so that they begin with a verb. (NOTE: Since verbs are “action words” we want to emphasize the activity that they will perform to attain the Objective.)
- c) When they have suggested Objectives for each Goal and Management Initiative, write out the Objectives on a flipchart sheet so that they can see them all together.

5 – Create a Performance Measure per Objective

- a) For one of the Objectives just created, have the group suggest a Performance Measure that they believe would be feasible for that Objective.
- b) If the participants suggest only quantitative Output Measures, try to get them to suggest a qualitative Outcome Measure or a Constraint Requirement for that Objective or one of the other Objectives.
- c) When they have suggested a Performance Measure for two or three Objectives, write out the Objective and its Performance Measure(s) on a flipchart sheet so that they can see them together.
- d) Tell them that they need to continue this kind of what during future Board meetings until they have completed the Strategic Plan.

Management & Governance Module

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

Background of the Management & Governance Module

FACILITATOR NOTES: Individuals who are new to Board membership may not be aware of responsibilities that they have. Some may try to minimize what they have to do or be concerned about. Others may blow their function out of proportion. The *purpose* of this module is twofold: a) to present participants with a list of Board member responsibilities and b) to explain the implications of each responsibility. The explanations of the Board responsibilities will broaden their understanding of what they have to manage. The emphasis in this module on responsibilities will help them to understand why it is so important that they govern themselves formally and act ethically in all their deliberations. Being a Board member of a Community Empowerment Board is a public trust.

Background on the Videotape Slides

Community Empowerment Board Type:

FACILITATOR'S NOTES: Page 72 is a repeat of one that was included in the Teaming Module. There we wanted to show the kind of team that a Community Empowerment Board is; here we want to emphasize the managerial aspects of the Board, as a whole and as a collection of individuals. While we use the word “managerial,” we are **not** saying that Board members are to be managers in the organization. The role of Board member is always to provide *leadership* to the organization. Instead, we are using the term “managerial” in the sense of someone who is “in charge” of the running of the organization. So, a Board member has to provide leadership and oversight to the organization; he/she has to be a source of advice, when it is asked, and each member should be a force bent on building trust, respect, and cooperation between members of the Board.

Ten Responsibilities of Non-Profit Boards:

While conducting research in the library of the National Association for Non-Profit Boards in Washington, DC, I came across this list of responsibilities of Board members of *any* non-profit Board. It seemed to make a handy poster that each Community Empowerment Board ought to frame and hang in its Boardroom. To this list I have added an eleventh responsibility: “Building and maintaining good corporate records.”

Pages 74 through 84 of the Participant Manual take each of these eleven responsibilities and explain more of what is expected of a Board member by each. In working with non-profit Boards, I have not yet found any that could successfully argue that one of these

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

eleven responsibilities did not apply in its case. However, this does not mean that every non-profit Board will carry out these eleven responsibilities *in the same way*. While each responsibility may call for local adaptation, each weighs nonetheless on each Board member. They can not pick and choose which ones they will meet and which they won't!

FACILITATOR'S NOTES: When creating the following eleven pages for the Participant Manual, I found that many of the responsibilities were too long to act as page titles. Therefore, I tried to come up with shorter expressions of the responsibilities. If any of the participants in the group you are facilitating, ask about the discrepancy, tell them my rationale and ask them to make the connection between the original list and the names I have used.

Define Reasons for Being:

The fact that the Strategic Plan has already been written does not absolve the Board members from this responsibility. A Strategic Plan should be a living document, which means that those who are responsible for it (e.g., the Board), must periodically review it and make sure that it is still relevant to the situation in which the Community Empowerment Board has to operate. Many today are complaining about the continuation of governmental programs begun years ago during the Depression. Periodically there are calls in Congress for a "Sunset Rule," i.e., programs go away when the original purpose for which it was created no longer obtains. Events and circumstances can make irrelevant the original purpose for which the Empowerment Community was formed. Therefore, each Board member has to make sure that the Mission and purpose of the community is still viable and pertinent.

Select a Manager:

As was said in the Leadership Module, the Chief Executive is the Manager of the Empowerment Community. As such, the Chief Executive is supposed to carry out the vision of the leadership (the Board). Because of this, the Board should carefully select the Chief Executive.

In many cases, someone who was instrumental in writing the proposal that created the Empowerment Community may want to be Chief Executive. Obviously this person has ideas and enthusiasm, and has already expended a lot of effort to get the corporate entity off the drawing board. However, the Chief Executive has to work closely with the Board and be responsive to the advice and guidance of the Board. Therefore, the Board should carefully determine the characteristics that it wants in a Chief Executive. If the "original angel" has those characteristics, he/she would probably make a great Chief Executive. On the other hand, if the Board has specified characteristics that the "original angel" does

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

not have, the Board should realize that to pick that person would be to condemn both the Chief Executive and the Board to a relationship that would be most difficult.

When the Board addresses the issue of choosing a Chief Executive, the members should use brainstorming and multi-voting to come up with a list of characteristics that it wants in a Chief Executive. They might specify such things as: "Attention to Detail," "Experience as a Manager," "Inter-personal Abilities," "Willingness to Cooperate," etc. Whichever characteristics they decide on, they could then put each as a column-heading in a spreadsheet, with the names of the candidates as row-entries. In the cells formed by the intersection of column with row, they can put some agreed-upon rating (of that candidate for the characteristic in the heading).

While use of such a mechanism (spreadsheet) does not make the hiring function easy, it does make it more formal and, perhaps, objective. When the spreadsheet is filled out, the reader can see at a glance which candidate has the highest comparative score. It should be clear that however the Board addresses the issue of hiring a Chief Executive, it should ask any of its own members who wants to be Chief Executive to excuse him/herself from the entire hiring process. Anything else would be unethical. If any individual has a problem with that, he/she should be asked to resign from the Board to avoid political and emotional conflicts in the future.

Support and Assess the Manager:

There are really two responsibilities combined in this one. On the one hand, the Board has to support the efforts of the Chief Executive; on the other, it must assess his/her performance from time to time.

As said earlier, the Chief Executive is supposed to carry out the vision of the Board. That means that he/she should not have a separate agenda of things that he/she wants to do. But this does not mean that the Chief Executive is subservient to the Board. Their relationship should be "Adult-Adult," not "Parent-Child." While the Chief Executive is to work to carry out the vision of the Board, the Board must give that individual the authority and support to do this. If the Board and the Chief Executive have worked together to build a relationship of trust, respect, and cooperation, they will both act as adults when dealing with one another. The Board will not "micro-manage" and "second-guess" everything that the Chief Executive does. If the Board has done a good job of selecting the best candidate for the job, it will trust the abilities of the Chief Executive to do what needs to be done without constant intervention into his/her affairs. While the Chief Executive is doing his/her best to carry out the vision of the Board, the Board will observe and supply whatever resources or decisions would make the job easier.

Since the Board is to offer oversight and advice, it must periodically assess the performance of the Chief Executive and suggest how he/she could improve his/her effectiveness or efficiency. Just as the Board should have created a spreadsheet when

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

hiring the Chief Executive, it ought to create an evaluation form when assessing his/her job performance. In the Leadership Module, we quoted Carr's list of "Manager Activities." The Board could take that list and assess the Chief Executive on how well he/she carried out those activities. In addition to these, the Board might go back to the spreadsheet it created when hiring the Chief Executive and use the characteristics that it felt were so important for success.

Again, using some such formal mechanism elevates a painful task (i.e., evaluating another person) to a formal, objective function. Probably each of us has had the experience of being evaluated by someone who used strictly subjective, personal criteria. More than likely, we concluded that the results were either useless or unfair. About the only advice we received in such an encounter was a tacit "become more like me." This usually means "think as I do, feel as I do, believe as a I do," but rarely have we been told how to act to become more competent. The use of an evaluation form is an attempt to avoid using subjective standards that are personality-related and to adopt objective criteria that are job-related.

Perform Planning:

The complete planning process produces plans at three distinct levels. The Strategic Plan has a 1 – 3 year timeframe (depending on how changeable is the environment) and contains the Vision, Mission, Goals, and Objectives the organization has set for itself. The Tactical or Implementation Plan has a 6 – 9 month timeframe and contains the Tasks, Requirements, Schedule, and Budget for attaining a specific Objective from the Strategic Plan. The Action Plan has a 1 – 2 week timeframe and contains the Activities and Resources required to carry out Tasks from the Tactical Plan.

The Board will be concerned especially with the Strategic Plan. As leaders, Board members have to keep their eyes on the future, making sure that the "ship of state" is maintaining a course toward its Goals. The Chief Executive will be responsible for creating the Tactical Plan, though the Board should review it and offer advice, especially about resource allocation or utilization. The Action Plan will also be the responsibility of the Chief Executive and his/her staff. The Board should not be involved in the details of this plan, but should make sure that the Chief Executive and staff are planning their time and efforts.

Acquire and Leverage Resources:

The module following this one deals with Financing and Fundraising. It is included in this training because of this and the following responsibility of non-profit Boards. In this responsibility the Board has to work to ensure that the corporate entity has the resources necessary to do its work. *Obtaining grants* is one way to acquire resources. Indeed, the

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

Title XX grant that started the Empowerment Community is an example of such a method. But there are others. One organization can form an alliance with another organization, perhaps pooling some portion of their resources for a joint project. This agreement *leverages* the resources of both organizations, and is another means of acquiring resources. Obviously, *fund raising* is a means of acquiring resources. Board members have to learn how to use these and other means of acquiring resources for the work of their organization.

Oversee Resource Utilization:

Board members are usually not involved in the day-to-day operations of the organization. Therefore, they are not the one to manage resource utilization. But as leaders of the organization, Board members have to oversee the use of organizational resources. They need to detect any trends in resource utilization, whether *up* or *down*, and suggest appropriate action. They should not be concerned only with expenditure of finances, though that is an important resource. In addition to finance, Board members need to examine and assess the characteristics of the work being done by the Chief Executive and staff: is it efficient, timely, or marked with quality? Does the expenditure of resources (personnel, time, money) seem proportionate to the task performed?

Oversee Organizational Activities:

This responsibility is originally expressed as “Determine, Monitor, and Strengthen the Organization’s Programs and Services.” Each verb in that statement expresses an important aspect of this responsibility.

Board members should be the making the decisions concerning what programs and services the organization will offer in pursuit of its vision. They do this when they select the Goals and Objectives for the Strategic Plan. It is part of their responsibility to envision the future of their organization and its service of its Audience. It may be needless to say that the Board should listen to the ideas of the Chief Executive and not act in isolation in determining the organization’s programs and services.

In addition to determining the organization’s programs and services, Board members must keep an eye on the functioning of these programs and services. They can do this by periodically checking whether the programs and services are on track, accomplishing their original purpose, and addressing the needs of the community.

