Planning for Change
A Coalition Building Technical Assistance System

Coalition Building Basics

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Coalitions

What Is a Coalition?

A coalition is an alliance representing different sectors and/or perspectives to a common issue. Coalitions are formed around a common interest or problem for the purpose of uniting resources to be used toward a common goal.

Coalitions are often formed when:
- One organization recognizes that it alone does not have the technical capability or people power to have a real impact on an issue.
- An issue is complex and involves wide audiences of service providers, customers, and clients. As such, when attempting to resolve an issue or reach a goal, it is often necessary to include nontraditional vested-interest groups.

Generally speaking, coalitions (1) set priorities for action, (2) identify specific data and informational needs from other groups and agencies, (3) carry out the plan, (4) report the results of coalition activities, and (5) improve the capacity for providing information to the community, interest groups, and policymakers. Successful coalitions typically enhance image, save time, result in better services, and promote the innovation of new programs.

There are two types of coalitions:
- An issue-oriented coalition is usually a short-term effort that focuses on one particular issue.
- A multi-issues coalition addresses related issues and is usually a more permanent type of coalition that recognizes the value of mobilizing together for action over a longer period of time.

A Coalition Is a Team

The man who gets the most satisfactory results is not always the man with the most brilliant single mind, but rather the man who can best coordinate the brains and talents of his associates. W. Alton Jones

Just like coalitions, teams are groups of people who work together for a common purpose—and they only succeed if group members work together and make a difference.
Both coalitions and teams:
- Have clear, shared goals—all group members understand the group's purpose.
- Include people with different strengths, talents, experiences, approaches, and styles—a successful coalition or team has all the skills and knowledge needed to achieve its purpose.
- Are critical to achieving goals—unless one person or organization has all the specialist skills and knowledge needed to attain that goal.
- Reduce complexity—every group member has a task and every group member knows who does what, where, when, and how.
- Increase creativity—one idea tends to stimulate other ideas.
- Require work.

Group members should routinely ask themselves:
1. Where should we be and where are we now?
2. What are the gaps?
   - How do we close them?
3. What happened and why?
   - What do we want to do about it?
4. Do we need information or data?
5. What are the causes of the problem and does it recur?
6. What are the client needs?
7. What is the timeline?

Collaboration

What Constitutes Collaboration?

Collaborative partnerships are alliances that are often formed to solve or improve community problems. Collaborations encourage people to unite to make a difference. Because collaborations bring people, agencies, and organizations together from all parts of the community, their efforts often have the weight to be successful.

Collaborations are a powerful way to improve communities.
What makes an issue a problem for one organization usually affects other things and, as a result, other organizations, as well. Through collaboration, problems can be defined as being connected to other issues, people, organizations and services. Collaborations can result in mutually beneficial results.

It's important that a collaboration be as inclusive as possible, including individuals from different agencies and organizations; different sectors of the community, such as representatives from schools, business, and the government; and different levels of representation, from the community, the county, the region, the state, and/or nation.

Some collaborations include members that offer support and technical assistance for community partnerships.

- These individuals or organizations can help collaborations build on the core competencies that are necessary for working on community issues. Core competencies may include community assessment, strategic planning, advocacy, leadership development, staff training, and evaluation.
- Funders and governmental agencies are also important members of collaborations because they can help create the conditions for community partnerships to be successful.

Typically, there are four criteria for a successful collaboration.

- Relationships are the foundation of a collaboration and must be built on trust and respect.
- Partners must share the same values in terms of solving problems.
- Partners must share the same vision for the future—this generates and maintains the energy to work through the rough spots.
- A collaboration must be fluid and flexible, and responsive to change.

Interagency Collaborations

There are four basic parts to an interagency collaborative partnership:

- Community assessment and planning.
- Community action and intervention.
- Community and systems change.
- Improving more distant outcomes (the long-term goals).

Interagency collaboration is fundamental to community-based planning. The process of collaboration begins within each agency or organization, and then extends out to the larger group and the community.

Within each organization:
There are several questions that must be asked prior to forming collaborative partnerships or initiating steps toward change. The answers to these questions will identify the level of awareness of the need for collaboration and change, and also indicate the degree of willingness to collaborate and change.

- How is our organization doing on its own?
- Are we serving all current adult learning needs?
- Are we reaching all adults in need of services?
- Are we achieving our desired outcomes?
- How is communication among staff?
- Do staff receive the professional development opportunities they need?

- Are staff aware of other adult literacy stakeholders in the community and how their services relate to ours?
- Are staff connected with other agencies?
- Do staff refer clients to or receive referrals from other agencies?
- Are transitions between programs smooth?
- How effective will our organization be if we continue to operate as we are now?
- Are we prepared to meet the emerging needs of clients?
- Do we have limited resources?
- Do we need to expand our services?
- Do we need to develop new services?
- Do we need to focus services?

Coming together is a beginning: keeping together is progress; working together is success. Henry Ford

Rate Barriers to Collaboration

Rate each of the following barriers in terms of your own organization and, then again, in terms of the degree of collaboration you feel exists among agencies within your community. The high ratings will indicate areas that need to be addressed as you begin the collaboration process. (1 is low, 5 is high)

1. Turf issues or concerns and mistrust.

1	2	3	4	5
Low level				High level

2. History of cooperation or collaboration.

1	2	3	4	5
Positive history				No history/negative history

3. Resources.

1	2	3	4	5
Adequate resources for everyone				No or limited resources

4. Communication.

1	2	3	4	5
Regular, positive communication				Poor or no communication

5. Awareness or understanding.

1	2	3	4	5
Accurate, comprehensive				No, inaccurate

6. Common vision.

1	2	3	4	5
Yes				No

7. Group goals.

1	2	3	4	5
Yes				No

8. Reluctant group members.

1	2	3	4	5
No				Yes

Coalition Building

How to Organize a Coalition

Start with a core group that shares common concerns and is interested in forming a coalition to address those issues.

