

Corporation for National & Community Service
Montana State Office

IN-SERVICE TRAINING







Learning Circle A:

HELPING THE COMMUNITY MOBILIZE

LC: HELPING THE COMMUNITY MOBILIZE LEARNING OUTCOMES

As a result of this session, participants will be able to:

	Dialogue about the mental models they use to inform their community organizing.
	Identify and discuss Back-of-The-Room Facilitation (BOTR) techniques they can use in community meetings.
	Discuss a delegation process that will help support community capacity building.
	Reflect on their current effectiveness as a “coach” and clarify language that can help support the development of others.



PROPOSED AGENDA:

1. **Learning Circle Set-Up**
 - ✓ Welcome
 - ✓ Check-ins and introductions
 - ✓ Session overview, packet, working agreements
 - ✓ Resource exchange activity

2. **The Art & Science of Community Mobilization**
 - ✓ Wisdom & writings

3. **BOTR Meeting Facilitation Strategies**
 - ✓ Recipe for effective meetings
 - ✓ Meeting action, stop action, analysis of BOTR
 - ✓ Discussion of VISTA BOTR opportunities beyond meetings

4. **Delegating for Capacity Building**
 - ✓ A delegation process
 - ✓ Planning to delegate

5. **Coaching Another, Peer Coaching**
 - ✓ The power of coaching
 - ✓ Coaching others
 - ✓ Peer coaching

6. **Learning Circle Close-Out**
 - ✓ Summary of session, next steps
 - ✓ Closing remarks



COMMUNITY ORGANIZING Thoughts ...

“Community organization is the process by which community groups are helped in order to identify common problems or goals, mobilize resources, and develop and implement strategies for reaching goals they have set. Empowerment, the central concept in community organization, is an enabling process through which individuals or communities take control over their lives and their environment. Community organization is composed of several alternative change models, including locality development, social planning, and social action.”

(Center for Substance Abuse Prevention)

“As soon as several inhabitants of the United States have taken up an opinion or a feeling which they wish to promote in the world, they look for mutual assistance; and as soon as they have found each other out, they combine. From that moment they are no longer isolated men, but a power seen from afar.”

(Alexis de Tocqueville, 1826)

“Every living person has some gift or capacity of value to others. A strong community is a place that recognizes those gifts and ensures that they are given.”

(Kretzmann and McKnight, 1994)

“Of the good leader let it be said, we did this ourselves.”

(Attributed to Lao Tsu)

“From time to time there have been external enemies at our gates but there has always been the enemy within, the hidden and malignant inertia that foreshadows more certain destruction to our life and future than any nuclear warhead. There can be no darker or more devastating tragedy than the death of man’s faith in himself and in his power to direct his future.”

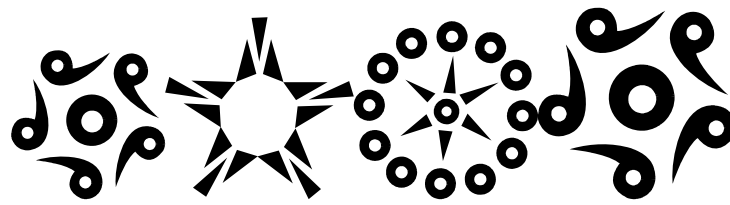
(Saul Alinsky)

“The organizer brings hope to the people.”

(Si Kahn)

“Pray for the dead, but fight like hell for the living.”

(Mother Jones)



Community Organizing

"Community organizing is the art and science of creating vehicles or organizations for ordinary people to use for participating in the social, political, environmental, and economic decisions that impact on their lives."