If their assessment of the programs and services uncovers deficiencies in them, Board members are then to suggest changes that will strengthen them. Since we seem to agree that “A stitch in time saves nine,” the sooner Board members can detect deficiencies and suggest improvements, the better.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

Maintain Public Relations:

In the Communications and Public Relations Module of this training, we emphasized the importance of this responsibility. If the members of the Audience do not know what problems the organization is facing, the efforts it is expending, and the accomplishments it is making, they will create their own rumors and suspicions in place of such information. Not only must the Board *inform* the community, but it must *motivate* the community as well. These are the two most important functions in public relations: tell the public the organization's story and motivate the community to support the organization's efforts. This is how Board members "enhance the organization's public standing."

Govern Morally:

Generally people want their leaders to be honorable. When we hear of a leader who has acted dishonorably, we feel "let down." This is probably caused by our desire to have leaders whom we can look up to and respect. As law-abiding people, we expect our leaders to act in ways that are both legal and ethical. Legal activities are those that are within the constraint of the *written law*; ethical activities are those that respect an *unwritten moral code* found in our culture. We want our leaders not only not to break the law, but not even to give the impression of doing anything illegal.

Individuals who have been given position of authority are usually called upon to give an accounting of how they have used what they were given. Accountability for the use of one's position is nothing new. Even in Scripture we read of the rich man who called an unjust steward on the carpet to "give an accounting of yourself." So Board members want to be sure that they can give an accounting for how they exercised their leadership while on the Board.

Recruit Fresh Blood:

This responsibility also has two parts: one dealing with new members and the other dealing with self-assessment.

After members have been on the Board for a while, they have a good idea of what it takes and the kind of person who is called for. Once they have that realization, they should be looking for other individuals in the community who could, when there is a vacancy, step in and become a new Board member. Obviously, they would want to identify individuals who have the required competencies (or who could learn them rather quickly) and who seems to be motivated to volunteer time and effort for the good of the community. When

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

new members do come on the Board, it is part of the responsibility of the current members to orient the new members to their new role and responsibilities.

This orientation must be more than merely telling the individual to quietly watch the others and learn from them. Anyone new to a group is at a real disadvantage when compared with those who have been in position for some time. Today in the private sector, the concepts of “coaching” and “mentoring” are very popular. Individuals who have been leaders in an organization for some time are encouraged to take budding leaders under their wings and help them to grow into their new positions.

In addition to taking care of new members, Board members are expected to turn the “evaluative eye” on the Board itself and assess how well it carries out its responsibilities. We might turn the ancient maxim “The unexamined life is not worth living” around to read “The unexamined performance is not worth doing.” Those interested in growing spiritually have always considered a “retreat” a necessary mechanism for assessing themselves, their behavior, and their development. Taking time during a Board meeting to assess how well the Board is operating would not be a waste of time and effort.

Maintain Corporate Memory:

Unaided human memory can be notoriously unreliable. For this reason, we find that the more important our action, the more we feel convinced that we need to make a physical record of it. Individuals who together experienced some event often find afterward that each individual has a different memory of what happened or who said what. Organizations often discover to their chagrin that the old secretary who retired took with her the corporate memory everyone had come to depend on.

For that reason, organizations usually establish rules about writing and filing corporate memoranda, notices, bulletins, and other forms of correspondence. Obviously, contracts, deeds, and titles are all important components of the types of records that need to be kept. Organizations need to avoid conflicts that can not be resolved because the two sides are based solely on unaided memories. For instance, the Board should be sure to write out the roles and responsibilities of the Chief Executive and staff. Otherwise, everyone will make their own interpretation of what they are, and these may be contradictory.

Responsible Behaviors:

Given those responsibilities, Board members might find it helpful to have a list of “ground rules” to guide them in their new role. We have put these “ground rules” into three categories:

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

- a) those that affect the meeting-to-meeting work activities they carry out as Board members;
- b) those that have impact on their inter-relationships with one another on the Board; and
- c) those that deal with the relationships they will forge with those outside the Board.

The suggestions or “ground rules” set out on the next three pages of the Participant Manual could be posted in the Boardroom, so that members can be reminded of them from time to time.

Responsible Work Activities:

A Board member who comes to meetings, but merely sits quietly is taking valuable space! If a person is going to serve as a Board member, that individual has to take an active part. They have to engage in conversations with other Board members. When a conflict arises, all the Board members must take part to resolve the conflict and ensure a cooperative atmosphere. They have to use formal procedures to cut down on the subjectivity that colors informality. And they have to be ready to go along with the majority, whether they agree with its conclusion or not.

Responsible Internal Relations:

The “ground rules” set down here on this page of the Participant Manual are true for human beings in any role or situation. If we are to get along, we have to seek to let others know what we think, feel, or believe; on the other hand, we have just as importantly to seek to know what the other members of the Board think, feel, or believe. Good communications are the responsibility of everyone on the Board, not just of the Chair.

Responsible External Relations:

The same things can be said of the “ground rules” listed on this page of the Participant Manual: they absolutely contribute to good interactions with individuals outside the Board. In fact, some will even come to realize that all these “ground rules” are valid for *everything* we do, no matter what role we play in life. Generally, they are “life rules” that make things go much more smoothly when humans interact with one another.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

Activity I – Board Assessment

FACILITATOR NOTES: Before you give the participants time to fill out this questionnaire, you might remind them of their responsibility to assess Board performance. Also, suggest that a clean copy of this questionnaire be kept by the Board and used at least yearly to check on the Board's functioning.

The *purpose* of this questionnaire is to present the participant with twenty statements about Board functioning and help them determine whether or not they practice these behaviors as Board members. The *assumption* underlying this questionnaire is twofold:

- a) if Board members are practicing all these behaviors, that Board is functioning well;
- b) if, on the other hand, Board members do not practice some of these behaviors, they know what to work on to improve their functioning.

Share both the purpose and the assumption with the participants *after* they have worked through the questionnaire.

1 - Fill out the Community Empowerment Assessment Questionnaire

You should walk the participants through the instructions that preface this questionnaire. Read the instructions with them, making sure that everyone understands what they are expected to do.

In the two-page table, this questionnaire presents twenty (20) statements about leadership activities. To the right of each statement are five numbers in five columns. Circling "1" means that the reader "Strongly Disagrees" that the Board does the activity described in the statement. Circling "2" means that the reader feels that he/she "Disagrees" that the Board does the activity described in the statement. Circling "3" means that the reader feels basically "Undecided," because he/she feels that the Board does the activity about as often as not. Circling "4" means that the reader feels that he/she "Agrees" that the Board does the activity described in the statement most of the time. Circling "5" means that the reader maintains he/she "Strongly Agrees" that the Board always does the activity described in the statement.

Now give the participants time to read each of the twenty statements and record their reactions to each. You will find that some take longer than others, but try to give them at least **ten minutes** to complete the questionnaire. If one or two seem to be having a hard time, suggest that you read the statement with them, so that they can take their time deciding how to react to the statement.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

2 & 3 – Compile Group Scores

After you have given the participants time to complete the questionnaire, you will need to gather the numbers that they circled for the twenty statements so that you can compile group scores for the Board(s) that they represent.

- a) If you have multiple Boards represented by the participants at your site, you will need for each different Board a copy of the blank scoring form found at the end of this section of the Facilitator's Guide. You will probably need to write the name of the Board at the top of the form.
- b) Give the scoring form for each represented Board to one of the members from that Board and ask him/her to find the first blank column under the heading "Participants." Now have that individual enter his/her scores (i.e., the numbers he/she circled for each statement) in that column for the next eleven lines down.
- c) When the first individual has entered his/her twenty numbers in his/her column, ask him/her to pass the form to the nearest participant from his/her Board. That individual will enter his/her twenty scores, and then pass the form on to another member of his/her Board in the room.
- d) When all the participants from the represented Boards have entered their numbers for the twenty statements, take the form and compute an average score for each statement. Add the numbers on each line and divide by the number of participants who have entered their numbers on that form. The result is the average score for that statement.
- e) When you have computed the averages for each statement, post the results on a flipchart sheet and ask the members of each Board to gather around their Board's average scores.

4 – List Average Scores for Each Statement

When you have calculated the average scores for all twenty statements, post them on a flipchart sheet by listing the numbers "1" through "20" with the average obtained for each statement by its number.

- a) Explain to the members of each different Board that any scores *below* "3" indicate an area in which the Board needs improvement if it wants to function successfully. The twenty statements of Board functioning represent behaviors that successful Boards perform.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

- b) Point out that any statement with a score lower than “3” indicates that a majority of the Board members **disagreed** that they perform that activity most of the time. The lower the score below “3” the stronger the conviction of the Board that they “hardly ever” perform the activity described in that statement.
- c) On the other hand, any statement with a score *greater* than “3” indicates that the majority of the Board members **agreed** that they perform that activity “most of the time.” The higher the score is above “3” the stronger the indication that Board members believe that they perform the activity described in the statement “almost always.”

5 – Discuss Problem Areas and Propose Actions for Improvement

- a) Suggest that the members from each different Board represented at your site now discuss the “problem areas” uncovered by their answers to the Board Assessment Questionnaire.
- b) Ask the members of each Board to determine, for each “problem area,” the exact nature of the problem: what behavior does the majority perform instead of the activity described in this “problem area?” Can anyone suggest why the majority doesn’t perform this activity? Try to determine how critical the problem is. Does it require immediate action?
- c) Now, have them think of two or three things that they could do in the *near-term* to change their behavior. For each alternative they suggest, have the members project the probability that the suggestion would have real success.
- d) Have them propose two or three things that they could do in the *long-term* to change their behavior. Try to move them toward a practical plan for changing their behavior.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

Activity II – Parliamentary Procedures Questionnaire

FACILITATOR NOTES: Before the participants are given time to fill out this questionnaire, you might remind them of their responsibility to assess Board meeting behavior. Also, suggest that a clean copy of this questionnaire be kept by the Board and used at least yearly to check on the Board's meeting behaviors.

The *purpose* of this questionnaire is to present the participants with eleven statements about Board meeting behavior and help them determine whether or not they practice these behaviors as a Board. The *assumption* underlying this questionnaire is twofold:

- a) if Board members are practicing all these behaviors, that Board is functioning well during meetings;
- b) if, on the other hand, Board members do not practice some of these behaviors, they know what to work on to improve their functioning during meetings.

Share both the purpose and the assumption with the participants *after* they have worked through the questionnaire.

1 - Fill out the Parliamentary Procedures Questionnaire

You should walk the participants through the instructions that preface this questionnaire. Read the instructions with them, making sure that everyone understands what they are expected to do.

