Becoming a Better Supervisor

In This Guide

- ☑ The Supervisor as Communicator
- ☑ The Supervisor as Advisor
- ☑ The Supervisor as Team Builder
- ☑ The Supervisor as Planner/Manager
- ☑ The Supervisor as Community Partnership Builder

A Resource Guide for Community Service Supervisors

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CORPORATION

FOR NATIONAL

★ SERVICE

TAKE A BITE OUT OF
CRIME®

The National Crime Prevention Council is a private, nonprofit, tax-exempt organization whose principal mission is to enable people to prevent crime and build safer, more caring communities. NCPC publishes books, kits of camera-ready program materials, posters, and information and policy reports on a variety of crime prevention and community-building subjects. NCPC offers training, technical assistance, a national focus for crime prevention, and acts as secretariat for the Crime Prevention Coalition, more than 135 national, federal, and state organizations committed to preventing crime. It also operates demonstration programs and takes a major leadership role in the comprehensive community crime prevention strategies and youth crime prevention. NCPC manages the McGruff "Take A Bit Out Of Crime" public service advertising campaign, which is substantially funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Reviewers

PREFACE

The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization that works to enable people to reduce crime and build safer, more vital communities. NCPC's relationship with the Corporation for National Service (CNS) began in 1993. Working with CNS and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, NCPC produced *National Service and Public Safety,* a guide for community service programs on meeting local public safety needs and creating safer, more caring neighborhoods. In 1994, NCPC provided technical assistance to more than 90 Summer of Safety sites working to promote public safety through community service. NCPC's support to CNS and AmeriCorps public safety programs continues today. NCPC's CNS-funded Public Safety Skills Development Center offers training, technical assistance, and information to AmeriCorps programs with a public safety focus.

Through in-depth work with Summer of Safety sites and other service programs, NCPC sought to identify the essential characteristics that effective community programs share. We found that a significant factor in successful service programs is the presence of a skilled and committed supervisor. During site visits to AmeriCorps projects, NCPC responded to requests for assistance with both public safety issues and supervisory concerns such as communication, performance feedback, teambuilding, and time management.

In early 1995, CNS recognized NCPC's efforts to develop community service supervision with a grant to design and deliver training and technical assistance to front-line supervisors in all kinds of programs. In the first year of the Supervisory Training and Technical Assistance Project, NCPC conducted a major needs assessment; designed and conducted over 20 supervisory workshops for more than 700 participants around the country; and provided technical assistance to numerous programs. NCPC also developed this guide—in collaboration with supervisors around the country—as a part of supervisory training and technical assistance. It is designed to support the work and increase the effectiveness of supervisors involved in any kind of community service activities.

As a National Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) Provider under contract with CNS, NCPC may be available to work with your program by telephone consultation or site visits and can offer training for supervisors and staff. For more information about NCPC community service publications and resources, please refer to Appendix A. For a list of National T/TA Providers and a

brief description of how these resources are available to programs, see Appendix B.

How This Resource Guide Was Developed

NCPC drew from three major sources of information in developing this guide:

■ a comprehensive needs assessment, including focus group discussions, site visits, and interviews with AmeriCorps supervisors;

■ views of AmeriCorps supervisors who participated in the Supervisory Skills Workshops; and

■ literature of respected specialists in the fields of supervision, management, and community participation.

In response to requests from the field for "hands-on" material, this guide is designed to be practical, skill-based, and grounded in the realities of AmeriCorps and community service.

Who Should Use This Guide?

Nearly everyone involved in supervising people working in community service will find something useful among the concepts, vignettes, and tools in this guide.

■ If you are a new supervisor, you will find the basics you need to understand and perform major supervisory functions. Try reading through the whole guide at least

once; then begin using the individual chapters to support your skill development.

■ If you are an experienced supervisor but new to AmeriCorps (or any other program), the guide will help you gain a better understanding of the uniqueness of the program and how you might apply your past experiences toward achieving the best possible results.

■ If you already have experience with both supervision and AmeriCorps (or your program), then use this guide as a refresher course and a reality check. You may find some new insights to enrich your techniques.

How Useful is This Guide for You?

Please give us your comments on the content, style, and user-friendliness of this guide. We welcome your suggestions, and will be pleased to respond to any questions you may have. See the title page of the guide for information on how to contact NCPC.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Becoming a Better AmeriCorps Supervisor:
How This Guide Will Help

There are three kinds of people: those who make things happen; those who wait for things to happen; and those who wonder what happened.

Anonymous

If you are an AmeriCorps supervisor, you are most likely the kind of person who makes things happen. You are a leader to your members and a catalyst for your project. You work in an exciting but demanding position and form a critical communication link between and among members, program directors, agency sponsors, and the community. As you've probably already learned, your major job is to *get things done* and to *develop members*. Balancing these two responsibilities will be a continual challenge. To be truly effective, you need to learn to get things done through the members you supervise.

Being an AmeriCorps supervisor presents a unique set of challenges and opportunities to make

In This Chapter

☑ How To Use This Guide

☑ Chapter Features and Icons

☑ Things You Won't Find
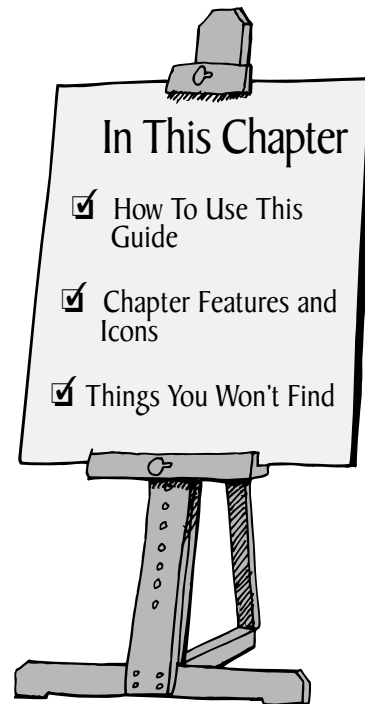
a difference. Just step back for a moment and look at your assignment:

■ You work with members ages 17 to 79 who have had a variety of life and work experiences.

- You are charged with instilling an ethic of service in your diverse team.

- You counsel and motivate members who may be working on a "real" job for the first time in their lives.

- Your work force isn't paid, nor are members "volunteers" in the strict sense of the term—they receive a modest stipend and job security for only one or two years.

- In the larger community, you coordinate multiple interests and expectations from agency.

- Finally, you do your work under intense local and national public attention. sponsors and partnering organizations.

Supervising AmeriCorps members is clearly more than a job. It is also a commitment to developing one's own capacity and that of others to initiate changes that will result in stronger communities. Building human capacity requires some solid skills on your part—skills in planning, communicating, leading, and problem solving to name just a few. Regardless of whether you are a full-time or part-time AmeriCorps supervisor, you are in a key position to make a difference in the lives of both your members and those who benefit from your project.

Help is a key word. You must offer it and ask for it. As a supervisor, you can't do everything required by your organization or program. In large part, you must learn to do your job by getting your members and agency partners to do the work. You are not expected to know all the answers, but you should learn where in your team, organization, or community you can go to find them. This resource guide is designed to help you with practical ideas, suggestions, and many effective supervisory techniques. These ideas and tools were developed through the National Crime Prevention Council's extensive work with a wide range of AmeriCorps, and other, supervisors who have identified key skill areas for effective supervision. As you settle into your supervisory position, remember that other supervisors are out there going through exactly what you are—you are not alone. Don't be afraid to ask others for assistance. And you might want to keep this resource guide on an easy-to-reach shelf.

Outline of Supervisory Roles and Skills

Chapter	Supervisory Role	Skills You Learn
1	Communicator	Active listening; providing feedback; conflict management
2	Advisor	Problem solving; coaching members
3	Team Builder	Building a collaborative team environment; guiding the team through stages of group development; making decisions in groups
4	Planner/Manager	Planning work; setting priorities/delegating tasks; managing time; managing meetings
5	Community Partnership Builder/AmeriCorps Representative	Assessing community needs; building and sustaining collaboration; public relations

How to Use This Resource Guide

The greater part of this resource guide is devoted to helping you build your supervisory skills and learn how to apply them successfully in your particular situation. The chapters take you through the five major supervisory roles, and the different skills they require.

If you are a very new supervisor, we recommend you read through the whole guide to get the "big picture" of what your job entails. If you already have some supervisory experience, you may want to read the guide as a refresher or go straight to specific chapters that address skills areas where you need more development.

The resource guide is formatted to give you quick and easy access to information. Each of the chapters contains a narrative that provides a basic understanding of the specific supervisory roles and skills; vignettes that illustrate the application of those skills in real-life situations; and a tool kit section that includes readings, assessment tools, checklists, and other support materials related to the chapter's theme.
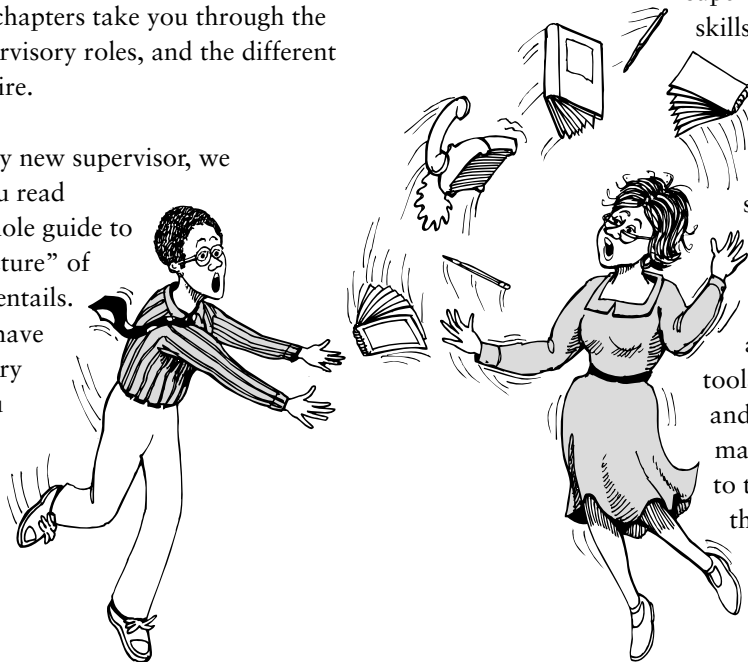
A Helpful Key to the Chapter Features and Icons

Chapter Introduction

A brief introduction to the supervisory role, specific skills areas, and tools presented in the chapter. The skills are always listed on the chart/easel on the first page. A Tool Kit list is always provided on the second page of the chapter.

Chapter Narrative

A discussion of the chapter skills areas. For each skill, we tell you two things:

Why You Do It

The reason for using the skill.

How You Do It

Concepts and methods for performing the skill.

"Busy Betty" and "Juggling Jamal" Stories

Each chapter includes stories that describe the challenges and rewards of two hypothetical AmeriCorps supervisors. We call them Busy Betty and Juggling Jamal. Betty works in an AmeriCorps program based on individual placement; Jamal supervises a crew-based program. You see what happens in their lives as supervisors and how they use the ideas and skills presented in the guide to improve their job performance.

Tool Kit

The tool kit is a compilation of support materials— e.g., descriptions of concepts or methodologies, checklists, and self-tests— that amplifies the information presented in the chapter text. Located at the end of each chapter, the tools are coded for easy retrieval and may be used in a variety of ways: 1) as lecturette/discussion notes; 2) as handouts for use during orientation sessions or meetings; 3) as models for overhead transparencies or other types of visual aids; or 4) however you see fit. You may also want to use the Jamal and Betty stories as tools. With little or no adaptation, they make interesting case studies and role-playing tools to use with your members, colleagues, and agency partners.

The first tool in the resource guide—the AmeriCorps supervisor's self-assessment is attached at the end of this chapter. The self-assessment is an extensive (but not exhaustive) inventory of the skills you need to perform your job effectively. It consists of

four sections that correspond to the major AmeriCorps goals:

- Getting things done,

- Strengthening communities,

- Encouraging responsibility in members, and

- Expanding members' opportunities.

The self-assessment tool will help you identify areas where you may already be strong and those you may need to develop further. Use it as a yardstick to measure your progress and accomplishments through the service year.

Appendices

At the end of the Resource Guide, we include the following useful information as Appendices:

A A bibliography, suggested reading list, and NCPC resources: publications and other reference materials related to the concepts and skills of supervision

B A list of national training and technical assistance (T/TA) providers. National T/TA providers are organizations contracted by the Corporation for National Service to provide specialty services (e.g., training, consultation, technical information, and handbooks) to AmeriCorps programs. Appendix B lists current T/TA providers and information on how to contact them for technical assistance. For an

update of this list, please call the National Service Resource Center at (800) 620-2684. Appendix B also includes a list of questions people frequently ask about AmeriCorps training and technical assistance.

A Few Things You Won't Find in This Resource Guide ...

- You won't find answers to all of your questions. Since AmeriCorps supervisors work in such diverse programs and organizational cultures, it would be nearly impossible to produce a guide that addresses all the needs you may have over the course of your assignment. We strongly encourage you to use this guide along with other relevant materials from your professional and public libraries.

- You won't find the "only" or "right" way to deal with people and situations. Although the information in this guide is based on sound management theory and practice, other models and approaches may serve you better at a given point. Talk to other supervisors and managers; consult with your affiliate organizations, training staff, or personnel office; and check out some of the resources listed in the bibliography. Learn what the options are.

- AmeriCorps training and T/TA providers have developed practical guides and other materials in a variety of subject areas such as leadership development, appreciating and building on diversity, service learning, pre-service training, and technical project design. You won't find extensive coverage of these themes in this guide. Rather than

duplicate or borrow heavily from these materials, we simply show where and how the themes or concepts relate to supervision. Familiarize yourself with the list of AmeriCorps T/TA providers and their areas of expertise in Appendix B.

■ Finally, you won't find AmeriCorps-specific policies, rules, and regulations that govern certain supervisory decisions. These administrative guidelines are established and disseminated by the Corporation for National Service, your State Commission, and/or your local agency.

What you will find in this guide is a wealth of information to broaden your understanding of supervision and develop your skills in leading others.

Good luck!

"Man's mind, stretched to a new idea, never goes back to its original form."

—Oliver Wendell Holmes

Self-Assessment

Introduction

The following self-assessment tool provides you with an opportunity to survey your skills as an AmeriCorps supervisor and to identify areas you may already be strong in and those you may need to work on further. Naturally, everyone's self-assessment will be different. No one will excel in all areas, so it's not necessary for you to assess yourself highly in everything.

The assessment is an extensive but not exhaustive inventory of skills you may need, in varying degrees, in your position as an AmeriCorps supervisor. Skill attainment is a lifelong process. The following assessment will give you a snapshot of where you are today.

