Name of student: Michael Deng Kuau Akech

Admission number**:** SN317/05/2019

Course code: D024

Course: Diploma Course in Developing a Strategic Community Plan, Organizational Structure, and Training System

Year: 2019

Month of Submission: August 2019

Assignment: An Assignment of Part 2

Institution of Learning: Strategia Netherlands

**Part 2**

**Developing an Organizational Structure for the Initiative**

Section 1: Organizational Structure: An Overview

1. **Why should you develop a structure for your organization?**

Because at some point, the bloom is going to fall off the rose. After the initial rush of energy, members may become less excited than they used to be. They may stop always agreeing with each other, and start to think about other things they could do with their days. At those times, which are much of the time in most organizations, structure is desirable and necessary.

Why desirable and necessary? There are at least three reasons.

• And third, because some kind of structure in any organization is inevitable, an organization, by definition, implies a structure. Your group is going to have some structure whether it chooses to or not. It might as well be the structure which best matches up with what kind of organization you have, what kind of people are in it, and what you see yourself doing.

• First, because structure gives members clear guidelines for how to proceed. Soon enough, uncertainty will arise, and so will disagreements. Uncertainty and disagreement, in repeated doses, are unpleasant and block accomplishment. And when there is too much uncertainty or disagreement, that's when people imagine how nice it would be to be someplace else and disinvest, or flat out leave. A clearly-established structure gives the group a means to cut through the uncertainty, resolve the disagreements, and maintain the investment.

• Second, structure binds members together. It gives meaning and identity to the people who join the group, as well as to the group itself. It satisfies the basic human needs for form, regularity, and order. These are no less important in our organizational lives than in our personal lives.

1. **Explain some elements of structure**

Regardless of what type of structure your organization decides upon, three elements will always be there. They are inherent in the very idea of an organizational structure. They are:

1. A distribution of work.
2. Rules by which the organization operates, and
3. Some kind of governance,

**Governance**

A first element of structure is governance. Some person or group has to make the decisions within the organization. This, of course, relates to the distribution of work mentioned above, but is important enough to be mentioned here separately.

**Rules by which the organization operates**

Another important part of structure is having rules by which the organization operates. Many of these rules may be explicitly stated ("The committees will use Robert's Rules of Order" or "The chairperson sets the agenda"). Others are implicit and un-stated, though not necessarily any less powerful ("People usually show up for meetings ten minutes late" or "I might call you at home, but I'll have a good reason"). Even the least formal of groups will have norms by which it operates. Both explicit and implicit "norms" (a.k.a. "house rules") are part of the organization's structure. We also sometimes say they are part of the organization's culture.

**Distribution of work**

Inherent in any organizational structure also is a distribution of work. The distribution can be formal or informal, temporary or enduring, voluntary or coerced, with many, few, or no intermediate layers. But part of the definition of an organization is some type of division of labour.

This begs the question, "What labour?" It's worth taking a moment here to look at the tasks common to most community groups. For while "who does what" will change from organization to organization, the "what" will remain much the same.

You may think that the work done by environmental activists has little in common with that done by the local symphony, for example. However, there's quite a bit more overlap than might be immediately obvious. In fact, four tasks are key to any group. Somebody or somebodies will be doing each of the following, if any type of community organization is to flourish. These tasks are:

* Envisioning desired changes. The group needs a Gandhi, a Martin Luther, or a Martin Luther King, to look at the world in a slightly different way. Such a visionary also needs to believe he or she can make others look at things from the same point of view, or the group never would have been formed.
* Planning for integration. Between the vision and the reality, someone needs to take the vision and figure out how to accomplish it by breaking it up into "bite-sized," doable chunks. These "chunks" generally take the form of broad strategies and goals. An organization or initiative will need to have people who can make its vision possible -- people to develop a blueprint that others can work from. That is to say, people who can integrate the vision into the reality of everyday community life.

For example, if a group is working to improve child health, one of its broad goals might be to increase the immunization rate of school-age children by 25% in the next four years. Its broad strategies might be to increase awareness of the vaccination schedule, and to improve access for busy parents.

* Supporting the efforts of those working to promote change. Every group will run into problems, be it a lack of money, an excess of opposition, or simple apathy. That's when support for the organization and its goals is especially important. This support can come from many corners. These include board members who raise money for the organization, a local politician who champions the initiative in the state legislature, and staff members who are hired to support people trying to transform their community.
* Transforming the community. The group needs people who will go out and do the work that has been envisioned. For example, organizations need people to teach the children, distribute the brochures, or pour the mortar for the new community centre.

1. **Mention some common roles in an organization**

Common Roles

Every group is different, and so each will have slightly different terms for the roles individuals play in their organization. But as with children playing with building blocks, groups often use the same pieces to create their individual masterpieces. We list some of these "building blocks" below, along with definitions and their typical functions.

1. An initial steering committee is the group of people who get things started. It is generally made up of leaders from all sectors of the community. Often, this group will create plans for funding and organizational and board development. It may also generate by-laws, and then dissolve. Different writers define "steering committees" differently, but we define it throughout the Community Development Tool Box as a "starter organization” with a short life span. Members ignite the fire, fan the flames, and then leave the scene. If they continue to meet after approximately the first six months, we might say they have metamorphosed into a coordinating council.
2. A coordinating council is a group that has many aliases, including coordinating committee, executive committee, and executive council. Whatever such a group chooses to call itself, however, its purposes are very similar. Council members, who are often staff members and co-chairs of task forces or action committees, modify broad, organization-wide objectives and strategies in response to input from individuals or committees. They may also recruit board members (see below), and help keep communication clear among all organization members.

If you think of an organization as a wheel, the coordinating council is the hub holding everything together. The hub collects and directs the energy from the spokes - and without it, the wheel would fall apart.

1. Often, one person will take the place of the coordinating council, or may serve as its head. Such a person may be known as the Executive Director, Project Coordinator, Program Director, President, top dog, or a variety of other appellations. He or she sometimes has a paid position, and may coordinate, manage, inspire, supervise, and support the work of other members of the organization.
2. Task forces are made up of members who work together around broad objectives, such as increasing child immunization or reducing toxic waste. Task forces integrate the ideas set forward with the community work being done.

For example, from the director of a coalition to reduce violence in a medium-sized city: "Currently, we have three operational task forces. Members of each have an ongoing dialogue with members of the coordinating council, and also with their action committees. The oldest was formed with the goal of eliminating domestic violence about fifteen years ago, when a local woman was killed by her husband. Then, after several outbreaks of violence in the schools a few years back, our group offered to help, and a second task force sprung up around reducing youth violence. We've just started a third, with the goal of increasing gun safety.

"All of it is interrelated, and all of it applies to our mission of increasing the safety of residents of South Haven, as well as that of our visitors. But each task force is contributing to that mission in vastly different ways, with different objectives, and using different strategies. 'Cause, you know, the strategies you use to stop a ninth grader from bringing a gun to school just aren't the same as the ones you use to stop a 40-year-old man on unemployment from beating his wife."

1. Action committees are committees formed by larger organizations to bring about the changes sought by the organization. They are at the heart of many partnerships, and are often created by sector. Some of these sectors, or areas, that are often used are:

* Business
* Faith community
* Family/caregivers
* Government/law enforcement
* Health
* Media
* Military
* Schools
* Social services

The aim of action committees is to bring about specific changes in programs, policies, and practices in the sectors in which they work. Members of action committees are the ones who roll up their sleeves, dig in, and reach the group's objectives by carrying out the steps that will make them real, and not just "real nice ideas." They are the ones who transform the community. They listen to community members, and bring what they have learned back to the larger group.

For example, the task force on domestic violence mentioned above has the following action committees:

* A government and law enforcement committee. Members include police officers, lawyers, a judge, and a state representative. Currently, they are trying to pass laws with stronger penalties for those convicted of domestic violence, especially repeat offenders. They are also training officers to be better able to spot an abusive relationship, and better able to inform a victim of his or her options.
* A media committee. Members include local journalists, writers, and graphic designers. They keep the project and the issue in the public's minds as much as possible with editorials, articles and news clips of events, as well as advertisements and public service announcements. They were also responsible for a weekly column spotlighting area volunteers, who are often from the shelter.
* A social services committee. Members (who include representatives from most of the service agencies in town) work to assure that staffs of all local services know where to send someone for the resources he or she needs, anywhere from a safe house for the night to job training. They are also trying to increase the number of trained volunteer counselors who work at the battered women's shelter.

In short, action committees are the different parts of task forces in larger organizations, where the number of people involved in a task force becomes too large to be manageable. In groups with fewer members or with a more specific mission, the work of task forces and action committees is often combined.

1. Support committees are groups that pave the way for you, and help ensure that action committees or other individuals will have the resources and opportunities necessary to realize their vision. For example, an organization may have the ambitious goal of matching every student in the area primary schools with an adult mentor, but doesn't have nearly enough people to do it. To find these potential mentors, a volunteer recruitment committee can be formed. Financial and media committees are other examples of committees formed to help support or facilitate your work.
2. Community trustees, also known as the board of trustees and (perhaps more commonly) as the board of directors, provide overall support, advice, and resources to members of the action groups. They are often either people who are directly affected by the issue or have stature in the community. That way, they are able to make contacts, network with other community leaders, and generally remove or weaken barriers to meeting organizational objectives. More information can be found in Chapter 9, Section 4: Developing an Ongoing Board of Directors.
3. Grant makers are another part of the picture. Sometimes, support from these organizations or individuals are essential to the many community organizations with whom they collaborate, as those groups know all too well. It is important to see them as partners in a common cause, and to understand what your organization offers them. Grant makers exist on an international, national, state, and local level. They may be private companies and foundations, or local, county, state, or federal government organizations (for example, block grants given by the city would fall into this category).
4. Support organizations (not to be confused with the support committees listed above) are groups that can give your organization the technical assistance it needs. University research groups often fill this need, as can private groups.
5. Partner organizations are other groups working on some of the same issues as your organization.

They can usually be found on a local level, even in the smallest of communities. For example, an anti-litter group might collaborate with a wildlife preservation initiative in an effort to clean up a local river. As the world gets smaller with greater technological possibilities, however, these partnerships also take place with increasing frequency with groups around the country and the world.

We realize that the above list is pretty extensive, and it isn't meant to put you off. Your organization may only use two or three of the above mentioned roles, especially at the beginning. It's not uncommon for a group to start with a steering committee, ask some other folks to serve as board members, and then recruit volunteers who will serve as members of action committees. Other pieces may come later, or not at all. What we've tried to do here is show you the broad spectrum of possibilities. Where does your organization fit in? Where do you want to be?

**Examples of Structure**

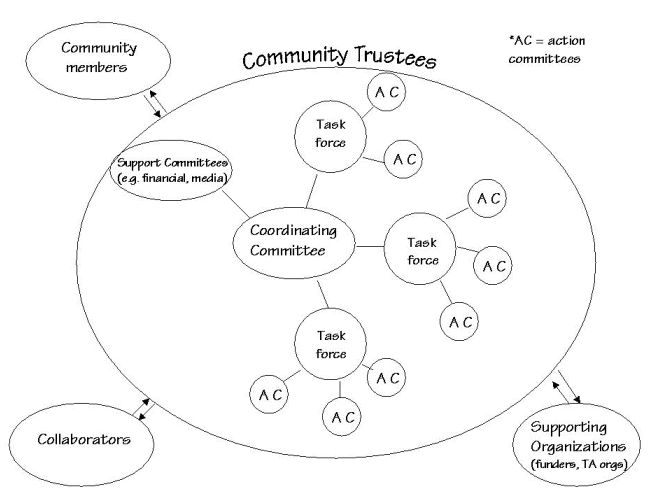
So how can all of these pieces be put together?

These structures are only three possibilities; they will not be a perfect fit for every community group. Again, the form a community group takes should be based on what it does, and not the other way around. The structures given are simply meant to serve as examples that have been found to be effective for some community-based organizations; they can and should be adapted and modified for your own group's purposes.

1. **A relatively complex structure**

Example – The Ste. Genevieve's Children's Coalition is a relatively large community-based group. They have a coordinating council, a media committee, and three task forces, dealing with adolescent pregnancy, immunization, and child hunger. Each of the task forces has action committees as well. For example, the adolescent pregnancy reduction task force has a schools committee that focuses on keeping teen parents in school and modifying the human sexuality curriculum. A health organizations committee focuses on increasing access and use of the youth clinic. The media committee works to keep children's issues in the news, and includes professionals from the local television stations, radio stations, newspaper, and a marketing professional. The coordinating council is composed of the executive director, her assistant, the media committee chair, and the chairs of each of the three task forces. A board of directors has been invaluable in helping keep the coalition financially viable.

In diagram form, a complex organization might look like this:



As you can see, a complex organizational structure, such as the structure for the Ste. Genevieve's Children Coalition, may have many layers. The coordinating committee is at the centre of the project. Its members develop a vision and broad goals based on comments from the action committees or other members of the community.