In a one-page table, this questionnaire presents eleven (11) statements about leadership activities. To the right of each statement are five numbers in five columns. Circling "1" means that the reader "Strongly Disagrees" that the Board does the activity described in the statement. Circling "2" means that the reader feels that he/she "Disagrees" that the Board does the activity described in the statement. Circling "3" means that the reader feels basically "Undecided," because he/she feels that the Board does the activity about as often as not. Circling "4" means that the reader feels that he/she "Agrees" that the Board does the activity described in the statement most of the time. Circling "5" means that the reader maintains he/she "Strongly Agrees" that the Board always does the activity described in the statement.

Now give the participants time to read each of the eleven statements and record their reactions to each. You will find that some take longer than others, but try to give them at least **five to seven minutes** to complete the questionnaire. If one or two seem to be having a hard time, suggest that you read the statement with them, so that they can take their time deciding how to react to the statement.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

2 & 3 – Compile Group Scores

After you have given the participants time to complete the questionnaire, you will need to gather the numbers that they circled for the eleven statements so that you can compile group scores for the Board(s) that they represent.

- a) If you have multiple Boards represented by the participants at your site, you will need for each different Board a copy of the blank scoring form found at the end of this section of the Facilitator's Guide. You will probably need to write the name of the Board at the top of the form.
- b) Give the scoring form for each represented Board to one of the members from that Board and ask him/her to find the first blank column under the heading "Participants." Now have that individual enter his/her scores (i.e., the numbers he/she circled for each statement) in that column for the next eleven lines down.
- c) When the first individual has entered his/her eleven numbers in his/her column, ask him/her to pass the form to the nearest participant from his/her Board. That individual will enter his/her eleven scores, and then pass the form on to another member of his/her Board in the room.
- d) When all the participants from the represented Boards have entered their numbers for the eleven statements, take the form and compute an average score for each statement. Add the numbers on each line and divide by the number of participants who have entered their numbers on that form. The result is the average score for that statement.
- e) When you have computed the averages for each statement, post the results on a flipchart sheet and ask the members of each Board to gather around their Board's average scores.

4 – List Average Scores for Each Statement

When you have calculated the average scores for all eleven statements, post them on a flipchart sheet by listing the numbers "1" through "11" with the average obtained for each statement by its number.

- a) Explain to the members of each different Board that any scores *below* "3" indicate an area in which the Board needs improvement if it wants to function successfully. The eleven statements of Board functioning represent behaviors that successful Boards perform.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

- b) Point out that any statement with a score lower than “3” indicates that a majority of the Board members **disagreed** that they perform that activity most of the time. The lower the score below “3” the stronger the conviction of the Board that they “hardly ever” perform the activity described in that statement.
- c) On the other hand, any statement with a score *greater* than “3” indicates that the majority of the Board members **agreed** that they perform that activity “most of the time.” The higher the score is above “3” the stronger the indication that Board members believe that they perform the activity described in the statement “almost always.”

5 – Discuss the Problem Areas and Propose Actions for Improvement

- a) Suggest that the members from each different Board represented at your site now discuss the “problem areas” uncovered by their answers to the Parliamentary Procedures Questionnaire.
- b) Ask the members of each Board to determine, for each “problem area,” the exact nature of the problem: what procedure does the majority follow instead of the one described in this statement? Can anyone suggest why the majority doesn’t follow this procedure? Try to determine how critical the problem is. Does it require immediate action?
- c) Now, have them think of two or three things that they could do in the *near-term* to remind themselves of the correct procedure to follow. For each alternative they suggest, have the members project the probability that the suggestion would have real success.
- d) Have them propose two or three things that they could do in the *long-term* to change their behavior. Try to move them toward a practical plan for changing their behavior.

Activity III – Ethical Behavior Questionnaire

FACILITATOR NOTES: Before you give the participants time to fill out this questionnaire, you might remind them of their responsibility to assess the ethical behavior of the Board. Also, suggest that a clean copy of this questionnaire be kept by the Board and used at least yearly to check on the Board’s functioning.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

The *purpose* of this questionnaire is to present the participant with eleven statements about Board functioning and help them determine whether or not they practice these behaviors as Board members. The *assumption* underlying this questionnaire is twofold:

- a) if Board members are practicing all these behaviors, that Board is functioning well;
- b) if, on the other hand, Board members do not practice some of these behaviors, they know what to work on to improve their functioning.

Share both the purpose and the assumption with the participants *after* they have worked through the questionnaire.

1 - Fill out the Ethical Behavior Questionnaire

You should walk the participants through the instructions that preface this questionnaire. Read the instructions with them, making sure that everyone understands what they are expected to do.

In a two-page table, this questionnaire presents twelve (12) statements about leadership activities. To the right of each statement are five numbers in five columns. Circling "1" means that the reader "Strongly Disagrees" that the Board does the activity described in the statement. Circling "2" means that the reader feels that he/she "Disagrees" that the Board does the activity described in the statement. Circling "3" means that the reader feels basically "Undecided," because he/she feels that the Board does the activity about as often as not. Circling "4" means that the reader feels that he/she "Agrees" that the Board does the activity described in the statement most of the time. Circling "5" means that the reader maintains he/she "Strongly Agrees" that the Board always does the activity described in the statement.

Now give the participants time to read each of the twelve statements and record their reactions to each. You will find that some take longer than others, but try to give them at least **six to eight minutes** to complete the questionnaire. If one or two seem to be having a hard time, suggest that you read the statement with them, so that they can take their time deciding how to react to the statement.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

2 & 3 – Compile Group Scores

After you have given the participants time to complete the questionnaire, you will need to gather the numbers that they circled for the twelve statements so that you can compile group scores for the Board(s) that they represent.

- a) If you have multiple Boards represented by the participants at your site, you will need for each different Board a copy of the blank scoring form found at the end of this section of the Facilitator's Guide. You will probably need to write the name of the Board at the top of the form.
- b) Give the scoring form for each represented Board to one of the members from that Board and ask him/her to find the first blank column under the heading "Participants." Now have that individual enter his/her scores (i.e., the numbers he/she circled for each statement) in that column for the next twelve lines down.
- c) When the first individual has entered his/her twelve numbers in his/her column, ask him/her to pass the form to the nearest participant from his/her Board. That individual will enter his/her twelve scores, and then pass the form on to another member of his/her Board in the room.
- d) When all the participants from the represented Boards have entered their numbers for the twelve statements, take the form and compute an average score for each statement. Add the numbers on each line and divide by the number of participants who have entered their numbers on that form. The result is the average score for that statement.
- e) When you have computed the averages for each statement, post the results on a flipchart sheet and ask the members of each Board to gather around their Board's average scores.

4 – List Average Scores for Each Statement

When you have calculated the average scores for all twelve statements, post them on a flipchart sheet by listing the numbers "1" through "12" with the average obtained for each statement by its number.

- a) Explain to the members of each different Board that any scores *below* "3" indicate an area in which the Board needs improvement if it wants to be a successful team. The twelve statements of Board functioning represent behaviors that successful Boards perform.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

- b) Point out that any statement with a score lower than “3” indicates that a majority of the Board members **disagreed** that they perform that activity “most of the time.” The lower the score below “3” the stronger the conviction of the Board that they “hardly ever” perform the activity described in that statement.
- c) On the other hand, any statement with a score *greater* than “3” indicates that the majority of the Board members **agreed** that they perform that activity “most of the time.” The higher the score is above “3” the stronger the indication that Board members believe that they perform the activity described in the statement “almost always.”

5 – Discuss the Problem Areas and Propose Actions for Improvement

- a) Suggest that the members from each different Board represented at your site now discuss the “problem areas” uncovered by their answers to the Ethical Behavior Questionnaire.
- b) Ask the members of each Board to determine, for each “problem area,” the exact nature of the problem: what behavior does the majority follow instead of the one described in this statement? Can anyone suggest why the majority doesn’t perform this behavior? Try to determine how critical the problem is. Does it require immediate action?
- c) Now, have them think of two or three things that they could do in the *near-term* to remind themselves of the correct procedure to follow. For each alternative they suggest, have the members project the probability that the suggestion would have real success.
- d) Have them propose two or three things that they could do in the *long-term* to change their behavior. Try to move them toward a practical plan for changing their behavior.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

Attachments:

Board Assessment Questionnaire
Board Assessment Scoring Form
Parliamentary Procedure Questionnaire
Parliamentary Procedure Scoring Form
Ethical Behavior Questionnaire
Ethical Behavior Scoring Form

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

EMPOWERMENT BOARD ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

In the table below you will find a number of statements related to various Board responsibilities. Register your reaction to each statement by circling one of the numbers to the right of the statement. The meaning and abbreviation of each number are as follows:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)
- 2 = Disagree (D)
- 3 = Undecided (U)
- 4 = Agree (A)
- 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)

STATEMENT	SD	D	U	A	SA
1. Members of our Board work to ensure that our Mission is carried out.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Every Board member is concerned with maintaining the community's trust in our Board's actions.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Our Board members do whatever they can to contribute to our organization's success.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Without exception, each Board member is careful to maintain confidentiality of Board matters.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Every Board member is sensitive to actual or possible conflicts of interest.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Our Board tries to maintain appropriate lines of communication with our organization's support staff.	1	2	3	4	5
7. On our Board we recognize the need for and maintain separate roles with appropriate responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Members of our Board trust and respect one another.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Each Board member is committed to enhancing the public image of our organization in the community.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Every Board member is continually on the lookout for individuals who can be recruited to serve as future Board members.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Our Board always follows its policies on Board size, composition, nominations, and elections.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Our Board has published a policies and procedures manual.	1	2	3	4	5

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

13. Our Board has developed a formal orientation program that it gives to new members when they come on board.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Our Board has effective and open lines of communication among its members and with the Executive Director.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Our Board has established a means for recruiting new volunteers to serve on the Board.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Our Board seeks to ensure diversity in its membership.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Our Board supports the Executive Director's professional development.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Our Board holds all members accountable for their actions.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Our Board conducts periodic assessments of its operations.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Our Board provides opportunities for informal interactions between Board members and the Executive Director's staff.	1	2	3	4	5

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

**BOARD ASSESSMENT
SORING FORM**

STATEMENT	PARTICIPANT																AVERAGE
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
1. Members of our Board work to ensure that our Mission is carried out.																	
2. Every Board member is concerned with maintaining the community's trust in our Board's actions.																	
3. Our Board members do whatever they can to contribute to our organization's success.																	
4. Without exception, each Board member is careful to maintain confidentiality of Board matters.																	
5. Every Board member is sensitive to actual or possible conflicts of interest.																	
6. Our Board tries to maintain appropriate lines of communication with our organization's support staff.																	
7. On our Board we recognize the need for and maintain separate roles with appropriate responsibilities.																	
8. Members of our Board trust and respect one another.																	
9. Each Board member is committed to enhancing the public image of our organization in the community..																	
10. Every Board member is continually on the lookout for individuals who can be recruited to serve as future Board members.																	
11. Our Board always follows its policies on Board size, composition, nominations, and elections.																	
12. Our Board has published a policies and procedures manual.																	
13. Our Board has developed a formal orientation program that it gives to new members when they come on board.																	