Getting Things Done

AmeriCorps helps communities meet their educational, public safety, human, or environmental needs through service.

How would you rate your skills in the following areas?

I can ...	With Ease	Fairly Well	With Some Difficulty	With Great Difficulty
Plan a project	○	○	○	○
Set measurable project goals	○	○	○	○
Implement a project	○	○	○	○
Evaluate project development	○	○	○	○
Modify a project based on changes	○	○	○	○

I can ...				
Understand project cycles (beginning/middle/end tasks)	○	○	○	○
Adjust work according to project cycle	○	○	○	○
Organize tasks	○	○	○	○
Prioritize tasks	○	○	○	○

I can ...				
Communicate tasks to members orally	○	○	○	○
Motivate members to accomplish tasks	○	○	○	○
Delegate tasks appropriately	○	○	○	○
Monitor and support members in the performance of delegated tasks	○	○	○	○
Evaluate members performance on assigned projects/partnerships	○	○	○	○
Communicate tasks to members in writing	○	○	○	○
Write progress reports/memos				
Complete paperwork effectively and efficiently	○	○	○	○

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Strengthening Communities

AmeriCorps unites individuals from different backgrounds and institutions of different kinds in the common effort to improve our communities.

How would you rate your skills in the following areas?

I can ...	With Ease	Fairly Well	With Some Difficulty	With Great Difficulty
Educate communities and potential partners about AmeriCorps' mission	○	○	○	○
Educate communities and potential partners about my program	○	○	○	○

I can ...				
Conduct a needs assessment to determine community/partner needs	○	○	○	○
Develop a collaborative strategy to accomplish goals	○	○	○	○
Develop and manage a work plan with a team	○	○	○	○

I can...				
Build trust/confidence between community residents and members	○	○	○	○
Recognize similar missions and see potential for partnership	○	○	○	○
Build coalitions among different groups	○	○	○	○
Respect diversity in working with partners to meet community needs	○	○	○	○
Organize a group to accomplish a common goal	○	○	○	○

I can ...				
Make presentations at community meetings	○	○	○	○
Work with committees and boards	○	○	○	○
Organize and facilitate meetings	○	○	○	○
Organize and facilitate training sessions	○	○	○	○
Prepare meeting agendas and minutes	○	○	○	○

Encouraging Responsibility

AmeriCorps encourages members to explore and exercise their responsibilities to their communities, their families, and themselves—in their service experience and throughout their lives.

How would you rate your skills in the following areas?

I can ...	With Ease	Fairly Well	With Some Difficulty	With Great Difficulty
Convey the "big picture" of AmeriCorps and connect it with the work members are doing in the community	○	○	○	○
Encourage members' participation in service or volunteer efforts	○	○	○	○
Promote the value of service and/or volunteering as an on-going life-style	○	○	○	○
Facilitate debriefing and reflection activities with members	○	○	○	○

I can ...				
Build trust between myself and my members	○	○	○	○
Assist members in recognizing and using their skills	○	○	○	○
Delegate based on ability and skill development	○	○	○	○
Provide opportunities to encourage members to assume leadership roles	○	○	○	○
Motivate members to recognize and take on their responsibility as agents of change	○	○	○	○

I can ...				
Listen to members and identify the crux of an issue	○	○	○	○
Help members move from a negative frame of reference toward a positive solution	○	○	○	○

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Self-Assessment—Implementing the AmeriCorps Mission

I can ...	With Ease	Fairly Well	With Some Difficulty	With Great Difficulty
Facilitate problem solving one-on-one with members	○	○	○	○
Assist members in personal difficulties and stress management	○	○	○	○
Refer members in crisis to other appropriate support	○	○	○	○
Facilitate team problem solving	○	○	○	○

I can ...				
Give developmental feedback to members	○	○	○	○
Give performance evaluation feedback to members	○	○	○	○

I can ...				
Establish and maintain the accountability of members for their own actions	○	○	○	○
Maintain professional boundaries in a personable way	○	○	○	○
Model professional behavior	○	○	○	○

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Expanding Opportunities

AmeriCorps helps those who help America. Members receive awards to further their education or pay back their student loans, as well as invaluable job experience, specialized training, and life skills.

How would you rate your skills in the following areas?

I can ...	With Ease	Fairly Well	With Some Difficulty	With Great Difficulty
Assist members with questions about the use of educational awards	○	○	○	○

I can ...				
Assist members in developing résumés	○	○	○	○
Assist members in interviewing skills	○	○	○	○
Assist members in their own job research	○	○	○	○
Assist members in developing personal goals	○	○	○	○

I can ...				
Use ongoing reflection on their service to help members discover their interests and skills and meaningful career options	○	○	○	○
Counsel members on career development goals	○	○	○	○
Identify resources for job and educational opportunities	○	○	○	○
Refer appropriate members to job and educational opportunities	○	○	○	○
Support/share professional networking with members	○	○	○	○

The Supervisor as Communicator

S tudies show that, over the course of a normal work week, supervisors spend about 75 percent of their time engaged in two activities— talking and listening. If you're like most supervisors, you probably enjoy and are good at these two skills. After all, if you didn't like to interact with people, you would not have become an AmeriCorps supervisor in the first place. But now that you are, you will find that "communicating" begins to take on a number of new dimensions. The challenge for you as a supervisor becomes how to use your communication abilities in the context of the wide variety of roles you must play. In a given day, you may be called upon to act as parent, counselor, boss, manager, negotiator, and referee to different people at different times. In playing some of these roles,

simply talking and listening is probably not enough.

The three critical communication skills you must call on if you hope to be a helper and a leader to your members are

■ Active listening,

■ Providing feedback, and

■ Conflict management.

These skills are highly interrelated in the sense that they build on one another: Active listening encourages feedback; conflict is less likely to erupt when feedback is asked for and given appropriately; and regular feedback promotes open discussion and active participation. In essence, good communication is the beginning of building trust between you and your members, not to mention between you and other staff.

In This Chapter

☑ Active Listening

☑ Providing Feedback

☑ Confllict Management

Whether you were first exposed to these terms and tools years ago or days ago, you may want to review them again in preparation for the next time someone looks at you and says, "Oh, is that what you meant when you said...?"

Supervisor's TOOL KIT

(These tools begin on page I 23*)*

A Day in the Life ...

It's been a long week for Juggling Jamal. The crew's been working hard on the park restoration project, and their efforts have paid off. Even local residents and passers-by have made comments about how much better the playground looks. Jamal smiles to himself when he thinks of how proud the members seemed at the end of the week. Even Valerie cracked a smile! He wishes every week could end on a high note like that, where everyone feels like part of the team and happy about what they're accomplishing together. Unfortunately, it isn't always that way. One week the team is working well together and the members are going the extra mile for one another. Then, all of a sudden, something throws them out of whack. Like a band whose guitar player suddenly pops a string, they start to seem a bit "off-key." Jamal leans back in his chair and puts his feet on his desk. "Okay, so a few of our instruments need a little tuning," he thinks. "But doesn't every band go through this? We were really together this week. We can do it again." He puts his hands behind his head and starts to think about a couple of his members who need some help before the team can really perform well on a regular basis.

First on the list—Devon. He left his shovel at the work site on Wednesday, and by the time they realized his mistake and ran back to the site, the shovel was gone. How can somebody who is such a great worker be so careless? He lost his pliers the week before! The shovels belong to the Parks and Recreation Department, so somebody has to reimburse them for the cost—about $30. Jamal knows Devon has limited funds and wonders whether he should just repay the Parks people himself, then tell Devon never to let it happen again. On the other hand, if any of the other members found out that Jamal did that for one of them....

Jamal looks down at the paperwork on his desk and frowns. There are the time sheets, reminding him of item #2, the meeting he has scheduled this afternoon with Valerie. "I'll trade two lost shovels for this confrontation any day," he sighs. According to her team leader, Valerie is putting more hours on her time sheets than she's working. The rules are pretty clear about this, but still it's not pleasant to tell someone they've been caught lying, especially Valerie. Sometimes it's hard for Jamal to look at her without thinking "prima donna," even though he knows he shouldn't stereotype people that way.

A knock on his door shakes Jamal out of his preoccupation with Valerie. It's Elena, with a long face and wrinkled brow. She's just returned from making her project proposal presentation to the Hispanic Youth Center board of directors. Jamal knows how nervous she was before leaving. Now she's back, and she isn't smiling....

Active Listening

Why You Do It

AmeriCorps members experience life's problems like everyone else. Given the communities they live and work in, some members may have more than their fair share of issues to deal with. If economic, social, and family problems are not present in their own lives, these issues certainly appear in the communities they serve.

Members also have hopes for the future—emotional, professional, financial—and they may want to take some risks to realize those hopes. For example, they may want to apply for a job, enter college, buy a car, rent an apartment, or retire. Whether dealing with their own issues, aspirations, and risk-taking, or with those of the community, members often turn to their supervisor for help. How do you respond?

Helping members (and colleagues and friends) deal with their concerns requires clear, two-way communication. First, you need to listen to understand—What is this person expressing to me about how she or he is thinking and feeling? Second, you need to check to see if the person with whom you are interacting understands the meaning or message of what you are saying in response. The greater the diversity of your member group (or staff), the more challenging clear communication becomes because everyone filters what they hear differently. What you mean to say may not be at all what some of your members hear. Furthermore, the way you listen and respond to a particular member may be influenced by your assumptions about factors such as the person's cultural group or educational level. Active listening is one of the surest ways to understand and be understood by others.

How You Do It

As an active listener, you try to understand what a member is saying, feeling, or thinking by putting your understanding into

"Listening, not imitation, may be the sincerest form of flattery."

Dr. Joyce Brothers, American Psychologist

words and feeding it back to the member for verification. You don't tell the member your own feelings or thoughts about the situation, only what you think the member means. Then the member can tell you whether you have correctly interpreted or understood. Active listening helps you to hear the emotion and affirm the person. It communicates these messages clearly:

■ I hear what you are feeling.

■ I understand how you see things right now.

■ I see you as you are right now.

■ I am interested and concerned.

■ I do not judge or evaluate you.

Active listening includes four sub-skills:

Attending
Using body language (e.g., eye contact, leaning forward) to communicate to the member that you are hearing her or him

Paraphrasing
Listening well and putting what the member says into your own words

Reflecting Feeling
Capturing and expressing the underlying feelings the member may have but may not put into words

Reflecting Meaning
Restating the member's feeling and combining it with the reason for the feeling—for example, "you feel discouraged because three of your highest-risk kids dropped out of your after-school program"

Given all the things that may interfere with the ability to really hear what someone is saying—environmental distractions, cultural barriers, and the like—active listening requires some study and practice. Check out the active-listening tools at the end of the chapter for further insight.

As with any communication technique, there is always the potential to overuse or overdo it. For example, if you "over-attend" (too many head nods, sitting too close, etc.), you may make the person you're listening to feel smothered. If active listening is a new skill for you, try practicing with a friend or colleague before using it to counsel a member.

Here's Jamal doing some active listening with Elena to help her talk about her problem...

Jamal Is All Ears...

Patting the extra chair in his office, Jamal gives Elena a concerned smile and invites her to sit down. He can't exactly tell whether she's mad or distressed, but she's obviously not happy [attending].

J: How was your meeting at the youth center?

E: You know, I don't know why I bothered to go in the first place. I just hate talking in front of a group of VIPs!

J: (Leans forward.) It's okay, Elena. Take a second to relax a bit, then tell me what happened [attending].

E: (Not relaxing.) What happened? More like, what didn't happen? I got up. I did my presentation. They asked all these questions I didn't know how to answer. I got all mixed up trying to explain things to them. Then, as soon as my 20-minute time slot was up, right in the middle of a sentence, they just cut me off and said, "Thank you very much...we'll be in touch." Yeah, right, I bet they'll be in touch.

J: Now, let me see if I understand exactly what happened at the meeting. You stood in front of the group and gave the presentation you'd worked up. If I remember correctly, it was about a 10-minute talk, right? (Elena nods yes.) Then, some of the board members started asking questions you didn't exactly know how to handle [paraphrasing]. You got a little flustered, maybe, trying to respond to them and, before you realized it, the presentation time was up, and they cut you off [reflecting feeling].

E: Well, they didn't shove me out the door, but I was just starting to remember a couple of key points that might have sounded more convincing, then all of a sudden it was, "Well, Ms. Vega, sounds like an interesting project, and we'll review the information you've provided...," blah, blah, blah.

J: So you feel frustrated because you were unable to field their questions and didn't get a second chance before the time was up [reflecting meaning]?

E: Stupid is more like it. At least that's what they probably think about me, especially after the next guy.

J: So there was someone else making a presentation after yours?

E: Yeah, and he was good. I know because I stood outside the door and listened to the first part of his talk. He was so convincing. Jeez, I wish I had practiced my talk more!

J: It sounds as if you're feeling sorry you didn't come off as polished as this other guy, and now you think the board may be more persuaded to fund his project than yours [reflecting meaning]. (Elena nods her head slowly, but firmly. Jamal continues...) Elena, I know how hard you worked on your presentation, and your project ideas are so good. I really hate to see you feeling so upset with yourself over this. How do you think we can work with this situation to figure out what your next step should be?
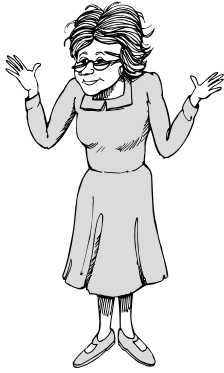
Providing Feedback

Why You Do It

One of the strengths of AmeriCorps' is the diversity of its members and supervisors. Members may be young or old, experienced or inexperienced, unskilled or very skilled, and may come from a variety of social and cultural backgrounds. Members also bring very different expectations to their work. As a supervisor, you need to establish a positive working relationship and a set of expectations with each member. If expectations are clear and members are motivated and capable, then they are likely to perform well. When this happens, it's important to offer praise. If, on the other hand, member motivations are in conflict with those of the project and team, or there is a disagreement on expectations—or perhaps members don't have the technical skills needed for a particular project—then their performance may be less than acceptable. In this case, the supervisor may need to give corrective feedback and work with the member(s) on how to make improvements.

As a supervisor, you not only need to give feedback, you must also ask for it from others (including members, bosses, and colleagues). Understanding how other people perceive you is one of the first steps toward knowing what to do to improve your job performance.

How You Do It

You communicate work expectations to members. You have members express their expectations for support from you, from agency partners, and from other members. You explain who assesses their performance and how that information is communicated, and to whom. Last, but not least, you describe the consequences tied to the process. There are rules of the game and you explain how to play by them. Like a coach on a playing field, you have to decide who is playing successfully and who needs more coaching. You reward good plays and criticize poor ones, and you do it in a constructive way. In other words,

you provide feedback to the players on how well they are doing and, if necessary, how they can do better.