Task forces develop broad strategic approaches to solve the problem. Usually, several task forces are created from priorities set through a community assessment process. Task force members are chosen for their interest in a particular issue. They are actively involved in supporting and participating in the action committees.

The action committees, which are organized around community sectors such as those listed above, develop specific steps to carry out broad strategic approaches. Each action committee focuses on specific actions in its sector.

The community’s trustees serve as a shield, helping make sure the members don't come up against barriers such as a lack of money. The organization might collaborate with others doing the same work, and may receive support from foundations or technical assistance groups. An organization of this size will usually have paid staff. This generally means they'll have an executive director and possibly project directors, community mobilizers, and administrative assistants.

The biggest advantage to this type of structure is that it allows active participation by all members, and in fact, it relies on that participation to function. However, this advantage can turn into a real drawback for smaller organizations. Organizations with fewer members will want to concentrate their resources, and may find one of the next structures more helpful.

1. **A mid-size structure**

Example – The coordinating council of Safe House, an organization for the homeless, is made up of six people, including one couple who were once homeless themselves. Membership on the coordinating council is open to anyone willing to accept its leadership responsibilities. People with less time are encouraged to be part of the larger group. The group has no task forces: its mission (reducing the city's homeless population) is targeted enough that they were deemed unnecessary, and the work usually done by task forces is carried out by the coordinating council. It does have three action committees: a social services committee, a business committee which deals primarily with job training, and a government/law enforcement committee.

With advice it receives from members of the group's action committees and other community members, the coordinating council discusses and debates every decision. It then acts as a united front, and takes the decisions back to the action committees to be carried out. If group members have any questions or problems with the decisions made, they can bring their concerns to an individual member, or to the council as a whole.

And in diagram form:



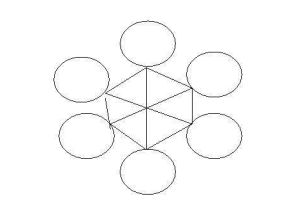
A mid-range organization might have a structure similar to the one above, but two or more of the roles might be collapsed together. For example, the roles taken on by the task forces might be subsumed by action committees or by the coordinating committee. Also, the work of support committees (such as recruitment or finance) might be shouldered equally by all members of the organization. A mid-sized organization may or may not have paid staff members, and generally will have a more targeted mission, leading to fewer task forces.

1. **Small action groups that are not part of a larger organization**

Here's a case of a smaller group:

A group of neighbours got together because they were worried about the possibility of traffic accidents in their area. After a lot of discussion over some beer and soda after lunch one afternoon, they decided that the worst problem in the neighbourhood was an unmarked intersection at Fourth Street and Sunset. They decided to ask the city to put up four-way stop signs there, a request to which the city readily acquiesced. Pleased with its success, the group started meeting on a monthly basis over dinner, to keep in touch and deal with problems as they arose. The group's structure remained very loose. A retired gentleman did become the unofficial leader, because he had more free time to arrange things, but decisions continued to be carried out by general consensus.

As smaller size means fewer people, these groups are usually less complex, as they have less need for a formal hierarchy and instead have governance that is consensus-based. They usually have a more focused interest. For example, the group might be constrained by its geography (a neighbourhood organization), resources (a brand new parents' group whose members are worried about gang violence), or their interests (a one-time beautification project at a local park). A diagram of such a small, consensual group might look something like this, with each of the circles representing an individual member:



These groups may have governance that is consensus-based in nature, as in the example and diagram above. This is true even though small neighbourhood groups often have officers. In fact, all aspects of small group structure tend to be rather casual. Such a group rarely, if ever, will have paid staff members.

As small groups grow, however, and the more issues they take on, the more hierarchical they may need to become. This doesn't mean everyone can't have input; it just has to be voiced differently than in a consensual group.

**Examination Assignment 3:**

**After studying the examples of structure, draw up a structure in diagram form of your (fictitious) organization**

Section 2: Choosing a Group to Create and Run Your Initiative

1. **Why would you want to form a group to create and run an organization or initiative?**

Assembling a group to guide the organization or initiative in its beginning stages has some distinct advantages over trying to do the same thing as an individual:

* It affords an opportunity to educate the community about the issue. Everyone is in favour of adult literacy, for instance, but very few - including staff people of health and human service agencies - understand how many adults need literacy services. As members of an oversight group for a community literacy initiative, however, they’ll have the opportunity to learn a great deal about the issue and the actual potential for addressing it. And they'll spread the word as they learn.
* It allows more ideas to come into play. Two heads are often better than one, and ten are better than two, although sometimes harder to reconcile. While it can be a lot of work to sort out the different ideas of many group members, the consensus you come to is likely to be more interesting and effective than what you could have developed alone.
* It gives new organizations and initiatives the benefit of others' experience. Even if the oversight group is largely made up of individuals from the community rather than agencies and organizations, many of those people may have founded their own businesses, started other organizations, been on community Boards, etc. Both these individuals and those who work for other organizations will have valuable knowledge and experience that can save your organization or initiative enormous amounts of time and trouble.
* It lends credibility and community support to the effort. Especially if the group is diverse, and represents a number of different organizations, interests, and parts of the community, it essentially gives the community a sense of ownership of the organization or initiative. This makes it much more likely that it will continue to have the community's enthusiastic support, even long after the group has been disbanded.
* It provides a base for membership, fundraising, and other support. Each of the people in the group will know literally hundreds of others - far more than you would have any chance of contacting on your own - and many of those others will be only too willing to help if only they are asked. The networking possibilities are endless.
* It provides personal support to its members and to the people who started the initiative in the first place. This kind of support can be extremely important when things look bleak... and they will, at least occasionally, in any community initiative.

When starting a new organization, you'll often find that the people involved don’t know each other well enough yet to really know who might make the best leaders. Yet there is still a lot of work to be done in laying the groundwork for this new entity. Forming a group is a way to get some of these important things done before figuring out what the ultimate governing structure will be:

* Choosing people to head individual committees and be in charge of specific tasks
* Creating an action plan
* Deciding the initial direction of the organization
* Determining and recruiting potential partners
* Forming a vision and mission for the organization

A group is also useful when your organization has started working on many tasks, but doesn't yet have - or will never have - a staff. The group may act as a substitute for an individual coordinator or director, either of an organization or initiative, or of an event or particular area of an organization's functioning.

1. **What kinds of groups might foster the development of an initiative?**

This question really has two sets of answers. The first depends on whether the group is one of individuals or a coalition of organizations; and the second involves the different ways such groups can function.

**Ways Groups can be formed**

Organizations and initiatives get started in a number of ways, and the nature of the groups that guide them is usually determined by how they originate.

1. **One person sees a problem in her community and decides to do something about it**. In this instance, the group assembled is often a group of individuals - typically friends or acquaintances of the initiator - who either have some personal reason to be concerned, or are simply community-minded and interested in the issue.

When her teen-age son was beaten up on the way home from school, a woman in a small town decided that teen violence needed to be dealt with. She put up posters, made phone calls, and gathered 35 parents and teens at an initial meeting to discuss the issue. Out of this first meeting grew a community initiative that involved both parents and teens in discussions, workshops, and theatre performances. With help from a local agency, the group got a grant, and continues - successfully - to try to reduce teen violence in the town.

1. **An organization, community institution (a church, for instance), or local government agency takes the lead in tackling a community issue.** In this kind of situation, the group formed is likely to be a coalition with a mixed membership of representatives of organizations and individuals representing only themselves.
2. **An organization decides to write a proposal for available funding to deal with an issue that requires a group response.** The group assembled in a case like this is generally by definition a coalition of other groups, but may include individuals from the community as well.

A community action agency responded to a request for proposals (RFP) from the state Department of Education for a community effort to serve at-risk families of children under four. A stipulation of the RFP was that the proposal be agreed upon by a coordinating body for the effort. A group representing community health and human service agencies, parents, schools, and others was assembled by the community action agency, and, when the proposal was successful, became the oversight body for the initiative.

1. **Coalition that already exists identifies a problem and resolves to address it.** Here, the coalition is the group that begins the process. It may remain the group that spearheads the initiative, or, as in this example, it may spin off a group that ultimately takes charge.

The North Quabbin Community Coalition in central Massachusetts is made up of representatives of health and human service agencies, the Chamber of Commerce, the police, the schools, local politicians, and other interested citizens. Appalled by the high incidence of child sexual abuse in the area, the Coalition formed a Child Sexual Assault Task Force which launched a community initiative to try to change the situation. The initiative in turn grew into an organization that provides parenting training and children's activities, and has become a permanent fixture in the community.

While both organizations and individuals have their own priorities and interests, organizational rules and politics add other elements into the mix. A group of organizations needs to function differently than a group of individuals does, because it has to take everyone's organizational issues into account. The simple matter of whether or not people are on the clock when they attend group meetings can affect how the group operates, as can the concerns of Boards, the requirements of different organizations’ funders, and the organizations’ mission statements. All that has to be considered when you look at how the group might function.

**Ways the Group can function**

Groups that oversee initiatives go by a number of names which are often used interchangeably. As a result, the descriptions below may not fit your own experience. These names, nonetheless, imply different ways of operating, and it would make sense to think about what might work best in your situation.

1. **Advisory or supporting committee (or council or board).** An advisory committee may have no real power at all, but may guide the organization or initiative through its members' knowledge of the community and the issue, and may lend its members' prestige to the cause when necessary. It may help to develop a vision and mission for the organization, but will probably not be the determining body in that effort. Advisory committees often exist in situations where the initiative is really the work of one charismatic or visionary individual who needs help and support, but doesn't particularly want guidance.
2. **Board of Directors.** In this instance, the group will function as the governing (but probably not coordinating) body for the organization. A board of Directors usually works with staff to set policy for and oversee the functioning of an organization. (Please see Chapter 9, Sections 4: Developing an Ongoing Board of Directors; Section 5: Welcoming and Training New Members to a Board of Directors; and Section 6: Maintaining a Board of Directors, for more information about Boards.)
3. **Coordinating council.** A coordinating council often does many of the same things as a steering committee, but also coordinates the organization's or initiative's activity. It essentially takes the place of a director or program coordinator, modifying broad, organization-wide objectives and strategies in response to input from individuals or committees. If the organization or initiative stages a public demonstration, for instance, the members of the coordinating council would be the ones running around making sure that everyone knew where they were supposed to be when, that the media was informed and courted, that the portable toilets were in place, etc. If you think of an organization as a wheel, the coordinating council is the hub holding everything together. The hub collects and directs the energy from the spokes - and without it, the wheel would fall apart.
4. **Other possibilities.** There are numerous other forms that a group might take. A core group, for instance, might assemble a larger group that ultimately takes one of the forms listed above. An executive committee might make decisions for a larger group, and thus effectively run the initiative. There is no one right way to start a community initiative or organization.
5. **Steering committee.** A steering committee, as the name implies, steers the organization or initiative at the beginning. The committee develops action plans, considers the political and other implications of what the organization or initiative is doing, and may develop vision and mission statements and organizational structure, and create plans for funding and Board development. As is explained in Section 1 of this chapter, however, steering committees, at least in the definition used in the Tool Box, are meant to dissolve once the initial work is done. If they continue to meet after the first six months or so, then they have become a coordinating council.

If you're hoping to hire staff eventually, a steering committee might work best for you, since it won't need to run the organization for very long. If you're starting a community initiative or coalition that probably won't ever have staff, a coordinating council might make more sense, since it will provide continuity as well as the capacity to form and direct the group from the beginning. A Board of Directors is most appropriate for an organization that already has a sense of itself. The main consideration is what will be most effective for the organization or initiative you're starting.

As you decide what kind of group will serve your organization or initiative best, you need to consider the needs and priorities of the organizations and individuals involved; the degree of involvement you're asking for; the amount of time group members will need to put in; and what the group is actually going to do.

1. **Who should be involved, and where do you find them?**

For your group, you'll want enough people to get everything done, but not so many as to make things too complicated. Those numbers can vary tremendously - there are effective groups of 10 or fewer, and of as many as 30 or more. Here are a few general guidelines about the type of people to involve:

* A good cross-section of the community in terms of race, socio-economic status, etc.
* It's important to involve people who will be able to regularly attend meetings and be involved. For some types of bodies, such as advisory councils, this may be less important, but for the work done by steering committees and coordinating councils you'll want people who are willing to roll up their sleeves and jump in.
* Members of the specific target community.
* Newer, up-and-coming leaders and people who hold no titles but are well respected in the community can also be very helpful.
* Other obvious stakeholders in the issue. If your initiative is meant to reduce substance abuse, for instance, you may want to include the police in your group, since they're the ones who often deal with the problem on the street.
* People who are enthusiastic about the issue and who have the time and energy to invest in making it successful.
* Recognized leaders in the community can add clout and credibility to your cause.
* Unless they gave the issue a bad name, be sure to consult and perhaps involve people who've had experience with your cause in this community in the past.