Parliamentary Procedure Questionnaire

In the table below you will find a number of statements related to parliamentary procedures followed by your Board. Register your reaction to each statement by circling one of the numbers to the right of the statement. The meaning and abbreviation of each number are as follows:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)
- 2 = Disagree (D)
- 3 = Undecided (U)
- 4 = Agree (A)
- 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)

STATEMENT	SD	D	U	A	SA
1. Each member of our Board is always given a notice of the time, place, and purpose of each Board meeting.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Our Board only holds an official meeting when and for as long as a quorum is present.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Each time our Board makes a decision, the question being discussed is always stated clearly for all to hear before a vote is taken.	1	2	3	4	5
4. When members of our Board vote on an issue, they know and understand the question being discussed and the likely impact of their decision.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Each member of our Board is encouraged to speak up on each question being discussed during our Board meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
6. A decision by our Board is only made during an official meeting by putting the issue to a vote of the members present.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Members of our Board are always reminded that they are free to abstain or to vote on an issue before the Board.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Decisions by our Board are always decided by the vote of the Board members present at the meeting.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Our Board always recognizes that any vote that is in conflict with Federal, State, or local laws or corporate by-laws is <i>null and void</i> .	1	2	3	4	5
10. Any Board member in the minority (on a particular question) is always given the right to speak and be heard by the other members of the Board.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Once a vote has been taken during a Board meeting, the question under discussion is not raised again in the same form during that meeting.	1	2	3	4	5

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

**PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES
SCORING FORM**

STATEMENT	PARTICIPANT																AVERAGE
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
1. Each member of our Board is always given a notice of the time, place, and purpose of each Board meeting.																	
2. Our Board only holds an official meeting when and for as long as a quorum is present.																	
3. Each time our Board makes a decision, the question being discussed is always stated clearly for all to hear before a vote is taken.																	
4. When members of our Board vote on an issue, they know and understand the question being discussed and the likely impact of their decision.																	
5. Each member of our Board is encouraged to speak up on each question being discussed during our Board meetings.																	
6. A decision by our Board is only made during an official meeting by putting the issue to a vote of the members present.																	
7. Members of our Board are always reminded that they are free to abstain or to vote on an issue before the Board.																	
8. Decisions by our Board are always decided by the vote of the Board members present at the meeting.																	
9. Our Board always recognizes that any vote that is in conflict with Federal, State, or local laws or corporate by-laws is null and void.																	
10. Any Board member in the minority (on a particular question) is always given the right to speak and be heard by the other members of the Board.																	
11. Once a vote has been taken during a Board meeting, the question under discussion is not raised again in the same form during that meeting.																	

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

ETHICAL BEHAVIOR QUESTIONNAIRE

In the table below you will find a number of statements related to different principles of ethical behavior. Register your reaction to each statement by circling one of the numbers to the right of the statement. The meaning and abbreviation of each number are as follows:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)
- 2 = Disagree (D)
- 3 = Undecided (U)
- 4 = Agree (A)
- 5 = Strongly Agree (SA)

STATEMENT	SD	D	U	A	SA
1. Members of our Board are always on the lookout for ways to improve their knowledge and skills as board members.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Our Board makes a conscious effort to ensure that our behavior is always in accord with our by-laws and procedures, as well as with local, state, and Federal laws and regulations.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Members of our Board are careful not to disclose any confidential information learned during Board meetings or while performing Board activities.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Members of our Board always warn staff employees about the confidentiality of any privileged information that they might learn while working for the corporation.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Our Board refrains from using or appearing to use confidential information acquired by the Board for unethical or illegal advantage, for themselves or any third parties.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Members of our Board are careful to avoid any actual or apparent conflicts of interest and advise all appropriate parties of any <i>potential</i> conflict of interest.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Members of our Board are careful not to engage in any activity that would prejudice their ability to carry out their duties as board members ethically and legally.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Members of our Board refuse any gifts, favors, or hospitality that would influence or appear to influence their actions as board members.	1	2	3	4	5

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

9. Our Board refrains from either actively or passively blocking the attainment of our organization's legitimate and ethical objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Members of our Board are quick to recognize and communicate any situation or constraint that would prevent them from carrying out their duties as board members objectively and without prejudice.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Our Board always communicates favorable and unfavorable information, professional judgments, and opinions to those whose proposals we have evaluated.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Members of our Board always refrain from engaging in or supporting any activity that would discredit our non-profit corporation.	1	2	3	4	5

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE MODULE

**ETHICAL BEHAVIORS
SCORING FORM**

STATEMENT	PARTICIPANT																AVERAGE
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
1. Members of our Board are always on the lookout for ways to improve their knowledge and skills as board members.																	
2. Our Board makes a conscious effort to ensure that our behavior is always in accord with our by-laws and procedures, as well as with local, state, and Federal laws and regulations.																	
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11. Our Board always communicates both favorable and unfavorable information, professional judgments, and opinions to those whose proposals we have evaluated.																	
12. Members of our Board always refrain from engaging in or supporting any activity that would discredit our non-profit corporation.																	

Financing and Fund Raising Module

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE FINANCING & FUNDRAISING MODULE

Background on Financing & Fund Raising Module

FACILITATOR NOTES: As a result of conducting an assessment of what knowledge and skills Board members needed, we learned that financial management figured prominently in Board member functioning. Some members of the Board, especially those who have never before held membership on any other Board, might claim that they know next to nothing about this subject. It was for this very reason that we have included material on this very important topic.

Background for the Videotape Slides

Your Financial Management Responsibilities

In the Module on Management & Governance, we presented eleven major responsibilities of non-profit Board members. Two of these responsibilities, i.e., “Ensure Adequate Resources” and “Monitor Resources Effectively,” have to deal with financial management. We treat both in this Module. In dealing with “Monitoring Resources Effectively,” we look for two outcomes:

- a) We want Board members to know those financial items for which they should have formal policies and procedures.
- b) We want to help them learn how to read financial statements, the reports that describe how the corporation's resources are being managed.

In the second part of this Module, we present information dealing various aspects of fund raising. At the end of the Module, we have the participants engage in an activity of planning for a fund raising project.

Monitor Resources Regularly

An important part of the Board's contribution to the Empowerment Community deals with oversight of the organization's resources. Usually the by-laws of a non-profit corporation will say very little about financial record keeping. Therefore, as soon as the organization becomes “official,” the Board must work to establish a set of formal policies and procedures regulating the allocation, utilization, and disposition of its financial resources. Keeping the financial books is the responsibility of the Treasurer; examining the financial status of the organization on a regular basis is the responsibility of the Board.

Financial Policy and Procedure Topics

Since many of the Board members may be new to their role, they can hardly be expected to be immediately conversant with many of the topics included in this module. For this reason, we have included as an appendix to this Module in the Participant Manual a glossary of financial terms. As well, we do not expect participants to have a handy set of procedures that they could suggest for adoption by the corporation. Instead, Board members of a new Empowerment Community should ask around for a set of procedures that were created and used by one of the earlier Empowerment Communities. If that organization would share a copy of its financial policies and procedures (on floppy disk), the new Board could tailor them to suit its own situation. The point to stress with the participants is the importance of having formal, written policies and procedures that govern the management of the organization's financial resources.

Reviewing Financial Statements

Financial statements are reports describing what financial resources an organization has at hand, has used in doing its business, and for what these resources were used. Board members must learn to review these reports, so that they can determine the financial status of the organization and whether there are any storms on the horizon. They will find it helpful to review statements not only for the current month, but also for the prior two months. That way they can better detect any trend in the amount of resources held and expended. If they see something they do not understand, they should ask the Treasurer for clarification. This is how they *monitor the organization's resources effectively*.

Types of Financial Statements

While accountants find many different financial statements useful, Board members need to know how to read and interpret four of these statements. The Statement of Financial Position, also called the Balance Sheet is important because it gives a snapshot of the current financial status of the organization. The Statement of Activities reports both the actual and budgeted revenues and expenses for the current month and year-to-date. Board members can see which organizational operations are bringing in the most revenues and which are incurring the most expenses. The Statement of Cash Flows shows the amounts of cash that the organization has available this year compared to last. The Statement of Functional Expenses presents the different types of expenses broken out by Program and Support Services.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE FINANCING & FUNDRAISING MODULE

Considerations re Statement of Financial Position

This statement, also known as the Balance Sheet, presents a snapshot of the financial status of an organization. It is called a “balance sheet” because it shows the balance of Assets with Liabilities and Equity. **Assets** cover such things as *cash* (as well as anything the organization expects to convert to cash during the fiscal year), *fixed assets* (land, buildings, furniture, equipment, etc.), and *accounts receivable* (money owed to the organization). **Liabilities** cover any *debts* (current and long-term), *accounts payable* (money owed to vendors), *accrued liabilities* (e.g., vacation or sick-leave accrued by employees), and any monies *reserved for taxes*. When one subtracts the Liabilities from the Assets of an organization, the remainder is called **Equity** (or Capital or Net Assets). Items in Equity may be *unrestricted* (i.e., can be used whenever available), *temporarily restricted* (i.e., for a certain time period), or *permanently restricted* (i.e., to be used only for a certain purpose).

When you read a Statement of Financial Position, realize that what you are seeing is the status of the organization *for just this moment*; it is a snapshot, not a movie. As a reviewer, you want to ask questions about what you are presented:

- Is the amount of cash sufficient to do business for the month?
- Is the cash in a savings account, checking account, or money market account?
- If the organization has investments, does the amount reported represent an increase or decrease?
- If there are significant changes to the fixed assets, what is the cause?
- Are the accounts payable in line with what you expected to see? If not, why the increase or decrease in expenses?
- If payroll is reported separately, is it in line with what you expected to see?

Considerations re Statement of Activities

The Statement of Activities presents a fiscal measure of the ability of the organization to carry out its Mission. This type of financial statement presents the *revenues* (income), the *expenses* (outgo), and *net assets* (equity) for determined period of time. It may be prepared each month. If so, then the Statement of Activities will show the *actual* revenues, expenses, and net assets for this month compared with the *budgeted* amounts for those items. To help the reader, the report may have a column to report the difference (or variance) between the actual and budgeted amounts. To give the reader an idea of how the organization is faring thus far in the fiscal year, the report may show the *year-to-date actual* and *budgeted* amounts, along with the total amount projected for each item in the annual *budget*.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE FINANCING & FUNDRAISING MODULE

When you read a Statement of Activities, recognize that you are seeing the amounts of income, outgo, and equity for the organization *for a certain time period* and *for the period from the beginning of the fiscal year to this date*. It is a picture of the present status **and** the trip the organization has taken thus far this year. When you receive such a report, be prepared to ask such questions as:

- Are the revenues or expenses surprisingly large for any category listed?
- Can you explain any large increase or decrease?
- Do any variances between actual and budgeted amounts suggest a change to next year's budget?
- Are the "year-to-date" figures in line with what you expected to see?
- Given the annual budget amounts, do you foresee any problems coming up later in the year?
- Do we have to be concerned with our expenditures or do we expect to see them smaller in coming months?