Providing feedback is the primary skill for performance assessment and coaching (we talk more about coaching in chapter 2, The Supervisor as Advisor). There are two types of feedback:

Praise—for exemplary work or behavior that exceeds expectations; and

Corrective feedback—for behavior that does not meet agreed upon expectations.

Praise for exemplary behavior is important in order to clarify what good performance looks like, reinforce commitment, and balance out any negative emotions caused by corrective feedback. Praise given by the supervisor must also be genuine Insincerity and flattery will be quickly detected by members and will eventually diminish the impact of truly felt and deserved praise.

The DESC Model

Corrective feedback is important in clarifying what poor performance looks like, discouraging it, and providing positive support for changing specific behaviors. People usually accept praise more easily than correction or criticism. The DESC model (in your tool kit) is a particularly useful approach for giving corrective feedback, because it focuses the corrective feedback on the person's behavior, not on the person. This allows the supervisor to depersonalize the discussion, separate the member from the problem, and engage the member as a partner in finding a solution. To begin the feedback process, the supervisor writes out or carefully thinks through the problem at hand in four steps.

"A stumble isn't a fall."

West African Proverb

4 STEPS

Step 1   Describes what the member is doing that creates problems;

Step 2   Expresses why that behavior is a problem for the supervisor and for the project;

Step 3   Specifies what the supervisor wants the member to do instead (with input from the member); and

Step 4   Clarifies consequences for changing or failing to change the problem behavior.

By using this simple four-step model, you will be able to get your constructive message across, and members will be more likely to accept and do something with your criticism. Although the model is logical and straightforward, it still requires study and practice. Please thoroughly review the DESC model description and guidelines in your tool kit before you attempt to use it with a member or a colleague.

Now, let's take a look at how Jamal uses this approach in giving feedback to Devon.

Shovels and Feedback: Important AmeriCorps Tools

Remember Jamal's issue with Devon and the lost shovel? Here are Jamal and Devon as they meet in the parking lot...

J: Devon, we need to talk about the shovel, man.

D: I left it behind by accident, and some creep stole it. What else is there to say?

J: Well, I'm not sure if you know this, but all the large tools belong to the Parks people. Anything we lose comes out of our budget. We're on a shoestring here, so we really can't afford to lose anything. How can you work things out so you can replace the cost of the shovel? It's about $30.

D: (Half serious, half joking) Oh man, I don't even have any shoestrings! (A couple of seconds of silence.) I guess I'll have to scrape it together, huh? (Jamal nods yes.) But could you wait 'til next month? I'm tight right now.

J: Sorry, brother. I'd like to help you out on that, but I just can't keep the Parks people waiting. I could do it like this, though. I could take $15 from you now, and another $15 after the next pay period. I'd want you to sign a letter so neither of us forgets.

D: Okay, that's more do-able for me.

J: Alright, then. But I also want to get your thoughts on how we can prevent this type of mishap in the future. Since this isn't the first time we've lost a tool, I wonder if we should start getting the team leader to remind everyone to pick up things at the end of the day. What do you think?

D: Yeah. I wish we'd had an equipment check yesterday. But you know, I wouldn't ask the team leader to do it—she's got too much already. Maybe we can rotate who does the check every week. But hey, put me down last on the schedule!

Feedback Is:

- Information about how someone else perceives or experiences you in a given situation;

- Essential for self-development, member development, and team development;

- As much about the person giving it as about the one receiving it; and

- Yours to agree with or not.

Feedback Is Not:

- A statement of who you are as a person, or how you behave all the time; and

- Something you have to agree with in order for it to be useful.

Three Feedback Pitfalls

You may fall into several bad habits that will make confronting members on performance issues more difficult:

AVOIDING THE CONFRONTATION AS LONG AS POSSIBLE

Putting off confrontation can cause two problems. One is that history may blur the facts. The other is that the behavior may become entrenched.

FAILING TO GIVE SUFFICIENT PRAISE FOR GOOD TO SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE

By failing to praise, you are essentially failing to encourage the member to continue good work. If you only notice poor performance, you may be perceived as one-sided and hard. Your praise also helps soften the potential emotional blow of constructive criticism.

FAILING TO COMMUNICATE CLEAR PERFORMANCE STANDARDS IN THE FIRST PLACE

It's unfair to hold a member accountable to a standard you have left vague or ambiguous.

By avoiding these pitfalls, you will lessen the potential for more serious conflicts between you and your members.

Conflict Management

Why you do it

Listening actively and providing ongoing feedback will reduce the amount of conflict you encounter as you supervise members. Unfortunately, these two skills don't always work. Sometimes you must use conflict resolution and mediation skills for turning conflict into constructive problem solving.

For our purposes, we'll define conflict as follows:

> CONFLICT: any situation in which the goals, methods, values, or needs of two or more people are, or are *perceived to be*, in opposition.

Sources of conflict may be competition, authority issues, diversity and sensitivities related to it, and differences in ideas, desires, or needs. Regardless of the source, active listening and feedback are the skills on which conflict management is based. Be sure to review the materials related to those two skills (presented earlier in this chapter) before jumping into conflict management and mediation.

How you do it

Sometimes you can avoid conflict over minor issues by using "I" statements instead of "you" statements. "I" statements make it easier for a member to hear corrective feedback instead of rejecting it. For example;

"You" Statement	*"I" Statement*
"You aren't making any sense."	"I couldn't understand what you said."

Sometimes, when you're trying to give corrective feedback to a member, it backfires and the member lashes out at you with strong feelings, either about the issue at hand or about other
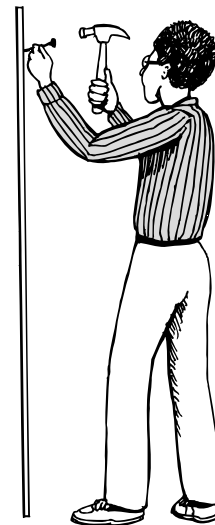
"You cannot shake hands with a clenched fist."

Indira Gandhi
Prime Minister of India

hidden "hot topics." Instead of a nod or a handshake of agreement to do something differently, you wind up with, "Well, let me tell you something, supervisor." In that case, use active listening to lower the emotional heat, translate what the other person says into constructive criticism, negotiate a change in behavior, and review the positive and negative consequences. The easiest way to explain this process is to demonstrate it.

Let's see how Jamal manages the conflict he has with Valerie over her time sheets.

Jamal and Valerie Discuss

Jamal has just started his meeting with Valerie. He's trying to give her corrective feedback about reporting her hours incorrectly on her time sheet. Jamal begins the conversation and carries it through the four steps outlined below. Notice he's using the DESC model we discussed earlier.

■ *Describe* behavior
   "Valerie, your time sheets don't match your hours. You were three hours short last week and four hours short this week."

■ *Express* why it's a problem
   "I don't falsify time sheets, and I really want you to qualify for the stipend. It's breaking the rules to approve hours not served."

■ *Specify* what you want (in terms of action)
   "I want you to at least meet the minimum hours by putting in the time required."

■ *Clarify consequences,* if necessary
   "I'd like to know if there's any reason you can't do that, and if there is, what I can do to help."

Let's say that Valerie interrupts Jamal between Step 2 and Step 3 with the following:

"That creep of a team leader's lying! I put in the time and he says I don't! Besides, everybody else skips out. You're only picking on me because I'm white!"

Jamal's first concern, whatever his response, is not to let Valerie interrupt him until he has finished his entire statement. If she insists, Jamal should use the "broken record" technique, i.e. keep repeating, "I want to hear what you have to say, but I'd like to finish my thought."

Jamal's next step is to help Valerie to transform her response from an attack into a constructive criticism (of himself and the team leader). To do this, Jamal actually uses the same formula as he used in the four steps above, only this time he states the behavior, the problem, and so forth from Valerie's point of view. Here's how Jamal does it:

Valerie's statement: "That creep of a team leader's lying! I put in the time, and he says I don't!"

Jamal's translation: "You think he lies about the time you put in and that makes you angry because it creates a problem between us. You want to know if I'll check on the accuracy of his reports?"

Valerie's statement: "Besides, everybody else skips out. You're only picking on me because I'm white!"

Jamal's translation: "You see other members missing hours and getting credit for them, and you feel angry with me because you think I ignore them and single you out because you're white? You would like me to agree to apply the same standards to everyone?"

Jamal Translates Conflict into Constructive Criticism

Negotiating

The first time Jamal translates a statement he may not get it exactly right, but he continues to use active listening until he gets acknowledgment from Valerie that she thinks Jamal understands her. The fact that he finally gets the message right, does not necessarily mean that he agrees with it. It just means that he knows what behavior Valerie is reacting to, why it's important, how she feels, and what she wants Jamal to do. With that kind of clarity, he can begin to negotiate what he is willing to give and what he'd like in return. For example, to get Valerie to comply with the service requirements, Jamal may agree to tighten up her control of service hours and/or change her team leader. By this stage, Jamal is no longer in conflict. He and Valerie are solving problems together.

Reviewing Consequences

If Jamal needs to put more muscle into the confrontation, he may add one more step to the feedback formula. He may describe the positive consequences related to the behavior he wants and the negative consequences for continuing the undesirable behavior. In this case he might say:

"Regardless of how your leader's honesty checks out, I want to say something just for the record. My policy is, I don't falsify service records, and I don't allow members or leaders to falsify them either. I will make sure you get credit for the time served and will write letters of recommendation for you to schools if you complete your time. But, if you don't meet your obligations, I will not certify that you qualify for the stipend. I'd like to talk to the team leader to get his perspective, so why don't we meet again in a week and pick things up from there?"

Addressing the Race Issue

In this particular case, Jamal must deal not only with the specific issue of Valerie's false time sheets; he must also address her more general allegations regarding racial bias. Jamal will do well to negotiate with Valerie on the issue of the time sheets first. Once he senses they are solving that problem together, he can begin to tackle the sensitive subject of bias. On this matter, Jamal needs to initiate a dialogue with Valerie to learn her real feelings about prejudice among and between members and staff. This exchange may take one meeting or several. Depending on what Jamal discovers, he may want to do several things, including 1) talk to others in the group about their perceptions, 2) ask one or two of his colleagues for feedback on his own interpersonal skills with people of different races or ethnic backgrounds, and 3) ask someone with appropriate expertise to help him assess the problem. The essential thing is to address the issue and to do so by creating an ambience in which people feel comfortable expressing themselves calmly and openly.

Mediating Conflict Between Members

When conflict breaks out among two or more members, you can use the same skills to mediate or get the parties involved to talk in problem-solving language. First use active listening with both sides to calm their emotions. Be aware that people respond to conflict differently (see the description of conflict management styles in the next section). Then use the following questions to bring the conflict to the negotiating table:

■ What has the other side done or not done that bothers you? Ask who, what, when, where, and how questions until you get specific descriptions of behavior.

■ How do you feel about that *[if that is not abundantly clear already]*? Why is it important?

■ What do you want the other side to do or not do instead?

■ *[Sometimes]* What are the consequences if the other side does or doesn't do what you want?

Once you get both sides clear on the answers to these questions, use your problem-solving skills to help generate options for agreements in which both sides win. Help them agree on a plan of action with clearly defined tasks, responsibilities, and deadlines.

Conflict Management Styles: A Few Options

The supervisor's job is often stressful, and under stress people tend to react to conflict in a knee-jerk, rather than a thoughtful fashion. It is helpful to look at the different options or modes most people have for dealing with conflict to understand when one mode may be more appropriate than others. The Thomas-Kilmann conflict management model is one conceptual way to assess an individual's behavior in a conflict situation. In this model, the person's behavior is described in one of two ways:

Assertive—the extent to which the member attempts to satisfy his or her own concerns; and

Cooperative—the extent to which the member attempts to satisfy the other person's concerns.

These two basic descriptions can then be used to understand five options for handling conflict:

COMPETING—a power-orientated mode. You want to get your way at the other person's expense.

ACCOMMODATING—the opposite of competing. You neglect your own concerns in order to satisfy those of the other person. There is an element of self-sacrifice in this mode.

AVOIDING—choosing not to address the conflict by postponing, sidestepping, etc. You don't pursue your goals or those of the other person.

COLLABORATING—the opposite of avoiding. By collaborating you attempt to involve the other person to find a solution to the issue at hand. It means digging into the issues to find an appealing alternative.

COMPROMISING—you try to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution that is at least somewhat satisfactory to both of you.
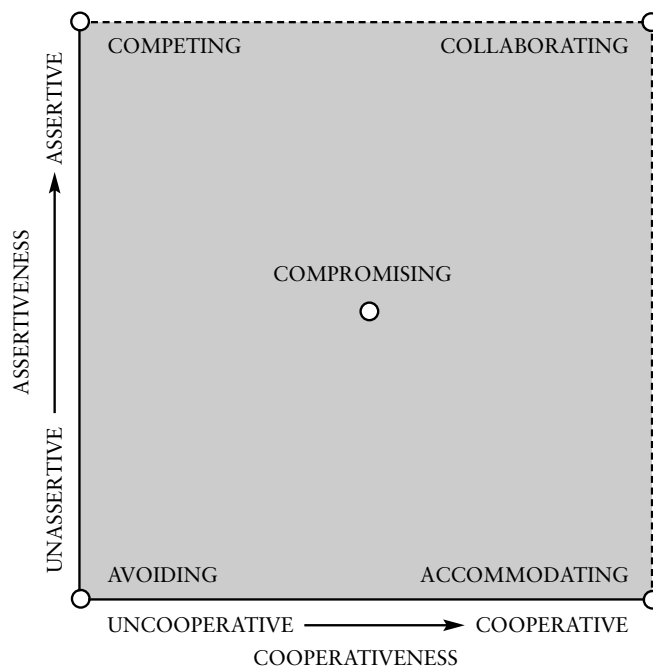
Conflict Management Styles

Two men were walking along a crowded sidewalk in a downtown business area. Suddenly, one exclaimed, "Listen to the lovely sound of that cricket!" But the other could not hear. He asked his companion how he could detect the sound of a cricket amidst the din of people and traffic. The first man, who was a zoologist, had trained himself to listen to the voices of nature, but he did not explain. He simply took a coin out of his pocket and dropped it on the sidewalk whereupon a dozen people began to look about them. "We hear," he said, "what we listen for."