(Gamaliel Foundation - <http://www.gamaliel.org/>)

Top Tips

- Conduct frequent community meetings and other opportunities for residents to work together.
- Determine problems and other areas of concern that are important to community residents.
- Encourage residents to participate in addressing their community's issues and to have an active voice. Remember- strength exists in numbers and resident involvement leads to community empowerment!
- Conduct community outreach or informal surveys door to door to ensure that all residents have an opportunity to give input.
- Identify leaders in the community who have residents' support and can organize others.
- Clearly define specific community issues to focus on and what needs to be done.
- Create an action plan that is developed and supported by the community, not just a few community leaders.
- Include short-term, achievable goals to provide success early on. Long-range goals will require more time and commitment.
- Identify allies and enemies of the plan's strategies and goals.
- Communicate the plan's strategies and progress to the community frequently.
- Provide ongoing training for residents to build their community organizing and leadership skills.
- Generate additional resources to support community organizing activities and costs.
- Educate the community and local decision makers about the community's specific issues and advocate for successful strategies and outcomes.
- Recognize community members for their ongoing participation and celebrate success!

Online Resources and Tools

- **ACORN**
<http://www.acorn.org/>
Community organizations association dedicated to organizing the poor and improving low and moderate income neighborhoods.
- **Applied Research Center**
<http://www.arc.org>
Public policy, educational, and research institute whose work emphasizes issues of race and social change.
- **Assets Based Community Development Institute**
<http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/abcd.html>
Practical resources and tools for community builders to identify, nurture, and mobilize neighborhood assets.
- **Center for Community Change**
<http://www.communitychange.org/index.html>
Provides assistance to residents to improve their communities and change policies and institutions by developing their own organizations.
- **Citizens Handbook**
<http://www.vcn.bc.ca/citizens-handbook/>
A guide to building community.
- **Comm-Org**
<http://comm-org.wisc.edu/>
Provides information and resources on community organizing
- **Community Tool Box**
<http://ctb.ku.edu/>
Provides tips, tools, and resources on all aspects of community building including: visioning, facilitation, collaboration, media and communication, participation, planning, and evaluation.
- **Grassroots Innovative Policy Program (GRIPP)**
<http://www.arc.org/gripp/index.html>
Works with communities to support local policy development.
- **Midwest Academy**
<http://www.mindspring.com/~midwestacademy/>
Provides information and training for community organizers (see Web site's sample agenda.)
- **Organizer's Collaborative**
<http://www.organizenow.net/>
Collaborative effort for computer accessibility to support community-based, social change organizing.
- **Shelterforce Online**
<http://www.nhi.org/online/index.html>
Online housing and community development magazine.
- **Tenant Net**
www.tenant.net/Organize
Organizing tips.

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Community Planning and Development
<http://www.hud.gov/>
HUD's community organizing resources and tips.
- Urban Institute
<http://www.urban.org/>
An economic and social policy research organization.

Suggested Reading

- Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, 1997. *Community Building: What Makes It Work: A Review of Factors Influencing Successful Community Building*. To order, call 1-800-274-6024.
- Axel-Lute, Miriam, 1995. *In Their Own Hands: Colonias Organize*. Article describes how colonias activists have organized to address issues in communities along the Texas-Mexico border. To read online, click on link: <http://www.nhi.org/online/issues/82/colonias.html>
- Bobo, Kimberly A., Steve Max and Jacquelyn A. Kendall, 1996. *Organizing for Social Change: A Manual for Activists in the 1990s*. Comprehensive manual for grassroots organizers. Seven Locks Press, second edition, ISBN:0929765419.
- Kingsley, G. Thomas, Joseph B. McNeely and James O. Gibson. *Community Building Coming of Age*. Paper describes community building and provides recommendations on supporting community building efforts. To read online, click on link: <http://www.urban.org/publications/307016.html>
- Kretzmann, John P. and McKnight, John L. 1993. *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets*. To order, call ACTA Publications at 800-397-2282.
- Midwest Academy. *Direct Action Organizing Process*. Webpage describes different methods of organizing and the principles of direct action organizing. To read online, click on link: <http://www.mindspring.com/~midwestacademy/Organize/page5.html>
- O'Donnell, Sandy and Ellen Schumer, 1996. *Community Building and Community Organizing*. Article describes issues in creating effective community building models. To read online, click on link: <http://www.nhi.org/online/issues/85/combuild.html>
- Shaw, Randy, 1996. *The Activist's Handbook: A Primer for the 1990s and Beyond*. Guide for activists working for social change. Univ. California Press, ISBN:0520203178.
- Stout, Linda and Howard Zinn, 1997. *Bridging the Class Divide and Other Lessons for Grassroots Organizing*. Describes organizing model that focuses on diversity, personal empowerment and existing barriers. Beacon Press, ISBN:0807043095.
- Trapp, Shel. *Basics of Organizing*. How-to manual for community organizing. To read online, click on link: <http://www.tenant.net/Organize/orgbas.html>
- Trapp, Shel. *Dynamics of Organizing*. From a series of Organizing and Neighborhood Presentation published by the National Training and Information Center. To read online, click on link: <http://www.tenant.net/Organize/orgdyn.html>
- Traynor, William, 1995. *Community Building: Hope and Caution*. Article describes community development corporations' and community based organizations' roles in community building and community organizing. To read online, click on link: <http://www.nhi.org/online/issues/83/combuild.html>