Considerations re Statement of Cash Flows

The Statement of Cash Flows shows both the flows of cash *in* and *out* of the organization for the year. Basically, it shows how the organization generated and used its cash during the year. Usually the cash flows will be presented for three different categories: a) for *operating* activities, b) for *investing* activities, and c) for *financing* activities. Toward the bottom of the report the net increase (or decrease) in cash is calculated and added to the amount of cash on hand at the beginning of this fiscal year. The result produces the amount of cash on hand at the end of this fiscal year.

When you read a Statement of Cash Flows, you should be trying to decide whether the organization is in better or worse financial shape this year. You want to ask questions about what you are presented:

- Is the amount of cash for accounts receivable (income) up or down?
- Is the amount of cash for accounts payable (outgo) up or down?
- Did we purchase a significant amount of equipment this year?
- Have our investments, if any, shown a good return?
- If investments have not risen as you might expect, what action should be taken?
- Are the financing costs acceptable?
- If not, what action can the Board recommend?

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE FINANCING & FUNDRAISING MODULE

Considerations re Statement of Functional Expenses

This report shows details of the *operating expenses* incurred by the organization for the year. These expenses are broken into what are called “program services” (the main functions that the organization performs to achieve its Mission) and “support services” (the functions done as part of doing business). Program Services may be broken down further into whatever the main categories of program functions are for the organization. Support Services usually break down into “Management and General” and “Fund Raising.” Usually there is a column that presents the total expenses of a certain type for each of the Services, as well as a column at the far right showing the Grand Total of each expense for the year.

When you read a Statement of Functional Expenses, you might want to ask such questions as:

- Do the amounts of salaries reflect how the Chief Executive and staff spend their time?
- Are there any expenditures that seem out of line? If so, what should the Board recommend?
- Are we spending too much on consultants?
- Are there any items that you do not recognize? Who can you ask for explanation?
- If the organization engaged in fund raising, do the expenses for that item seem in line with the amount of money raised?
- Do the expenses for this year seem out of line when compared to last year's? If so, what would you recommend?

Ensuring Continuing Resources

On page 113 of the Participant Manual, we listed three different ways to acquire resources for the organization. Board members may not become personally involved in them, but they must realize that acquiring resources is a very important responsibility for them.

Board members may not actually write proposals for grants; that is the responsibility of the Chief Executive and his/her staff. But Board members should become aware of the components of a good proposal, of the organizations that offer grants, and of the various means for learning of Requests for Proposals (RFPs) that are presently announced. They should expect to be on the “red line team” that reads the proposals and makes suggestions for changes. They should explore the Internet for Web-sites of organizations that make grants to organizations such as theirs. They definitely will want to explore in their local universities, colleges, and technical schools for any one who could offer free consulting assistance to the organization in proposal writing.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE FINANCING & FUNDRAISING MODULE

Board members should be actively involved in learning about other organizations with which their organization could form an alliance, a partnership, or a coalition. As part of this effort, it might help for all the Board members to pool names, phone numbers, etc. of individuals in these organizations in a “support network database” to which they would have access. They should do this right from the beginning, not when the organization is considering the possibility of teaming with some organization in response to an RFP. We talked of exactly this as a behavior that Board members should demonstrate concerning “Responsible External Relations” in the Management and Governance Module. Board members should build and maintain a Board-related support network to be used when considering cooperative ventures.

Board members definitely should take an active part in any fund raising that the organization conducts. As leaders of the organization, they should be the ones to make personal contact with those potential donors who could make large contributions to the fund raising project. As well, they are the ones who should be “courting” local professionals who might be able to donate their professional expertise pro bono (for free) to the organization.

Fund Raising Essentials

There is no way that one can teach individuals the topic of fund raising in only an hour and a half. However, since all of us have probably been approached by fund raisers, we have some idea of what the topic entails. What we have chosen to do is focus attention on eight items that we call “The Essentials of Fund Raising.” These eight items are the subject-matter of the next eight pages of the Participant Manual. If a group, such as a Community Empowerment Board, pays attention to these eight items, the fund raising project conducted by that group will be successful. Trying to conduct a fund raising project while ignoring these eight items is an invitation to problems, if not disaster.

Purpose of Fund Raising Project

The great German poet, Goethe, said that “one can endure almost any *how* who has a *why*.” Victor Frankl, in his book, Man's Search for Meaning, argued that those who could find a purpose to their lives, even while interned in Nazi death camps, not only survived, but became better people. Individuals who are given something distasteful to do will often give up when the first challenges are met. Those who have a sense of purpose will endure.

No one really likes having to ask others for a contribution. But knowing the *cause* for which we are raising funds makes it easier, especially if it is a cause with which we can identify. This is one of the most important items in fund raising: determining the reason why we are seeking funds from others. Without that, the fund raisers will not feel any

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE FINANCING & FUNDRAISING MODULE

push to persist in asking for contributions, nor will potential donors feel any *pull* to part with their money, time, or expertise.

Fund Raising Goal

A goal is not the same as a cause or purpose. The latter answers the question “why;” the former answers the question “when will we know we have arrived?” The cause for a fund raising project might be to assist citizens who do not have health insurance with some form of basic coverage. The goal might be to raise \$100,000.

Just as it is important to have determined the purpose or cause for the fund raising project, so it is essential to establish a goal. Leaving the target open-ended robs the fund raisers of a very strong motivator. We feel more confidently of running toward a determined goal, rather than running for a destination that is over the horizon. The goal gives us something to keep our eyes on. By focusing on the goal, we can tell that when we have made progress, because it appears closer. Donors also react to a determined goal: they can see what their contribution means toward bringing the project closer to that goal.

Fund Raising Team

Money does not automatically flow in to an organization; individuals are required to do the work necessary to carry out a fund raising project. And the individuals that will make up the fund raising team need three things:

1. Knowledge
2. Motivation
3. Commitment.

The team has to *know the purpose* for the conducting the fund raising project and the goal that has been set. They have to know something about the present situation of the eventual recipients of the funds. If the purpose were to help those who do not have medical insurance, it would be important for the team to know what it is like not to have that kind of insurance. They need to know that those who lack it put off going to a doctor and risk having something small, and usually curable, become worse, possibly life-threatening. If the cause were to improve housing for the indigent, it would be important for the team to know what the present housing conditions are for the poor and the implications of these conditions.

The team has to feel an *inner drive* to overcome the natural reticence about asking others for anything, be it money, or time, or expertise. They have to feel that something else is more important than their own discomfort. In the early Christian church, individuals who

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE FINANCING & FUNDRAISING MODULE

were threatened with death if they did not worship the Roman Emperor gladly chose death. They felt that their eternal salvation was more important than this earthly life. If we are working for a cause in which we believe in strongly, we will have a nearly inexhaustible store of energy.

But, even with knowledge and motivation, we need the additional dynamic called *commitment* or *resolve*. Members of the fund raising team need to have committed themselves to the cause. Otherwise, they can give up at the first sign of donor resistance. Throughout history we can find instances of individuals who did not fear where others refused to go, who persisted in the face of overwhelming odds, all because they had committed themselves to a cause in which they deeply believed.

Fund Raising Resources

We tend to mock someone who “goes off half-cocked” in a project, only to withdraw before the end because the resources ran out. We usually feel that if we don’t have the resources to finish a job, it is better not to start it at all. Before beginning a fund raising project, it is very important for the team to identify the many different kinds of resources that it will need to bring the project to a successful conclusion.

Various kinds of resources will be required to carry off a fund raising project. The team will need to have or obtain *technical* and *professional guidance*. The team members may have never before conducted a fund raising project; they need help from those who have done it. They will need help in putting together the brochures, banners, fliers, and other materials that tell the community about the fund raising project. They could benefit from having someone who knows how to write compelling “copy” or create eye-catching graphics for the printed materials they will hand out to potential donors. And they definitely will need the help of volunteers to pass out the printed materials, as well as collect the pledges and contributions that donors will make.

Fund Raising Audience

On page 119 of the Participant Manual, we suggest that the fund raising audience can be put into three different categories: new donors, past donors, and “big” donors. The approach taken to each of these three categories must be tailored; one size (i.e., approach) does **not** fit all. New donors have to be *interested* in the cause and *want* to help with their contribution. Past donors have to be *thanked* for their past contribution(s) and *enticed* to make a new contribution for this cause. “Big” donors have to be given *recognition* of their generosity and *gratitude* for the difference their contribution will mean for the recipients of the funds given.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE FINANCING & FUNDRAISING MODULE

The team will need to devise different strategies for each group. For instance, Board members may need to accompany team members when they approach any “big” donors. Board members will likely be individuals who have given to various fund raising projects in the past. But they need to set the example in this project by again giving a contribution of their money and time. Board members may be called on to write letters to prospective donors, or make follow-up phone calls to those who have made pledges.

Fund Raising Benefits

In the videotape we suggest that it is important to recognize the various types of benefits that the community will derive from the fund raising project. Those who will actually ask for contributions will need to know these benefits, so that they can explain them to potential donors. Donors like to know what kind of changes their contributions will make possible. If the benefits are important to them and compellingly presented, donors will be more easily persuaded to make their contribution.

Many fund raising projects choose a “poster child” to personify for the potential donor the recipient of their contribution. A child is chosen because individuals are usually positively inclined to little children, rather than adults. If adults are the recipients of the funds being collected, then fund raisers will be careful to choose someone who creates a positive image of the recipients.

But a fund raising project will have benefits more than the designated recipients; the whole community will benefit. If those who could not afford health insurance now have some, those who provide health-care will see increase in their patients. Those who supply medical materials will have a greater demand for their products. And the economy of the whole community will be affected positively.

Fund Raising Approach

A community that has never before engaged in fund raising and chooses to “go it alone” stands a very good chance of making errors, some possibly serious. However, individuals who raise funds as a living do not work for free. Nonetheless, a community may decide to spend some of its collective money to gain some guidance from the “experts,” but supply the core of the team that will carry out the project.