In situations like this, you have to do your history homework. If you're trying to start an organization to offer services to the homeless, for instance, it's vital to know what has been attempted along these lines in the past, and what the result was. If the experience left a bad taste in people's mouths, you're going to have a much tougher time. You need to know that, and to counter it as best you can. If the people who were involved in the past attempt are respected for what they did, then they should be involved in what you're doing. If the community thinks that they made a mess of the whole thing, or that they're dishonest, their participation will make your effort look like more of the same. Those who don't learn history are condemned to repeat it.

* Be sure that at least one person on board is a good writer, and that he, or at least one other member, has had some experience with funding proposals; they will be instrumental in writing early grant proposals, press releases, and so on.
* Try to get some youth involved; they often have a fresh perspective on things and tons of infectious energy.

It's crucial to be aware that some people you want to include may have less experience being members of groups, and of this type of group than others.

"The middle-class 'meeting skills' that most educated people have been learning and practicing since junior high or before may be unknown to many welfare recipients or migrant workers, simply because they've never been exposed to them. Thus, they may sit silent, confused by the flow of the meeting, unable to contribute, and feeling foolish; or they may speak or act in ways or at times others deem inappropriate. People without meeting skills need support and encouragement in what is often for them an intimidating situation. One answer may be to pair all team members, so that those who need support will have a mentor. Another possibility is to start the process with training for everyone in group dynamics and meeting skills, so that no one is singled out and the ground rules are clear for all."

Where can you find these folks? Consider these possibilities to look for steering committee or coordinating council members:

* Chamber of Commerce and other business organizations
* Churches and other organizations in the faith community
* Civic organizations
* Economic development organizations
* Flyers in Laundromats, markets, etc. that cater to the target population or to others you specifically want to reach
* Local colleges or universities, schools, and libraries
* Local government officials and agencies
* Social and sports clubs and community centers, especially in neighborhoods you particularly want to reach
* Social service agencies
* Youth groups and organizations

As you begin your search - or perhaps even before - you'll meet, or realize you know, people who will introduce you to others. Networking is, in reality, probably the way you'll find most of your group.

Section 3: Developing Multi-Sector Task Forces or Action Committees for the Initiative

1. **What is a multi-sector task force or action committee?**

A task force or action committee (also sometimes called an ad hoc committee from the Latin meaning "for this purpose") is a group assembled to address a specific problem or accomplish a specific goal. That problem or goal can take at least two different forms:

* It might be related to dealing with a specific community issue - affordable housing, child abuse, early detection and treatment of breast cancer.
* It might stem from a need of the larger group. A coalition might need a smaller group to focus on advocacy, for instance, or to draft a set of bylaws.

A multi-sector task force or action committee is drawn from all sectors of the community affected by or involved in the problem or goal that is the group’s focus. In the Peterson Community example, for instance, the task force leaders tried to include representatives of every group they could think of that had anything to do with the problem of teen prescription drug abuse.

Task forces and action committees, as you might assume from their names, are action -oriented. Their specific purpose is to do something. Depending upon the issue they address, their initial goals may be very specific (find community shelter space for at least 15 homeless families; draft a timeline for a community economic development effort) or more general (address the problem of youth violence). In either case, however, their purpose is to come up with real results.

In general, these groups are not meant to be permanent. They either disband when their task is done, or they become another kind of group. As will be discussed in more detail later, a task force might spin off a new community intervention, for instance. While that venture would continue the work of the task force, it might not involve any of the first group's members, and would have a different purpose and structure.

A task force or action committee is usually part of a larger initiative - a community coalition of some sort, a local or other government committee, etc. It may be one of several such groups spawned by the initiative, each aimed at a different issue or goal. It may operate independently, or may have to gain approval from the larger group before taking any action.

The North Quabbin Community Coalition, in north central Massachusetts, regularly maintains several task forces working on specific community issues. Some former and current task forces include Information and Referral, Child Sexual Assault, Homelessness, and Youth-Community Relations.

1. **Mention some advantages of a multi-sector task force.**

**Advantages of a multi-sector task force or action committee**

* Community action usually requires the support, and often the participation, of all stakeholders if it's to be successful.
* Finally, it's simply fair and reasonable to involve people in decisions which affect their lives. Those decisions are likely to address the issue more realistically, and to take into account the legitimate needs of the groups affected, if those groups are involved in planning and implementing them.
* Involvement of all stakeholders in planning and carrying out any action means that they'll take ownership of those plans and actions. They'll be much more concerned about making sure that the action is successful because it's theirs, rather than something imposed on them by "experts" or some other authority.
* Involvement of many sectors of the community brings with it the information and insights that those different sectors have into the issue. More information and insight lead to better planning and more chance of successful action.
* Involving many sectors in the task force or action committee will generate community cooperation and support for the action taken.
* Multi-sector participation benefits the larger initiative and the community as well, because it brings together individuals and groups who might not, under other circumstances, have much contact, or who might distrust one another. In the work of the task force or action committee, they have the opportunity to learn about one another, and develop mutual trust and respect.
* The perspectives of various sectors on community history and personalities can help the group to a real understanding of the issue, including the vital small things that might be otherwise ignored. (Whether or not two individuals get along well may determine whether a given plan is workable, for example. Neighbourhood people, who are familiar with the personalities involved, are more apt to know that sort of thing than, say, health professionals.)

1. **Mention some disadvantages of a multi-sector group.**

**Possible disadvantages of a multi-sector group**

Although there are many compelling reasons for forming multi-sector groups, there are potential difficulties with them as well. Even if you understand the history and current situation of your community before you start to assemble such a group, there are still problems you may run into.

* Different individuals or groups may have very different levels of commitment to the work of the task force or action committee. This can lead to problems in a relatively small group where everyone depends on everyone else to carry out assignments.
* There may be deep-seated disagreement about how to handle the issue. Police may see the answer to a drug problem as more rigorous enforcement, while medical professionals see it as one of treatment, and human service providers as one of addressing the underlying causes - poverty, hopelessness, unemployment, child abuse, education, etc.
* There may be differences in levels of sophistication, education, and "group skills" among members of the group from different sectors of the community. In order to ensure that everyone's capacities are tapped, some folks may need support, encouragement, and mentoring or training in order to feel comfortable participating.
* There may be enmity and distrust among segments of the community that are normally at odds, or who have little contact. Some of these may be obvious - racial or ethnic tensions, intergenerational conflict - but some may not, or may be one-sided. Low-income people may distrust members of more affluent groups, for instance, even if the latter have good intentions and are trying to be open and welcoming. Politicians who are genuinely concerned with solving the problem may nonetheless be objects of suspicion. Academics may scorn business people, or vice-versa. These areas of conflict have to be resolved if the group is to function well.

1. **Who might be part of a multi-sector task force or action committee?**

The short answer to who might join a multi-sector task force or action committee is just about anyone. Here are some considerations when you're recruiting:

1. **Seek members who aren't part of the larger group that the task force or action committee is part of.** The only criteria for membership are their interest in the issue, and their willingness to work on it. You can recruit friends and neighbours, program participants, politicians - anyone who can help.
2. **Look for stakeholders and other interested parties.** Stakeholders might include:

* Interested citizens may have no specific stake in the issue, but may see it as a community problem, and therefore something they should be concerned about.
* Target populations.
* Those affected indirectly or secondarily. Businesses are affected by low literacy rates in a community, for instance, because they can't find workers with the skills they need.
* Those directly affected by the issue.
* Those responsible for the issue in the community. If the issue involves the law, for instance, as in the case of drug abuse, the police and court personnel would be appropriate task force members.
* Those who work with those directly affected.

1. **Look for people who can be helpful to the effort**. These folks may not be stakeholders, but may be able to offer support and credibility, as well as resources. Some possibilities:

* Business leaders.
* Clergy and other leaders of the faith community.
* Local or state officials.
* People who may hold no official position, but who have high standing in the community.
* People with access to money or other resources.
* People with access to power.
* People with access to the target population.

1. **Look to engage people from different sectors.** Some examples of different community sectors include:

* Business community
* Civic and volunteer groups
* Community organizations
* Healthcare professionals
* Law enforcement agencies
* Media
* Older adults
* Religious or fraternal organizations
* Schools
* State, local, or tribal governmental agencies
* Youth
* Youth-serving organizations

Ultimately, a cross section of the community on your task force or action committee means more access to different sectors of the community, more credibility among those sectors, more and better information, and more chance of community support and eventual success.

1. **How do you develop a multi-sector task force or action committee?**

In order to put a group together and get it working, there are a number of steps you should take. These steps are essentially the same as those a larger group might take in defining its goals and actions.

1. **Define the relationship of your task force or action committee to the larger group.**

How are you going to operate within the context of the initiative? There is a broad range of options here, from complete independence to having to check back before taking any step at all. Three common models:

* The task force operates fairly independently, but reports back to the larger group on a regular basis. It doesn't need approval to do most things, but can’t commit the initiative to anything, or act in its name, without an official okay.
* The task force or action committee operates independently. In this situation, the larger group delegates authority for the issue in question to the task force that's working on it. It may come back to the initiative for help, support, or resources, or to report on its progress, but the decisions about how to proceed are its own.

Decide beforehand exactly what the task force can do on its own, what it needs approval for, and who can give that official okay. In the case of a coalition, for instance, permission might come from the coordinator, a steering committee, an executive board, or a vote of the whole membership.

Once a decision is made about how task forces will operate, that decision will usually hold for all future task forces and action committees of the initiative as well, unless there's a need for something different in a particular circumstance.

* The task force needs permission to take any action steps at all. Operating this way, it would probably formulate a plan and get it approved by the larger group. Then, it would have to check with the larger group only if the plan changed.

In general, the more independent the task force, the more effective it is likely to be, since there may be times when it needs to move quickly. But, at the same time, the more informed the larger group is, the more likely it is to be supportive and available for help when needed. One reasonable way to incorporate both independence and the involvement of the larger group is to create a mechanism for checking back with the group that still allows for speed when necessary. This might mean clearing action with one or two people, or with a small executive committee.

1. **Find the right people to lead your task force or action committee.**

The person(s) you choose need(s) two characteristics:

* He must be a good facilitator, who can deal with conflict and keep group members on track and all headed in the same direction.
* He must have, or be able to establish, credibility with all sectors of the population that you need to draw from. (This may mean that he's an outsider, or a neutral party with no connection to any specific group; or he may simply be someone who's known throughout the community for fairness and integrity, or liked by everyone.)

Given these attributes, some potential leaders might be:

* A group representing several sectors of the community.
* The coalition or initiative coordinator.
* The person(s) most concerned with, or with the most credibility on the issue.
* The person(s) who can best articulate the task ahead and see the process for accomplishing it.
* The task force or action committee may be led collaboratively by all its members. (You'll still need a facilitator, but that person may change from meeting to meeting.) Please see Chapter 13, Section 12: Leading Collaboratively: Leadership As a Collaborative Enterprise, for more information on this process.

1. **Identify individuals or groups whose participation your task force can't do without.**

The questions to ask here are:

* Who are the actual stakeholders in this issue?
* Who are the policy makers, powerbrokers, and others whose permission, support, or membership is necessary to get anything done?
* Who will actually carry out any changes or reforms that your task force succeeds in establishing?

Make an actual list, with both individual names and - if you can't identify an individual - names of groups or sectors of the community who need to be involved. Ask other members of the initiative, contacts in the community, and anyone else you know to help you identify specific people to contact wherever you can.

There are some people whose direct participation is crucial. But there are others who would be ideal as well, even though they may not be absolutely necessary to success. Remember the list above of people who can be helpful.

1. **Recruit members for your task force or action committee.**

Use your list and your contacts to get in touch with people. Many may be people already involved with the initiative, but many may not. Where you have an individual listed as the best representative of a particular group or segment of the community, it might help to have second and third choices from that group as well. In addition, people who may not be able to become members themselves will have ideas about others who would be good additions to your task force. Don't hesitate to ask them for names.

The best method of recruiting people is always personally. An ideal is for the first contact to be from someone the person already knows, but a "cold call" - a personal visit or phone call made to someone you don't know - is still better than an e-mail or a letter. Please see Chapter 7: Encouraging Involvement in Community Work, for more on recruiting.

1. **Gather the group and define its purpose.**

The issue is already a given, but how are you going to approach it, and what are you going to do about it? Some task forces or action committees are convened to study an issue, others to affect it indirectly, still others to take immediate and direct action. Members need to decide what they're going to do. One model for achieving this assumes that the task force works together as a group to plan its course of action:

The model below assumes also that someone acts as facilitator to guide the group through the process. It is aimed at a group whose purpose is to address a community issue - youth violence, homelessness, etc. A task force or action committee that has a very specific purpose, such as drafting bylaws, won't need to go through this whole process.