Shagwan Shreeh
Rajneesh
"The Discipline of
Transcendence"

No one of these conflict management options is "the best." The basic point of the model is to make you aware of the choices and of people's tendency to use one mode more often than another. All five options are useful depending on the situation. The effectiveness of a given option depends on the requirements of the specific situation and the conflict management skills of the people involved. If you find yourself confronted with serious conflict situations, you may want to study some of the books on conflict management recommended in the bibliography in Appendix A. You may also want to consider enrolling in a focused workshop that provides guided practice in negotiation and mediation skills.

In your tool kit you'll find more information and examples of the Thomas-Kilmann model.

REFERENCES
Pages I 21 and I 22 adapted from: Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument, by Kenneth Thomas and Ralph Kilmann. XICOM, 1974.

Active Listening: A Primer

One of the most critical communications skills for supervisors is active listening. Active listening helps you to "hear the emotion and affirm the person." It includes attending, paraphrasing, reflecting feeling, and reflecting meaning. When you listen actively, you do so with your body, eyes, ears, and instincts and—temporarily—you suspend judgment.

Attending: Listening with your body is called attending. It communicates that you are listening through body language, by

- sitting or standing within a comfortable distance of the member speaking,

- facing the person directly and leaning slightly forward,

- maintaining an appropriate amount of eye contact,

- nodding approval or agreement when you feel it,

- reflecting the emotion and information from the speaker by facial expression, and

- conveying "relaxed intensity" with your body language.

The body language of attending varies by culture. When in doubt, discuss cultural differences with the member, asking how he or she would know that you were paying attention and acting concerned.

Your eyes listen to the speaker's body language. Body language may alert you to issues when what you're hearing is different from what you're seeing. The member who slumps in a chair with a down-turned mouth and eyes that avoid yours while telling you how happy she is with her agency supervisor is sending you a mixed message.

Suspend judgment while you are listening with your ears. The mind gets so busy judging the "rights" and the "wrongs" and planning what to say next that it forgets to hear what is said. The speaker is absolutely right in his mind. Your job is to get into the speaker's mind. If you listen well, you should be able to repeat to the listener exactly what was said after every two or three sentences.

Paraphrasing: If you listen well and can put what the speaker says into your own words, that's paraphrasing. A paraphrase is a short statement that covers the content of what was said, not the underlying emotion. If done correctly, your paraphrase should elicit a "Yes" or a "That's right" from the speaker. There are many lead-in phrases to introduce a paraphrase, such as "In other words" or "I'm hearing that...." Other active-listening lead-in phrases are:

- I'm picking up that...

- As I get it, you felt...

- If I'm hearing you correctly...

The Supervisor as Communicator

1 24

■ To me, it's almost like you're saying...

■ What I guess I'm hearing is...

■ So as you see it....

Reflecting Feeling: Even when you correctly paraphrase what the speaker is saying, she or he will not feel really heard until you capture and express the underlying feelings that may not be expressed verbally. Research indicates that more than 80 percent of communication is nonverbal. Focus on listening with your eyes, listening to the tone of voice, and listening to what your instinct tells you about what could be going on with the other person.

Your guess about what the speaker is feeling may be right on target, and, if it isn't, the speaker will often give you more verbal cues. When you express the underlying feeling(s) and get confirmation, you have successfully reflected feelings.

Be careful of thoughts disguised as feelings. "I feel she doesn't like me," uses feeling, to express a thought. Some active listening might get you closer to "You think she doesn't like you and you feel hurt." Hurt is the feeling underlying the thought. A list of feeling words follows:

	Anger	*Elation*	*Depression*	*Fear*
Mild	annoyed bothered bugged irritated	glad comfortable surprised relieved confident	unsure confused bored resigned disappointed hurt	uneasy tense concerned anxious worried
Moderate	disgusted harassed mad put upon set up	cheerful happy up elated great hopeful eager	discouraged drained distressed down unhappy sad	alarmed threatened afraid scared frightened
Intense	angry hostile hot burned furious proud	joyful excited enthusiastic moved free fulfilled	miserable ashamed humiliated hopeless despairing	panicky overwhelmed terrified

Active Listening: A Primer

Reflecting Meaning:

Meaning combines both the content of what is communicated and the associated feeling. A simple formula for expressing meaning is to restate the feeling(s), followed by "because" and a statement that explains the reason(s) for the feeling(s). Some examples follow:

> "You are furious because the agency director didn't acknowledge your recommendation. You suspect this means you don't matter to her."

> "You feel sad because your girlfriend broke up with you and you're afraid that any new relationship will make you feel the same kind of pain."

Summary

The skills of active listening described above may seem awkward and forced at first, but with practice they will feel more natural. It is difficult to respond with patience, understanding, and empathy when you may consider the other person's ideas wrong. However, active listening, if practiced faithfully, will generate attitudes of tolerance, understanding, and nonevaluative acceptance of the other.

[Feeling words adapted from *Listening, the Forgotten Skill: A Self-Teaching Guide,* by Madelene Burley Allen, Wiley & Sons, 1995.]

Tips for Active Listening

1. Find a quiet, private place to listen. Hallways, shared offices, and other busy places are not conducive to active listening. In a quiet spot you'll be better able to focus your whole attention and create a nonthreatening environment.

2. Want to listen. Almost all problems in listening can be overcome by having the right attitudes. Remember, there is no such thing as uninteresting people, only uninterested listeners.

3. Act like a good listener. Be alert, sit straight, lean forward if that's appropriate, let your face radiate interest.

4. Listen to understand. Do not just listen for the sake of listening; listen to gain a real understanding of what is being said.

5. React. The only time a person likes to be interrupted is when he is applauded. Be generous with your applause. Make the other person feel important. Applaud with nods, smiles, comments, encouragement.

6. Stop talking. You can't listen while you are talking. Communicate—don't just take turns talking.

7. Empathize. Try to put yourself in the other person's place so you can see his or her point of view.

8. Concentrate on what the other is saying. Actively focus your attention on the words, the ideas, and the feelings related to the subject.

9. Look at the other person. Face, mouth, eyes, hands will all help the other person communicate with you and help you concentrate, too—show you are listening.

10. Smile appropriately. But don't overdo it.

11. Leave your emotions behind (if you can). Try to push your worries, your fears, your problems away. They may prevent you from listening well.

12. Get rid of distractions. Put down any papers, pencils, etc., you may have in your hands; they may distract your attention.

13. Get the main points (the big story). Concentrate on the main ideas and not on the illustrative material. Examples, stories, statistics, etc., are important but are not usually the main points. Examine them only to see if they prove, support, define the main ideas.

14. Share responsibility for communication. Only part of the responsibility rests with the speaker; you as the listener have an important part. Try to understand; if you don't, ask for clarification.

Tips for Active Listening

15. React to ideas, not to the person. Don't allow your reaction to the person to affect your interpretation of words. Good ideas can come from people whose looks or personality you don't like.

16. Don't argue mentally. When you are trying to understand the other person, it is a handicap to argue mentally while you are listening. It sets up a barrier between you and the speaker.

17. Use the difference between the speed at which you can listen and the speed at which a person can talk. You can listen faster than anyone can talk. Human speech is about 100 to 150 words per minute; thinking is about 500. Use this rate difference to your advantage by trying to stay on the right track, and think back over what the speaker has said.

18. Don't antagonize the speaker. You may cause the other person to conceal ideas, emotions, and attitudes in many ways: arguing, criticizing, taking notes, not taking notes, asking questions, not

asking questions, etc. Try to judge and be aware of the effect you are having on the other person. Adapt to the speaker.

19. Avoid hasty judgments. Wait until all the facts are in.

20. Develop the attitude that listening is fun! Make a game of seeing how well you can listen.

21. Put the speaker at ease. Help him or her feel free to talk.

22. Be patient. Allow plenty of time. Do not interrupt. Avoid heading for the door.

23. Hold your temper. An angry person gets the wrong meaning from words.

24. Go easy on argument and criticism. This puts others on the defensive and they may "clam up" or get angry. Don't argue: even if you win, you lose.

25. Ask pertinent questions. This is encouraging, shows you are listening, helps to develop points further, and is essential for clarification.

Different kinds of questions provoke different emotional and intellectual responses from people. To be an effective communicator and group leader, you need to select and pose questions so that people feel encouraged to share ideas and opinions within the bounds of the subject or issue at hand. Most questions fall in one of two general categories "closed" and "open-ended."

Closed Questions

Closed questions can be answered with a simple yes or no, or with one or two other words. For example:

> *Question:* Are you satisfied with the project tasks assignments we made this morning?
> *Answer:* Yes/no/sort of/I guess so.

> *Question:* How many shovels will we need at the park site tomorrow?
> *Answer:* About ten/a half-dozen.

Use closed questions to elicit short answers and very specific or pointed information. Do not use them when you are trying to encourage people to exchange their ideas and opinions. They will only stifle the discussion.

Open-Ended Questions

Open-ended questions usually begin with words like how, what, and why, and require more elaborate answers than closed questions. For example:

> *Question:* How do you feel about the community center burglary?
> *Answer:* I feel like the whole project has been violated. It's shaken my trust in the neighborhood, but it woke me up to some problems that I hadn't seen before.

> *Question:* What kinds of goals have you set in your work group?
> *Answer:* We decided it was important to identify goals that address three areas of concern: getting the task done, developing ourselves as professionals, and getting recognition from the community at large.

> *Question:* Why do you think the project failed the first time? Answer: I'm not sure we have enough information to answer that, but I think it may be critical to find out. Maybe we could interview some of the organizers and beneficiaries who would remember.

Asking Questions

Use open-ended questions to promote discussion and explore problems and solutions, but take care that the group stays on track. Here are several types of open-ended questions and ways to formulate them to help individual members or groups solve problems and make decisions:

Diagnostic questions: What is your analysis of the problem?
What can you conclude from this information?

Challenge/testing questions: Why do you believe that?
What might someone offer as an opposing opinion?

Action questions: What needs to be done to get this project going?
What are our first steps?

Prediction questions: If your conclusions are correct, what do you think the reaction of the seniors (youth, parents, etc.) might be?

Hypothetical questions: What would have happened if we had decided not to include the housing authority in the first phase of the project...?

[Adapted from: "The Discussion Teacher in Action: Questioning, Listening, and Response" by C. Roland Christensen in *Education for Judgment*, eds. C. Roland Christensen, David A. Garvin, and Ann Sweet. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1991.]

Listening Blocks

Comparing	Saying "I have more information or experience..."
Mind Reading	Saying "I know what you're really thinking..." or "I know exactly how you feel..."
Rehearsing	Preparing what you will say before the other is done
Filtering	Selective listening
Judging	Jumping to a quick decision, labeling
Dreaming	Getting lost in your own private associations
Identifying	Confusing the other's need with your own
Advising	Immediately suggesting a course of action, without being asked
Sparring	Disagreeing: "Yes, but"—also known as playing the devil's advocate
Being Right	Maintaining an unshakable point of view
Derailing	Changing the subject
Placating	Pretending to agree
Criticizing	Explaining how the person is wrong
Threatening	Talking about negative consequences

"What Did You Say?" Communicating With Those Whose English Is Limited

It was December 23 and I ran into my local 7-11 to get a few lottery tickets as last minute stocking stuffers. Because I was in a rush and harried by holiday season pressures, I blurted out my usual rapid-fire speaking style to the unsuspecting Korean clerk behind the counter, "I'd like five rub-off lottery tickets."

I couldn't understand what she said, but I could read the confusion on her face. So, I repeated my original request, only this time louder and slower. "I'd like five rub-off lottery tickets." Again she said something unintelligible to me, this time looking even more bewildered. For the third time, louder and with even more exaggerated mouth movements, I repeated my request. In exasperation, she went to the computerized ticket machine and punched out a ticket with five quick picks.

By this time my burn had turned to a boil and I said between clenched teeth, "This is not what I asked for. I want five rub-off tickets!" At this point another clerk came to her rescue, saying a few words in their native language. The no longer frantic clerk turned to me and with a smile of relief on her face "Scratch-off, scratch-off," she kept repeating.

This incident points up some of the difficulties and frustrations experienced on both sides of the language barriers we face regularly in our multicultural society. It also clearly shows the mistakes we often make in communication with people whose command of English is limited.

What Doesn't Help

The biggest stumbling block in situations like these is the anger that often comes from the frustration of not understanding or being understood. That anger becomes a powerful saboteur of communication in two ways. First, a message that comes out of anger threatens the receiver, making him/her less able to use the little English they may know. Anger also blocks the thinking of the sender, preventing that person from finding creative solutions to the impasse. So, the sender keeps repeating the same unsuccessful behavior, each time louder, slower and with more irritation.

What Does Help

Avoiding anger is a beginning, but that's not enough. The following tips will help you find alternatives to louder and slower.

1. Make it visual

As the saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words. Using pictures, signs, diagrams, and symbols gives you another dimension beyond words with which to make yourself clear. Had I drawn a picture of a lottery ticket, pointed to one or shown a sample, I could have quickly overcome my 7-11 difficulty.

A veteran army instructor who regularly taught courses to allied military personnel from many countries advised that diagrams, charts and graphs were critical aids in teaching his classes where most students had limited command of English. International symbols in road signs have long been used in Europe where there are many languages spoken in a relatively small area and where there is much travel between countries.

2. Show and Tell

Kindergarten isn't the only place where "show and tell" is useful. Demonstrating what you are explaining can often get the message across faster than words in any language. Wouldn't you rather have someone show you how to do something than have to figure it out from written instructions in a manual? I could have taken a coin and made scratching motions to show the clerk what kind of ticket I wanted. In on-the-job situations, this works best when you first show the person how to do a task, then do it together, and finally observe the individual in action so you can be sure you've been understood.

3. Use Their Language

If getting your message or information across is more important than showing your displeasure at their limited English, then using the other person's language may be your best bet. Don't panic. This doesn't mean you need to speak the other person's language. Emergency instructions, school district letters to parents, and signs in airports are common uses of bilingual or multilingual communication.

However, there are more. A local nursing home was temporarily stumped when its elderly residents kept complaining about not being able to communicate their needs to the mainly Spanish-speaking aides. The solution? Bilingual printed sheets with the twenty or so most common requests. When they need something, they just point to the request in the English column and the aide reads it on the corresponding line in the Spanish column.

Another example of bilingualism in action is the Theatre Para Los Niños (Children's Theater) which performs Spanish/English musicals for San Fernando Valley elementary school children. A recent performance focused on changing role stereotypes, showing that it is okay for boys to cook and for girls to play basketball. Without the use of both languages, many students would not have understood the message.

4. Take It Easy

When a language is not one's mother tongue, processing information in it takes longer. Not only is the vocabulary often unfamiliar, but grammar and intonation patterns are sometimes new. It is helpful to slow down and pause between sentences so the listener has time to let each segment of your message sink in. Then summarize at the end, pulling all the pieces together.

