

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

*Serving Atchison, Gentry,
Holt, Nodaway and Worth
Counties*

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Special Notes:

- Current health and emotional stability affects individual productiveness within the group.
- Prior experiences can be “logged, stored, or lost,” but may become a factor in group discussions.
- Individuals use a filtering system to share workplace information. Views on resources, facilities, information systems, etc., are individually perceived.
- The perceived place or value of an individual within the organizational setting will vary.
- Interpersonal wants, tensions, images, and language capabilities influence one’s ability to lead in the group setting.

GROW STRONG LEADERS

Like communities, leaders develop in a variety of ways. In rural communities, the responsibility for leadership development comes from every group, agency, or institution in town.

Leaders in most communities are multi-tasking individuals. Most wear two or three hats. Writer Peter Senge believes that “leadership is collective.” Super leaders can’t do everything. In towns that are growing and healthy, leadership is taken on many people.

Leadership roles, when spread around, may look very different from traditional concepts. There may be differing age spans, genders, educational levels, and cultural backgrounds. Today’s leaders may not have been “born and raised” in the local area. The important leadership qualities include having a vision, and an ethical set of ideals and beliefs.

No community can survive a leader who is a “solo”



All great leaders have had one thing in common—their ability to confront the major anxiety of the people of their time. —Galbraith

performer. Building an inclusive, supportive, and nurturing leadership mentoring program is a healthy system.

Just as every basketball player has responsibility to create a “team,” local citizens also have responsibility to interact and help determine the future of their community.

Empowering others is a trait found in true leaders.

Senge also describes a desired leadership characteristic as “having passion.”

Effective leaders in local government invite diverse opinions and remain flexible and encouraging.

ENTREPRENEURIAL SUPPORT...

As entrepreneurship gains support in a community, one often asks if the community recognizes and celebrates people who create and grow local businesses.

As entrepreneurship is encouraged from within, the

community can also find ways to grow itself. Support systems often include micro-lending programs. These lending programs originate because of recognized needs and the desire to support local efforts.

Support systems also include the development of training programs for current and future business leaders. A successful program also provides opportunities for networking between and among investors and the entrepreneurs.

GROUPS IN CONFRONTATION

NINE QUESTIONS TO ASK...

Strong Leaders...

1. *Maintain a "can-do" attitude and create a positive and open working environment.*
2. *Have a strong community vision.*
3. *Promote teamwork within the organization.*
4. *Have the "right priorities" when making decisions.*
5. *Listen to concerns of others and remain open to criticism.*
6. *Accept challenges and address problems.*
7. *Make decisions based upon "long-term" goals.*
8. *Share leadership roles and empower others.*
9. *Encourage and support the development of new leaders.*

Adapted from: The 7 1/2 Keys to Big Success in Small Towns, Jack Schultz.

Much like childhood games between siblings, groups often find themselves in confrontational situations. When confrontation happens, there are several questions to ask.



Confrontation often involves a style of communication that ignores questions.

1. What is the better approach to the problem? Are my own motives "right?" Is the payoff worth the price? Is the use of "power" involved?

2. Can the problem be written in a single sentence?

If not, what is the goal?

3. How do personal wants and behaviors relate to that expressed by the complainant?

4. What is the best approach? Face-to-face? In writing? By telephone or email?

5. What is the best time to address the issue? Are emotions under control?

6. What would be the better location to have the conversation? Should it be done in private or in public? My space? The other person's space? A neutral space?

7. Does the issue have a history? Is there something from the past behind the issue? Will the conversation be framed in the "present tense?"

8. Will the conversation be centered on the issue? Or, will it be personalized?

9. Will a support system be developed?

Adapted from Groups in Context by Wilson and Hanna

WHEN LEADERS GET IGNORED...

There are times the appointed or elected leader is challenged when ignored. The staff stop asking questions. They make their own rules and make decisions that require the leader's OK.