The core group should first:

- Define the issues and the purpose of the coalition.
- Identify all stakeholders.
- Invite stakeholders to a first meeting.
- Write a tentative statement of purpose to interest stakeholders in joining the coalition.

While the coalition is forming, certain tasks are fundamental to its growth.

- Involvement and commitment of all stakeholders.
- Establishment of leadership.
- Group agreement on a common vision and mission statement.
- Assessment of needs and identification of resources.
- Development of short and long-term goals and objectives.
- Development of an action plan and specific strategies.
- Implementation of the action plan.
- Ongoing evaluation of group work and attainment of goals.
- Continual review of progress and exploration of new opportunities.

The First Coalition Meeting

- Hold the meeting in a neutral location on a date and at a time that will be convenient to as many stakeholders as possible.
- Identify a first meeting facilitator in the initial call or letter, but make it clear that it is anticipated that a group leader will be elected at the first meeting.
- Ask each individual to come prepared by bringing their address card file, appropriate newsletters, organization membership books that include their mission statements and plans for action, and telephone books for agency phone numbers.

At the meeting, collect information from each group in attendance, to include:

- Name and type of organization
- Director's name, address, phone, fax, and e-mail.
- Purpose or objectives of the organization.
- Communities served by organization.
- Description of services provided, clients served, and numbers of clients participating in services.
- How the organization acquires its funds. (Member dues, donations, government or agency funding, grants, other).
- Examples of the types of projects the organization has sponsored.
- What the organization hopes to achieve through belonging to the coalition.
- What the organization can contribute to the coalition.

<u>Work through a team building exercise to get people acquainted.</u>

1. Pair those attending with someone they don't know.
2. Ask them to introduce themselves briefly by telling the other person at least one (and no more than three) groups they belong to, and a skill or talent they possess.
3. Ask each pair to introduce their partner using the other person's name, where that person is from, the groups the person belongs to, and a skill or talent the person possesses.
4. After everyone has been introduced, comment on the number of groups mentioned, the various skills named, and how this is a beginning of an effective coalition.

Discuss and develop a group structure for future meetings.

- Identify who will continue as group leader.
- Discuss the agenda for the next meeting.
- Decide if committees are needed to collect information or to be responsible for particular tasks.
- Discuss and decide upon dates, times, and locations for future meetings.

Begin to develop a group vision and mission statement for the coalition.
Discuss the vision for the future and outline the mission of the coalition. Group member s can be asked to volunteer to work on a draft of the mission statement and share it with the group at the next meeting for feedback/approval.

We always hold to the hope, the belief, the conviction that there is a better life, a better world, beyond the horizon.
Franklin D. Roosevelt

Developing a Group Vision

The vision is the starting point for collaboration.
Before a group vision can be created, all group members must share an awareness and understanding of relevant issues and must speak a common language.

- Group members must become aware of the different types of services other members provide.
- Group members must develop an understanding of the different perspectives other members bring to the group.
- Group members must understand the terms, definitions, and acronyms used by other organizations.

The group's vision should be a detailed description of the desired future.
To develop the group's vision, begin at the end—where you want to be in the future.

- Describe how the group's work can produce the desired changes to promote and support the mission.
- The process should encourage creative thinking in new directions.
- The vision should provide direction for collaboration, offer opportunities for member participation, and promote member commitment.
- The vision should consider past traditions and the community's history.
- The vision statement should begin with the present and focus on the future taking into consideration emerging needs and issues.

<u>There are two types of vision statements:</u>

1. A broad-change vision
- Mobilizes group interest.
- Keeps collaborative efforts from becoming too narrow.
- Avoids mini-projects of marginal gain.
- Takes longer to accomplish results.
- Is often more difficult to create change.

2. A short-term vision
- Focuses on day-to-day activities.
- Provides opportunities for short-term, concrete accomplishments.
- May not be inclusive enough to attract support from the larger community.

The farther back you look, the farther forward you are likely to see. Winston Churchill

Developing a Group Mission

The group mission is the starting point for action.
The group mission defines the unique purpose of the group in terms of creating change.

- It should define what the group will accomplish, where and for whom.
- The mission statement must be operational and must focus on what the organization really tries to do.
- It must be kept up-to-date, abandoning old things to take on new priorities.

The mission statement must:
- Be simple and clear, and build on strengths, resources, opportunities, and needs.
- Have the commitment of the group.

Like the vision, before a group mission can be defined:
- All group members must share an awareness and understanding of relevant issues.
- All must speak a common language and must understand the terms, definitions, and acronyms used by different stakeholders.
- All must be aware of the different perspectives stakeholders bring to the group and the different types of services they provide.

Second Meeting
Identify other individuals and groups to be invited to the next meeting.
1. Discuss other organizations that would or would not support your issue.
2. Knowing supporters and potential non-supporters helps the coalition develop an action plan.
3. Decide who will invite other organizations to join the coalition at the next meeting.
- When inviting groups to join the coalition, define the issue in a way that appeals to their self-interest.

<u>Conduct a brainstorming activity to add to the list of potential group members.</u>
- Maintain brainstorming rules that instruct that all ideas should be listed and no criticism should be made of any of these ideas.
- Use a newsprint pad, marker, and ask for a recorder.
- Begin brainstorming and record answers.
- Ask the group to think about who is already involved and who else should be asked to join. This may include agencies, organizations, or individuals that:
    - ❖ Might gain or lose as a result of current issues.
    - ❖ Control resources that could help resolve the issue.
    - ❖ Have the power or influence to affect the issue.