Before signing a contract with one or more fund raising consultants, a community ought to do some searching in libraries and the Internet to see what guidance it can get for free. Many organizations that have conducted successful fund raising projects seem quite ready to share their experiences and their “lessons learned” with others who “surf the net.” It would not take any Board member long to give a few different search commands to one of the many search engines found on the Internet.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE FINANCING & FUNDRAISING MODULE

When I did this, I found hundreds of thousands of “hits” for the topic “fund raising project.” Various fund raising consultants write articles giving guidance (with the hope of attracting those who want more). There are publications on fund raising, such as the Grassroots Fundraising Journal from Chadron Press in California. Different organizations that have recently conducted successful fund raising projects write articles describing their approach, the problems they encountered, and strategies they used to overcome their problems. This could be of great help to a group just getting started in fund raising.

Fund Raising Plan

It does not pay to assume that, because “we all mean well,” things will go smoothly. We all know the destination of the road paved with “good intentions.” As we tried to argue in the Strategic Planning Module, if we don’t have a plan, we will end up working someone else’s plan. Until they were able to physically outnumber and overpower the Roman legions, the invading barbarians were usually defeated by small bands of Roman legionnaires who employed a “battle plan.” Athletes know the power of a good “game plan;” pilots flying to far off destinations must have a “flight plan.” So, too, those who want to raise funds must have a project plan.

On page 122 of the Participant Manual, we have proposed nine activities a fund raising team ought to perform in creating a fund raising project plan. These activities were taken from “experts” who make a living out of fund raising. They are not activities that would completely foreign to adults, even those who have never engaged in fund raising before.

Activity I – Fund Raising Activity

FACILITATOR NOTES: The *purpose* of this activity is to give participants a chance to think through the planning for a fund raising project. If the participants at your site represent multiple Boards, you will need to have each different group sit in a different part of the room (so they don’t disturb one another). Make sure that each group has flipchart sheets on which to record their suggestions and voting results. Unless you have colleagues who can help you facilitate these groups, you will need to move from group to group facilitating their use of these tools.

1 – Select a Potential Fund Raising Project

- a) Once you have the participants separated in their groups and ready to begin the activity, ask them to discuss various causes that would be appropriate for a fund raising project. If they find it difficult to think

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE FINANCING & FUNDRAISING MODULE

of suitable causes, have them use brainstorming to come up with a list of possible projects from which they could pick one for this activity.

- b) If they come up with a list of possible projects, have them use multi-voting to select the one that the group as a whole wants.

2 – Develop and Prioritize a List of Potential Donors

- a) Ask the group(s) to take about **ten minutes** to brainstorm possible donors to the fund raising project that they chose in the previous step.
- b) Have them spend between **five and seven minutes** on the proliferation phase suggesting different groups of people who could be “big” or new donors.
- c) Ask them to spend three to five minutes refining their list down to those who realistically could be counted on as donors for their exercise project.

3 – Brainstorm Names of Project Consultants

- a) Next, ask the group(s) to take about **ten minutes** to brainstorm the names of those in their community who might be able to provide fund raising guidance because of their professional training and experience.
- b) Have them spend between **five and seven minutes** on the proliferation phase suggesting different groups of people who could offer help. These might be those who could provide technical, legal, artistic, or editorial help. It might include those who could volunteer to perform some of the non-technical tasks required for the project, e.g., distributing fliers, driving volunteers around, or providing food for volunteers who collect pledges or contributions.
- c) Ask them to spend three to five minutes refining their list down to those who realistically could be counted on as pro bono consultants for their exercise project.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE FINANCING & FUNDRAISING MODULE

4 – Brainstorm Ideas for the Project

- a) Ask the group(s) to take about **ten minutes** to brainstorm such things as a project motto, methods they might use for involving the whole community, or ways they might provide recognition to those who donate to the fund raising cause of their exercise project.
- b) Have them spend between **five and seven minutes** on the proliferation phase suggesting different possibilities of the things suggested in the previous step.
- c) Ask them to spend three to five minutes refining their list down to those items which realistically could be used in their exercise project.

5 – Evaluate the Project's Feasibility for Your Community

When participants have had a chance to apply these techniques, have them discuss the feasibility of conducting their exercise project in their community.

- a) Ask them to explain why it would or would not be feasible. If they say the project **would not** be feasible because the community would not cooperate, play the Devil's Advocate and ask whether their assumption is justified.
- b) If they say that people in the community do not have the money to give for this cause, ask if they have money for things that are not "life necessities."
- c) On the other, if they conclude that the exercise project **would** be feasible, again play the Devil's Advocate and ask how they might go about surveying the community to determine whether it would support such a project.
- d) Let them express their opinions, but then ask them to back up that opinion with examples that argue for it.

FACILITATOR'S NOTE: Remember that the real benefit of this activity is merely to get the participants started in discussing such matters and to teach them some of the things they need to discuss. Emphasize that if they should decide to pursue the exercise project for real, they should perform the nine activities presented on page 122 of the Participant Manual.

Community Involvement Module

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

Background of the Community Involvement Module

FACILITATOR NOTES: Rural Development's Community Empowerment Initiative (known as the Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities Program) requires a shift in mind-set among those who work on the Boards. In the past, those in the power structure usually directed community development efforts. Citizens in the community sometimes heard a bit about a project, but they were never asked to take part in the planning and decision making. It is not easy to change habits. Both those who played a role in the old power structure and those who are taking their position on a Board for the first time need to change their behaviors. The former have to open up the process to include others; the latter need to take their courage in their hands and take an active part. The *purpose* of this module is twofold:

- a) to help Board members realize what is necessary for a successful community involvement project, and
- b) to give them a chance to begin the planning process required for a community involvement project.

Background for the Videotape Slides

Why Involve the Community?

We have seen with the Welfare System that those who are given regular support for an indefinite period most often become locked into the "welfare cycle." They need help because of some calamity or loss, but if they obtain an unending source of resources, they will rarely break out of the trap. They begin to doubt in their own abilities to make a difference in their situation. Involving members of the community in their own redevelopment is the best way to empower them. As they gain even small successes, they feel encouraged that "they can make a difference." As they confidence grows, they begin to notice other things that they can do to improve their situation.

Bringing in outside "experts" is a two-edged sword. If the community depends on the outside "experts" too much, community members shift the responsibility over to the consultants and do nothing themselves. The community needs to find "experts" who play the "missionary role:" come in, analyze the problem, propose alternative solutions, guide community members to choose and implement the best of the proposed solutions and then leave. As the community learns the consultant's approach and gains experience in problem solving, it will eventually no longer need the consultant.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

The Principle of Community-Based Partnerships

Part of the genius of the Empowerment Initiative is the shift from giving people help to helping people to help themselves. We probably all subscribe to the saying: "Give a person a fish, and you have fed that person *for a day*; teach that person to fish, and you have fed that person *for life*." This is why it is vital to involve the community in its own redevelopment. Support that is freely given makes the recipient(s) *dependent on the giver*.

This is not something that individuals who have lived in "historically depressed" rural areas will take to enthusiastically. It is quite possible that they have built up an arsenal of excuses for why their situation is what it is:

- "The prices of commodities are down."
- "No one wants what we have."
- "We just live in a poor part of the country."

Subscribing to these kinds of belief creates for us a "self-fulfilling prophecy," because likely we will voice our belief and then act on it --- doing nothing to change our situation. And, of course, our situation never improves, so that we can then say, "Told you so!" But, the *cause* of our situation is **not** the low price of commodities, or lack of a seller's market, or the amount of resources in our part of the country. The cause is our lack of action.

Blocks to Involvement

Change agents are never popular individuals, because people don't like to be moved out of their "comfort zones," even if these zones are depressing. In Ireland, I heard people explain their refusal to move (change) by a saying: "Better the devil you know than the devil you don't know." Psychologists tell us that people will not change their behavior until the situation caused by that behavior becomes too painful to continue to bear. They have to feel that they can't continue this way, and feel that anything else would probably be less painful. Until they reach that point, they are not *ready* to try new behavior. On the other hand, when they have reached that point, they themselves will often discover what they need to do to make their situation better.

As shown on page 130 of the Participant Manual, we can fortify our "comfort zone" with various kinds of defenses: cognitive, emotional, or philosophical. In fact, you find out quickly how inventive people can be in finding excuses for justifying why their situation is "hopeless." Of course, their excuses all have what the philosophers call "a basis in reality," or else the excuse wouldn't seem so convincing. People in depressed rural areas may *not* have certain knowledge and skills required for changing their situation, but they can *learn* them. They may have what psychologists call "a fear of failure," but they can learn to set *small, attainable objectives* for themselves and build on their successes. Shakespeare said that "There is nothing right or wrong, but thinking makes it so!" Our

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

thinking (our opinions, attitudes, and beliefs) affects our situation, making it a “self-fulfilling prophecy,” or causing us to change it.

Required Paradigm Shift

As I have said so often in this training, to make a success of the Community Empowerment, people in the community have to make a “paradigm shift.” That means that they have to look on their situation from a *different point of view*. Individuals who only look at the physical world as it appears to their senses find it impossible to accept as fact that everything physical is at the microcosmic level of detail actually largely empty space. Only when they change their viewpoint and consider physical reality from the sub-atomic level can they grant that what seems very solid is actually quite porous.

Page 131 of the Participant Manual presents four changes that a community has to make to be successful at empowerment. Instead of expecting “someone else” to do it, the community has to count on all its various groups. Leadership has to change from someone acting as the authoritarian dictator (telling others what they should do) to someone delegating responsibility to others and helping them meet that responsibility. The community has to stop seeing itself as a collection of individuals each competing for his/her own advantage; it must begin to subscribe to the motto from the Revolutionary War: “United we stand, divided we fall!” And what is probably hardest to change: the community has to recognize that there is strength in their diversity, and that as often as some members of the community are ignored or shunted aside, the community devalues itself.

Representative Participation

The research that brought the concept of “self-fulfilling prophecy” to light showed that people react *the way they are treated*. Tell someone that they are incompetent or worthless, and they will adopt behaviors that *live down to that standard*. On the other hand, treat people as though they are competent and possess something of value to the community, as they will strive to *live up to that standard*. This discovery should lead us to the conclusion that if some parts of our community are incompetent, feel worthless, or fail to volunteer in community projects, it may be that that is how they have been treated by the community. If we don't begin to incorporate them, we are partially responsible for keeping them on the fringes of society.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

Committee Consciousness

Those Empowerment Communities where only “the chosen few” control the Board are usually unsuccessful in the Community Empowerment Initiative. The chosen few usually consider only their own viewpoint, thereby limiting the possibility of coming up with innovative solutions to problems. Restricting control only to the chosen few limits the motivation in a community to *their* level of motivation. When they tire of carrying the load, no one is there to pick up the slack. The chosen few can only do so much, and usually they will not be fully appreciated for what they do. People resent being left out!