* Brainstorm or otherwise determine ways to reach each benchmark from the one before, and to reach your final goal.
* Define the problem or issue clearly.
* Draft a plan based on what you've come up with. It should include a timeline for when you expect to reach each benchmark, and when you expect to reach your final goal.
* Envision the ideal solution - what do you want things to look like or be like when your work is done?
* Identify the resources you'll need to get to each benchmark, and decide - realistically - how much you can obtain. Adjust your actual goals accordingly.
* Identify whether your plan means that other issues have to be addressed as well (not necessarily by this group), or whether other people must be included, and decide how to deal with those realities.
* Map out benchmarks - achievements along the way - between where you are now and where you want to be.
* Start with the solution and work backward. What things need to happen to get from where you are now to the solution you've envisioned?

Always be aware that a plan like this is a guideline. Everything always takes longer than you expect or want it to. The purpose here is to give yourself and the initiative some idea of what you're doing and how long it might take. Not only your timeline, but your plan itself will change. If it's a good plan to begin with, its major elements may survive reality, but much will be different by the time you reach your goal. The flexibility to adjust to changes in circumstances and to things you didn't anticipate or know about should be part of any plan.

* Present your plan to the larger group. Even if you have the latitude to act independently, it will help to hear what others think. It will also help both you and the initiative as a whole if everyone knows what's happening, especially if you need help from other task forces or members of the initiative.

At this point, you've actually developed your task force or action committee, and set it on its way. Your work has hardly begun, however. There are still a number of steps before you're ready to hang up your task force hat for good. We'll discuss them briefly.

1. **Implement your plan.**

Take action to reach your benchmarks and your ultimate goal.

1. **Evaluate and adjust your plan and your actions.**

As mentioned in the box above, no plan is perfect. Every chapter in the Tool Box contains numerous references to evaluating plans, programs, and processes regularly and there are four Community Development Tool Box chapters (36-39) that deal with nothing else. These evaluations give you a chance to see what's working well, what needs to be changed, and what assumptions are in error or outdated. Most important, evaluation makes it possible to adjust and improve what you're doing.

1. **Celebrate successes along the way.**

Celebrate reaching benchmarks with parties or formal ceremonies. Give awards to task force members, community volunteers, and anyone else who deserves them. Advertise your successes to your colleagues, and use the media to tell the community about them.

Celebration keeps people going, and reminds them why they're putting in all that time. It creates way stations so that the road to success doesn't seem all that long. It makes people feel good about themselves and what they're doing, and reminds the community that you're there.

1. **Once you've reached your goal - or better yet, long before - find a way to institutionalize whatever is necessary to continue to address the issue.**

Task forces and action committees usually disband once they've accomplished their purposes. But public health and community issues have a habit of never being "resolved." As long as you keep working at addressing them, you can keep things flowing smoothly. But once you turn your back, there are those issues again, just waiting for you to leave so they can surface.

There are some ways that a task force or action committee can make sure that its issues continue to be addressed:

* The implementation of the task force's plans or goals may be taken over by an existing agency.
* The initiative as a whole may assume oversight of the task force's work, and institutionalize it in the community.
* The task force's work may be spun off into a new program or agency.

For example, The North Quabbin's Child Sexual Assault Task Force eventually spawned Valuing Our Children, an independent organization that conducts various programs for children and teens, offers parenting classes and other support services for parents, and runs family activities to encourage parents and their kids to have fun together.

Reaching your goal is only the first part of your task force's job. Only when the strategies for maintaining that goal have become institutionalized is your job done.

Section 4: Developing an Ongoing Board of Directors

1. **What is a Board of Directors?**

A Board of Directors is the governing body of an organization. It decides on policy, and makes sure that the organization's policies are carried out.

For instance, a Board may decide that its organization won't accept money from funders whose practices it disagrees with. The Board may then monitor contributions to make sure that it's not taking money from those funders.

The Board oversees the financial operation of the organization through its Treasurer. It is responsible for any mistakes, bad judgment, or illegal financial activity. If the organization's Accountant tries to cook the books, the Board should catch her!

The Board hires, fires, and supervises the Director (if there is one), and oversees the operations of the organization. It usually doesn't interfere in day-to-day decisions, but it might work with the Director or ask him or her to do something specific to correct a problem or deal with an issue. It might also fire the Director if it thinks that he or she is doing a bad job, is doing something illegal, can't get along with the staff, or isn't supporting the goals of the organization.

The Board makes sure that the mission and philosophy of the organization are maintained. This is one of the most important things a Board can do. It is the watchdog that keeps the organization moving forward toward its goals, and protects the ideals that moved you to do all this in the first place.

The Board is legally responsible for all the actions of the organization. If the organization does anything illegal, owes money, or is sued, the Board is the responsible party.

Many organizations indemnify their Board members. This means that in most cases, the Board members cannot be sued or prosecuted as individuals for the actions of the organization. If the Board members knowingly commit or allow illegal acts, of course, all bets are off.

In some cases, the Board may do some or all of the work of the organization. This might happen if...

* The organization is a volunteer organization, where paid staff's job is to organize, and the Board and other volunteers actually carry out the mission.
* The organization reserves some tasks specifically for the Board in order to keep Board members directly connected to its operations.
* There is no paid staff, or not enough money for adequate staff to do everything necessary to run the organization. Board members then become the (volunteer) staff of the organization, and do whatever needs to be done to accomplish the organization's goals.

**Other types of boards or governing bodies:**

Not all Boards have as much power as those I've just described. Some may not actually be called Boards of Directors at all, but may be referred to as Steering Committees, Advisory Boards or Committees, or Core Groups. Not every group needs a Board of Directors. A short-term initiative, for instance, that expects to disband after a few months when a particular goal is accomplished, probably has no reason to form a Board, though it might need some sort of governing body--perhaps a Steering Committee to guide its actions. Other organizations may simply not want a traditional Board of Directors, but may want to try another model.

A Steering Committee may be appointed or elected, but is often open to any member of the organization who is interested in helping it to run. It usually makes recommendations about a particular action or about the direction in which the organization should go, rather than setting policy. If the Steering Committee oversteps these bounds, the organization may dissolve it, or otherwise limit its authority. Coalitions, which may be organizations made up of several other organizations, often have Steering Committees.

An Advisory Committee is just that, a group that advises the organization. It may do many of the same things as a Board of Directors, but it doesn't set policy or oversee the Director, operation, or finances.

An advisory committee for a program in a school system was made up of parents, teachers, and administrators. Its job was to work with teachers to come up with ideas for the program, to represent the community in the discussion of those ideas, and to help find the community resources to help the program run. It had no real control over the program, but it was listened to, although not 100% of the time. That's how most advisory committees work.

Another possibility is creating a Board of Directors that reflects the philosophy and structure of a collaborative program or initiative. Rather than remaining separate from staff and members, this kind of Board might...

* Include, or be largely made up of, those whom the organization serves.
* Participate with them in deciding on policy, rather than being in charge of it
* Share Board work with them
* Share power with them

This type of Board would be most likely in an organization that operates as a collective or collaborative, or in which staff empowerment is extremely important.

1. **Why do you need a Board of Directors?**
2. **Funding, traditional structure and non-profit status**

One of the most important reasons to develop a Board is that most funders want to deal with organizations that have traditional structures. They simply won't give money to an organization without a Board. By the same token, many funders-especially local, state, or federal government bodies--won't even talk to an organization without non-profit status. And you generally can't get non-profit status without a Board of Directors.

Non-profit status is granted by both the state and federal governments. Being a nonprofit organization means, among other things, that you don't have to pay taxes on the organization's income (although you do have to pay payroll taxes for regular employees.)

Although the organization can take in more money than it spends, no one can take that money home as profit. It has to go back into the organization in some way.

Non-profit status also means that your organization can't lobby more than a certain amount, and that it can't support a particular political candidate or party. And if too much income goes for salaries or bonuses--if the organization's Director makes $250,000 a year, say--the government tends to get suspicious.

1. **Gaining connections with the community**

A carefully chosen Board can give an organization visibility and connections in the community, and can marshal community resources and support for the activities of the organization. If it's made up of people from all parts of the community--different income groups, ages, parts of town, jobs, races, etc.--the Board can also help the organization understand what the community really wants and needs. When a lot of people in the community know someone connected with an organization, they're much more likely to think well of it, and give it their support.

1. **Building organizational credibility**

Often the hardest thing for a grassroots organization to do is to convince the community that it is a legitimate group that knows what it’s doing. Having a Board that includes respected members of the community--whether because of their jobs or community standing (bankers, city councilors, clergy, etc.) or simply because of their personal qualities--can go a long way toward gaining respect for an organization.

A community coalition had as a founding member a veteran who had been shot down as a fighter pilot in Vietnam. When he got home, the whole town watched for agonizing months as he learned, through obvious pain, to walk and function despite crippling injuries that were supposed to confine him to a wheelchair for life. He was an ordinary guy without wealth or position, but he had credibility in that town. His membership extended that credibility to the coalition.

1. **Attracting good people to your organization and your cause**

While people may not always be willing simply to volunteer for an organization, they often can be persuaded to serve on a Board, because being asked is a mark of respect. Being invited to join a Board is flattering, and indicates that someone thinks your opinion is important. It's harder to resist volunteering in that situation, and an organization may be able to attract terrific Board members who might not otherwise be willing to work with it.

1. **Using board members' talents and skills**

Does your organization need legal advice? Accounting? Someone who'll always be honest about what the community is likely to think about an idea? People who know health issues? Education? Community organization? Your Board can be a source of all of these and more. Many professionals serve on Boards particularly to provide their services to an organization they believe in. Local people may have a better perspective on what will fly in the community than program staff, who might live elsewhere. A Board is a collection of talents, knowledge, and skills that an organization can draw on.

1. **Maintaining organizational balance**

Sometimes a particular individual or small group can dominate the workings of an organization. Even if they are generally intelligent, well-meaning, and right most of the time (perhaps especially if they are), people who dominate can poison a program. If the staff and the community feel that their ideas are ignored, then achieving your goals may be a casualty. A Board can help, through its supervision of the Director and oversight of the program, to assure that some balance is maintained. It's a bit like the federal government, where the President, Congress, and the courts all control and are controlled by one another.

A word of warning: There are many horror stories about organizations where the Board struggles with the Director for control. Most of these stories are true: unfortunately, it's all too common. It's tremendously important that the roles of the Board and the Director are clearly defined, so that everyone knows who's in charge of what. It's also tremendously important that the Board President and the Director both understand the possibility of conflict, and try to make sure that they're working together instead of against each other. Directors of organizations are usually strong people, and good Boards are also made up of strong people. If they're all working together, the organization can be tremendously strong. If they're fighting over who gets to call the shots, you might as well pack up your cleats and go home, because there's not going to be any game until everyone's playing by the same rules.

1. **Safeguarding the mission**

Staff members, and even Directors, come and go. They don't always completely understand the mission and philosophy of the organization when they come; it takes them a while to learn; and then they take that knowledge with them when they go. The Board can act as an institutional memory to make sure that the mission and goals of the organization are not neglected, and continue to be pursued. It can be the link, through its records and the longevity of some of its members, to those who founded the organization and to its original purpose.

1. **How do you choose Board Members?**
2. **Where to look:**

To find Board members, it's best to start with people you know and work outward. People who are not interested in being Board members may be happy to give you names of others who might be interested. Some groups to start with:

* Current friends, acquaintances, and supporters of the organization.
* High-profile people (legislators, media people, celebrities, etc.) who have commented publicly and positively about the organization's issue.
* Members or staff of organizations which are natural allies (hospitals, AIDS education groups, or mental health centres for a health initiative.)
* People who have a vested interest in the issue (teachers for a literacy initiative, for example.)
* People who may benefit if the organization achieves its goals (homeless or poorly -housed individuals for an affordable housing program.)

1. **Talking to potential Board members**:

Coming up with a list of names is only the first step. Now you have to find out if they're the right people for your Board, and they have to decide whether your Board is right for them. The first conversation with a Board candidate is a lot like a first date: each of you is trying to decide whether this relationship has any potential, and whether you want to see the other person again. Some guidelines for a first conversation:

* Answer all their questions completely.
* Be sure to find out about their availability. Do they have enough time to be Board members? When can they meet, and when can't they?
* Find out what the candidates want out of the relationship, as well as telling them what you want. What do they think they can contribute? What would make them feel useful?
* Tell them as much as they can digest about the organization, so they have a clear idea of what they're getting into. Be as honest as possible; describe weaknesses as well as strengths. For some people, helping to correct weaknesses is a strong reason to join a Board.
* Tell them why you're considering them for the Board, and what role you hope they'll play. Try to make them feel (as they should) that they're highly valued.
* Try to get answers to your questions about their fit with the Board, their willingness to work with a diverse group, etc. Remember the Really Important Points above.

1. **Some issues to consider in choosing Board members:**

* Are you willing to risk having two or more people on the Board who may be individually valuable, but don't get along with each other?
* Do you want all Board members to agree? You lose a lot if everyone thinks alike, but if they don't, the Board has to be able to handle differences of opinion without falling apart.
* How will you handle differences in class and education? What kind of support and training will you provide for those who don't have a lot of experience working in groups, let alone serving on Boards? How will you make sure that they feel comfortable presenting their opinions, and that their voices will be heard when they do?
* How will you tell someone that they're not right for the Board?