Defining Group Leadership

Anyone can hold the helm when the sea is calm. Publilius Syrus

Leadership is the art of influencing and directing people in such a way as to obtain their confidence, respect, trust, and willing cooperation.
- Anyone can be a boss, but only those who have people working with them, rather than for or under them, are true leaders.
- The most important task of leadership is to anticipate problems and prepare the group for battle.
- Leaders are responsible for the accomplishment of organizational goals and objectives.

Decide upon the leadership structure of the group.
1. Choose a name for the group that describes the coalition and can be useful in publicizing activities.
2. A shared leadership is most effective.
- A lead agency should be designated, while a shared leadership is maintained.
- The lead agency may be the primary contact, may be the fiscal agent, and/or may be responsible for the coordination of the group.
3. An Executive Committee is an effective leadership structure.
- Procedures must be defined for electing officers.
- Roles and responsibilities of officers must also be defined.
4. A committee structure helps groups move forward toward attainment of group goals.

Decide:
- What committees are needed and who will serve on committees.
- Who will chair committees.
- Are committee chair people part of the Executive Committee?
- How and when do committees meet and report back to the group?

A Laundry List of Leadership Responsibilities

- To establish the format for conducting meetings.
- To develop meeting agendas, protocol, and conflict resolution procedures.
- To define roles and responsibilities.
- To initiate new ideas.
- To keep the group goal-oriented.
- To foster team-building.
- To maintain group process.
- To prevent individual members from dominating group discussions.
- To halt side conversations.
- To mediate differences.
- To facilitate brainstorming and problem solving.
- To keep the group focused and on task in a timely manner.
- To encourage input from all members.
- To delegate responsibilities.
- To capitalize on member strengths.
- To encourage members to think in new ways.
- To clarify and tie together comments from group members.
- To explain relationships between facts, ideas, and suggestions.
- To facilitate group decision making.
- To ensure that controversial issues are thoroughly discussed.
- To stop any efforts to push through issues or decisions.
- To facilitate negotiation or reaching consensus.

Recruiting and Sustaining Active Participation

Define the Roles and Responsibilities of Group Members

Consider:

- The amount of time group members can realistically commit to the group.
- The relevant skills, expertise, and experiences that members bring to the group.
- The resources that are readily available to group members.
- The relevant interests of group members.
- Who will be responsible for the meeting agenda and recording meeting discussions and decisions.

Commitment

- Each individual or organization must be committed to the problem.
- Each individual or organization must be committed to coordinating resources and efforts to solve the problem.
- Each individual or organization must be committed to the belief that every other organization has the right to be involved.
- Each individual or organization must be committed to open communication.
- Each individual or organization must be committed to coalition recognition, not individual recognition.

Involving All Stakeholders

Stakeholders must include key decision-makers at all levels—agency, community, regional, and state.

- Each stakeholder must be represented in the coalition by someone who has the authority to make decisions for the agency.
- Bringing key decision-makers into the coalition at the beginning gets them interested in the issue and helps keep the issue alive.
- Regular contact with decision-makers helps identify opposition and support.
- Involving key decision-makers gives creditability to the coalition.

To encourage active participation:

- Create an atmosphere that encourages participation—an environment that is relaxed, friendly, and unhurried.
- Act as if you expect everyone to participate.
- Look for opportunities to include as many people as possible in discussions.
- Allow all members to express their thought.
- Encourage passive or quiet members to speak.
- Don't allow a few to dominate the discussion.
- Ask the right questions to the right people.
- Be sure that there is respect for differences of opinions and value differences as a means to develop creative solutions.
- Don't allow an individual to be harassed or embarrassed.
- Be sure credit is given where it is deserved.
- Respond to verbal and nonverbal signals.
- Use the group's talents and expertise.
- Allow conflict, but maintain focus on issues and not personalities.
- Encourage problem solving.

From a Group Member's Point of View

The self-interests of your own organization should be analyzed before becoming involved in a coalition.

Ask yourself these questions:

- What can be gained from joining with others?
- Will the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?
- How can we best communicate the demands of other groups to our members?
- If we join a coalition, what are we promising?

To be a contributing and positive member of the group:

- Listen and try to understand others' points of view.
- Avoid editorializing.
- Offer the same courtesies that you expect.
- Speak clearly, loud enough to be heard without shouting, and at an even and appropriate pace.
- Use language that is understood by everyone—avoid jargon and acronyms.
- Do not use offensive language.
- Use the power of persuasion—Aristotle said, "The fool tells me his reasons, the wise man persuades me with my own."
- Don't interrupt unless necessary to stop a dominating speaker.
- Focus on issues, not personalities.
- Don't get personal.

Solutions to Problems Common among Coalitions

1. Floundering meetings or plans, characterized by trouble starting or following through, and digression and tangents.
   - Use an agenda and keep to it— agree to remind each other, in a friendly way, to stick to the point.
   - Bring discussions to a conclusion.
   - Assign tasks with timelines.
2. Arrogant group members who disallow any discussion in their areas of expertise or authority, reject ideas other then their own, and exclude other team members by using technical jargon, regulations, or concepts.
   - Agree that no area belongs to any one person or group.
   - Use those with expertise to present initial information to the team, but remind them that all team members have a voice.
3. Dominating team members who monopolize discussions, refuse to listen to others, and quickly dismiss or fail to pay attention to topics or discussions that are of little or no interest to them.
   - Maintain a balance of participation.
   - Structure discussion and, if necessary, keep time limits for speakers.
4. Reluctant participants who remain passive and rarely speak.
   - Ask quiet team members appropriate questions.
   - Break the team into small groups to encourage more participation.
5. Turf issues.
   - Use conflict resolution strategies when necessary.
   - Hold meetings in a neutral location.
   - Manage time for all to speak and keep discussion focused on topics, not personalities.
   - Control seating arrangements to avoid "sides".
6. When opinions are treated as fact, motives are assumed, and particular team members' ideas are discredited.
   - Agree to make only those statements that can be supported with evidence.