Page 133 of the Participant Manual is entitled “Committee Consciousness” because I wanted to emphasize the need to change from an authoritarian, hierarchical form of leadership to a democratic form that delegates power and responsibility out to members of various committees. Forming diverse committees and giving them valued tasks to perform is the best way to make individuals feel *invested* in a project. Not only will the committee members feel involved and invested, but those they represent will feel included as well. “Community Involvement” does not mean only “keeping the community informed,” but making them feel a valued part of a project, personally or through their representative(s).

Collaborative Atmosphere

In the Teaming Module of this training, I presented three different types of atmospheres that a group can create for itself: individualistic, competitive, and collaborative. I argued that neither the individualistic nor the competitive atmospheres are conducive to building a team. That is also true of building a community: only a collaborative atmosphere will do it.

On page 134 of the Participant Manual, I present seven things that seem to contribute to creating a collaborative atmosphere.

- People who are brought onto a project that is already under way often do not understand why things are being done the way they are. We usually resent being put in the position of being nothing but a “rubber stamp,” ratifying decisions made by others and forced to meekly carry them out.
- One of the most destructive forces when building a team is “information hiding,” i.e., keeping information from the masses and reserving it only to those who “need to know.” People who don’t know what is going on don’t feel involved.
- It is important to plant the seed for a community involvement project and give the community time to deal with the idea. Members of the whole community need to talk about it, clarify it, and start to develop some desire to want it to happen.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

- Earlier I quoted Goethe to explain that people will endure many difficulties and expend a lot of energy **IF** they understand the reason (the why) for something.
- Giving people “make work” tasks communicates to them that they are merely being given something to keep them occupied, because they can not be trusted to carry out serious work. Such lack of trust and respect disintegrates a community.
- In the past, those in power often kept information from the “masses” with the excuse that they could not understand or appreciate it. Information was seen as power, and therefore, if you did not want to share power, you did not share information. This attitude seems to ignore the power of the Internet to give anyone who can gain access to it with a fund of information without requiring proof that it can be understood and appreciated.
- Authoritarian leaders cause followers to become competitive with one another (usually for the favor of the leader) and to feel resentment, if not hostility, to the leader him/herself. Sole use of an authoritarian leadership style does not empower a community.

Consensus Building

Consensus does not mean unanimity (i.e., “we all think alike”). It does mean that everyone is given a chance to express his/her perception of the problem and likely successful solutions, and then is willing to go along with the majority. Building consensus takes time, because everyone has to be given their chance to speak out and be heard. When a group considers a problem, they are like people occupying different positions on a circular sidewalk around the problem and its potential solutions. Each one sees the problem from a slightly different point of view. If the group were to listen only to a few people on the sidewalk, it would deprive itself of different points of view from which an innovative solution may appear.

We have already presented the decision-making tools called problem identification, brainstorming, and multi-voting. We have even given Board members who have taken the training a chance to put these tools into practice. As we tried to show on page 135 of the Participant Manual, we build consensus by conducting community workshops (to give people a chance to speak out on the issues), by brainstorming topics, and by focusing in on the group's decision by multi-voting. The more the Board uses these tools during its Board meetings, the better they will use them when guiding community involvement projects.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

Outside Assistance

It is one thing to consider using consultants to guide you with their special expertise. But these people are in business to earn a living. So they charge fees. No doubt a community will, from time to time, need the help of outside experts. But that community ought also to consider enlisting the assistance of those professionals and technicians who earn a living in colleges, technical schools, and universities. These individuals will often provide their expertise pro bono, i.e., for free. In the Management & Governance Module, we said that it was a responsibility of the Board to build and maintain a support network, i.e., individuals who can provide special knowledge and expertise to an Empowerment Community. When a community is considering a project, it should contact the members of its support network and ask for assistance.

Another source of pro bono help can come from the legal or financial communities. Lawyers often will provide legal consulting for free as part of a community service. Likewise, accountants and bankers might be enticed into offering their services to help a community trying to help itself. At least, they may give a discount on their fees.

Board members should make themselves knowledgeable about the Internet, because it offers many sites where they can get some initial assistance on matters concerning community development. A search on the Internet on the topic "Community Involvement Techniques" produced nearly 54 million hits. Now, admittedly, some of them were useless, but the first two hundred led to sites where an Empowerment Community could reap real benefits. One of the responses presented a bibliography of community involvement literature that could be a treasure trove for the beleaguered Board member. Before a community spends its hard-acquired resources, it ought to first explore the possibilities of free assistance.

Stages of Consensus Building

Earlier we talked of the tools of consensus building. Here we present four stages that Board members ought to use as stepping stones for achieving consensus in the community. The following pages (138-141) takes each stage and explain its implications. While these four seem very simplistic, they act as organizers for those who sponsor and/or conduct projects involving the community.

At the beginning of any venture, we always have to perform some preparatory activities. Otherwise, we could be accused of going off "half cocked," something that we instinctively don't consider helpful. As we tried to argue when we introduced the decision-making tool called "Problem Definition," it is always important at the outset of any venture to clearly define what we are doing and why. Otherwise, we would never know whether anything we did was "on target" or not. The stage called "Making Choices" assumes that the group trying to build consensus has worked with the community to generate options or alternative solutions. If leaders of a project leap to the first solution proposed, they would be guilty of "trading one's inheritance for a mess of

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

porridge,” as the Bible phrases it. After a group has finally decided on a solution, it needs to create a plan of action and implement the solution.

Getting Started

Just as we stressed in the Strategic Planning Module, it is extremely important at the outset of a project to take time to formally identify the audience that will be affected. Many a manufacturing firm has found that it has developed a “super” product that no one wants. Typically, manufacturers will not go ahead with product development until they have first conducted market surveys to make sure that people want what they are planning to produce. The same is true for a project that will involve the community. If the majority of the community does not want what the project intends to produce or accomplish, it will not get behind the project and may actively oppose it as a waste of time and effort.

Politicians will always get out and “press the flesh.” This is their way of making contact with the audience so that they can determine what are their needs and concerns. Board members that have decided to conduct a project involving the community need to get out and make contacts with different components of the audience, to assess their interests, their resolve to help, and their understanding of the long-term effects of the proposed project. Only when they have picked up this kind of information should they move ahead with designing the project. And even then, they need to go back to the community to let them know what they heard from *all* of them. Most people are egocentric and see things only from their own point of view. They tend to judge the value of things based on how these things match *their* values. Those who have dealt with the many different segments of the audience (the community) need to provide feedback to the whole community about what they have heard from the different parts. Only then can the leaders start to create a project design that will serve the majority.

Defining the Task

The key word throughout this module is “negotiate.” Those who want to conduct a project involving the community have to be ready to find out from the community what *it* wants, not to try to force on the community what the *leaders* think it ought to want. The objective(s) of the project are best if they come from the community as a whole, rather than from the “father figures” who think they know best what the community ought to desire. If the different groups in the community have been kept abreast and involved in the planning of the project from the beginning, they will feel they understand the objective(s) of the project. Even if they do not agree with the objective(s), they have had their chance to influence the majority. If true consensus has been developed, the different parts of the community will be ready to cooperate.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

Of course, as stressed several times in this training, the leaders have to generate and consider many different proposed solutions. It is tempting to jump on the bandwagon of the first solution suggested. But our experience as a human race has been that the best solutions arise only after many other solutions have been suggested and considered. This is a hard saying, as the Scriptures say, because many individuals feel that we don't have time to propose and consider many different proposals. There is always the push to action, but that has not always served us well.

Making Choices

If the community has been surveyed for their needs and concerns, and if they have been asked for various possible solutions, it is necessary for the leaders to define ahead of time the criteria for deciding which proposal is "best." Quotations are put around the word "best" because it prompts the question "From whose point of view?" Ralph Tyler, of the University of Chicago, suggested that any group designing a project always ask four questions in the following order:

- Why? To determine the need(s) that the project , must satisfy.
- What? To determine the necessary components of the solution to satisfy the identified need(s).
- How? To determine the best way to design a project that combines the basic components identified in the previous step.
- How will you know? To identify the evaluative criteria to be used to determine whether the needs have been properly addressed, whether all the basic components were identified and addressed, whether the best implementation strategy had been chosen, and what information would indicate that the previous three questions had been successfully answered.

Implementing Decisions

The activities presented on page 141 of the Participant Manual give six steps in the implementation of any project. It is absolutely essential to get the leaders of the community behind the project. Lest the design of the project be rejected because of personality conflicts with the presenter, a committee from the Board should present the proposal to the decision-makers, whether that be the rest of the Board or the overall community. If, at the presentation of the project design suggestions are made for changes, someone on the Board should make sure that these changes are agreed to, either by the Board or by the community at large.

Once the project has begun, it is absolutely essential that the leaders monitor its progress. They need to be concerned with at least three things:

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

1. that the project is providing products or services that match the earlier identified evaluative criteria,
2. that the project is on time, and
3. that the project is under or at budget.

The Scripture holds up for ridicule the man who begins to build a building and has to stop when he discovers that he doesn't have the resources to finish the project.

When the project is completed, it is important to evaluate the project in all its stages. Otherwise, future projects may make the same mistakes as the present project did. If the implementation of a project ought to move, as project management authors tell us, through the steps of "Initiating," "Planning," "Implementing," "Monitoring," and "Evaluating," then leaders of a project need to evaluate the way they conducted the project and produce a "Lessons Learned" document from which future projects can learn.

Suggestions for Success

There is no way that anyone can give a community a "cookie cutter" for designing a self-development project. Each one will be different. But there are certain steps that we take for each project we conduct, and those have been suggested in this module. Along the way, project leaders need to keep in mind certain suggestions that others before them have found lead to success. That is what we have tried to distill and present in the videotape.

We are always tempted to do more than we are prepared for. That is why it is so important to keep it small and simple (KISS). We seem to have no trouble agreeing with the saying that "you have to learn to walk before you can run." Yet we seem to forget that when we throw ourselves into a project. The Board members who are considering a project involving the community need to develop a plan for how they will involve the many different parts of the community in the project --- and right from the start. Although they are not the only groups to be involved in the project, certainly the Board should involve the elected officials, professionals, service people, as well as ordinary citizens of the community. This is what "representative participation" is all about!

If Board members feel that they have had to *sell* the community on the project, it is extremely important that they do **not** promise more than they can deliver. Nothing will stop a project dead in its tracks quicker than people feeling that they were sold a "bill of goods." For this reason, Board members need to keep their presentations simple and to the point. If they are going to make a public presentation about the project, they should try out their presentation on their fellow Board members --- to make sure that they don't promise what they can not deliver.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

During any community meeting, most individuals will be involved in the “product” of the meeting. It is absolutely essential that someone learn to guide the “process” of the meeting; they need to become a facilitator. This facilitator can not become involved in the discussion, because then he/she will stop being concerned with the process and shift to being concerned about the product. This is one reason why it makes sense to bring in someone from the outside who is a trained facilitator.