5. Keep It Simple

"Take the ball and run with it," "Go the extra mile," "A tough row to hoe," "A thumbnail sketch," and "Beyond the call of duty." These kinds of idiomatic expressions are common in everyday speech. Most of us probably use many throughout the course of the day. Yet, for a non-native speaker who tries to translate them literally, they make no sense at all. In addition, jargon—works that are specific to a particular business or industry—may also be confusing. In construction, for example, calling mortar "mud," or talking about "roughing the plumbing," would be difficult for anyone outside the profession to understand, let alone someone struggling with English. Finally, use simple words that are commonly heard, for example, "problem" rather than "glitch" or "snafu."

6. Say It Again

When you're having difficulty making yourself understood, it does help to repeat while using different words. If I had tried to find another way of describing the lottery ticket I wanted, I probably would have thought of "scratch-off," an expression the perplexed clerk would have understood.

One caution here, however. When looking for another way to say something, beware of cognates, words in other languages which look and sound similar to English words. The most common mistakes occur between Spanish and English. While "largo" in Spanish looks like large, it means long. And if you're embarrassed, don't say you're "embarazada" because that means pregnant.

7. Assume Confusion

Whatever you do, don't ask people if they understand and then take their "yes" to mean they do. In many cultures, saying "no" is the height of rudeness. Besides, even here in this culture, we often say we understand even when we're a little fuzzy because saying we don't makes us feel dumb.

Instead of asking, watch the person's face for non-verbal signs of confusion. Also watch behavior as the individual begins to act on what you've said. In my lottery ticket situation, the clerk's face told me she didn't

understand, and when she walked over to the computer to begin punching a quick pick, it was absolutely clear I had not gotten my message across.

8. Get Help

When you've done steps one through seven and you still are having trouble, get help. A bilingual friend or colleague can often get you out of a bind. In many organizations, staff who speak other languages are listed and called on a rotating basis to translate interchanges between staff and customers or clients. That way the extra duty is spread more equitably and does not fall on the same person each time. In other organizations, those with bilingual abilities are given pay differential for the extra service they provide. Just make sure the person who is doing the interpreting is fluent enough in both languages to be able to make things clear to all parties.

9. Walk In Their Shoes

To help reduce your frustration and anger when you get blocked by a language barrier, try to put yourself in the other person's place. Have you ever been somewhere where no one spoke English? How did it feel? What would have helped you? Remembering these times gives you some empathy for the bewilderment that the individual might be feeling.

10. Don't Laugh

The Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations reports that immigrants' most common request is that people not laugh at them when they try to speak English. When we're not confident of our ability in an area, we're particularly vulnerable and sensitive to slight. While you may not be laughing at the person's poor English, your joking manner or teasing banter may seem like ridicule.

A local bank executive recounted just such an example. While explaining a particularly complicated form to an immigrant with limited English skills, he turned and made some joking remarks to a colleague. A few minutes later, the customer called from home saying he had not appreciated being laughed at and treated as though he were stupid.

No matter what languages we do or don't speak, all of us need to be treated with dignity and respect. Communication that has these elements at the base will go a long way beyond language and cultural differences.

[Reprinted by permission from: *Managing Diversity Newsletter* by Lee Gardenswartz, Ph.D., and Anita Rowe, Ph.D., P.O. Box 819, Jamestown, NY, 14702, 716-665-3654, 1993.]

Giving Praise and Encouragement

We probably all have memories of someone unexpectedly praising or encouraging our work and how that changed our feelings about what we were doing and gave us pride and motivation.

Because you are an authority figure for your team, your words carry a lot of weight. If you praise their actions (whether it be the courtesy with which they served lunch to the elderly or the care with which they stenciled storm drains), they will shine.

It is sometimes hard to feel genuine in giving praise. Emphasizing the positive is a skill we aren't taught much as we are growing up. But if you start to practice watching for the good, you will probably start seeing more of it, and you will be more comfortable giving praise. But be aware that people respond to praise in different ways. If you work with a diverse group, you may want to check to see if your positive comments and encouragement are being received as you intended them, or if you need to adjust your approach to make someone feel more comfortable.

Words for Showing Praise:

- "I really liked how you..."

- "I've always found that [fill in] hard to do, but I really learned something by watching you do it today."

- "You should be proud of how you..."

- "I hope you are pleased with how [fill in] went today. I thought you did a great job."

- "I know you were completely absorbed while you were working with those children [or homeless men, or site visitors] today, but I was watching, and I wish you could've seen the expressions on their faces."

Words for Giving Encouragement:

- "You looked so confident while you were doing [something that had been giving the team member trouble earlier] today. I was impressed."

- "It looks like you might be frustrated with [fill in]. Let's figure out how you can

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do it differently." (This is particularly helpful if you can point out some of the strengths this member could use in the situation.)

■ "This has been a hard day, but we're still here. Let's go get some ice cream in 20 minutes."

■ "I know we're having to cut back our expectations on this project, but it means we're working thoughtfully, and it means we're learning something about how to do this next time."

■ "Wow, look at how this work we did today is so much better than what we were doing last week. We're really learning."

[From: *On Being a Team Leader*, by Ann Wysocki for the National Civilian Community Corps, 1994.]

Criteria for Effective Feedback

Feedback is a communication to a person (or a group) that provides information about how he/she/they affect others and helps them to understand the impact of their behavior. Feedback helps people keep their behavior "on target" and thus better achieve their goals.

Feedback is more effective when the following criteria are used:

1. It is specific rather than general. To be told that one is talkative will probably not be as useful as to be told that "just now, when we were deciding the issue, you talked so much I stopped listening."

2. *It is descriptive rather than judgmental.* Describing one's own reaction to another's behavior leaves the other person free to use it or not to use it as he or she sees fit. Avoiding judgmental language reduces the liklihood of a defensive response.

3. *It takes into account the needs of both the receiver and giver of feedback.* Feedback can be destructive when it serves only our own needs and fails to consider the needs of the person on the receiving end.

4. *It is directed toward behavior which the receiver can do something about.* Feedback is only increased when a person is reminded of shortcomings over which he has no control.

5. *It is solicited rather than imposed.* Feedback is most useful when the receiver has formulated the kind of question that those observing can answer.

6. *It is well-timed.* In general, feedback is most useful at the earliest opportunity after the given behavior (depending, of course, on the person's readiness to hear it, the support available from others, etc.).

7. *It is checked to ensure clear communication.* For example "the receiver" may try to rephrase the feedback to see if it corresponds to what the "sender" had in mind.

8. *It is checked with others to ensure accuracy.* Both the giver and the receiver of the feedback should check with others in the group as to its meaning. Is this one person's impression or an impression shared by others?

Helping Others Give You Feedback

Feedback is an important source of data that tells you how other people see your actions and that gives you the choice of trying to change your behavior. People act on their perceptions of your actions, and you may be "coming across" in unintended ways. So even if you "disagree" with feedback, it is important for you to hear it clearly and understand it.

Giving someone feedback is sometimes difficult; if you keep the following in mind, you will make it easier for someone else to give you feedback that you can use.

1. Make it your goal to understand the feedback. Asking clarifying questions and paraphrasing are two ways to do this.

2. Wait until the feedback has been given, then paraphrase the major points.

3. Help the giver use the criteria for giving useful feedback (for example, if the feedback is too general: "Could you give me a specific example of what you mean?").

4. Avoid making it more difficult for the giver of feedback than it already is (by reacting defensively or angrily, arguing, etc.).

5. Avoid explanations of "why I did that," unless asked.

6. Remember, feedback is one person's perceptions of your actions, not universal truth. Be active in checking out feedback with others. If two or three people give you similar feedback, there may be a pattern you might want to consider.

The DESC Model for Performance Feedback

The DESC model, developed by Bower and Bower in *Asserting Yourself* (1976), is a feedback method for constructively bringing an issue to a member's attention and initiating the problem-solving process. An important aspect of the DESC model is that it focuses on the member's behavior and not on the member. It allows the supervisor to depersonalize the discussion, separate the member from the problem, and engage the member as an equal partner in finding a solution. Essentially, it makes the member and the supervisor allies in finding a resolution.

To begin this process, write or carefully think through the following steps in planning how to approach the member:

Describe what the member is doing that creates problems,

Express why that behavior is a problem for you as the supervisor or for the project,

Specify what you want the member to do instead,

Clarify the consequences for either succeeding or failing to change the problem behavior.

By writing out or thinking out what you want to say to a member—as if you were writing a script— you are likely to be clearer, more forceful, and less judgmental in describing the problem in question. Writing out the script doesn't mean you sit down with the member in question and read it to him or her. It means you have thought through the presentation of the issues carefully before meeting with the member.

The following paragraphs describe each of the four steps of the model in greater detail.

Describe

A good description covers the facts about the issue, not the supervisor's assumptions about what these facts mean. Supervisors in general tend to assume what someone's intentions will be and jump into feedback discussions that sound blameful or judgmental. By describing in writing what the person is doing, the supervisor can review the language for things like "loaded" words that may trigger anger in one or both parties, and the discussion becomes a much more positive one. The description should also be specific so the member can clearly understand what behavior is at issue.

Express

Expressing the impact or consequences of the member's behavior is critical because it

relates directly to motivation: Members will be more motivated to change when they understand other people's perceptions of their actions. The most important reason why the behavior of a member becomes a problem is that it interferes with getting their work done. Other reasons for involving a member in such a discussion are that the behavior: a) keeps others from getting their work done; b) breaks the rules/policy/law; c) creates interpersonal problems among the work group; d) damages the status or credibility of members within the organization; or e) creates a negative image of the project/organization.

Too often, supervisors assume that the causes of problems are obvious to the member in question when, in reality, supervisors usually have broader information and perspective about the project's needs than the member does. Another thing supervisors may assume is that they share the same values with members about work and how it ought to be done. In expressing the problem, the supervisor opens up the opportunity for learning more about the member's perceptions and motivations. Besides the expressing negative effects of a behavior, it is helpful to point out the positive goals that are being interfered with or delayed by the problem behavior.

Specify

Specifying means deciding with the member exactly what steps you and the member will take to address the situation at hand; it also means that you (the supervisor) decide what you yourself want to stop doing, start doing, or continue doing relative to the behavior. Sometimes it's simply easier for a supervisor to identify changes in his or her own behavior to preempt a problem than to hope for the member to change. When specifying the desired outcome of the feedback, the supervisor should allow and actively encourage the member to suggest the means for achieving the end result. (The more motivated the member is, the less the supervisor should have to define the means to the end.) During the specifying step, it's helpful to explain what the desired goal is but also to state the bottom line so the member is clear on just how far the supervisor is willing to compromise.

Clarify

Identifying consequences can motivate people to change, and it's good to start with the positive ones. When feedback on an issue is being given for the first time, it may not be necessary to state consequences. In general, though, by explaining the advantages to be

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gained by a change in behavior, the supervisor essentially answers the member's unspoken question: What's in it for me? If, over time, the behavior does not change, or if the problem is a very serious one, then it's appropriate to state the negative consequences that will occur as a result. It's important that the supervisor not state a consequence that he or she would not be willing to carry out. Idle threats do not motivate the member, and they damage the supervisor's credibility. When discussing negative consequences, the supervisor should strive for a calm and matter-of-fact manner.

Delivering the Feedback

By writing out or thinking out these four steps, the supervisor clarifies the issues and has a chance to carefully consider how she or he wants to phrase certain points. How the supervisor delivers the message also influences the member's reactions and willingness to be involved productively as a partner in finding a solution.

Keep in mind that it's important to describe, express, and specify (steps 1–3) before soliciting a response from the member. There are three reasons for this: First, you will be better able to guide the discussion and keep it on track. Second, you will be able to explain the issue clearly so the member has enough information to become involved.

Finally, you will prepare yourself to become a better listener. Until you've fully expressed yourself, it may be hard to really listen to what the member has to contribute. Since the goal of feedback is establishing a two-way street, be sure all your own roadblocks to listening are down by stating your important points early and fully.

Guidelines for Using the DESC Model

1. Give feedback as soon after the event as possible, before the behavior becomes a habit and while the member still remembers what happened.

2. Focus on the specific behavior the individual can do something about, not on the person. Avoid generalizations—describe actions. For example,

Don't Generalize	*Describe Specific Behavior*
LAZY	Arrived 10 minutes late 2 days in a row
CARELESS	Left your shovel at the work site today
STUPID	Drained coffee pot and left burner on

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3. Explain why the behavior, not the person is a problem. Explain the kind of behavior you want. Using the above examples, you might say

   "If you keep coming in late other people will start doing it, too. Or they may resent you for not following the same rules as everybody else. I don't want that to happen. I want you to show up on time."

   "The shovels belong to the City, and any tool of theirs we lose comes out of our budget. We can't afford to lose any. I want you to return any tool you take by the end of the day."

   "The janitor doesn't get here until an hour after we leave and the coffee pot either breaks or burns to a crisp. I want you to check it before you leave at night."

   Behavior and action are what you want. Avoid the use of the verb "to be" and judgments about the person. In other words, avoid "I want you to be punctual." The more specific you are, the more likely the member will understand what you want (and why) and act on it. For example, "I want you to arrive by eight in the morning."

4. Ask whether the member can give you what you want. If the member has a problem with it, offer to help resolve the problem. Continuing again with the above examples, you might say

"If getting here on time is a problem, the team could help you find a couple of alarm clocks at garage sales so you have to get up and turn off more than one clock each morning."

"Will that work? Should the leader give everybody a reminder about tools at day's end?"

"Can you make it a habit to check the coffee pot? Should we put a sign by it so we remember?"

Once you open up to hear the other side of the story, be prepared to use active listening and to help solve the problem. The member a) may be late because she or he is temporarily babysitting or has a broken alarm clock; b) may have lent that tool to someone and expected the person to return it; or c) may be absent-minded about details and really need that sign by the coffee pot. Basically, there are three types of reasons for not meeting an expectation:

Don't know—Either the member wasn't aware of the expectation or didn't know how to meet it. If so, you have to do more orientation or training. That could be the case with the coffee pot.

Don't want to—The member isn't motivated to meet the expectation. Your question is, "What would it take for you to want to?" Arriving 10 minutes late could be related to motivation.

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There are problems—The member has personal or work-related problems. If the shovel really was loaned to someone, you need a rule about who is responsible for loaned tools.

5. Finally, choose an appropriate time and place for giving feedback. It may make sense to praise a member in front of others, but constructive criticism is almost always best given alone. No matter how skillfully you offer critical feedback, you may get anger and defensiveness as the response. Make sure that you have the time for active listening and problem solving or you may make the problem worse.