1. **A mechanism for choosing Board members:**

A common method of selecting potential and actual Board members is to appoint a Nominating Committee. This committee is charged with finding and interviewing people in the community who would be good Board members for the organization. Usually, the Nominating Committee reports back to the full Board about the interviews, and may recommend a list of people for acceptance. The Board then votes to accept or reject interested candidates, or may choose to meet some or all of them before making a decision. The Nominating Committee generally also has the task of informing those candidates who have been rejected.

One way to reject people gently but honestly is to focus on whether they'd be happy on the Board. If you can truthfully say that you think they wouldn't--especially if you can give a non-threatening reason (I don't think you'd be able to support a lot of our positions), then it's easier for both you and them. Talking about their fit with the ideals, the purpose, the work of the Board is also a way to approach this issue without attacking people as human beings.

Someone who has been rejected as a Board member may be able to help the organization in other ways. A Nominating Committee or other recruiter should always look for a place where such a person can fit in, and feel valuable to the organization.

Board members may also be elected from among the membership of the organization, or proposed by current Board members. On some Boards, a member who is leaving is expected to find his or her replacement. In almost every case but general election, however, the Board still approves or rejects candidates for membership.

**Examination Assignment 4:**

**How has your organization organized the Board?**

Section 5: Welcoming and Training New Members to a Board of Directors

1. **How do you welcome and train an effective Board of Directors?**

There are three major steps in setting up such a session: advance preparation, the welcoming and training session itself, and follow-up. Let's look at these ideas one by one.

Before the welcoming and training session

**Decide who should attend.**

Will it be mainly new members, or will you include the entire Board? Especially if the session coincides with a retreat, this might be a good time for all Board members to refresh their ideas of what the Board is and what it will do.) Also, decide if paid staff will be present. If new members haven't yet met staff members, and it's logistically possible, it's probably a good idea. If not, be sure to find a different time for the new member(s) to meet staff and at least some of the organization's volunteers.

**Decide who will facilitate the meeting**.

This might be a "no-brainer;" very often the facilitator role falls to the Board chair and/or the chief executive. However, there are other possibilities as well. One is to bring in someone from the outside - an organizational developer or other consultant. You wouldn't necessarily want to do this every time, but it might be useful if you have a slew of new Board members coming on at one time. Another possibility is to have one or more staff members run an orientation. This idea often works out really well. If you're a participant-centered organization, it may make sense to have a participant or group of participants facilitate at least part of the meeting.

**Send out information for attendees to look over before the meeting.**

All attendees should receive:

* A list or notice of anything you want members to bring to the meeting. (For example, "Be sure to bring your Board manual, as we'll be reviewing it and passing out supplements!")
* A reminder, often in the form of a postcard, to arrive a week before the meeting.
* A tentative list of who will be at the meeting, with an explanation of who they are. (For example, "Toumani Chiabete is a social worker at Shawnee County Mental Health Centre and is one of our new Board members... Theresa Welsko has been our exceptionally capable administrative assistant for the past seven years... Melissa is one of our clients, who have served on our Board for the past year and a half.).
* Contact information, such as addresses/phone/e-mail contact for all Board members.
* Notice of the meeting, along with all of the relevant logistical information (when, where, a hotel to stay at if the meeting isn’t local for everyone, and so on). If a) the meeting is particularly important (e.g., an annual retreat), or b) your Board meets rarely (e.g., quarterly), this information should be received at least a month before the upcoming meeting or retreat.
* Proposed agenda for the upcoming meeting.

New members should receive:

A lot of information, received well before the meeting so they will be able to sift through it at their leisure. Information that you might send them in a large packet might include:

* A Board manual, if one exists (see Examples for topics it might include )
* Articles, both negative and positive, that have been written about the organization
* Materials developed about the organization and its programs (brochures, press kits)
* Minutes of previous meetings

**Can you overwhelm a new Board member with material?**

Possibly. But generally speaking, it's far better to give a Board member (new or old) too much information, rather than not enough. It's critical that Board members are well informed about what's going on with the organization, the issue the organization stands for, and the non-profit sector as a whole. So go ahead, send out that information. At worst they won't read all of it; at best, Board members may be far more informed than you had even hoped for!

The welcoming and training session itself

**Give everyone nametags and make sure everyone has a chance to meet everyone else.**

If it is simply a regular meeting time (as opposed, say, to a two-day retreat), you might consider a "social hour" either before or after the meeting itself to let people have a chance to get to know one another. This doesn't have to be formal -- you might offer to buy the first round if folks want to join you for drinks after the meeting.

If people haven't met, they should be introduced -- and if you can swing it, you might want to let them know something they have in common to help break the ice. ("Christen, let me introduce you to Thurman -- he's the only person I've ever met who likes soccer more than you do."

Remember: One of the major reasons people join Boards is to meet other people. The easier and more enjoyable you can make that, the happier (and more effective) your Board is likely to be.

**Explain (or, for old-timers, review) major topics which concern the Board**

This might include:

* An administrative calendar which schedules important Board activities
* An organizational chart, including the list of current and planned committees
* An overview of the organization's history
* Information about how the Board conducts its meetings -- what kinds of rules do you use to make sure that things get done?
* Roles and responsibilities of the Board and the staff, including time expected or normal time commitments
* The Board Manual
* The mission, vision and values of the organization

**How formal is your Board?**

A great many Boards use Robert's Rules of Order to keep the meeting running smoothly and efficiently; if yours doesn't and is frustrated with its meeting process, you might consider trying it out. It really depends on how formal your Board is and how into procedure you want to get. Robert's Rules are logical, and they aren't a bad set of guidelines for running a meeting; but they're also very detailed and nitpicky. For example, anyone who wants to be obstructionist can have a field day if they know the ins and outs of the rules. Obviously, you're not going to intentionally appoint contrarians to your Board, but they do turn up anyway.

In addition, running a Board by Robert's Rules can be really intimidating to those who aren't familiar with them and with procedure in general, such as program participants who have become Board members.

Especially in grass roots, inclusive organization, you may be better off either using a modified version of Robert's Rules, or creating your own guidelines or group norms. You'll certainly want to have motions recorded accurately in the minutes, for instance, and want the chair to have the capacity to keep the meeting under control while still allowing for free discussion and giving everyone a chance to be heard. But the bottom line is, if you don't want to use Robert's Rules, make sure you find or develop a set of rules that do work for you.

**Ensure adequate time for questions and answers.**

Also, make sure that new members know who they should contact with questions and concerns on different topics in the future.

One idea that is used by many organizations is pairing new Board members with a "buddy," -- a current Board member who is willing to help orient the new member, and answer questions that he or she may have.

**Make sure to involve new members immediately.** Don't let them go home without any homework! Instead, involve them in relevant committees or on projects that interest them at the first meeting. As with almost anything in life, strike while the iron is hot, and get people involved while energy is high. Becoming immediately immersed in the group's work will also solidify members' ideas of what the organization is all about.

For more information on running the training session itself, be sure to take a look at Chapter 16, Section 1: Conducting Effective Meetings.

After the welcoming and training session

**Send out minutes that detail what was said**

Make surewith a special emphasis on what agreements have been made and what actions will come out of the meeting. (For example, "Alpa has agreed to contact the different banks in our area and ask for their financial support for our upcoming fundraiser.") Make sure that these minutes are sent out promptly -- within a week of the meeting. Minutes from a meeting three months ago have lost much of their power to prompt people to follow up on their commitments.

**Send out an evaluation form for all Board members**

Ask for their opinions of how they thought the orientation and training session went. Again, this should go out promptly (possibly with the minutes). You might also consider giving it to members at the end of the session. Giving it to them at the meeting can be advantageous because ideas and thoughts are still going to be fresh in their minds. What's more, you're sure to get a better return rate! On the other hand, having them mail them to you allows people to send you ideas once they have had a chance to reflect on what happened at the meeting. Both ideas hold merit; it's up to you to decide what is best for your organization. In either case, you can see the Tools for a worksheet you might use for this purpose.

**For new members, follow up with a phone call to see how things went from their end and what questions remain.**

The person who calls can also make sure that the meeting schedule of the committee(s) they signed up for will work for them, that they feel comfortable with what they've committed to do, and can fill them in more on the details of the specific work they've volunteered for.

1. **How do you provide ongoing training for Board Members?**

Special topic 1: Ongoing training of Board members

Of course, once you finish the original training session, your work has really just begun. Board training can (and should!) continue as long as your Board is functioning. Not only does this help your Board become stronger, it also provides a chance for Board members to continue their education.

There are several ways to approach continuous Board training. One is to schedule regular training sessions several times a year - maybe 3 or 4. What kind of training will go on at those sessions might depend on what the issues are that year, or on who's available at the scheduled times to do a workshop, presentation, etc. Thus, everyone on the Board knows when trainings are going to be, and can schedule around them accordingly.

Another way to do it is as needed. A problem comes up, Board members say "we need help here,” and you arrange, or go look for someone to provide, training on the issue at hand.

A third possibility is to organize trainings around predetermined topics each year (Board responsibilities, tax-exempt issues, conflict of interest, etc.), keeping them broad enough that they don't repeat, but making sure everyone in the organization gets enough information and insight to understand the issues and react appropriately when they come up.

Finally, trainings don't always need to happen in the flesh -- a lot of smaller things your organization does can contribute to ongoing learning. For example:

* A special newsletter can be developed for the Board.
* Board members can receive copies of the organization's general newsletter.
* Develop a listserv or an interactive website exclusively for Board members.
* Generic tip sheets on Board development can be sent to all members for review.

These ideas are certainly easier to carry out (in many ways) than live Board trainings, and might have their place in your organization.

For trainings done together, one key point is to attract the largest number of Board members to trainings. One possibility is to include a brief training - perhaps half an hour - at each Board meeting, so that it is seen as a regular part of the business of the Board.

Another issue is how to conduct trainings. They definitely don't all have to be the same. You can bring in people to conduct some of the training, and you might do others internally, depending upon the resources and expertise available, and the form you want sessions to take.

For example, training sessions can be self-generated and -conducted, using discussion and peer supervision to address issues. They can also conducted by program participants or staff members, depending on the topic. An accountant on the Board could do training on tax issues, a lawyer on legal responsibility, a doctor on health issues, etc.

Some possibilities for training topics (in no particular order):

* Board responsibilities and legal issues (liability, conflict of interest, etc.)
* Discussion of the organization's vision, mission, philosophy, etc. - where they came from, what's the foundation (theoretical, political, or otherwise), etc.
* Financial issues - how the organization's finances work, where the money comes from, current status, etc.
* Fundraising
* How Boards work
* How to argue productively in meetings
* How to be a productive Board member
* Interpersonal relations/conflict resolution
* More on legal issues (indemnification, tax issues, lawsuits)
* Needs, concerns, demographics, etc. of the target population
* PR
* Problem solving
* Program evaluation
* Relations with staff
* Relations with the community
* Staff compensation and benefits
* Strategic planning - why you'd want to and how to do it
* The actual work of the organization - program or other activities: what do people actually do every day, in their interactions with target population and others?
* The Board's relationship to the organization

Special topic 2: Board members who need extra help

Sometimes, you will have new Board members who may need more than a simple orientation. This is especially true if your organization asks participants or other people with less formal education to be Board members.

From the former director of a Massachusetts-based literacy organization:

The Literacy Project Board always included students, and they always had trouble figuring out what they were doing there, how the Board worked, what was expected of them, etc. Most of them had not only ever been on a Board before; they had never been part of a deliberative body of any kind before - no committee, no PTA...nothing. The result was they had no idea what was going on, and were often too diffident to say so. They would nod their heads, speak when spoken to, and generally feel lost and stupid. They also often felt caught between two worlds because of their position. Most students saw the Board as part of another world: it was the body that ran the organization, and was made up of "important" people (actually most of them were human service types and teachers, but one person's "important..."). Thus a student on the Board took on an aura that she didn't necessarily want.

The point is that all of this needs to be addressed if you have participants or other low-income or less-educated people on the Board, and it isn’t easy. Even after we figured out what was going on and tried to deal with it, we found it really hard to devise orientation and training that spoke to the problem in a way that students could respond to. We were still trying when I left, although we had made some progress.

It's important that your organization thinks about these issues if you have similar people coming onto the Board. Other, similar issues may come up if new members join who...

* Are simply very shy by nature
* Are the first or only woman/minority/young person on the Board
* Don't speak English as their first language

Certainly, there are no easy answers to questions like these. However, it's important that these issues aren't ignored, and that they don't come as a complete surprise to organizations that are trying to be inclusive.

Section 6: Maintaining a Board of Directors

1. **How do you maintain an effective Board of Directors?**
2. **Develop a system to assist Board members in understanding the Board and their roles on it.**

At a minimum, this includes:

* Furnishing clear job descriptions for members. When new members come on board, they should know exactly what they've signed on for before they say yes. This includes time commitment, what kind of fundraising they will be expected to do, and so on. Sometimes a new member may be asked to sign off on a brief statement of roles and responsibilities before formally joining the Board, to make sure that she is clear on what's involved.
* Making sure Board members have a clear, written understanding of the way things are and why. This generally includes giving members copies of the constitution or bylaws of the organization, its policies, and minutes of Board meetings.

One simple, helpful way to do this is to provide all of this in a Board member manual that's designed in a loose-leaf notebook. That way, pages can easily be added or replaced.

Whatever way your organization might choose to do it, this material should serve as an orientation for new members, over and above any more formal or oral orientation they might receive later on. Chapter 9, Section 5: Welcoming and Training New Members to a Board of Directors, offers more information on this topic.

1. **Design a process for welcoming, training, and mentoring new members.**

Again, this topic is fully discussed in Chapter 9, Section 5: Welcoming and Training New Members to a Board of Directors.

1. **Maintain a healthy, effective relationship with paid staff.**

There are several good ways to do this, including:

* Creating other opportunities for the Board to better understand the work done by staff members. For example, Board members might tour the organization's facilities during normal working hours; or they might help staff a booth at a local festival.
* Inviting staff members (and even interested volunteers) to meetings. In many or even most organizations, the Executive Director or key staff person attends Board meetings as a matter of course. However, it's often worthwhile for staff members to attend meetings as well. In some organizations, staff and volunteers give regular presentations at Board meetings. These can serve to update Board members on the immediate needs, progress, and opportunities available to the organization.
* Making sure the staff is getting the support they need. Board members should regularly ask the Executive Director what would be helpful in getting things done. They can also ask other staff members, who might be less willing to approach the Board. And finally, visit the organization, with an eye towards what else could help things be more comfortable, more efficient, and just all around nicer for the people working in and helped by the organization every day.

Of course, all of this isn't a one-sided event. The Executive Director, in particular, is often informally or formally responsible for maintaining a healthy and effective relationship with the Board. Both sides need to do their part to ensure the best association possible.

1. **Hold effective meetings.**

All of us have been frustrated by unproductive meetings, as well as pleasantly surprised by how well a different meeting went. Holding effective meetings is an art that is critical to effective Board maintenance. It is discussed most thoroughly in Chapter 16, Section 1: Conducting Effective Meetings. What follows are some additional points that might also be helpful.

* Have set, understood rules to give structure to meetings. For example, many Board members swear by Robert's Rules of Order. Having these rules allow you to keep members on task without creating hard feelings.

Of course, not all Boards follow Robert's, and some deliberately choose not to. They may see those rules as too formal and limiting. They may develop their own operating procedures, procedures that work for them. But for any Board, the key point is to have set, understood rules.

The following suggestions come from The Board Cafe (http://www.boardcafe.org/)

* Be sure to find a balance between bigger issues and the day-to-day work of the organization. Take time to report on the institution's work. (This is often done by the Executive Director or other staff members.) It's easy to forget and fall into the habit of only dealing with "bigger" issues - that's important, but you need to stay grounded.
* Bring in experts to lead discussions on different topics.
* Finally, make sure everyone says something during the meeting. If you're chairing, invite quiet board members to speak by asking them directly for their opinions on the topic at hand, or through encouragement in a private conversation. You can also encourage others to speak without putting direct pressure on them by saying something like, "Any other thoughts on this?" (Looking around the room) "Sylvester? Natasha?"
* Make sure members (especially new members) have the opportunity to get to know one another. After all, that's one of the main reasons we all joined the boards we did! Name tags can be helpful when there are new members present, and snacks before or after every meeting are always appreciated. You might even ask the meeting chair to add to one of the agendas that you'll be buying the first round of drinks for Board members who join you after the meeting!
* Try an unconventional place to meet as part of "stealth board education." If you're on the Board of a performing arts organization, why not meet on stage once a year? If you're on the board of an independent school, try holding a meeting in the science lab or the school library. A food bank? Try having a meeting in the middle of the warehouse.
* Work with the executive director to put together a readable, relevant, interesting Board packet that goes out to Board members at least a week ahead of the meeting.

On the other hand, the opposite situation may also occur -- Board members' time gets taken up with the nitty-gritty stuff, and the larger issues go unaddressed. The Board must find a balance between dealing with the immediate and concrete, and the longer term and more general. Sometimes this can't be done well in a given meeting, or even in meetings in general, so some of it can and perhaps should be done "off line" in smaller task groups.

1. **Maintain a sensible work level for Board members.**

The idea here is that each Board member should have something to do; this should be part of the up-front expectation. If there is nothing for a Board member to do, he's less likely to feel effective, to stay committed, and to stick around. Of course, if there is too much to do, the Board member is also likely to look for an exit. It's a question of balance, of finding something for each member to do, but not too much. Trying to maintain this balance can be a staff responsibility, the responsibility of the Chair of the Board or other officers, or it can be jointly shared.

1. **Develop a policy for dealing with urgent (and not so urgent) matters between meetings.**

This is the "between the lines" work -- the work that goes on between meetings, which often makes up much or even most of the organization's work. This includes committee and task group work, informal contacts, and so on. There are many different ways to do this. A couple of popular ways to help do so often include:

* Communication by E-mail can be a lifesaver for larger groups that are spread out geographically.
* Developing a small internal newsletter to be sent out to Board members regularly or as needed
* Having a designated "point person" who distributes information to everyone
* Phone trees -- these are especially helpful for small, local Boards

As with point five above, sometimes this is a staff responsibility, other times that of the Chair or an Executive committee -- but in any case, it's important to have such a policy.

On many Boards, the Executive Committee -- usually the officers, often joined by committee chairs -- handles any between-meeting emergencies or crises. When something arises that calls for a Board vote, however, the Board should have a procedure for contacting and polling members that satisfies any legal requirements and conforms to the organization's bylaws. All Board members should be aware of this procedure -- through the Board handbook or other Board information -- and it should be spelled out in the bylaws as well, so that any votes taken between meetings will be legitimate

1. **Define terms of membership.**

Developing terms of membership is a broad topic, under which your Board will need to answer a short list of questions of what's best for your group. These questions include:

**How will you choose your officers?**

Every Board will do this differently; try to find a system that works for you. One Board we know elects its presidents for three years: one year as president-elect, a second year as president, and a third year as the outgoing president. Other Boards have formal policies, or informal understandings, where the vice-chair one year becomes the chair the next time around. In both instances, these policies help the Board maintain a strong sense of continuity of leadership.

**Will your Board be staggered?**

As for the larger Board, the terms can be of uniform length, but staggered so that a constant percent of Board members complete their terms in a given year. (Half, if it's a two-year term.) This system can help maintain a healthy duality of experience and fresh ideas.

Probably the most common way of staggering terms is by using three groups and three-year terms. This way, there are never less than 2/3 experienced members on the Board. Obviously, this makes no sense for a small Board say, fewer than about 12.

But for Boards larger than that, it can really help with both continuity and effectiveness.

With a brand new Board, this can be set up by giving members different lengths of terms. For example, half the members might be given two-year terms, and the other half one-year terms. This sets up the staggered process; it can be done by lot.

**Will your Board have term limits?**

All Boards have the additional choice of whether members and officers who have completed their terms can run again, or whether it wishes to impose term limits.

**How will you ensure a diverse membership?**

Whatever type of organization your Board represents, it will be important to ensure that Board membership remains diverse. This diversity can and generally should represent a wide continuum: racial, geographic, religious, socioeconomic, and so on. It's especially important that the Board continuously represents the people it tries to help.

It's important to remember, though, that in some cases you might want people on your Board who have no or very little experience dealing with this type of group. These people may very well need special or extra training for program participants or others. They may feel (rightly, in many cases) that they have no idea what's going on, and don't see how they can contribute. Sometimes they have difficulty reading and understanding Board communications minutes, plans, etc. They need not only training, but a lot of support --perhaps a mentor from among the other Board members -- in order to learn how to function on the Board and give it the advantage of their experience and point of view.

Some Boards have a Nominating Committee (either formal or informal) whose charge it is to be on the lookout for new Board members, with various predetermined skills and appropriate diversity. The Nominating Committee may also have the responsibility of contacting prospective Board members in advance and sounding them out.

The general idea here is always to have potential new members in the pipeline. The leadership ought to be thinking in multiple time periods -- present and future, and maybe also past -- and to be doing so in parallel.

Chapter 7: Encouraging Involvement in Community Work, offers many different suggestions for doing this.

1. **Be aware of state and national laws that will affect the Board and the organization.**

Depending on where you are and what you are doing, there are many different laws that will determine, at least in part, what you can or cannot do. One example is personal liability of Board members -- can individual Board members be sued for something the Board or organization does? In at least some places, the answer is yes. Or if your organization decides to raise money by selling raffle tickets (or cookbooks or brownies or T-shirts or anything else), how do you, as an officially designated 501(c) (3) organization, deal with that? And so on.

It's often a very good idea to have a lawyer or someone else who is very familiar with non-profit law as a Board member to help answer these questions.

One thing is certain: you want to know the rules before you play the game. It is always the Board's responsibility to keep staff abreast of laws and regulations, not the other way around.

1. **Develop and maintain a conflict-of-interest policy.**

This should be a standard part of a packet given to new members. All Board members and executive staff should review the policy when they start their roles with the organization. It is also common practice to sign a paper that acknowledges that they have read and will comply with the policy.

1. **Organize an annual retreat.**

This can be informal or formal; it may just be an annual, longer-than-usual meeting with the purpose of planning for the year ahead. It's important to have a regular block of time set aside for looking at the "big picture."

At these retreats, ask the Board to decide the year's agenda. Also, offer Board members the opportunity to say what organizational programs or community issues they would like to learn more about over the coming year, and add these items to the agendas of upcoming meetings.

Finally, this time can and should also be a time for members to evaluate (at least informally) the Board's work over the past year, and what changes they believe should occur in the coming year. Evaluation of what's already happened should always be the first step in planning ahead.

1. **Have regular (if infrequent) formal evaluations.**

Along with the more casual evaluations we suggest be built into annual retreats, we suggest a formal evaluation every two to four years. This can be a good time to discuss how things are going both among the Board (are our meetings as effective as they could be?) as well as with the organization the Board serves. These evaluations can also be a time to look at the organization's by-laws, and make sure they are still in keeping with the organization’s needs, or if they should be modified. Chapter 38: Some Methods for Evaluating Comprehensive Community Health Initiatives offers suggestions of how you might decide to do this.

1. **Celebrate your accomplishments!**

A Board is more likely to be maintained if it is getting something done (which in turn depends on structure, leadership, etc.) But the social relationships, and the good feelings that come from them, are at least as important. People will come to Board meetings, and work hard for the Board, when they feel they are being valued and that they like the others who are there -- when they are doing something that is both productive and fun.

Section 7. Writing Bylaws

1. **How do you write bylaws?**

Before you begin, think a bit about whether you really need bylaws and what purpose they will serve for your organization. For non-profit organizations, bylaws are actually a legal document that the organization is responsible for upholding. For organizations that provide direct service, bylaws usually don't apply to the organization as a whole; instead, they might delineate the board's powers as opposed to those of the Director. Towns work the same way: there are bylaws that specify what people can and can't do (just like state laws), but the various boards often have their own bylaws. So take some time to think about what the bylaws are for - the board? The organization as a whole? Once you have a good idea of the purpose of your bylaws, you can proceed with writing them.

1. **Gather examples of the bylaws of similar organizations for reference.**

Seeing how other groups like yours have written their bylaws will be immensely helpful. Getting examples from several different groups will let you see a good range of styles and ideas. You shouldn't just copy another group's bylaws and then stick your organization's name in here and there, but other groups' bylaws can make a good rough guide.

1. **Decide by whom and how the bylaws will be written and approved.**

Will it be your board of directors, your officers, your steering committee, or some combination of these groups? Will you approve portions of the bylaws by consensus, or will each part have to be agreed upon unanimously? Before you start, know how you're going to make these decisions, and then choose one person to be in charge of writing up the first draft and making additional changes. If the bylaws are going to be long or complex, you might divide up the writing tasks, with each of two or more people writing particular sections.

1. **Write a first draft of your bylaws.**

The group that will approve the bylaws should meet at least once to come up with a rough outline for the writer before writing begins. Depending on how much you already know about how your organization is going to operate, the first draft may be easy for one person to complete on his or her own or it may require you to meet as a group and work together. This is not the time to get into lengthy discussions about the particulars of the bylaws; instead, you should put together enough generally agreed upon information for the writer to compose a first draft, and leave the specifics for later discussion.

When writing your first draft, you may find that filling in a general bylaws outline (such as the one included in Tools at the end of this section) is much easier than writing it from scratch. You can leave blanks on specific things you're not sure about; those can easily be filled in when you meet again as a group.

Below is a list of items that typically appear in bylaws. You may decide to alter this somewhat for your own purposes, so keep in mind that your bylaws don't necessarily have to be arranged in this order or include all of these components, and you may decide to add components of your own.

**Article I. Name and purpose of the organization.**

There should be no doubt as to the official name of your organization. If there are other names used to refer to your group (shortened versions that are easier to say in casual conversation, for example), you might mention here that your group is also known as these names. The name of the organization is usually indicated in bylaws with the words, "This organization shall be known as" or "The official name of this organization is" as seen in the example below.

Clearly defining your group's purpose helps you keep your focus. Will the primary purpose be service, social, political, or something else? Is the organization focused on a single issue, a set of issues, a geographic area, or a specific population?

**Example:**

From the bylaws of the Baylor University Staff Council (http://www.baylor.edu/staff\_council/index.php?id=12604):

**ARTICLE I. Name and Purpose**

**Section 1.** The name of this organization shall be the Baylor University Staff Council.

**Section 2.** The purpose of this organization is to advance the exchange of information within the staff of the University by providing a forum for the expression and exchange of ideas and concerns of the staff at Baylor University.

This may also be a good place to include your vision and mission statements (see Chapter 8, Section 2: Proclaiming Your Dream: Developing Vision and Mission Statements).

**Article II. Membership.**

This explains what the members' rights are, what their limitations are, and what, if any, requirements there are for membership (if membership is open to anyone, say so!). It should also clearly state any required fees, attendance requirements, and any circumstances in which membership can be revoked. If you are going to allow honorary memberships, the particulars about that should be included here as well.

**Example:**

From the bylaws of the University of Virginia's College at Wise Student Government Association (http://people.uvawise.edu/sga/documents/constitution\_html.aspx):

**ARTICLE II: Membership**

**Section 1:** All persons enrolled for six or more semester hours at The University of Virginia's College at Wise are considered members of the Student Government Association during the time of their enrolment and shall be entitled to all the rights and privileges thereof.

**Article III. Officers and decision-making.**

In this section of your bylaws, you should explain:

* Amendments: How changes to the bylaws should be made. Usually it requires previous notice (for example, telling members at two consecutive meetings that a bylaw amendment will be voted on at the third meeting, or sending out a postcard to all members telling them that a bylaw amendment will be voted on and when) and a two-thirds majority vote.
* Committees: What, if any, standing committees (committees that are ongoing) there will be, how special committees (committees that only exist for the duration of completing a specific task or project) will be formed, how committee chairs will be chosen, and how members will be appointed to those committees.
* Decisions: How decisions are to be made and how many members and/or officers are required for quorum (the number that must be present for official business to take place).
* Governing structure: The pecking order in your organization; who reports to whom in terms of the overall governing structure. The bylaws will explain that the Director is hired and overseen by the Board, for instance, but won't set out who other staff members report to or what their duties are: that's the province of the Director and the day-to-day operation of the organization.
* Officers: Official offices of the group, with their correct titles and required duties specifically outlined, and how long their terms should run.
* Procedures for filling and vacating offices: If an office is to be elected, who votes on it and how; if an office is to be appointed, who makes the appointment? Also, what must happen in order to remove someone from office?

There are numerous other areas your bylaws might cover, depending on the nature of your organization. Some common ones include standing (i.e., permanent) and other committees, conflict of interest, indemnification of officers (this means that officers and board members can't be held personally liable for the debts of the organization, or prosecuted for illegal organizational activities, unless they were caused by the illegal actions of one or more particular officers), the specific duties of the board as opposed to those of the director or CEO -- the list can go on. Try to think about all the structures that have to do with governing the organization. The more nearly complete your bylaws are, and the better they reflect the actual character and workings of the organization, the more useful they'll be.

**Article IV. General, special, and annual meetings.**

This part of your bylaws should explain how often meetings are to be held. This doesn't have to be very specific, but it should be clear whether the organization will meet on a regular basis or if it will meet only as needed. The bylaws should explain who has the authority to call meetings and how notice of upcoming meetings must be given to members. You should also describe your meeting procedures (i.e. whether you're going to use Robert's Rules of Order, the prerogatives of the Chair, who gets the floor and how, etc.)

Special meetings should also be covered in this section of the bylaws. Special meetings are sometimes restricted to the board or the officers. This section should explain how special meetings are to be arranged, who has the authority to call a special meeting, what sort of business may be conducted at a special meeting, and who may attend.

Finally, if your organization will be having an annual meeting of any sort, the specifics of how that will work should be included in this part of the bylaws. Annual reports should be covered here as well - when they'll be delivered, what they'll include, who prepares them, etc.

**Example:**

From the bylaws of the Producers Guild of America (http: //www.producersguild.com/members/constit/)

**ARTICLE IV: Meetings of Members**

**Section 1.** Regular Meetings. The Annual Meeting of the members of the Guild shall be held on the first Monday in May in each year in the County of Los Angeles, at such hour and place as the Board may designate, for the purpose of electing Directors and Officers, considering reports of the affairs of this Guild and transacting such business as may be properly brought before the meeting. If, in the opinion of the Board of Directors, the Annual Meeting cannot be conveniently held on the first Monday of May, it shall be empowered to call said Meeting on a Monday during either the month of May or the month of June of the same year.

**Section 2.** Special Meetings. Special meetings of the members of the Guild shall be held whenever called by the Board of Directors, and such special meetings shall also be held within thirty days after being so requested in writing by at least 20% of the members in good standing, which request shall specify the purpose of such meeting and shall be addressed to the Secretary of the Guild. If upon receipt of any such request the Secretary shall fail to call and give notice of a special meeting, the members requesting shall have the right to fix a time and place for such meeting and give notice thereof in the manner hereinafter specified.

**Section 3.** Notice of Meetings. Notice of the time and place of meetings of the members, whether regular meetings or special meetings shall be sent to each member of the Guild not less than seven, nor more than fourteen days before the date of said meeting. All such notices shall be addressed to the members at the last address registered with the Guild, and shall be given by personal delivery, telegraph or mail, telegraph or postage charges prepaid.

**Section 4.** Adjourned Meetings and Notice Thereof. Any members meetings, regular or special, may be adjourned from time to time by a vote of the majority of the members present, in person or in proxy, and when any member’s meeting is so adjourned no notice of adjournment need be given unless the adjournment shall be for a period in excess of thirty (30) days.

**Article V. Board of Directors**

If your organization has a board, this section should describe what its role is in the group, how many people will be on the board, how long a board member's term will run, how often the board will meet, and how board members will be appointed or selected. It should also designate how many board members must be present for quorum, and how members can be removed from the board.

**Example:**

From the bylaws of the Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas (http://www.fawco.org/)

**ARTICLE V: Board of Directors**

**Section 1:** Number, selection. The Board of Directors shall consist of the elected officers of the Corporation and the Secretary.

**Section 2:** Qualifications. At the time of election, all elected Directors must be American members of regular or Associate member clubs.

**Section 3:** Vacancies. Any vacancy occurring among the Directors between Biennial Conferences shall be filled in the following manner:

a. The office of President shall be assumed by an elected officer only, in the order of First, Second and Third Vice-Presidents. b. In the absence or resignation of a Vice-President, the President shall appoint a replacement with the approval of the Board of Directors. c. The Assistant Treasurer shall assume the duties of the Treasurer in her absence or resignation. d. The appointment of a Secretary and an Assistant Treasurer pro tempore is left to the discretion of the acting President.

**Section 4:** Powers.

1. The Board of Directors shall have full charge of the property and business of the Corporation, with full power and authority to manage and conduct same, subject to the instructions of the Council. c.
2. The Board of Directors shall have the power to remove Officers and Directors for cause, pursuant to the instructions of the Council.
3. The Corporation shall be governed by the Board of Directors.

**Section 5:** Meetings. There shall be at least one meeting of the Board of Directors annually.

**Section 6:** Quorum. Two-thirds of the members of the Board of Directors present or represented by proxy shall constitute a quorum at a Board meeting.

**Section 7:** Resignations. All resignations shall be made in writing and addressed to the President.

After you have completed your draft of the bylaws, make copies for all the people who will be involved in the process of approving them. If possible, get copies to them in advance of your meeting so they'll have a chance to go over them carefully before meeting.

1. **Meet as a group to discuss the proposed bylaws.**

Get copies of the proposed bylaws out to the group that's going to edit or go over them well in advance of the meeting so they'll have time to reflect and can have their questions, issues, prospective changes, or concerns ready. This will not only save time, but it will also make it much more likely that errors or ill-considered bylaws will be caught, and that the final version will mirror what everyone really wants.

Get together and go over the bylaws together. You may find this really calls for one person taking charge and reading off the bylaws for approval, or if you have a smaller or more casual group you may take turns reading the articles and sections aloud. Go over each article and section individually for approval, and do so carefully. It may seem tedious, but your bylaws are very important and should be handled with attention to detail.

This is also the time you should consider whether your bylaws are fair and democratic. Do they distribute the power in your organization in a fair way? Do they allow members enough of a voice in how the organization is run? A good list of questions to ask yourself when looking over your bylaws can be found at the following link: http://www.parli.com/newsletter/news697.aspx

Take note and discuss any changes, voting when necessary. Depending on how long and how complicated your bylaws are, this may take more than one meeting. When you've worked through and made all the changes, adjourn to have the final draft made.

1. **Complete and approve the final draft.**

Again, make sure that people get copies ahead of time. If the whole membership has to vote on the bylaws, you need to figure out how that's going to happen, especially if the membership is large. You may find it easiest to send them out a letter explaining the history of the bylaws (who wrote them, what the process was, etc.) and an approve /disapprove form to send back. If you do it this way, there should be a last date to receive the votes, and tallies will be made based on either the whole membership or the number of votes received. Another option would be to designate a meeting at which the bylaws will be voted on and give the membership written notice about the meeting in advance.

Make all the agreed-upon changes to the bylaws and meet again to go over the final draft. When everyone is satisfied that the changes have been made correctly and the bylaws are as they should be, you should vote to approve bylaws. The date that the final draft was approved should appear at the bottom of the bylaws in all future copies.

1. **Be sure copies are given to anyone who needs them.**

All officers, members of your board, and committee chairs should be given copies of the bylaws. Also, you should either give copies to all members, or make copies easily available to those who want them.

1. **Use your bylaws!**

So now your new bylaws are in effect - that's wonderful! But they're not worth much if you don't actually use them. If your organization has a parliamentarian - an officer or a consultant who advises the officers and board on parliamentary procedure and generally makes sure that meetings are run smoothly and according to your bylaws - then he or she can help remind people whenever the organization, one of its officers, a board member, or a regular member is doing something contrary to your bylaws.

Otherwise, you will just have to make sure that your officers make an effort to keep the bylaws in mind when doing your organization's business. Be sure that a copy of the bylaws is handy any time that official organization business is being conducted. If there is ever any question about how exactly you should proceed, don't hesitate to consult the bylaws. And if you come upon a situation you didn't think of when writing your bylaws, consider dealing with that in the final step of the bylaw process, which we'll talk about next.

1. **Review and amend your bylaws periodically.**

Getting together as a group from time to time to go over your bylaws and, if necessary, amend them will insure that your board, officers, and members remain familiar with the bylaws. It also will allow you to gauge whether your bylaws accurately reflect the direction of the organization, whether changes need to be made in the light of events since the bylaws were written, or if any clarifications need to be made.

Bylaw amendments can be suggested at any time, either by anyone, if that's the way you prefer it, or by a group of people (if you use this method, be sure to specify how many people must propose the change), or by any board member whatever specifications work best for your organization. Not matter what; there should be room for those kinds of suggestions whenever there's an issue.

Section 8. Including Youth on Your Board, Commission, or Committee

1. **Why include youth on boards, committees, and other similar bodies?**

It sounds like it might take some work with your board to get it to the point where it will accept youth members. Why make the effort? There are a large number of good reasons, both philosophical and practical:

1. **Your board can gain insight into the youth perspective on issues and on its actions.**

No one person can speak for all those he represents, and one or two young board members can’t claim to know what every teen in the community thinks and feels about something. They can give their own perspective, however, and relay the feelings of those of their peers they’ve spoken to. They’re far more likely to have a window on the general attitudes of community teens than most adult board members are, and their information can help the board in making important strategic decisions about issues that affect youth or about involving them.

1. **Youth can bring new and creative ideas.**

The inexperience of adolescents can be a minus, but it can also be a plus. Because they come at problems and issues without a lot of preconceptions, youth may be able to look at them in new ways and with new ideas. They are often better at “thinking out of the box” than adults are, because their box is so much less well-defined – they’re not as strongly influenced by what they “know.”

1. **Youth can inject new life into your board**.

Young people are idealistic and energetic, and their freshness can bring passion and direction to a board that’s gone stale, or that has ceased to be (or never has been) excited or innovative.

1. **Board membership can make youth more conscious of and knowledgeable about community issues and the larger factors that affect their – and others’ – lives.**

By including youth on your board you’re helping to build community capacity for the future.

1. **Youth board membership makes your group more inclusive and participatory.**

Having a mix of ages, genders, backgrounds, etc. that reflects the whole community often leads to better decisions, grounded more strongly in reality, than does having a less diverse group making decisions that have consequences for the whole community. (See Chapter 18, Section 2: Participatory Approaches to Planning Community Interventions.)

1. **Having teen board members is more likely to convince community youth to participate in your organization or support your positions.**

If youth know that they’re honestly represented and that their concerns are considered, they’re much more apt to buy into and support your decisions than if decisions are made for them without their input.

1. **By including youth on your board, you’re making a statement to the community about their importance and about their ability to contribute.**

Particularly if you’re an organization that serves youth and/or addresses youth issues, it’s important to let the community know that you believe in young people. By inviting them to join your board and giving them responsibility, you’re demonstrating your integrity, and showing that you’re not just paying lip service to the idea of youth capacity.

1. **As a result of their interactions with youth board members, adults on the board may develop more positive attitudes toward young people.**

Seeing teens performing well when they’re given responsibility will make these board members, who may have been sceptical initially, stronger advocates for youth in the community.

An actual example from a slightly different context:

Dave, a local Lions Club officer engaged in helping to set up a summer fair and carnival at the high school, looked down the street and saw a group of youth approaching in full Goth regalia – piercings, all-black clothes, and leather dog collars, spiked and dyed hair. His reaction was “Here comes trouble,” but they paid for their admission, and there was no reasonable excuse for keeping them out.

Later in the afternoon, a thunderstorm arose suddenly, with pelting rain and violent winds. Tent supports began to give way, and Dave, who was in charge of the event, rushed to try to control the damage. If the big tents broke loose, people could be injured or worse. As he struggled with a tent, he realized that he had help. All the Goth teenagers had immediately sprung into action to help, tying down tents, calming frightened fairgoers, and generally taking charge of the situation. Let Dave tell the rest:

“I thought to myself, how stupid was I? If I’d tried to keep those kids out, anything could have happened. I judged them without knowing them, and I realized I do that all the time. It’s just plain wrong. I’ll never do that again, and I tell this story every time I get the chance, so other people won’t do it either.”

1. **You can increase the credibility of your group, both among youth and in the community in general, by acting on your principles.**
2. **If you’re a grassroots organization or initiative, having a diverse board that includes youth membership is likely to be consistent with your philosophy.**

That kind of consistency is extremely important, especially if inclusiveness or youth empowerment are among your goals.

1. **You’re encouraging youth leadership and developing the next generation of community leaders.** See Chapter 13, Sections 5: Developing a Community Leadership Corps, and 7: Leadership Development Across the Life Span.)
2. **Mention some challenges to youth board membership.**

**Challenges to youth board membership**

It’s clear from the list above that there can be great benefits to inviting young people to join your board. As with many benefits, however, there may be accompanying challenges as well. Most can be overcome, but it’s important for a board to understand what it might need to deal with in the interests of gaining a youth voice.

1. **Youth may need help with meeting skills.**

As with some adult board members, youth may not have experience with meeting etiquette, rules of order, how to follow the flow of discussion, etc. They may need time, training, and perhaps mentors to bring them up to speed.

1. **Most youth simply don’t have the background of knowledge and experience that most adult board members do.**

This can work as both an advantage (see number 2 above) and a disadvantage. On the minus side, they may come in with biases or assumptions that are not based on fact (this can also be true of adult board members, but it’s somewhat more likely with adolescents), and may not start with the educational background and knowledge to understand some discussions that adult board members take for granted.

1. **Young people may be hesitant about speaking out.**

Sometimes youth may need lots of encouragement before they’re comfortable enough to speak up and feel that their opinions are valued when they do..

1. **Adolescents – even those that are generally quite mature – can be impulsive**.

They may express their emotion, disagreement, or anger in ways that most adults wouldn’t in a board setting. Adult board members may need to be patient and understanding of the needs of youth members, and youth members may have to learn both to understand when their actions are inappropriate, and to control their impulses.

1. **Incorporating youth members takes time.**

Board meetings may be less efficient and take longer until the youth members learn the meeting skills and gain the background of knowledge and judgment that will make them true peers. With some, that will not take long at all – perhaps a meeting or two. Others may take longer, and adult board members may have to be patient.

1. **Adult board members may have to change their assumptions about what youth are capable of.**

That can take time, and may lead to conflict along the way. It may be hard for some adult board members to take youth members seriously, and that can delay or derail those youth members being able to contribute to the extent that they’re able. On the other hand, if those attitudes change, those adults could become advocates for youth abilities in the community, and pave the way for youth taking responsibility in other circumstances as well.

1. **While youths may be better advocates for the organization or initiative with other youth, they may have less credibility in the community with adults, especially those who are more conservative.**

None of these drawbacks are fatal, not all (or any) will necessarily apply to any given board, and resolving them can lead to positive outcomes above and beyond the advantages that youth board members bring.

Section 9. Understanding and Writing contracts and Memoranda of Agreement

1. **What are contracts and memoranda of agreement?**

**A contract** is a legal document, enforceable in court that governs a relationship involving "consideration" - an exchange of money or some other commodity for goods, services, or something else of value. A subcontract is a contract between a contractor (an organization or individual directly paid or funded to perform a service or deliver a product) and another organization or individual the contractor pays to provide part of the service or product in question.

**A memorandum of agreement** is not legally enforceable, but describes the terms of an agreement between or among two or more parties to cooperate or collaborate in some way. These agreements don't involve an exchange - if they did, they'd be contracts.

A contract or subcontract should be used in any relationship involving an exchange, particularly one involving money. A memorandum of agreement is more appropriate in situations relating to organizations collaborating on a service, agreeing to refer participants to one another, offering mutual support, or engaging in an activity together.

In reading a contract, try to follow these guidelines:

* Be sure that the terms of the contract are acceptable to you, and don't involve promising something you can't do, or threaten damage to your organization.
* Don't be put off or frightened by legal language.
* If you don't understand something, ask for clarification from the writer of the contract, and/or check with a lawyer or other knowledgeable person you trust to make sure you know what you're signing.
* Learn the standard phrases and conditions you're likely to find in a number of contracts, particularly those from public funders.
* Negotiate any questionable points before you sign.
* Read the whole document carefully.

The guidelines for reading a memorandum of agreement are essentially the same. These are usually not written in legal language, and may be quite simple, so reading and understanding them may be much easier. Even though it's not a legal document, a memorandum of agreement is a promise, and should be treated by signers in the same way as a contract: you should consider yourself bound by it, and, if you sign it, you should make every effort to carry out its terms.

The touchstone for drafting a good contract or memorandum of agreement is absolute clarity about everything the document covers. In the case of a contract, that means describing exactly the who, what, how, when, and where of the exchange, as well as:

* Any other obligations or conditions attached to any party
* Anything else that's important to either party
* Evaluation of the contractor
* Termination of the contract by any party for cause or without cause
* The specifics of payment

If the contract is to stand up in court, its expectations have to be clear enough to be enforced. (It's a good idea to work out the contract details with the contractor, if that's possible. That way, it's much more likely that the contract terms will be both feasible and acceptable, and the chances that the result will be exactly what's desired are much higher.)

Drafting a memorandum, as with reading one, is usually a lot simpler than drafting a contract. The Community Development Tool Box recommends, however, that you approach the process in the same way, aiming for as much clarity and specificity as possible. That way, there will be no misunderstandings or bad feeling about what the agreement includes. This result is even more probable if you and other parties to the agreement draft it together.

If you can follow these guidelines, your contracts or memoranda of agreement - whether you're the one who's writing them or the one signing on - have an excellent chance of achieving the results you hope for.

1. **When do you use a memorandum of agreement?**

Use a memorandum of agreement:

1. **To agree to affiliate in a particular way.** This may encompass some of the activities described above, but May also entail a more formal agreement to combine some elements of your organizations, or to work together in specific ways.
2. **To agree to share something.** This may be space or equipment, or may cover the long-term loan of furniture or equipment.
3. **To agree to work together in specific ways, or to collaborate if the opportunity arises.** Service providers might agree to engage in shared training or staff development, for example, or to look for mutual funding opportunities.
4. **To define a relationship between organizations that agrees to do something jointly, or to provide something other than goods or services.** Some examples of things organizations might agree to:

* To engage in or contribute to a particular activity, such as a comprehensive community assessment.
* To provide members for each other's boards of directors.
* To provide support (referrals, publicity, materials, etc.) for a new or ongoing program or initiative.
* To refer participants to each other.
* To use the services of a particular organization if those services are needed (e.g., if a participant in your youth leadership program needs a vocational assessment, you'll send him to the local community economic development program to get it, rather than somewhere else.)

A diverse group of organizations, including a women's crisis centre, a senior services organization, an adult literacy program, a community-run theatre, a family-planning program, and a youth services provider came together to look for funding opportunities that might involve two or more of them. Their purposes were to generate creative programs, and to find new and different sources of funding for all the organizations. They drafted a memorandum of agreement detailing their relationship, and describing how they would search for joint funding and how joint funding might work in different circumstances.

**Examination Assignment 5:**

**Draw up a contract and an agreement of understanding by your organization and another party**

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for forming Co-Location**

Between

**GVN, KUECHO and WDRO**

**Background information:**

The three Civil Society Organization (CSOs) are partners that have the same visions and shared objectives for strengthening communities and smaller groups in greater Lakes Region (Gok, Western and Eastern Lakes). For this reason, they were contracted by Mott MacDonald, a Euro-Consultant Firm implementing Water for Lakes Project to take part in implementation in areas of WASH, small group farming and VSLA. The project was funded by the Government of Kingdom of Netherlands through its Embassy in Juba.

Therefore, because of huge investments in these CSOs by ways of partnering and through experiences gained during the project implementation, coupling with successful mentorship by the project top management team, GVN, KUECHO and WDRO became interested in remaining joining their efforts to implement Civil Society Facility in form of Co-Location for the entire one year period of the project implementation.

**Overall objectives:**

* To gain an exposure about other teams approach to community interventions.
* To mutually foster cooperation and build team networking towards common agenda.
* To quickly gain experience and knowledge through each other.
* To reinforce individual attitudes and behaviors towards commitment to helping communities and small groups.

**Guiding Principles**

* Accountability
* Honesty
* Openness
* Perseverance
* Sincerity
* Team work spirit
* Tolerance
* Total commitment to communities’ services
* Transparency

**Terms:**

1. That in event of amendment of this Co-Location MOU, members the leading members of these three Organizations shall come together to agree on the replacing terms.
2. That the three Organizations shall throughout the project period be contributing equally to the cost of the following:
3. **Hiring of a main office within Rumbek town with all its equipment which include and not limited to; fuel, generator, furniture, computers, etc.**
4. **Mobility such as vehicles, motorcycles etc.**
5. **Staffs exchange visits in locations where each of the three Organizations will assigned to field activities.**
6. **Training Consultants for big capacity building trainings.**
7. That, the three Organizations having been fully inspired by the community dire need to be given quality services by the national Civil Society Organizations, have amicably agreed to be bound and throughout guided by this Operation Co-Location MOU guiding principles and values.

That, the three Organizations shall equally enjoy the usage of these contributed assets as with the capacity building services in total compliance to the procedures and policies to be laid by the three organizations, pending to the contract awarded to implement the CSF project.

1. That, the three parties for this Operation Co-Location MOU shall always remain as; Green Village Network abbreviated as GVN, Kind United for Education and Community Health Organization (KUECHO) and Wulu Development and Rescue Organization abbreviated as WDRO.
2. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a summary statement of the agreement by three Civil Society Organizations that have amicably agreed to form an **Operation Co-Location** to bind them during the implementation of Civil Society Facility (CSF) Project in greater Lakes Region (Rumbek).

**Statement of Commitment.**

Having equally formulated the terms and conditions of this MOU and fully understood the contents, we have agreed to respect this document and totally be bound by the conditions stipulated in it until when amended by the three member Organizations.

**Signed on behalf of the respective Organizations;**

1. **Andrew Sebit Mathen: GVN Program Manager Date: 21.09.2019**
2. **John Majok Matuet: WDRO Executive Director Date: 21.09.2019**
3. **Michael Deng Kuau: KUECHO Program Manager Date: 21.09.2019**

Referencing list

(Fisher, Roger, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1991, PP. 117 – 121)

(Houle, C. 1997, Marinelle, F. July-August, 1998, Roth, S. August, 1998, Wood, M. 1995, Carver, J., 1990, Stoesz, E. and Raber, C. 1994, PP. 41 – 52, 56 – 62, 69 – 74 & 80 – 87)

(Internet web: online at <http://www.alaskaice.org>, PP. 100 – 102)

(Internet web: online at <http://www.attny.com>)

(Internet web: online at <http://www.ncnb.org/>)

(Leuci, M.S. 1997, PP.19 – 24 & 29 – 39)

(Untermn, I. & Davis, R.H. 1984, PP.. 4 – 14)