Suggestions for Success

One of the responsibilities of a Board member presented in the Management & Governance Module dealt with recruiting and orienting new members of the Board. It is vital, while leading a community involvement project, to develop leadership skills in other members of the community who could one day become Board members. Since not everyone in the community can exercise responsibility at the Board-level right away, it is important to provide many different levels of community involvement. Some may be ready to serve on the Board, others may be ready only to stuff envelopes. All these tasks are important, and there needs to be activities at all these levels for those who are ready for them. We have already talked about the importance of creating many different committees that can carry out various valued tasks; it is vital to make members of the community feel involved and invested in the project.

People can quickly see through phony treatment. If they feel that they have been shunted aside and given “make work” tasks to perform, they will pull away from the project. The Board must be very careful to consider what committees should be formed and what work should be given to each. Since the community is made up of many different individuals with many different schedules and value systems, it is important to schedule meetings at a time that is best for the majority. We can never satisfy everyone, but we can strive to satisfy the majority.

Very often community projects forget the importance of public relations. That was why it was presented as a part of this training. The leaders of a project involving the community can not forget the role of the media. If used properly, the media can contribute to the success of the project. If ignored, they can create an aura of rumor and suspicion in the mind of the community. The media needs to be invited to project meetings right from the beginning, and they should be included in every following stage of the project. Properly dealt with, the media can be an important contributor to the success of the project. Shunned or reviled, the media can be a mighty force fighting against the project.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

Activity I – Planning a Community Involvement Project

FACILITATOR NOTES: The *purpose* of this activity is to give participants a chance to begin to plan a community involvement project. If the participants at your site represent multiple Boards, you will need to have each different group sit in a different part of the room (so they don't disturb one another). Make sure that each group has flipchart sheets on which to record their suggestions and voting results. Unless you have colleagues who can help you facilitate these groups, you will need to move from group to group facilitating their use of these tools.

1 – Select a feasible community involvement project

- a) Once you have the participants separated in their groups and ready to begin the activity, ask them to suggest different causes for which they might want to conduct a community involvement project. If they find it difficult to think of suitable causes, have them use brainstorming to come up with a list of possible projects from which they could pick one for this activity.
- b) If they come up with a list of possible projects, have them use multi-voting to select the one that the group as a whole wants.

2 – List ways for announcing the proposed project to the community

- a) Ask the group(s) to take about **ten minutes** to brainstorm possible announcement techniques that they use to let the community know the project for which they intend to enlist the community.
- b) Have them spend between **five and seven minutes** on the proliferation phase suggesting different ways of telling people about the project selected in the first activity.
- c) Ask them to spend three to five minutes refining their list down to the two or three techniques that would work best letting the community know about the forthcoming project.

3 – Compose the text of the announcement

- a) Have the group select some member to act as secretary and to take down the announcement ideas that they think would be important to

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

include in their announcement statement. Remind them to answer the wh-questions that they learned of in the Communications and Public Relations Module.

- b) After they have finished suggesting ideas, have them concentrate on “wordsmithing” a good statement.

4 – List reasons why the project’s objective would be important to the community

- a) Ask the group(s) to take about **ten minutes** to brainstorm reasons for doing the project that they think would appeal to the community.
- b) Have them spend between **five and seven minutes** on the proliferation phase suggesting different possible benefits that might appeal to the community.
- c) Ask them to spend three to five minutes refining their list down to those items that realistically could be shared with their community.

5 – Discuss ways of giving meaningful jobs to different project volunteers

Having taken some first steps in planning a community involvement project, have the participants discuss different ways of involving members of the community in jobs that are not make-work.

- a) As each participant suggests a way, ask him/her to explain how the community could be made to feel that they were making a real contribution. If anyone says that the community **would not** volunteer to take part in the project, play the Devil’s Advocate and ask him/her on what basis the statement is made.
- b) If anyone says that people in the community just do not take part in projects, ask whether they have ever been asked to take part in a meaningful way.
- c) On the other, if they conclude that the exercise project **would** be feasible, again play the Devil’s Advocate and ask how they might go about surveying the community to determine whether it would support such a project.
- d) Let them express their opinions, but then ask them to back up that opinion with examples that argue for it.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

FACILITATOR'S NOTE: Remember that the real benefit of this activity is merely to get the participants started in discussing such matters and to teach them some of the things they need to think about when planning a community involvement project. Emphasize that if they should decide to pursue the exercise project for real, they should follow the twelve "suggestions for success" presented in the videotape at the very end.

Activity II – Assessing Board Performance on Community Involvement Activities

FACILITATOR NOTES: Before you give the participants time to fill out this questionnaire, you might remind them of their need to assess Board performance on community involvement. Also, suggest that a clean copy of this questionnaire be kept by the Board and used at least yearly to check on the Board's functioning.

The *purpose* of this questionnaire is to present the participant with ten statements about Board functioning on community involvement and to help them determine whether or not they practice these behaviors as Board members. The *assumption* underlying this questionnaire is twofold:

- a) if Board members are practicing all these behaviors, that Board is functioning well;
- b) if, on the other hand, Board members do not practice some of these behaviors, they know what to work on to improve their functioning.

Share both the purpose and the assumption with the participants *after* they have worked through the questionnaire.

1 - Fill out the Community Involvement Questionnaire

You should walk the participants through the instructions that preface this questionnaire. Read the instructions with them, making sure that everyone understands what they are expected to do.

This questionnaire presents in a table ten (10) statements about community involvement activities. To the right of each statement are five numbers in five columns. Circling "1" means that the reader "Strongly Disagrees" that the Board does the activity described in the statement. Circling "2" means that the reader feels that he/she "Disagrees" that the Board does the activity described in the statement. Circling "3" means that the reader feels basically "Undecided," because he/she feels that the Board does the activity about as often as not. Circling "4" means that the

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

reader feels that he/she “Agrees” that the Board does the activity described in the statement most of the time. Circling “5” means that the reader maintains he/she “Strongly Agrees” that the Board always does the activity described in the statement.

Now give the participants time to read each of the ten statements and record their reactions to each. You will find that some take longer than others, but try to give them at least **five to seven minutes** to complete the questionnaire. If one or two seem to be having a hard time, suggest that you read the statement with them, so that they can take their time deciding how to react to the statement.

2 & 3 – Compile Group Scores

After you have given the participants time to complete the questionnaire, you will need to gather the numbers that they circled for the ten statements so that you can compile group scores for the Board(s) that they represent.

- a) If you have multiple Boards represented by the participants at your site, you will need for each different Board a copy of the blank scoring form found at the end of this section of the Facilitator's Guide. You will probably need to write the name of the Board at the top of the form.
- b) Give the scoring form for each represented Board to one of the members from that Board and ask him/her to find the first blank column under the heading “Participants.” Now have that individual enter his/her scores (i.e., the numbers he/she circled for each statement) in that column for the next ten lines down.
- c) When the first individual has entered his/her ten numbers in his/her column, ask him/her to pass the form to the nearest participant from his/her Board. That individual will enter his/her ten scores, and then pass the form on to another member of his/her Board in the room.
- d) When all the participants from the represented Boards have entered their numbers for the ten statements, take the form and compute an average score for each statement. Add the numbers on each line and divide by the number of participants who have entered their numbers on that form. The result is the average score for that statement.
- e) When you have computed the averages for each statement, post the results on a flipchart sheet and ask the members of each Board to gather around their Board's average scores.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

4 – List Average Scores for Each Statement

When you have calculated the average scores for all ten statements, post them on a flipchart sheet by listing the numbers “1” through “10” with the average obtained for each statement by its number.

- a) Explain to the members of each different Board that any scores *below* “3” indicate an area in which the Board needs improvement if it wants to function successfully. The ten statements of Board functioning represent behaviors that successful Boards perform.
- b) Point out that any statement with a score lower than “3” indicates that a majority of the Board members **disagreed** that they perform that activity most of the time. The lower the score below “3” the stronger the conviction of the Board that they “hardly ever” perform the activity described in that statement.
- c) On the other hand, any statement with a score *greater* than “3” indicates that the majority of the Board members **agreed** that they perform that activity “most of the time.” The higher the score is above “3” the stronger the indication that Board members believe that they perform the activity described in the statement “almost always.”

5 – Discuss Problem Areas and Propose Actions for Improvement

- a) Suggest that the members from each different Board represented at your site now discuss the “problem areas” uncovered by their answers to the Board Assessment Questionnaire.
- b) Ask the members of each Board to determine, for each “problem area,” the exact nature of the problem: what activity does the majority perform instead of the activity described in this “problem area?” Can anyone suggest why the majority doesn’t perform this activity? Try to determine how critical the problem is. Does it require immediate action?
- c) Now, have them think of two or three things that they could do in the *near-term* to change their behavior. For each alternative they suggest, have the members project the probability that the suggestion would have real success.
- d) Have them propose two or three things that they could do in the *long-term* to change their behavior. Try to move them toward a practical plan for changing their behavior.

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

Attachments:

Community Involvement Questionnaire
Community Involvement Scoring Form

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

In the table below, you will find a number of statements concerning your Board and community involvement activities. Register your reaction to each statement by circling one of the numbers to the right of the statement. The meaning and abbreviation of each number are as follows:

1 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

2 = Disagree (D)

3 = Undecided (U)

4 = Agree (A)

5 = Strongly Agree (SA)

STATEMENT	SD	D	U	A	SA
1. Our Board has developed and is implementing a coordinated community information plan.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Each member of our Board gathers information from the community about its needs and concerns in a way that makes individuals feel understood and acknowledged.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Our Board works to find ways that decision-making power and responsibility can be given to various groups in the community.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Members of our Board from time to time will suggest different volunteer citizen participation projects that will build experience in our community.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Board members regularly meet with different groups in our community to explain our goals and objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
6. When our Board plans a community involvement project, it gives the project adequate time to be designed and implemented.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Every community involvement project for which our Board is responsible involves participation from all citizen groups in the community.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Our Board works hard to ensure that every community project requiring volunteers has many different opportunities so that all individuals in the community could find something they could do.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Whenever we conduct a community involvement project, our Board creates several different advisory committees that interested community citizens can join.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Our Board involves the media as much as possible in each community involvement project it conducts.	1	2	3	4	5

FACILITATOR’S GUIDE FOR THE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT MODULE

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
SCORING FORM**

STATEMENT	PARTICIPANT																AVERAGE
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
1. Our Board has developed and is implementing a coordinated community information plan.																	
2. Each member of our Board gathers information from the community about its needs and concerns in a way that makes individuals feel understood and acknowledged.																	
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