If this is happening, the leader can ask some of the following questions.

When decisions have been

needed, have they been made?

Are all the facts being considered before making the decisions?

Have previous decisions been "sold" to the workforce because of position or authority?

Are personal feelings,

friendships, and disdain influencing the decision-making process?

Are staff members included in finding solutions to group problems?

If the answer to any of the questions is "Yes," perhaps steps can be taken to support group goals and group achievements.

The Executive Deskbook, Uris

THE SUNSHINE LAW CORNER...

When is a committee that is appointed by a public body subject to the Sunshine Law?

Contrary to some beliefs, there is court case history supporting the decision that local non-profit corporations that are created to carry out the purposes of a municipal facility and who answer to that facility's board of trustees is a quasi-public governmental body.

Such discussions often take place when non-profit groups begin to have controversy regarding who controls the financial operations of the non-profit.

Case law in these situations note it is the sponsoring public body's

board status that is used in determining the quasi-board's status.

This question is often confusing to municipal facility boards because there may have been tradition and history that indicated otherwise.



www.ago.mo.gov/sunshinelaw/

STEPHEN COVEY'S THOUGHTS ON EFFECTIVENESS...

Covey defines effectiveness as "getting results." Yet, the results one gets may not be aligned to ones' goals. One must determine what result is desired in order to evaluate effectiveness of actions.

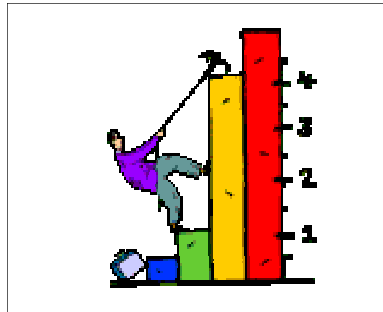
In today's world, a strong leadership principle says, "You climb up the ladder of success one rung at a time." When reaching the top of the ladder, the person may have been effective in reaching that height; however, the question remains, "What is the desired outcome?"

Developing strategies that get one to the "top" must also align with ethically accepted

standards—taking care to insure the actions are ethically aligned with worthy results.

Peter Drucker said, "effectiveness cannot be taught, but it must be learned." In other words, "another person cannot be turned into an effective person."

How, then, would effective people be characterized? Someone once asked, "What would you like written on your tombstone?" After reflecting a moment, the second person responded, "He stayed the course and lasted."



How high one climbs is only relevant to the desired outcome.

Effective people have ways that last. They are balanced. And, they have a sense of wisdom and proportion in all of life's dimensions.

Effective habits produce effective results.

Source: *Highly Effective People*

If social issues arise during meeting conversations, comment on the issue, then say, "Now, let's move back to our discussion."

If meeting distractions continue, make a comment like, "I'm concerned that we might not meet our meeting goal."

Before introducing the next topic for discussion, say something like, "So, we have agreed that, (summarize)..."

When meeting participants are not responding, the leader might say, "Jane, you have heard Susan's comment, would you like to add to it?"

Avoid excessive contact with talkative persons.

After a particularly difficult discussion, use appropriate humor.

Encourage participants to provide more than one alternative to problematic situations.

When direct statements are made, ask "How do we know this is true?" or "How or when was that data collected?"

LEADERSHIP BUILDERS...

ADAPTED FROM *THE WISDOM OF TEAMS*
KATZENBACH AND SMITH

The KIS method works well for many leadership building activities, especially when building leadership teams.

Team building activities keep goals and approaches relevant and meaningful.

People new to job assignments often find it comforting when top management interacts

directly with them. Leaders often find the challenges and perspectives to their liking when meeting with their workforce.

The meetings often result in building commitment and levels of communication skill that would otherwise go untouched without the personal contact. Therefore,

the personal interaction strengthens the mix and improves skill levels.

Frequently, workforce personnel can remove some obstacles hindering leadership's ability to create needed change.

Helping to create opportunities for others helps build strong leaders.