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The Community Organizing Toolbox

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING: THE BASICS

WHAT IS CO?

Community organization is that process by which the people...organize themselves to 'take charge' of their situation and thus develop a sense of being a community together. It is a particularly effective tool for the poor and powerless as they determine for themselves the actions they will take to deal with the essential forces that are destroying their community and consequently causing them to be powerless.⁷

-Reverend Robert Linthicum, World Vision International

Organizing does two central things to seek to rectify the problem of power imbalance - it builds a permanent base of people power so that dominant financial and institutional power can be challenged and held accountable to values of greater social, environmental and economic justice; and, it transforms individuals and communities, making them mutually respectful co-creators of public life rather than passive objects of decisions made by others.⁸

-Mike Miller, Organize Training Center

Just what is CO? What are its driving philosophy, values and goals? Who employs the strategy? What are some examples of CO in practice? What is being accomplished? Why does it seem to be gaining in importance and use today? How does CO differ from other strategies, activities or interventions that seek to benefit low-income people and communities?

This section of the Toolbox paints a broad-brush picture of CO and underscores its importance for making what may be called “bottom-up” change in pursuit of social and economic justice.

CO is a values-based⁹ process by which people - most often low- and moderate-income people previously absent from decision-making tables - are brought together in organizations to jointly act in the interest of their “communities” and the common good. Ideally, in the participatory process of working for needed changes, people involved in CO organizations/groups learn how to take greater responsibility for the future of their communities, gain in mutual respect and achieve growth as individuals. Community organizers identify and attract the people to be involved in the organizations, and develop the leadership from and relationships among the people that make the organizations effective.

Typically, the actions taken by CO groups are preceded by careful data gathering, research and participatory strategic planning. The actions are often in the form of negotiations - with targeted institutions holding power - around issues determined by and important to the organizations. The CO groups seek policy and other significant changes determined by and responsive to the people (that is, their “constituencies”). Where good-faith negotiations fail, these constituency-led organizations seek to pressure the decision-makers - through a variety of means - so that the decision-makers will return to the negotiations and move to desired

outcomes. CO groups continuously reflect on what they have learned in their action strategies and incorporate the learning in subsequent strategies.

Modern CO rests on a solid bed of key principles around which most knowledgeable practitioners and observers are in general agreement. The degree of adherence to these principles, and the relative emphasis placed on one principle or another, provides the best means to distinguish CO groups and efforts from each other. These same principles also help to distinguish CO from other types of strategies for neighborhood and community change and social betterment.

The central ingredient of all effective CO in the view of many involved in the field - what they believe distinguishes CO most clearly from all other social change strategies - is building power. CO builds power and works for change most often to achieve social justice with and for those who are disadvantaged in society.