[Adapted from: *Assertive Supervision: Building Involved Teamwork,* by Susan Drury, Champaign, IL: Research Press, 1984.]

Self-Test on Giving Feedback

Respond to the items below by indicating yes or no. Be as frank as you can. The quiz will give you a "reading" on your skill in and attitudes about one key area of communication—giving feedback to your members.

		YES	NO
1.	Do you avoid giving members feedback about their performance?	____	____
2.	Do you avoid giving members negative feedback because members often do not like to hear it?	____	____
3.	Do you try to give feedback about performance by comparing the member with other members?	____	____
4.	Do you avoid giving members praise, because they are often embarrassed by it?	____	____
5.	Do you criticize the person rather than the action or the behavior?	____	____
6.	Do you give criticism on a number of items at one time?	____	____
7.	In giving feedback, do you ignore the member's sensitivity or receptivity to it?	____	____
8.	Do you give feedback long after the incident (or behavior) has occurred rather than immediately?	____	____
9.	Do you feel it is more important to communicate your view than to listen to your member's point of view?	____	____
10.	Is your purpose in giving feedback to prove that you are right rather than to get at the causes of behavior?	____	____
11.	Do you tend to slip in a criticism between two layers of praise?	____	____
12.	Do you give feedback to members when you are angry or upset?	____	____
13.	Does your feedback often involve sarcasm or "put-downs?"	____	____
14.	After you give feedback, do you avoid checking for understanding, thinking that people will get the message if they really want to?	____	____
15.	Do you tend to interrupt your members while they are responding to your feedback?	____	____
16.	Do you give feedback to others without worrying too much about your future relationship with them?	____	____
17.	Do you feel that it is more important to point out mistakes than it is to indicate how to correct them?	____	____
18.	Do you feel it is more important to give feedback than to receive it?	____	____

Self-Test on Giving Feedback

19. Do you prefer to give feedback to members in writing rather than orally? YES NO

20. Do you give criticism to members both in public and in private?

Scoring

The above test items are designed to stimulate your thinking about this business of giving feedback to others. The preferred response to all quiz items is NO. Accordingly, give yourself five points for every YES answer. You can use the following table as your guide to your skill as a giver of feedback.

20 points or less: Your understanding of and skill in giving feedback is very good.

20–30 points: You have a satisfactory ability to give feedback.

30–40 points: You have a fair ability to give feedback.

More than 40 points: You are probably not giving feedback effectively. Develop some new skills before you go back in.

[From: *The Winning Trainer,* by Julius E. Eitington, Houston, TX: Gulf Publishing Company, 1984.]

Using "I" Statements

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You can be sure that, no matter how you deliver it, corrective feedback will arouse defensiveness. But if you use "I" statements instead of "You" statements, you'll help the other person listen to the feedback instead of rejecting it defensively.

"I" Statements Tend To

- Place responsibility with you, the speaker
- Clarify your position, feelings or opinions

"You" Statements Tend To

- Put people down
- Place blame
- Preach about how the other should think or feel
- Elicit a negative or defensive response

Notice how easy it is to point your finger at someone when you use "you."

Examples of "I" Statements	Examples of "You" Statements
I couldn't understand what you said.	You aren't making any sense.
I missed having your input at the team meeting.	You didn't care enough to come to the meeting.
I'm worried about meeting the deadline.	You won't be able to make the deadline.

[From: *Communication Skills,* by the Executive Potential Program, Birch & Company.]

How to Cope with Difficult People

Step 1   Assess the situation

- Has the person acted differently in at least three similar situations?

- Are you reacting out of proportion to the situation?

- Was there a particular incident that triggered the troublesome behavior?

- Will direct, open discussion relieve the situation?

If your answer to at least one of these questions is yes, you are probably dealing with a problem you can solve, not a difficult person that you cannot change.

Step 2   Stop wishing they were different

- Stop blaming them—it won't change anything.

- Give up wishful thinking; unrealistic hopes lead to even more resentment.

Step 3   Get some distance between you and the difficult behavior

- Label with prototypes (see the next page for prototypes such as Complainer and Negativist), but do not stereotype. Stereotyping assumes all Complainers are the same, and they are not.

- Seek to understand the person from the inside out.

Step 4   Formulate a plan for interrupting the interaction

- Negative interactions become even more negative.

- You can't change the other person, but you can change your response.

Step 5   Implement the strategy

- Timing—Select a time when you are not under great stress and have the energy to experiment.

- Preparation—Use mental rehearsal and role-play.

Step 6   Monitor and modify

- Expect that you will have to plan, experiment, and persist.

- Know when to give up; if necessary, create physical or organizational distance.

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Coping with Difficult People—
A Quick Reference Guide

TYPE	CHARACTERISTICS	COPING TECHNIQUES

Hostile, Aggresive	Behavior: intimidating, abrupt, abusive, loud, indignant, sniping, explosive
	
	Underlying issues: strong need to be "right;" fear of weakness in themselves and others; need to be in control; suspicious of and quick to blame others
		If the attack is overt:
		    Let them run down.
		    Stand up to them.
		    Don't argue.
		    Don't return fire.
		
		If the attack is covert:
		    Bring it to the surface.
		    Don't snipe in return.

Complainer	Behavior: whining, blaming, accusing; may complain to you about you, or may complain to you about others
	
	Underlying issues: feel powerless; need attention; want to view themselves as perfect and blameless
		If the complainer blames you:
		    Listen attentively.
		    Acknowledge their complaint.
		    Don't agree.
		    Move into problem solving.
		
		If the complainer complains to you about someone else:
		    Don't listen. Tell them to stop!
		    Offer to pass on their complaint or to set up a meeting.

Silent, Unresponsive	Behavior: in response to your direct questions or statements, only silence, a nod, or a grunt; only a "Yes" or "No" when more information is called for Underlying issues: hard to generalize, but could be silent sniping, fear of your reaction to what they would say if they talked, or fear of their own feelings	Ask open-ended questions. Use a friendly, silent stare. Don't fill up the silence. Make a direct observation: "I'm waiting for your answer, and you're not saying anything." Help them overcome their fear: "Can you say anything about this?" or "How about starting in the middle?"

How to Cope with Difficult People

TYPE	CHARACTERISTICS	COPING TECHNIQUES
Super Agreeable	Behavior: outgoing, sociable, friendly, quick to agree or give support; doesn't follow through with action Underlying issues: strong need to be accepted or liked; fear of conflict or of making you unhappy	Help them feel accepted and appreciated. Make honesty nonthreatening. Don't let them make unrealistic promises. In conflict situations, propose win/win solutions.
Wet Blanket, Negativist	Behavior: regularly shoots down others' ideas or solutions, no matter what they are Underlying issues: often genuinely believes it is futile to try to change things; feels powerless; doesn't trust people in power	Avoid getting drawn in. Don't take their comments seriously. Don't argue. Express your realistic optimism. Use negative comments constructively: "How might we overcome that obstacle?"
Indecisive Staller	Behavior: appears helpful and agreeable; postpones decisions, particularly ones that others may not like; beats around the bush Underlying issues: doesn't want to hurt anyone and therefore postpones difficult choices; genuinely concerned with quality over expediency; when confronted with practical problems, stalls until the issue "goes away" or it is too late to do anything	Make it easy for them to be direct with you. Express their doubts for them: "You might be concerned that I won't like your answer...?" Help them problem solve. Work with them to prioritize solutions. Give lots of support when they make a decision. Follow up to make sure they implement the decision.

[Adapted from: *Coping With Difficult People,* by Robert M. Bramson, Dell Publishing, 1981.]

8-Step Conflict Resolution Process

Step 1: Deal Effectively with Anger

You can't negotiate a good agreement if you and/or the other person are too angry to think straight, or if you don't acknowledge your feelings.

Step 2: Do Your Homework (think before you act)

How does this conflict affect each of us?
What interests or values are at stake here for each of us?
What prejudices or assumptions do we each have about the other?
What approach or style would be best here (avoid, compete, collaborate, etc.)?
If I want to collaborate, what would be the right time and place to initiate that?

Step 3: Set a Positive Tone

Invite the other person to negotiate. ("Could we talk?")
State positive intentions. ("I'd like to make things better between us.")
Acknowledge and validate the other person. ("I can see this is difficult for you, too. Thank you for working with me on this.")

Step 4: Use Ground Rules (stated or unstated)

One person talks at a time.
Work to improve the situation.
Stay calm.

Step 5: Discuss and Define the Problem

One at a time, each person shares issues and feelings.
Use effective listening and speaking techniques.
Identify interests and needs.
If necessary, discuss assumptions, suspicions, and values.
Summarize new understandings.

Step 6: Brainstorm Possible Solutions

Each person contributes ideas to satisfy interests and needs.
Don't criticize or evaluate ideas yet.
Be creative.
Use "I can…" or "We could…" rather than "You should…" or "You'd better…"

Step 7: Evaluate and Choose Solutions

Solutions should be:
   a) mutually agreeable,
   b) realistic,
   c) specific, and
   d) balanced.

Solutions should also address the main interests of both parties.

Step 8: Follow Up

Check back with each other at an agreed-upon time and date.
If the agreement isn't working, use the same process to revise it.

[From: *Face to Face: Resolving Conflict Without Giving In or Giving Up, A Conflict Resolution Curriculum for AmeriCorps,* Draft, by Jan Bellard and Hilda Baldoquin, The National Association for Community Mediation, 1994.]

The Nature of Positive Thinking

- Acknowledge that the other person's position is legitimate for that person.

- Differentiate the other person's position from yours.

- Check to see that you have heard the other person correctly and develop an environment that allows him or her to check what he or she hears you saying as well.

- Accept angry and hostile feelings in yourself and in the other person as real.

- Be responsible for your own feelings.

- Accept that the other person may feel differently than you do.

- Don't problem solve until your differences are clear to both of you. (You know the differences are clear when you feel heard and understood and can clearly state what the differences are.)

- Ask the other person for her or his preferred solutions.

- Be prepared to state and differentiate your preferred solutions.

Thomas-Kilmann Model of Conflict Management Styles

In any conflict situation, you may respond in one of several ways: by competing, accommodating, avoiding, collaborating, or compromising. Which of these conflict management styles you choose should depend on the nature of the situation, rather than your particular personality traits. Read the descriptions below to learn more about the five styles and their applications.

Competing is assertive and uncooperative—an individual pursues their own concerns at the other person's expense. This is a power-oriented mode, in which one uses whatever power seems appropriate to win one's own position—one's ability to argue, one's rank, economic sanctions. Competing might mean "standing up for your rights," defending a position which you believe is correct, or simply trying to win.

Uses:

1. When quick, decisive action is vital—e.g., emergencies.

2. On important issues where unpopular courses of action need implementing—e.g., cost cutting, enforcing unpopular rules, discipline.

3. On issues vital to the organization's welfare when you know you're right.

4. To protect yourself against people who take advantage of noncompetitive behavior.

Accommodating is unassertive and cooperative—the opposite of competing. When accommodating, an individual neglects their own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the other person; there is an element of self-sacrifice in this style. Accommodating might take the form of selfless generosity or charity, obeying another person's order when one would prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view.

Uses:

1. When you realize that you are wrong—to allow a better position to be heard, to learn from others, and to show that you are reasonable.

2. When the issue is much more important to the other person than to yourself—to satisfy the needs of others, and as a goodwill gesture to help maintain a cooperative relationship.

3. To build up social credits for later issues which are important to you.

4. When continued competition would only damage your cause—when you are outmatched and losing.

Thomas-Kilmann Model of Conflict Management Styles

5. When preserving harmony and avoiding disruption are especially important.

6. To aid in the managerial development of subordinates by allowing them to experiment and learn from their own mistakes.

Avoiding is unassertive and uncooperative

Avoiding is unassertive and uncooperative—the individual does not immediately pursue their own concerns or those of the other person. They do not address the conflict. Avoiding might take the form of diplomatically sidestepping an issue, postponing an issue until a better time, or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation.

Uses:

1. When an issue is trivial, of only passing importance, or when other more important issues are pressing.

2. When you perceive no chance of satisfying your concerns—e.g., when you have low power or you are frustrated by something which would be very difficult to change (national policies, someone's personality, etc.)

3. When the potential damage of confronting a conflict outweighs the benefits of its resolution.

4. To let people cool down to reduce tensions to a productive level and to regain perspective and composure.

5. When gathering more information outweighs the advantages of an immediate decision.

6. When others can resolve the conflict more effectively.

7. When the issue seems tangential or symptomatic of another more basic issue.

Collaborating is both assertive and cooperative

Collaborating is both assertive and cooperative—the opposite of avoiding. Collaborating involves an attempt to work with the other person to find some solution which fully satisfies the concerns of both persons. It means digging into an issue to identify the underlying concerns of the two individuals and to find an alternative which meets both sets of concerns. Collaborating between two persons might take the form of exploring a disagreement to learn from each other's insights, concluding to resolve some condition which would otherwise have them competing for resources, or confronting and trying to find a creative solution to an interpersonal problem.

Uses:

1. To find an integrative solution when both sets of concerns are too important to be compromised.

2. When your objective is to learn—e.g., testing your own assumptions, understanding the views of others.

Thomas-Kilmann Model of Conflict Management Styles

3. To merge insights from people with different perspectives on a problem.

4. To gain commitment by incorporating other's concerns into a consensual decision.

5. To work through hard feelings which have been interfering with an interpersonal relationship.

Compromising is intermediate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness. The objective is to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution which partially satisfies both parties. It falls on a middle ground between competing and accommodating. Compromising gives up more than competing but less than accommodating. Likewise, it addresses an issue more directly than avoiding, but doesn't explore it in as much depth as collaborating. Compromising might mean splitting the difference, exchanging concessions, or seeking a quick middle-ground position.

Uses:

1. When goals are moderately important, but not worth the effort or potential disruption of more assertive modes.

2. When two opponents with equal power are strongly committed to mutually exclusive goals.

3. To achieve temporary settlements to complex issues.

4. To arrive at expedient solutions under time pressure.

5. As a backup when collaboration or competition don't succeed.

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The Supervisor as Communicator

The Supervisor as Advisor

I n the last chapter, we presented several communication skills supervisors can use to understand how a member may be feeling about a challenging or troubling situation. The member's situation may relate to an individual performance problem, or it may have more to do with program issues. The active listening you practice will lead naturally to wanting to do something about the member's problem.

To help you do just that, we discuss three skills in this chapter:

- Problem solving,

- Coaching, and

- Helping members build commitment.

By using these skills at the right times and appropriately, you will empower your members to learn—rather than teaching

In This Chapter

☑ Problem Solving

☑ Coaching

☑ Helping Members Build Commitment

them. When we talk about the supervisor as "advisor," we do *not* mean "expert" or "advice-giver." On the contrary, we mean counselor, facilitator, mentor, and coach.