Group Member Self-Assessment

Rate each item on a scale from 1 to 5 (5 is the highest). High scores need attention.

1. Members understand the purpose of the group.

All				No or few
1	2	3	4	5

2. Leadership.

Shared and encourages participation				Autocratic
1	2	3	4	5

3. Group members possess the skills and knowledge needed to achieve the group's purpose.

Yes				No
1	2	3	4	5

4. Trust and respect characterize the group.

Yes				No
1	2	3	4	5

5. Group meetings help the group work as a team.

Yes				No
1	2	3	4	5

6. The group regularly assesses how it is doing as a team.

Yes				No
1	2	3	4	

Coalition Meetings

A meeting should not be a social event, nor should it be a battleground.

Scheduling Meetings

- Allow enough time for preparation or action.
- Schedule on a date that is convenient for as many members as possible.
- Avoid scheduling at the beginning or end of the week.
- Morning meetings are more productive than those later in the day.
- Make the location convenient, politically neutral, and comfortable.
- Check availability of parking.
- Meetings should last only long enough to accomplish the purpose.
- Schedule breaks if the meeting lasts over an hour.

Meetings or meeting items typically have four phases:

1. Present the information.
- Be prepared to present the purpose, facts or ideas necessary to achieve the purpose.
2. Evaluate the information.
- Consider merits, consequences, and pros and cons.
3. Come to a decision.
- Resolve the problem.
4. Take action.
- Implement the decision.
- Make assignments with follow-up.

A Quick Look at Conducting a Meeting

1. Introduce participants, include why they are there, what they do and have to contribute, etc.
2. Seating at a meeting can be important.
- Seat members so that alliances are not reinforced.
- If you want group members to sit and listen, use classroom seating.
- If you want open discussion, use a round table.
- A rectangular table suggests sides and encourages dominant personalities sitting at the ends.
- If problem solving is on the agenda, do not seat opposing factions across from each other.
3. Be sure to have all of the facts before discussing an issue or problem.
4. Keep the meeting moving and on schedule.
- Use an agenda to guide and direct the meeting.
- Set ground rules for discussion, disagreement, etc.
5. Set goals for the meeting.
- Stay task-oriented.
- Keep conversation relevant. Let everyone be heard.
6. Summarize as you go along.
7. Insist on conclusions and action.
8. Help others express themselves when necessary.
9. Keep discussion balanced. Allow disagreement, but not fights.
10. End the meeting on a positive note and schedule the next meeting at that time.
11. Keep a record of the meeting.
12. Assign someone to take minutes that include date, time, members present, all agenda items, conclusions, assigned tasks, and date, time, and place of next meeting.

Planning an Agenda

An agenda should provide information about the purpose of the meeting, as well as the subject(s) of discussion. Send one out prior to the meeting and provide one for each member at the meeting.

- It must give specifics as to date, place and time and duration of meeting.
- It must be clear, specific, brief but comprehensive.
- Include discussion times for each topic.

- Tell what is expected of members. The more that is expected of members in terms of information or reports they are expected to share with the group, the more time you must give them to prepare.
- Keep to the agenda. Using an agenda to direct and guide every meeting will save the group time and serve as a checklist to make sure everything is covered.

Basic items to be included in an agenda:
- Welcome.
- Introductions.
- Presentations of new information.
- Status report on action items and assignments from last meeting (can be committee reports).
- Issues to be discussed or decided.
- Work that needs to be done during the meeting.
- Review of progress relative to the work plan and timelines.
- Assignments (break out into committee meetings).
- Reminders of upcoming events.
- Review of action items from this meeting.
- Draft agenda for next meeting.

Group meetings must be productive and action-oriented to encourage member participation and promote member commitment.

1. Keep meetings active.
- Creativity, productivity, and efficiency should characterize meetings.
2. Keep meetings focused.
- Meetings will not go anywhere until the group has focused on one problem for a period of time and has put all of its energy into investigating and resolving it.
3. The group must be perceived as an entity in its own right.
- The group must be perceived as having prestige.
- The group mission must be perceived as a positive force for the future.
- Group goals must be perceived as realistic.
- Group members must feel the issues being addressed are of importance and relevance.
4. Respect and value the participation of members.
- Each member must be perceived as important to the group.
- Members must have a clear understanding of their group role and responsibilities.
- All members should receive credit for group accomplishments.
- All members should have worthwhile tasks and feel appreciated by the group.
5. Team building is the key to success.
- Teams are more creative, can solve more complex problems, make better decisions, and do more to build individual skills and commitment than individuals working alone.
6. Group members must establish or strengthen relationships with other members.
- Member partnerships are fundamental to commitment and group success.
- Effective collaborations are characterized by win-win relationships among members.
- Group members must feel a sense of connectedness to other members and the group.
7. Turf issues and concerns must be resolved.
- Members must not feel competitive with other members.
- Members must not feel that their domains are being threatened.
- The higher the sense of commitment to the shared vision, the higher the probability that turf issues will not arise.
8. Collaboration must be perceived as a win-win situation.
- All members must feel they will gain by working together.
- The costs of collaboration must be perceived as less than the rewards or benefits.

Dealing with Change

Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there.
Arthur Godfrey

Adult education coalitions are organizations, made up of representatives from other agencies and organizations. Within coalitions and within their member agencies and organizations, attitudes about change vary and influence the way an organization remains competitive and how well it serves its customers. Attitudes about change are often influenced by:

- An understanding of the purpose of change.
- Information about the future in terms of change.
- An acceptance of the need to change.
- An awareness of the benefits of change.
- A willingness to participate in change.
- A concern about the degree of responsibility taken in initiating or implementing change.
- Optimism or pessimism about change.
- A victim mentality, basically defined by the perception that change is mandated regardless of local thought or consequences.

Because coalitions are often formed to initiate, promote, or support change, successful coalition building requires an understanding of how organizations and individuals react to change.

<u>When forced to change, people within organizations tend to react negatively because of feelings that result from:</u>

- Little or no knowledge of the anticipated change.
- Little or no understanding of how change will affect their jobs, their clients, or the way they do things.
- Little or no understanding of what the future will be like.

As a result, they may:

- Avoid or ignore change.
- Sit by and watch change happen to and around them.
- Actively fight change.

<u>When prepared for change with adequate information and understanding of the reasons for and benefits of change, people are much more likely to:</u>

- Develop positive attitudes about change, focusing on the benefits.
- Prepare themselves and their organizations for change.
- Help initiate change and make things happen.

Group Member Change Worksheet

At both the agency and coalition levels, ask individuals to answer the following. The responses to these questions can be used to guide the development of strategies needed to successfully implement change.

1. What changes are happening around you?
2. What are the potential impacts of change in different areas of your organization and your job?
3. How do you feel about these changes?
4. Think back:
- When have you avoided change and what were the consequences?
- When have you resisted change, what were the consequences, and how could you have handled the situation differently?
5. Think forward:
- What changes do you anticipate?
- What potential changes do you need to react to?
- How can you begin to plan for those changes?
- How can you handle these changes successfully?
- What changes do you think you should initiate? Why and what are the consequences?

Preparing for Change

It is impossible to win the great prizes of life without running risks.
Theodore Roosevelt

The responses from the worksheet, can assist with determining where to begin in preparing organizations and individuals for change. The goal is to create positive attitudes about change and a willingness to change.

1. Adjusting negative attitudes about change may take some work and time.
- Realize that letting go of the old is difficult, because it is hard to let go of the familiar.
- Be careful, if change is forced too quickly, there may be resistance.
2. Successful transitions between old and new require clear and concise communication about the change.
- How external forces have changed things and what has resulted.
- What the present situation is and what will happen if change is not made.
- The vision for the future.
    - What is being lost and what is being gained.
    - What will happen as a result of change.
    - What the change will mean to the agency, agency staff and clients, and the community.

Implementing Change

It is important to recognize that past success can ruin an organization if it retires on the job. If the market grows or changes, the organization must change with it or it will no longer be competitive.

- Continual improvement prevents an organization from resting on its laurels.
- Change must be perceived as a potential opportunity, rather than as a threat.
- When and where possible, focus efforts for change on past successes and then build on, improve, or change them.
- The responsibility for change usually begins at the top of the organization; however, new things need staff commitment, time, and attention to grow and succeed.
- Because all new or innovative changes have risks and run into problems, those responsible for implementing change must be committed to the idea, comfortable with taking risks, and secure within the organization.
- Look both inside and outside of the organization for opportunities. Looking inside reveals the direction for change and looking outside identifies opportunities for change.
- Marketing is a crucial component of change. Successful non-profits often develop a specialty and, in so doing, don't try to do everything for everybody.

How change is reacted to and accepted will vary among staff and agencies. Change creates stress, but can also create group energy that can become creative or innovative.

Those leading change must remember that:

- People have different ways of reacting to and beginning change, and process change in different ways at different rates.
- Communication is the key—listening is just as important as talking.
- Change will affect different people and agencies in different ways.
- The vision for the future must be shared among all group members.

In order to help group members with change:

- Maintain regular and positive communication at all levels of the organization.
- Keep all members active in the process of change.
- Create a plan to implement change.
- Establish a support system for change.
- Develop a transition team to help guide and support the implementation of change.
- Develop a safety net for those who may need it.

- Create high levels of group synergy to connect staff and agencies—in other words, create a team.

Considerations in promoting and implementing desired change:

- Are there models and strategies that others have used successfully to create the same or similar desired changes and obtain the same or similar desired outcomes?
- Can change be implemented most effectively in small steady steps—in other words, improvement by evolution?
- Is there a need to break unwritten rules and policies or change written rules and policies?
- Do current practices need to be dismantled and rebuilt, reinvented, or redefined?

Assessing and Reinforcing Change

Strategies make accomplishments.
According to St. Augustine, one prays for miracles, one works for results.

Have a plan with well thought-out strategies.

- Develop a step-by-step plan based on measurable objectives.
- Assess attainment of objectives on a regular basis.
- Document and report positive outcomes of change as they occur.
- Develop strategies to deal with negative outcomes of change.

Common mistakes in implementing change include:

1. Going from the concept or idea stage to a full-blown operation.
   - Time is needed to pilot, evaluate, and make changes or improvements.
2. Repairing the old to save time and money can be costly compared to developing the new.
   - Decisions must be made as to the best course of action—improving upon what exists or redirecting and starting over.
   - Using the same strategy because it has been successful in the past can be a mistake.
3. Not assessing why a strategy doesn't seem to be working.
   - When a strategy doesn't seem to be working, it may be a sign that a new strategy is needed or it may need a little more time.
   - Try a second time and if it doesn't work, move on to something else.

Self-Assessment of Challenges Resulting from Change

To monitor and assess the implementation of change, ask staff to respond to the following questions.

- Do I see the challenge in my situation?
- Am I aware of the forces that might be working counter to my efforts (threats)?
- Do I understand the nature of the challenge?
- How do I see it? Can I see it differently?
- Who can best help me understand and deal with this challenge? How might we help each other?
- What would constitute effective action in dealing with this challenge?
- What capabilities do I need?
- How will I know if I am making progress?

Strategic Planning

The following are strategies that can be used to (1) develop, maintain, and sustain coalitions and (2) assist coalitions in developing and accomplishing their action plans.

- Assessing capacity.
- Defining desired outcomes.
- Setting and attaining goals.
- Developing and implementing an action plan.
- Monitoring goal attainment and evaluating success.

Strategies to Assess Capacity

A Strategic Analysis Process to Guide Effective Action
The first and second steps of this process are an environmental scan and a SWOT analysis. Their purposes are to collect data and analyze factors that have the potential to have either a positive or negative impact on achieving the desired results.

First Step: Conduct an environmental scan.
An environmental scan collects data to answer questions about both the present and the future. The data collected include both internal and external information, and can identify strengths, weaknesses, trends, and conditions.
An environmental scan is:

- A key and ongoing process,
- Used to analyze and monitor,
- Both internal and external changing conditions that have a potential impact or influence on relevant issues.

There are many approaches to environmental scanning, including:

- Surveys
- Questionnaires and interviews
- Focus groups and open forums

Second Step: Conduct a SWOT analysis.
A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis is a tool for decision making.
It requires an internal survey of strengths and weaknesses, and an external survey of opportunities and threats. The purpose is to isolate key factors and to facilitate the development of a strategic approach to action. Although the exact origin of the SWOT strategy is difficult to determine, it is widely used in industry for strategic planning, and is included in many management books as an effective tool. There are also many SWOT articles and resources on the Internet.

<u>The SWOT Process</u>

1. Identify a desired activity or outcome, proposed solution, or strategy etc.
2. Collect key factors.
3. Identify strengths and weaknesses in terms of the internal factors that might have an impact on carrying out the proposed activity.

- Strengths are positive internal aspects and answer: What are your advantages? What do you do well?
- Weaknesses are negative internal aspects and answer: What is done badly? What should be avoided? What could be improved?

4. Identify opportunities and threats in terms of the external factors that might have an impact on carrying out the proposed activity.

- Opportunities are positive external aspects and answer: What are priorities or trends? Where are good chances? What changes offer possibilities? What support is available?
- Threats are negative external aspects and answer: What are the obstacles or barriers? What is the competition?

5. Analyze the results to determine the aspects or factors that need to be strengthened, improved, reduced, or changed in order to carry out the activity successfully.
6. Apply this information to the development of strategies.

The SWOT Matrix

Internal Strengths (positive)	External Opportunities (positive)
Internal Weaknesses (negative)	External Threats (negative)

Internal Strengths (positive)
A resource or capacity the organization can use effectively.
- Coalition characteristics that allow the coalition to take advantage of opportunities or reduce the impact of barriers.

External Opportunities (positive)
A favorable situation in the environment.
- Factors outside the coalition that allow it to take action or support taking action.

Internal Weaknesses (negative)
A limitation, fault, or defect within the organization.
- Coalition characteristics that could stand in the way of the coalition taking advantage of opportunities or reducing the impact of barriers.

External Threats (negative)
An unfavorable situation in the environment that is potentially damaging.
- Factors outside the coalition that stand in the way of its effect.

When developing strategies, use a SWOT analysis
Look at the factors in each cell, combine them to develop possible strategies, and evaluate the potential for success.
- The best chance for success is when opportunities are combined with strengths.
- If opportunities are combined with weaknesses, look for ways to strengthen weaknesses to improve the chance for success.
- If threats can be combined with a strength, an obstacle can be confronted with some chance for success.
- When threats are combined with weaknesses, the chance of success is risky.

However, keep in mind that threats are often barriers and barriers should be examined to determine their real impact. Barriers are often illusionary or flexible, but are perceived as rigid.

Barriers to Change
Barriers, obstacles, or constraint can prevent action toward change. Think about each barrier and evaluate it in terms of the following, then use the information to develop or redirect strategies for implementing change. *Is the barrier, obstacle, or constraint:*
- Realistic and rigid?
- Moderately firm (such as a standard policy or practice)?
- Flexible?
- Or could it be illusionary (mostly perception and only partly based on facts)?

One major corporation found that over 95% of the barriers identified by its foremen and first-line supervisors were either flexible or illusionary.

Third Step: Develop strategies for action.

1. A strategy is abstract and has no concrete form or substance.

- It is communicated in words and/or diagrams, but the words and diagrams used to communicate strategy are not the strategy they convey.

2. Strategy is about the preparations made before action, or it may be about avoiding action, and or it may be about making undesirable action unnecessary.
3. Strategy is a general plan of attack, an approach to a problem, the first step in linking available means and resources with desired ends or outcomes.
4. Strategy is, at the same time, both direction and destination.
5. Strategy is a set of decisions.

Fourth Step: Evaluation—determining potential for success.

Strategies deploy resources and tactics employ them.

- Without a goal, there can be no strategy and tactics will consist of aimless flailing about—in other words, engaging in action for the sake of doing something.

Strategy is getting it right and then execution is doing it right.

- First, the right course of action must be identified.
- Once chosen, the action must be carried out properly.

Defining Desired Outcomes

Focus on outcomes first, process second—on results, rather than means. Outcomes must be clearly stated so results can be recognized and understood when they occur.

- Define specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant outcomes with time lines.

When forming a coalition, the first set of outcomes will be those related to establishing a coalition that is made up of committed stakeholders.

- Outcomes in terms of the successful recruitment and active participation of members.
- Outcomes in terms of the effectiveness of group leadership and group process.
- Outcomes in terms of the group's ability to define a mission and shared vision, set short and long-term goals, develop and implement an action plan, and work towards the attainment of group goals.

The subsequent outcomes will be related to specific issues or problems that the coalition is addressing.

- These outcomes are the anticipated or desired results of interagency collaboration and community-based planning.
- Initial outcomes can be defined while developing a shared vision and group mission, and should reflect success in working toward both the vision and mission.

Setting and Attaining Group Goals

Goals are measurable steps toward the attainment of the shared vision and group mission.

- Goals must be clearly understood and acceptable to all group members.
- Goals and objectives must be clearly stated, measurable, and achievable.
- Goals and objectives should have designated completion times.
- Goals must represent the interests of the group and allow for all members to be successful.
- Goals should be a blend of individual member goals that will further the mission of the group.
- Group goals are never totally compatible with any one agency's goals; members must be prepared to compromise.
- Time should be spent, when necessary, clarifying goals in order to develop member commitment to them.

Goals should include both short- and long-term objectives.

- What can be done first, that will be easy to accomplish, and start the group moving?
- How can goals and objectives establish and maintain group momentum?

Success depends upon the ability to set and attain goals.

- A plan must be made to attain goals.
- The plan should utilize strengths, strengthen weaknesses, take advantage of opportunities, and circumvent threats (SWOT) to ensure the best chance of succeeding.

Goals can be set to:

- Improve services, processes, agency operations and/or procedures, and staff development.
- Help staff work smarter and get more out of available resources.

Note: Constant improvement means abandoning old, unattained goals and replacing them with ones that do the same things differently or do something different.

Setting Goals

A goal is a desired outcome that will enable you to obtain or achieve something that is important to you.

- Goals must be clearly stated and specific.
- Goals must be feasible and achievable.
- Goal attainment must be measurable and have realistic timelines.
- Goals can be long or short-term. Long-term goals can have shorter-term subgoals.

<u>To set goals:</u>

1. Identify an issue and one thing (outcome) that can be accomplished to improve current conditions.
- A specific goal must be set for each outcome.
2. State that one thing as a desired outcome or goal.
- Break short-term goal down into steps, if necessary.
- The goal must be reasonable, reachable, realistic, and relevant to the desired outcome.
3. Develop a plan to attain the goal.
4. Determine a way to measure progress toward attainment of that goal.
- Decide on checkpoints to make sure plan is working.
5. Identify obstacles to achieving the goal and ways to circumvent those barriers.
6. Identify any special materials or help needed to attain goal.
7. Identify incentives for reaching goal.
8. Evaluate progress.
9. Revise plan if necessary.

A Plan for Achieving Goals

Goals and plans for attaining goals should be written and reviewed frequently.

Goal: ____

Date for attainment ____________________________________

Steps	**Completion date**	**Possible difficulties**
1.		1.
2.		2.
3.		3.

Solutions to barriers	**Who can help**
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.

Goal/Objective	**Assigned to:**	**Report date:**
______________________________	______________	___________
______________________________	______________	___________
______________________________	______________	___________
______________________________	______________	___________

Developing and Implementing an Action Plan

Define the Scope of Work
1. Define key areas to address.
2. Divide and assign work.
3. Delegate work to committees, if a committee structure is being used.

Key Areas
Key areas can be the different areas (issues/problems) the group must address and in which the group must achieve results (outcomes) in order to serve its mission and work towards its vision. They can be identified as part of the processes of defining desired outcomes and setting goals, and must align with both the group vision and mission.

For Each Work Assignment
1. Define key areas within each work assignment.
2. Define desired outcomes and set goals.
3. Determine information or data that are needed.
4. Collect information and data.
5. Determine positive and negative forces working for or against change (SWOT).
6. Develop an action plan.
7. Develop specific strategies.
8. Evaluate potential impact of action plan.
9. Implement action plan.
10. Evaluate.

Selectively focus on past, present, and future outcomes and conditions.
- Focus on the positive and the negative from the past and learn from both.
- Focus the majority of group time and energy on the present.
- Focus on the future to create strategies to sustain desired outcomes.

Action Steps:	**Assigned To:**	**Completion Date:**
______________________________	______________	___________
______________________________	______________	___________

Collecting and Analyzing Information and Data

1. What information and data are needed?

2. Has past work done in this area resulted in: Success in obtaining desired outcomes? Best practices? Effective models? Results-oriented strategies?

3. How will information and data be obtained and from whom or where?

4. Who will collect and compile what information and data?

5. How will information and data be reported?

6. Are additional information and data needed?

7. Where can additional information and data be found?

8. What will be done with the information and data collected?

Monitoring Goal Attainment and Evaluating Success

Consider the potential impact of action strategies on:
- Current clients.
- Potential clients.
- Organizations, agencies, or groups.
- Services.
- Resources (skills, time, people, funding realigned to focus on the issue).

Evaluating the success of the group is critical to establishing and maintaining group momentum and commitment.
- Evaluating success requires clear statements of desired results that are measurable and achievable within a designated time period.
- Measures of success must be built into all aspects of the group process. The group vision, goals, objectives, and desired outcomes should all include measures of success.

Evaluation should be viewed and implemented in two ways:
1. As an ongoing means of monitoring and improving group work.
- To keep the group on track.
- To provide ongoing feedback to group members.
2. As a means to determine success and identify accomplishments.
- To acknowledge both short and long-term successes and accomplishments.
- To build and maintain group member interest and active participation.

Group Techniques

- Brainstorming
- Storyboards
- Negotiation
- Problem Solving
- Making Decisions

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a technique used to generate ideas or solutions. The results are ideas that come from and are owned by the group and incorporate the creativity of all group members.

1. Specify and clarify a problem or question.
2. Assign someone to record all ideas or solutions on a flip chart.
3. Everyone is asked to call out ideas.
4. All are recorded, even those that are very similar.
5. Nobody is allowed to comment on, change, or criticize any ideas.
6. Whatever is called out is written verbatim.
7. When the group runs out of ideas, those on the flip chart are grouped by common elements.
8. The group then assesses the ideas and crosses out those that are completely unrealistic or not feasible.
9. The remaining ideas are assessed using criteria developed by the group.
10. The goal is to come up with one or two possible options.

Storyboards

Storyboards are groupings, graphs, or flowcharts that sort, organize and illustrate ideas.

- Group members can make individual contributions that can be clustered in a chart format.
- A flowchart can be developed to illustrate stages or phases of a project.
- Storyboards can bring together a range of ideas or needs.
- Storyboards can provide the basis for action plans or committee tasks.
- Storyboards can be used to evaluate progress.

Negotiation

Successful negotiations require planning and benchmarks for evaluating options. Without planning, negotiators surrender the initiative to come up with options and reduce the overall quality of options presented.

Negotiating requires:

1. Knowing and considering the interests of both sides.
   - Don't focus on an initial demand with a minimum and maximum that is acceptable—this results in a battle for dominance.
   - Don't focus on your needs because an acceptable option must also satisfy their needs.
   - Look at <u>why</u> you want what you want and why they want what they want to understand the reasons for your interests. Be sure to consider relevant parties and constituencies from both sides.
   - Prioritize interests.
2. Separating people and relationships from issues or problems.
   - Consider what might be causing misunderstandings, concerns, fears, lack of trust, etc. Identify ways to reduce or eliminate these barriers.

3. Good communication.
    - Don't focus or plan what you are going to say as it limits your ability to listen and understand what is being said.
    - Be aware of how the other party perceives what you are saying.
4. Clarifying assumptions and reframing your thoughts to clarify your perspective.
5. Knowledge of the legitimacy of options.
    - Know if the proposed option is fair, based on external standards or precedents.
    - Think of fair in terms of a range of fairness.

Negotiating involves a goal, options, alternatives, and a commitment to follow through.

1. A goal that is clearly understood and stated.
- The goal must be an outcome that is acceptable to both parties.
2. Options for agreement.
- When considering or developing options, don't focus solely on what you want because it will leave you unprepared for responding to the interests and needs of the other party.
- Don't remain narrowly focused on your position because it will leave you unprepared for problem solving and the possibility of new options.
- Value differences and attempt to use them to encourage creativity in developing options.
- Strive to find options that result in more for both as opposed to dividing the existing into parts.
3. Assess the risks of options.
- Consider the timing of options.
- Consider the perceptions of all sides and constituencies.
- Create options that present ways to maximize joint gains.
- Inventory skills and resources of both parties—(1) combine or pool similar skills and resources to produce a mutually desired outcome <u>or</u> (2) combine different skills and resources to produce a mutually desired outcome.
4. Alternatives
- Not every negotiation will end with an option that is acceptable to both parties.
- A walk-away alternative can be defined by cost limits or by a better offer somewhere else.
- Alternatives can be based on knowledge of other ways of accomplishing something.
- The important thing is to know what alternatives exist prior to negotiating so you can evaluate options in comparison to alternatives. Moreover, it is important to know if alternatives can be strengthened or improved upon.
5. Commitment to follow through.
- Know what is "done."
- Determine needed actions to reach agreement.
- Decide on how to finalize the agreement—contracts, signatures, etc.

Problem Solving

Steps toward Solving Problems

1. State the problem in as many different ways as possible to make sure you understand the problem. *A problem that is understood is half-solved.*
2. Get the facts to determine what is known and what information is needed.
3. Analyze the situation and assumptions to determine if they are valid.
4. Based on what you know, restate the problem and begin to develop as many solutions as possible.
5. Review all solutions and select the one that best solves the problem.

Factors and issues characterize problems. Identifying major factors and issues is an important first step toward solving the problem.

- Factors are things, circumstances or conditions that cause something to happen.
- Issues are points to be argued regarding factors.

Problems should be resolved in two directions:
Focus on and move toward a single point.

- Focus the view of a problem.
- Identify factors and issues, and differentiate between fact and assumptions.

Consider new information or alternative solutions.

  - Be open to new ideas.
  - Include brainstorming which results in a list of possible problems, causes of problems, or solutions to problems—the more ideas the greater the likelihood of one that works.

Both directions are needed for effective problem solving.

Decision Making

There are two ways to make a group decision—voting and reaching a consensus.

Voting is the most common choice, takes less time, and results in a decision.

- The drawback is that it is a win or lose situation.
- Use when all members are equally informed and understand others' perspectives.
- Be sure to have a plan to deal with "losers" of a vote.

Consensus is usually more effective, but is often more time-consuming.

- Consensus is a search for the best decision or solution using everyone's thinking and perspectives.
- As more ideas are discussed, a synthesis takes place and often the final decision is better than any single idea offered.
- Consensus takes into account all points of view and usually results in a decision that is supported by more members.
- Consensus is best when decisions are important or have a widespread impact.
- Consensus is not a majority vote—nor does it mean that everyone gets exactly what they want.
- Consensus does mean that everyone understands the decision and can live with it.