IMPROVING YOUR LEADERSHIP SKILL...

Successful leaders prepare for meetings, but some are more successful than others.

Using a meeting checklist can help make planning more thorough.

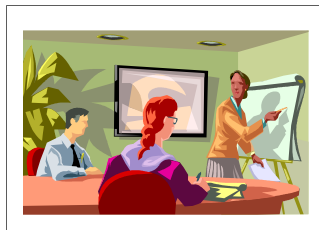
Five basic elements for leading successful meetings have been generally recognized.

Begin a meeting with a clear statement of purpose. Too often people think they

understand the meetings purposes, but they really are unclear.

Research all topics to be discussed. Make it a habit to know about the items to be discussed.

Be sure to adapt the agenda



Take a break during meetings that last longer than one hour.

to the group's needs. Include strategic questions under individual topics.

Ask those to attend the meeting who will commit to the tasks.

Review the comments of the participants. Uncover hidden meanings.

University of Missouri
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"Attention to rules and regulations promote cohesiveness."

"Too much cohesiveness may move the group from the designated task to socializing."

"People are attracted to group membership by shared similar attitudes, a sense of how to achieve goals, the type of conflict and how the group handles conflict."



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Leadership Development

Leadership Academies
Orientation for Public Officials
Team Building
Community Change
Conflict Resolution
Diversity Training
Ethical Problem Solving
Facilitation of Public Forums
Marketing Your Community
Understanding Community Demographics

Civic Engagement

Community Visioning
Community Decision-Making & Governance
Business Retention and Expansion

Community-Based Structure

Affordable Housing Issues
Community Revitalization
Entrepreneurial Climates
—Customer Service Training
—Demographic Research
—Needs Assessment
Strategic Planning
Tourism Inventory Planning
—Festivals and Special Events

To request any of the above programming services contact Jerry Baker at the Atchison County Extension Office — 660.744.6231

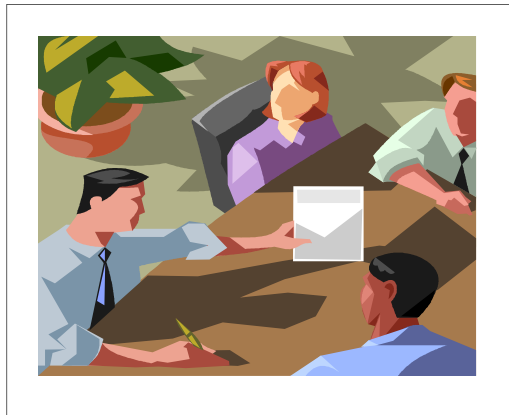
PROMOTING COHESIVENESS...

LEADERSHIP STYLE, PARTICIPATION, COMMITMENT

Effective leadership is essential to building cohesive groups. Building a repertory of appropriate social leadership behaviors and knowing when it is appropriate to use them is one of the more critical skill sets in developing a leadership style.

Determining the group size needed relates directly to all research that addresses issues in building group cohesiveness and effectiveness.

When engaging a large group, the positives can be added available skill sets. However, large groups may have subgroups forming, unequal participation, increased demands and difficulty in reaching a consensus.



The degree to which members are attracted to each other and the group is defined as "cohesiveness."

The ethical commitment of a group participant bears significantly on the productivity of all groups. In larger groups, participation is best achieved in subgroup settings. Often the larger group is used to address or define the problem with subgroup participation to define possible solutions.

Today's social atmosphere will often engage members in the group setting who are totally dependent on being "personally satisfied." Without a commitment from group members to individually do the best possible job for the task at hand, a lack of responsibility is sensed.

Group participants often can have personal values that do not mix with group consensus. Promoting straight

thinking becomes a challenge. Achieving group cooperation may become difficult. The win-lose attitude often erupts in these settings in such remarks as, "I think we ought..."

Obtaining a commitment to the group goals is challenging and exists within each participating member.