Supervisor's TOOL KIT

(These tools begin on page **2** *27)*

Problem Solving

Using Force Field Analysis for Problem Solving

An explanation and illustration of how to use this technique to analyze helping and hindering forces at play in a problem situation

Brainstorming

A step-by-step guide to using this technique with individuals or small groups—useful for generating possible solutions

Common Errors in Problem Solving

Pitfalls to watch out for when problem solving

Responses that Kill Creativity

Phrases that tend to stifle creativity during a problem-solving session

Coaching

The GROW Model for Improved Performance Through Coaching

A coaching model based on a four-phase questioning technique—useful for helping members resolve individual or program-related issues through careful goal setting

Service Learning—How to Make it Happen

A discussion of what service learning is and how to do it with your members

Helping Members Build Commitment

Worksheet on AmeriCorps Member Motivation

Checklist for identifying and ranking primary reasons for serving as an AmeriCorps member

Why Members Do Not Do What They Are Supposed to Do

Information on how to address common performance problems

A Day in the Life ...

On Tuesday morning, Betty holds a meeting with three of her members who work in the Resource Mothers program. In this program, members work with low-income, single mothers to help them develop life and job skills that will promote stability and independence in them and their families. As Betty listens to the members report on their activities, she's impressed with how far the program (and members) have come in the short time the program has been running. It is obviously filling a need. There seems to be no shortage of things the members can do with the mothers. If anything, they seem overwhelmed by the variety and sometimes the severity of the mothers' problems. The last time Betty met with these three members, their overall mood was one of anticipation and enthusiasm. Now it appears the excitement is wearing off and giving way to frustration.

During the meeting, Betty praises the group for the many activities they've already planned and have begun implementing. She asks them to share some of the highlights and then explain any major issues or concerns they have. Betty notices that two of the members dominate most of the discussion while the third, Mike, hardly says anything at all. He looks preoccupied, so Betty decides not to ask him any probing questions in front of the others. At the end of the meeting, she discretely pulls Mike aside

and asks if anything in particular is bothering him and if she can be of any assistance. Mike fumbles at first, then starts explaining a situation he has become involved in with Mrs. Smith, one of the mothers in his project cluster. Betty listens actively as Mike describes feelings of dismay and confusion. He explains that Mrs. Smith lost her job, one of her kids is beginning to misbehave seriously, and now it seems she might even lose her apartment. After Mike finishes, Betty lets him know that his concern for Mrs. Smith is admirable. Then she suggests to him that because Mrs. Smith's problems seem so complicated, perhaps they should have a meeting that focuses specifically on her. Although Mike appears a bit skeptical, he agrees to come to Betty's office the following afternoon.

Back at her office, after her discussion with Mike, Betty spends a few minutes writing down information and impressions from the meeting. She is concerned about Mike. Her assessment of his performance is that he reacts emotionally to clients' needs, so much so that he becomes "tied up" and can't seem to figure out where to begin taking action. Betty is glad he accepted the invitation to

work one-on-one with her and is looking forward to their meeting.

As she double-checks her date book to be sure she's penciled in her meeting with Mike, Betty hits the button to check her phone messages. She finds a message from Carol, another one of her members. Carol is nearing the end of her term of service as an AmeriCorps member. She joined when she graduated from high school. Now, with the post-service award and some careful saving, she has enough money for the first two years

of college, but she doesn't know where or how to get started with the selection and application process. She has called Betty to explain her dilemma and wants to come by for a meeting. Betty has been reading about a coaching model called GROW and thinks this might be a good opportunity to use it. She calls Carol to confirm an appointment for the next day. Later in this chapter, we'll learn more about Betty's follow-up meetings with Mike and Carol.

Problem Solving

Why you do it

It is probably safe to say that you'll never run out of problems to solve in AmeriCorps (or in life)! Members turn to their supervisors for help with social, family, health, transportation, and emotional problems. Some members have only their stipend as a means of support and consequently look to their supervisors for help with basic needs. Still others run into trouble because of poorly developed life skills—maybe they can't manage their money, or they avoid fulfilling responsibilities, or they don't know appropriate professional protocol for their workplace. On the programmatic side, members are often placed in difficult jobs with insufficient support (e.g., mentoring at-risk students at an understaffed school). By helping your members accurately identify their problems and then determining viable solutions together, you will be fulfilling one of your most important supervisory functions.

How you do it

Although there are a number of slightly different models for problem solving, the basic process involves

- identifying and describing the real problem or problems,

- identifying possible solutions,

- predicting consequences of and, testing out the possible solutions,

- selecting what seems to be the best solution(s),

- making and implementing an action plan, and

- evaluating the outcomes.

Supervisors with strong advisory skills create ways to make the process truly collaborative. That means you must resist the urge to take over and dictate solutions. Keep in mind that we all

have to experience, define, and resolve our own problems with a little help from our friends (or supervisors). There are at least six possible ways to help a member solve his or her problems:

■ Use your own reality (similar past experiences) to acknowledge and validate the member's experience;

■ Ask clarifying questions for additional information about the problem;

■ Ask goal-oriented questions and reinforce the member's goal statements;

■ Clarify obstacles and resources and develop strategies and step-by-step plans that begin in the here-and-now and are likely to lead to the identified goal;

■ Provide information about resources and strategies that might help the member overcome obstacles and achieve his or her goal; and

■ As necessary, refer the member to professional resource people and services that may be more qualified to help than you are.

Throughout the problem-solving stage, try to remember these three guidelines:

1. Continue active listening to make sure you don't take over the conversation.

2. Avoid making judgments, especially about what goal the member should adopt and what action steps he or she should take to reach it.

3. Avoid making decisions for the member.

On the following page, we describe a collaborative problem-solving process in detail and show you how Betty and Mike work out a plan for helping Mrs. Smith, one of the women in Mike's Resource Mothers project.

Problem Solving with Members:
A Collaborative Process

Validate Experience

After hearing the member out, thank him or her for confiding in you. Then, if it's appropriate, briefly share a similar experience of yours. It's likely the member has been feeling somewhat isolated or alone and has the idea that no one has experienced the problem he or she is experiencing. By expressing your empathy with the situation, you help the member to feel less alone.

You cannot really know whether you completely understand or completely share the member's feelings. "I know how you feel," often gets a "No, you don't" reaction. You can say, for example, "I've been hurt before, and I sympathize with what you are going through." A statement about your experience, not the member's, helps to acknowledge and validate the member's experience and feelings.

Let's go back to Betty and Mike and see how well Betty is able to validate Mike's experience. She is still listening to Mike describe his feelings about Mrs. Smith's situation. If you recall, Mrs. Smith is one of the mothers in Mike's Resource Mothers program.

A Day in the Life ...

B: Mike, I remember once a couple of years ago when I felt pretty helpless to do anything for a woman and her kids who came into a shelter where I was working. I wanted to help but I didn't want to get in over my head.

M: Yeah, I guess I feel that way too. But this woman really needs somebody to help her get on a good track. She's got too many bad things happening at once. I really want to figure out how to do something for her.

Clarify the Problem

Once a person's experience is heard and validated, he or she will usually feel comfortable sharing additional information about it. Then you can begin to clarify by asking questions, especially questions that begin with who, what, where, when, and how.

This type of question will help to clarify the problem (feelings, the meaning behind the feelings, etc.). Let's check back with Betty and Mike...

B: *Who* talked to you in the first place about Mrs. Smith?

M: Her son told me some things, and I confirmed it with one of the social workers at the Resource Center. After that, I told Mrs. Smith about my under-standing of her problems.

B: *What* was Mrs. Smith's reaction?

M: Well, at first she seemed suspicious of me. She said I looked like someone who had never had to worry about where my next dime was coming from.

B: *How* did that make you feel?

M: A little hurt, but then after I talked to her a while longer, I realized she was worried I would just run out on her like other people had done in the past. I think I convinced her otherwise.

B: Can you share with me some of the things you told her?

M: I told her that part of my job was to do whatever I could to help her stay in the program and that I would learn a great deal about the community's needs and hers in particular if she'd let me try to help her. I think she trusts me because I've done some tutoring and other stuff with her grandson she takes care of.

B: Good for you, Mike! I'm sure she really values that. *What* do you think is her main problem?

M: Well, she lost her job at the day care school where she was teaching and soon

she won't even have a place to stay. There's a whole eviction process going on to kick her out of her apartment. Maybe the job issue can wait a few weeks, but the eviction seems scary. I can't believe they really do that to people....

In many problem situations, a larger issue can be identified, and it needs to be clearly understood before it can be resolved. Perhaps it needs to be broken down into a number of smaller issues that can then be addressed individually. Another way to clarify is to discuss why and how the problem is related to other problems. The ultimate goal is to be able to restate the problem in simpler terms, and in manageable parts.

Clarify the Goal

You get to the goal by turning the problem inside out. Useful questions for doing this are:

- How do you want the situation (or yourself) to be different?

- If the problem were solved what would it look like? What would be going on?

- How would you know if the problem were solved?

- Where do you want to be in relation to where you are now?

Reinforce any statements the member makes about what she or he wants as a goal by using active listening and encouragement. Explore with the member the same *who, what, when, where,* and *how* questions you used to explore the problem. The goal should be as specific as possible. After Betty and

Mike do some more exploring of the issues, Mike's goal might be

I want Mrs. Smith to be able to stay in her apartment this winter (instead of being evicted).

Identify Obstacles, Resources, Strategies

With a specific goal defined, ask questions and offer information about possible resources, obstacles to achieving the goal, and resources to overcome the obstacles. Obstacles can include people, agencies, laws, rules, infrastructure, ignorance, and money. Resources include the same things, but they substitute knowledge and information for ignorance. Sometimes it is useful to list the obstacles and resources next to each other in two columns. Such a list can help suggest possible strategies.

Look at Betty and Mike's analysis of Mrs. Smith's problem (on the next page). The list of resources provides ideas about short-term legal delays, short-term credit solutions, a long-term legal solution, and a long-term employment strategy. See if you can find them or perhaps discover other possible strategies. (For additional information on this problem-solving approach, see the tool on "Using Force Field Analysis for Problem Solving.")

Provide Information

At this point, the supervisor's knowledge and resources can be helpful. If you were Betty, you could tell Mike that you know people in

Mike's Analysis of Mrs. Smith's Eviction Problem

GOAL:

I want Mrs. Smith to be able to stay in her apartment this winter.

RESOURCES:	OBSTACLES:
Her son gives her money for food	She has no job, and welfare has dropped her.
She has 20 days to pay her landlord.	The landlord gave her an eviction notice.
There is a 30-day appeal policy.	The Housing Authority backs landlords.
She applied for a city teaching job.	The city school budget was cut.
The law puts teeth into alimony compliance.	Her ex-husband is an alimony fugitive.
Legal Assistance is close by.	She knows nothing about legal rights.
The local grocer extends her credit.	
There's a local fund for heat and light.	
She has $1,500 left on her VISA.	

the Housing Authority, Legal Assistance, the power company, the school system, or other useful organizations. You may know something about relevant laws, rules, and procedures. Or you may know someone who knows. Make your resources available by making phone calls and introductions. Help the member decide which strategies to follow. Then break them down into tasks, responsibilities, and due dates.

In this case, Betty and Mike decide to talk with Mrs. Smith and recommend that she select a legal delay strategy along with a list of action steps. Mrs. Smith herself must be included in the problem-solving process at least by this point, if not earlier. She needs to have input into—and agree with—any strategies on how to prevent her apartment eviction. If Betty and Mike did not include her in the problem-solving process, they would run two risks—that she wouldn't be

committed to carrying out her part of the plan and/or that she might become dependent on Mike to solve the problem for her. It's also likely that Mrs. Smith will have some ideas and resources to contribute to the problem solution.

Now let's take a look at how Mike and Mrs. Smith might devise a strategy and some tasks aimed at helping Mrs. Smith stay in her apartment (see box on page).

Problem solving is an extension of active listening and helps the member to adjust his or her focus. Rather than dwelling on the negative implications surrounding the issue at hand, the member can step back, review alternatives, and seek a positive solution. The situation may involve legal, family, psychological, or medical issues that are beyond your problem-solving capability. If so, the outcome of the problem-solving

Mrs. Smith's Eviction Problem

STRATEGY
Invoke legal delay for rent payment

TASKS	DATE	WHO
Get landlord's name, address, and phone number and a copy of the eviction letter	8/10	Mrs. Smith
Set up a meeting with Legal Assistance	8/10	Betty
Get a copy of the Housing Authority eviction policy	8/11	Mike
Meet with Legal Assistance (by deadline)	8/15	Mrs. Smith
Follow up on Legal Assistance action	8/18	Mike and Mrs. Smith
Offer the landlord a partial payment using food money	8/20	Mrs. Smith (accompanied by Betty)
Review the success of the strategy	8/25	All

process could be the member's decision to seek an appropriate professional resource (like Legal Assistance in the above example).

Make Referrals

Making appropriate referrals means communicating information to members about the right professional resources, people, and services available to help, given their particular concerns.

A referral is appropriate when neither you nor the member has sufficient knowledge, skills, or other resources to address the problem. You need to understand the nature of the problem to be able to refer a member appropriately to professional resources in substance abuse, counseling, crisis intervention, education, employment, housing, law, law enforcement, mediation, medicine, welfare, and child care.

Your agency, or one of your agency partners, may already have a referral system. If not, a local crisis intervention center or hotline may be able to help in getting the resources and referrals together. A visit to get to know your local crisis intervention center's resources bank can tell you a lot about resource people and social services in your community. Once a referral has been made, be sure to follow up with the member and with the agency to which you referred the member to ensure that the service has been provided and the member is satisfied with the services.

Coaching

Why you do it

AmeriCorps is about getting things done through strengthening communities and encouraging responsibility. An added benefit is expanding opportunity for its members. The quality of what gets done depends on the performance of members. Member performance and quality of supervision are closely linked. Through coaching, you accomplish two equally significant objectives:

- You improve individual and program performance; and
- You develop member capacity.

How you do it

The term coaching is described in so many different ways by so many different people, we'll try to relate it as specifically as possible to the context in which you work.

Coaching means unlocking members' potential and helping them improve their problem-solving and planning skills. The goal is to help members learn rather than teach them. Your role as a coach is to help members define their personal and professional goals and provide them with the information, resources, knowledge, and skills they need. Your resources are your knowledge, skills, and ability and the world of other training, coaching, and teaching resources in the community.

The GROW Model—Ask, Don't Tell!

In his book, *Coaching for Performance,* John Whitmore presents a simple and straightforward coaching model called GROW. In this model, the overall context is one of increasing the member's awareness (of self and of surroundings) and sense of responsibility for learning. The supervisor facilitates this process by using questions to guide the member in exploring

what needs to happen to improve performance. The elements of the GROW model are as follows:

GROW Model for Coaching

CONTEXT
You are striving to help members attain awareness of self and surroundings and responsibility for learning and improving.

METHOD
The method consists of asking questions in the following sequence:

G - Goal-setting for the meeting, short-term and long-term;

R - Reality checking to explore the current situation;

O - Options and alternative strategies, or courses of action; and

W - What is to be done, when, by whom, and the will to do it.

The following is a sample list of the coaching questions you can start with to help your members work on a variety of issues or problems. Use the list as a guide first, then modify and expand it to suit your own needs and style.

GROW Model Coaching Questions

GOAL
- What is the goal of this meeting (or conversation or discussion)?
- What do you want to achieve (short-term and long-term)?
- By when do you want to achieve it?
- How is your goal positive, challenging, attainable, and measurable?

REALITY
- What (when, where, how much) is happening now?
- Who is involved?

"Life is the sum of all your choices."

Albert Camus

REALITY (*Continued*)

- What have you done about this so far?
- What results did that produce?
- What is happening both internally and externally?
- What are major constraints to finding a way forward?

OPTIONS

- What options do you have?
- What else could you do?
- What if...?
- Would you like another suggestion?
- What are the benefits and costs of the alternatives?

WILL

- What are you going to do?
- When are you going to do it?
- Will this meet your goal?
- What obstacles could you face?
- How will you overcome them?
- Who needs to know?
- How will you get that support?
- Rate yourself on a 1-to-10 scale as to the likelihood of your carrying out this action.

As you can see from the list, most of the questions begin with words that quantify —what, when, who, how much, and how many. These are the most effective question starters for helping members explore issues around awareness and sense of responsibility because these questions ask for more specific, factual answers. On the other hand, asking why often implies blame and may provoke defensiveness on the part of the member. Why questions don't always bring that response, but exercise caution if you do use them.

The GROW model may be applied to both one-on-one coaching sessions and group development. Given some orientation and guidance, members themselves can use the GROW approach for

peer coaching. (Be sure to study the detailed description of the GROW model in your Coaching Tool Kit before trying it out for real.)

Remember Betty's coaching meeting with Carol? Here's how she uses the GROW model to help Carol set future goals and start a plan of action....

Betty and Carol Chart Some GROWth

B: Hi Carol, have a seat! I got your message about your educational award—about figuring out how to use it and sort of charting a course for what you want to do after your service is up. I'm glad you called. I'm happy to help you work things through. To get ourselves off to a good start, though, what are some specific outcomes you'd like to see from our meeting?

C: Well, I don't know about specific outcomes. I guess I'm just generally trying to get a handle on what I'll be doing after my AmeriCorps stint is over. We have to fill out this form by next week—the form that tells AmeriCorps where to send our educational award— and I don't have a clue! There are so many options! Deciding on a college. Figuring out what I want to study. There's so much to think about. I'm having a hard time taking a first step.

B: That's certainly understandable. But actually, it sounds like you have thought about some specifics. I heard two basic questions you're considering. First, you're concerned about what you want to study. The next question seems to be where? Anything else on your mind specifically?

C: I guess those are the two major things. Now that you put them in two boxes like that, it seems more manageable. I was just feeling so over- whelmed.

B: I'm glad you're feeling a bit more focused. Let's take the questions one at a time. Thinking long-term, what do you hope to get out of going to college? Is it part of a career plan you're starting to form?

C: Well, I've always thought I was good with people. Working at the Family Resource Center this past year has helped me to see this as a strength I have. And I loved working with the parents and kids resolving their problems—with housing and child care and other basic life skills stuff. I think I'm good at building relationships with people where they trust me to help them. I want to be in a career where I can use these skills.

B: I think you're right on target. I've noticed how the people at Family Resource have responded to you. I would have to agree with your assessment of your own skills! [Smiling] What specific careers do you think might require these skills?

C: Well, I've done a little exploring. I walked down to Greenburg College a few weeks ago—it's only a few blocks from where I live and I was just taking a

walk around the lake—and I decided to check out the admissions office. I picked up some information about applying, and the woman at the desk sent me down to the career counseling library. I got some brochures about human services careers, and I found this book about what it takes to break into the field, the degree you need, the kind of experience, things like that.

B: Incredible! You've been "on the job" with this, Carol. So what did you find out?

C: I found out that if I want to really establish a career in human services, maybe run a program like the Family Resource Center some day, I'm going to have to get that four-year degree and do an internship somewhere. You know, as I say that—the part about running a program—I think that's really what I've had in the back of my mind for a long time.

B: It sounds like you've answered your first question, Carol! And it sounds like you've got a good idea of what it will take in terms of time and commitment to make this happen. Have you done this kind of thinking yet about where you might want to study? You mentioned Greenburg College. Do you think you might want to stay in town for school?

C: There are definite advantages to staying in town, I guess. In-state tuition, free room and board where I'm staying. I know the town, the ins and outs. And adjusting to a new situation wouldn't be as much of a big deal.

B: What about advantages to going out of state?

C: It would be more of an adventure, I guess. But I think I'd rather start my course work here and transfer later on. Just to get my footing.

B: So Greenburg is one college you've checked out. Any place else you're thinking about?

C: While I was at the library, I looked at another book that described all the colleges in the state. Most of them seemed to have pretty good human services programs. But Greenburg definitely has the best variety of courses. You know, I just thought of something. If I go to Greenburg, I could continue to volunteer at Family Resource. Maybe do my internship there.

B: That would work out nicely. So, you're thinking about a four-year human services degree that would lead to a career as a social services administrator, and you'd like to stay in touch with the Family Resource Center for a possible internship later on. You've done some checking on a few colleges and found one that offers the classes you're interested in. That sounds like a plan to me! And it sounds like you know exactly where you want that educational award to go. What are the next steps for getting enrolled at Greenburg?

C: Well, first I have to pick up the application and fill it out. I think they make you write a statement of purpose. Then I send them a $25 check and cross my fingers.

B: How about setting a date with yourself to do those things? Pick a day to go get the application, then pick a date for finishing it.

C: Monday. I'll go Monday. And I think I can finish it up in a week. The director at Family Resource went to Greenburg. Maybe I'll talk to her about my statement of purpose.

B: The director at Family Resource went to Greenburg? That's perfect! She'll be an excellent resource for you in filling out your application.

C: Yeah. You know, it's really amazing. Before I came in, none of this seemed to fit together. But now that I've talked it through and come up with some specific ideas, it all makes so much sense.

B: Feels good, huh? [Betty and Carol smile and lean back in their chairs. Mission accomplished. Then Betty speaks.] Not to bring you down or anything, Carol. But let's just say something comes up that delays the application process. Can you think of anything right now that could possibly throw you off track?

C: The only thing that could stop me from getting the application completed, I guess, would be if the director at Family Resource can't work with me. Maybe she's out next week, or doesn't have time or something.

B: How would you work around this, or how could you prevent it?

C: I guess I could call her to see if she can help me. And if she can't, maybe the two of us could set up a time to talk? [Carol points at the phone on Betty's desk and raises her eyebrows.]

B: Sounds good to me. You want to call her right now? Sure, use my phone. And if she doesn't have time next week, why don't we meet at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday? [Carol nods agreement. As she dials the number for the Family Resource Center, Betty waits. Carol puts her hand over the receiver and tells Betty she's on hold. Betty continues.] If the director can meet with you, will you call me after the meeting and set up a time for us to talk anyway? I'll be curious to see how your plan is coming together. I'm really psyched for you, Carol!

Opportunities for Coaching Members

Sometimes members will directly solicit your coaching help (as Carol did with Betty in the sample dialog on the previous page). More often than not, though, you will have to seek opportunities to guide members in their personal and professional development. Here are a number of suggestions for when and how you can coach your members during their service year. This is only a starter list so feel free to add your own ideas.

Coaching Through Orientation

The orientation is the first experience most members have to learn about AmeriCorps.

- Use the initial orientation meeting to establish the expectation that service learning is part of the job.

- Ask the member to think about learning objectives as he or she moves through the orientation.

- Start work on a service learning plan at the end of the orientation.

- Conduct a background review with the member to help you identify areas in which he or she may be able to teach, coach, or train another member.

- Treat any of the four AmeriCorps priority areas that are components of your program, education, environment, public safety, and human needs, as subjects for research in the context of the community you are serving. Encourage research, exploration, debate, and program applications among the members.

Coaching Through Performance Assessment

Members need specific information about how they are performing. The performance assessment should focus on both positive and negative behaviors.

- Use performance assessment any time you provide feedback to identify training and learning opportunities.

- Active listening and problem solving on members' personal issues may lead to training and learning opportunities. If a personal issue seems to have no clear solution, ask the member to research it and report back on any training opportunities, informal groups, or other resources that are focused on the issue.

- At about the halfway mark of members' terms of service, conduct a midpoint review of their performance to evaluate backward and plan forward. Treat it as a problem-solving exercise: Define the present state (where you are) and the desired future state (where you want to be). Help members define obstacles, resources, strategies, and tasks for moving toward an improved future. The plan may include training, reading, contacts, interviews, conferences, tutoring, etc.

Coaching By Accessing Community Resources and CNS

- Identify and access resources in your parent organization, the immediate community, the city and county, and state commission program and training offices.

- Find out what the AmeriCorps Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) resources are and how to access them. (In the Appendices of this manual, you'll find a guide to all current T/TA providers.)

- Talk to the Human Resources people in your agency and in your partnership agencies.

- Identify service clubs, associations, and informal groups in your areas of interest and get on their mailing list for training opportunities.

- Start an Open University in which anyone can present a topic, workshop, or invite an outside speaker.

- Create a training bulletin board (physical or electronic), and lobby to get as many supervisors and members as possible to contribute information on training resources.

- Use this Resource Guide as a tool for study, discussion, role playing, and skill practice.

Coaching Through Sharing and Reflecting on Learning

In your role as an AmeriCorps supervisor, you can seize opportunities to incorporate service learning into members' lives. You can turn coaching sessions into learning plans, issues into research projects, and conflict into intellectual development. Service learning may become a part of the organizational culture and a lifetime "habit of the heart."

- Establish plans for member development, including learning objectives.

- Structure meetings to review learning plans and share information on resources and achievements.

- Organize group discussions on topics relevant to member project concerns, such as "environment vs. community development," or "the daily routine and the 'big picture'— where do they meet?"

- Incorporate learning objectives into performance assessment sessions.

- Use members and other supervisors as trainers, tutors, and coaches.

(See your tool kit for more information on service learning.)

Helping Members Build Commitment

Why You Do It

People who are high performers usually have high commitment to their work. As an AmeriCorps supervisor, it is critical that you understand what your members want to get out of their assignments and what motivates them to do their job well. Different people will be motivated by different things, depending upon what they value. What might be a risk to one person may be rewarding to another. For example, some members may be excited by an assignment that requires a high degree of creativity and flexibility in scheduling; others may find the same work too unpredictable and stressful. Once you begin learning about your members' internal incentives (what they want for themselves, not what you want for them), you can help them find ways to achieve their personal rewards through helping the program accomplish its goals.

How You Do It

Theories on "worker motivation" abound. If you haven't studied this subject much, you may want to check out some of the books in the Suggested Reading List or in your local library. For our purposes, we find it useful to approach the term "motivation" in the following manner: You cannot motivate your members; motivating is something we can only do to ourselves, not to other people. What you can do is help your members develop and sustain their own motivation.

Members are likely to develop their commitment to program goals when:

■ They are *clear* about AmeriCorps' mission, values, and goals and can see them in action.

Supervisors must not only provide information about the mission, values, and goals of AmeriCorps and their

particular program, they must also model these ideals. In their daily interactions with members, agency partners, and the community, supervisors must "walk the talk" to be convincing. Members observe the actions of their supervisor and use what they see as a reference or guide for what behaviors are acceptable. Members often imitate supervisors who "lead by example."

■ They feel *appreciated* for their contributions.

Members usually value a direct supervisor's approval more than that of any other person on the job. Let them know that their diligence, contributions, service, and positive attitudes really matter to you.

■ They are *competent and confident*.

Performance assessment, praise, and constructive feedback help identify problems early and build competence and confidence. Over time, members begin to feel more and more empowered. If the job requirements are beyond the members' present skills, arrange for the needed training.

■ They have *influence* over developing their roles in the program.

Influence creates ownership and ownership builds commitment. Let members participate actively in the planning processes that determine their roles and responsibilities. They will have creative ideas for how to get the work done and begin to feel that the project is theirs.

■ Their *personal goals* are met.

Get to know your members as individuals and try to understand what motivates each one (e.g., self esteem, team affiliation, social interaction, technical expertise, professional recognition). As a start, you might ask your members to fill out the "Worksheet on What Motivates AmeriCorps Members" included in the tool kit at the end of this chapter. Once you know what they hope to get out of their service, then assign them work that they regard as valuable and that will help them achieve their personal goals.

I know why there are so many people who love chopping wood. In this activity, one immediately sees the results.

Albert Einstein

"A vision without a task is a dream; A task without a vision is drudgery; A vision and a task is the hope of the world."

Anonymous

At times, trying to satisfy individual member motivations within the larger context of addressing the AmeriCorps mission and goals may seem overwhelming. AmeriCorps service is very demanding of your members and of you. After a few months of service, when members have adjusted to the changes service has brought into their lives, enthusiasm may lag. What was new may become routine. One way to help members sustain their energy level and commitment is to build a supportive, high-energy organizational culture.

AmeriCorps Culture Building

Social science researchers do not agree on what organizational culture is, but they do agree on some basic characteristics:

■ Culture is shared by a group.

■ Culture is both invisible (beliefs, attitudes, ideas, values), and visibly expressed (dress codes, office furniture, stories, celebrations, communication patterns).

■ Culture both influences the behavior of group members and is influenced by their behavior.

■ A culture that "works well" encourages the people who are a part of it to both work for their own satisfaction and toward the achievement of the group's objectives.

These basic characteristics suggest some ideas for using culture as a tool for supporting member energy, enthusiasm, and commitment. Here is a list we hope you'll use and expand throughout your project year:

Ideas for Culture Building

Create shared experiences and symbols of shared values
■ Distribute information on AmeriCorps accomplishments.

■ Promote service learning as a shared activity.

■ Sponsor joint activities with other nearby AmeriCorps programs.

■ Arrange for time and space that belong to the members.

■ Encourage their use for sharing information and experiences.

- Create celebrations of accomplishments.

- