

Handout #7: Steps for Involving Partners in the Program

From *Making Health Communication Programs Work*, National Cancer Institute, 2002

1. Choose organizations, agencies, or people that can give the resources, expertise, or credibility your program needs.
2. Think about which roles partners might play to best support the program.
3. Involve representatives of these groups as early as appropriate in program planning.
4. Give partners the program rationale, strategies, and messages (in ready-to-use form). Remember that strategic planning, creative messages, and quality production are the most difficult parts of a program to develop. They may be the most valuable product you can offer an organization.
5. Give partners advance notice so that they can build their part of the program into their schedule. Discuss with them what will be expected of them.
6. Let partners personalize and adapt program materials to fit their needs. Give them a feeling of ownership, but do not let them stray from the strategy.
7. Ask partners what they need to conduct their part of the program. Beyond funding, consider other help, training, data, or tools that would help them to function successfully.
8. Give partners new contacts that they will see as being valuable for their work. These could be links to local, State, and national contacts.
9. Give partners an appropriate amount of work. Give them a series of small, concrete, short-term responsibilities as well as a system for giving their feedback to you.
10. Gently remind partners that they are responsible for their activities. Help them complete tasks, but do not complete tasks for them.
11. Assess progress through your feedback system. Help make the changes needed to respond to the organization's needs and keep the program on track.
12. Provide moral support by frequently saying "thank you" and giving other rewards (e.g., letters or certificates of appreciation).
13. Give partners a final report of what was achieved. Meet to discuss follow-up actions and resources that they might find useful. Make sure that they feel that they are a part of the program's success.
14. Share one final, tremendous "Thank you for a job well done."