CO encompasses other principles that were described in a particularly thoughtful article jointly written a few years ago by a veteran foundation official and an experienced community organizer. The authors, Seth Borgos and Scott Douglas, stressed that “the fundamental source of cohesion of every strong CO group is the conviction that it offers its members a unique vehicle for exercising and developing their capacities as citizens.”¹³ The authors also noted that the most common usage of the term CO “...refers to organizations that are democratic in governance, open and accessible to community members, and concerned with the general health of the community rather than a specific interest or service function.”¹⁴

- *Power is the purpose of community organizing, and the issues, problems, strategies and victories are a means to the end of increased power for the organization and the community.*¹¹ - Dave Beckwith and Randy Stoeker
- *Definitions of CO range from a single sentence - “Organizing is people working together to get things done” (followed by a book length discussion to demonstrate what this means)¹⁰ - to long listings of what are thought to be its most important characteristics, to lengthy, to lengthy essays containing assertions about CO.*
- *The empowerment process at the heart of CO promotes participation of people, organizations and communities toward the goals of increased individual and community control, political efficacy, improved quality of community life, and social justice.*¹² - Nina Wallerstein, *American Journal of Health Promotion*

According to Borgos and Douglas, the key principles of contemporary CO are:

- ***A Participative Culture.*** *CO organizations view participation as an end in itself. Under the rubric of leadership development, they devote considerable time and resources to enlarging the skills, knowledge and responsibilities of their members. “Never do for others what they can do for themselves” is known as the iron rule of organizing.*

- **Inclusiveness.** *CO organizations are unlike other kinds of voluntary associations that, in most instances, tend to draw their membership from a narrow social base and their leadership from business and professional elites. As a matter of principle, CO groups are generally committed to developing membership and leadership from a broad spectrum of the community, with many expressly dedicated to fostering participation among groups that have been “absent from the table,” including communities of color, low-income constituencies, immigrants, sexual minorities and youth. Working with marginalized groups demands a high level of skill, a frank acknowledgment of power disparities, and a major investment of time and effort.*
- **Breadth of Mission and Vision.** *In principle, every issue that affects the welfare of the community is within CO’s purview, where other civic institutions tend to get stuck on certain functions while losing sight of the community’s larger problems. In practice, strong (but by no means all) CO organizations have proven adept at integrating a diverse set of issues and linking them to a larger vision of the common good. This is a holistic function that has been largely abandoned by political parties, churches, schools and other civic institutions.*

Critical Perspective. CO organizations seek to change policies and institutions that are not working. In many communities, they are the only force promoting institutional accountability and responsiveness. Because community organizations take critical positions, they can be viewed as partisan or even polarizing in some contexts, and an obstacle to social collaboration. However, research suggests that effective governance depends on “civicness” - not consensus. A critical stance may generate conflict, but it can also stimulate participation and sharpen political discourse in ways that lead to deeper forms of social collaboration.¹

How CO Differs from Other Strategies. CO is one of many strategies for revitalizing disadvantaged neighborhoods and communities and for pursuing social change on a broader basis. But CO is the only strategy that invests all of its resources and energy to build the power of the people themselves - low-income residents, people directly impacted by the issues being addressed - to work effectively for community change.

⁷ Robert C. Linthicum, *Empowering the Poor: Community Organizing among the city’s “rag, tag and bobtail,”* Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1991, p. 31.

⁸ Mike Miller, *Organize Training Center*, as quoted in Sally Covington and Larry Parachini, *Foundations in the Newt Era*, Washington, DC: The National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy, 1995.

⁹ The term “values-based” refers to values that form the basis of CO theory and practice. For most community organizers and CO groups, the values include: community, solidarity, equality, freedom, justice, the dignity of the individual, respect for differences, civility, and political democracy.

¹⁰ Si Kahn, *Organizing: A Guide for Grassroots Leaders*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1982, p. 1.

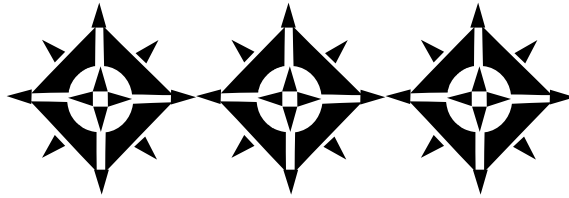
¹¹ Dave Beckwith and Randy Stoecker, *Community Organizing: Soul and Substance*, forthcoming.

¹² Nina Wallerstein, “Powerlessness, Empowerment, and Health: Implications for Health Promotion Programs,” *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 1992, (6): 197-205.

¹³ Seth Borgos and Scott Douglas, “Community Organizing and Civic Renewal: A View from the South,” *Social Policy*, Winter, 1996.

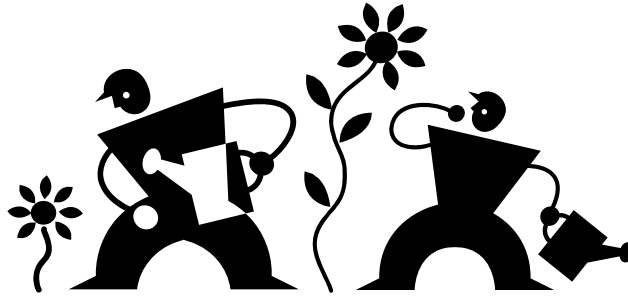
¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*



COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION & CAPACITY BUILDING PRINCIPLES of VISTAs

- **The capacity of others, before my capacity**
VISTA members keeps the focus on strengthening the capacity of others
- **Handing off will allow the capacity of others to develop**
VISTA members continually advocate for the opportunities of others to co-lead and lead so that the leadership capacity of the individual group members, group, organization and community will develop faster
- **Holding back will allow others to step up**
VISTA members wait and hold off posing forth their suggestions and ideas so that others can step up, be heard, and help lead
- **Many people are able but lack the trust to step up**
VISTA members serve in a manner that builds trust and is trustworthy
- **Many people are able but lack the confidence and opportunities to step up**
VISTA members continually do succession planning with their communities
- **Succession planning needs to start on day one and runs throughout the VISTA's term**
VISTA members start out thinking about how they can support the development of capacity of a cross-section of stakeholders (volunteers, staff, network partners, community members, youth, etc.) on an ongoing basis
- **Credit giving and credit sharing contribute to confidence building**
VISTA members acknowledge often, publicly, and in varied ways the contributions of all
- **Transparency of one's intention and action fosters trust**
VISTA members gently remind the group, agency, community, etc. how their actions are directly tied to helping to strengthen the capacity of others



PEOPLE CAPACITY BUILDING

- * Training & orientation**
 - * Teaming**
 - * Mentoring/coaching**
 - * Debriefing**
 - * Delegating**
- * Scaffolding, guided practice**
 - * Succession planning**
 - * Handing off**
 - * Pulling back**
- * Getting people ready talks**



BOTR FACILITATION STRATEGIES FOR EVERY PHASE OF A MEETING

A. Meeting Planning

B. Meeting Facilitation

- Opening – Welcome, introductions
- Set-Up – purpose, timing, approach, history
- Relationship building – who’s here, who needs to be thanked
- Agenda review

- Work or main purpose time
- Next steps planning
- Wrap-up
- Closing

C. Meeting follow-up



DELEGATION

*(Corporation for National & Community Service CAMPAIGN CONSULTATION, Inc.
“Collaborative Decision Making Processes”)*

Any time you do a task that someone else could do, you do it at the sacrifice of the talent that only you can provide elsewhere in your project. This is the primary reason why delegating effectively is so critical to you sustaining success, quality and involvement over the duration of your project or initiative.

Write it down

1. Consider all that you currently do.
2. Identify those things that someone else could do but you just have not thought about delegating.
3. Then list the things that you could delegate if you had someone trained to do them.
4. Lastly, list the things that you alone must do. This should give you a better idea of what types of tasks you can let go of as you tap into the talent of those around you.
5. Develop a plan to let go of some of the items

Select a delegate

- Consider their abilities, skills and experience. Could anyone be trained to do what you need?

Prepare the delegate

- ✓ You must make sure that you thoroughly explain the task you want done, the responsibilities and authority it entails.
- ✓ Always aim to fit the individual's talents and abilities to the task.
- ✓ Be sure to explain what needs to be done, show how to do it, let
- ✓ them try it while you observe (whenever possible), let them know the purpose and how it contributes to the goals, spell out the boundaries, what resources and information are available, and finally, what you expect once the task has been completed.
- ✓ Don't forget to give the person the authority to do what you have asked. You don't want them needing to come to you for final approval of each task (remember, this is why you delegated it in the first place). They should know what their span of authority is.
- ✓ Set up check-in points that allow the person to come back and ask questions without feeling inept.
- ✓ Don't forget to let others know what tasks and authority you have delegated to whom thus reducing potential roadblocks.
- ✓ Don't judge the process or their way of accomplishing the task; let your judgment rest on the final product or results achieved. You don't want to give the impression that you are looking over their shoulder.
- ✓ Let them know how satisfied you are with the task.
- ✓ Folks will never grow unless you give them the freedom to learn from their mistakes. Expect there to be a learning curve and give them a chance to repeat the task.

What is coaching?

Coaching is a partnership that focuses on supporting someone to reach her/his goal through engaging in powerful conversations that offer a new way of seeing and encourages effective action.

Power of Three: Critical Components of Coaching

1. **Presence:** Listen more effectively, deal with the source of a problem rather than symptoms, hear what the other isn't saying, focus solely on the other's agenda
2. **Perspective:** Point to what is working, keep other focused on forward movement, offer a new way of seeing a situation/issue, point to the other's strengths
3. **Powerful Conversations:** Ask questions to help unlock the person's wisdom and potential, empower the other, teach the other to be self-reliant, put the burden of discovery where it belongs, teach the other to find the answer within.

[Source: Management Coaching Curriculum developed by Janis Glenn and Jackie Jordan-Davis, TASC]

Why coach? What's the return for investing valuable time in coaching?

- ◆ Coaching is interactive...you listen, ask questions, share views and negotiate solutions
- ◆ Coaching helps individuals to grow as professionals and contribute fully to the success of an organization
- ◆ Coaching focuses on what needs improvement and what's going well.
- ◆ In today's environment of change technology and evolving organizations, coaching can have a strategic impact.
- ◆ Coaching is an investment that you make in developing your key resource—People—for the long term benefit of your organization.

Source: Harvard Business Online: eLearning.hbsp.org

Examples of Useful Questions When Using G.R.O.W.

GOAL

- What is it you would like to discuss?
- What would you like to achieve?
- What would you like from (to achieve in) this session?
- What would need to happen for you to walk away feeling that this time was well spent?
- If I could grant you a wish for this session, what would it be?
- What would you like to be different when you leave this session?
- What would you like to happen that is not happening now, or what would you like not to happen that is happening now?
- What outcome would you like from this session/discussion/interaction?
- Is that realistic?
- Can we do that in the time we have available?
- Will that be of real value to you?

REALITY

- What is happening at the moment?
- How do you know that this is accurate?
- How often does this happen? Be precise if possible.
- What effect does this have?
- How have you verified, or would you verify, that that is so?
- What other factors are relevant?
- Who else is relevant?
- What is their perception of the situation?
- What have you tried so far?

OPTIONS

- What could you do to change the situation?
- What alternatives are there to that approach?
- Tell me what possibilities for action you see.
- Do not worry about whether they are realistic at this stage.
- What approach/actions have you seen used, or used yourself, in similar circumstances
- Who might be able to help?
- Would you like suggestions from me?
- Which options do you like the most?
- What are the benefits and pitfalls of these options?
- Which options are of interest to you?
- Rate from 1-10 your interest level in each of these options (and their practicality).
- Would you like to choose an option to act on?

WRAP-UP

- What are the next steps?
- Precisely when will you take them?
- What might get in the way?
- Do you need to log the steps in your diary?
- What support do you need?
- How and when will you enlist that support?

Coaching Practice:



1	➤ What are some strong examples of coaching within national service and non-profit work that you already know about? Who? Where? How? To what benefit?
2	➤ What is the group's analysis and perceptions about the current context and climate for strengthening the use of coaching in national service work? Contributing factors? Barriers or hindering forces? What things have to shift in order for coaching strategies to really take hold? What are cultural considerations re: coaching?
3	➤ What thoughts do group members have about the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors re: effective coaching?



LEARNING CIRCLE REFLECTION:

**HELPING THE
COMMUNITY MOBILIZE**

Ideas and strategies

I want to remember and carry forward. . .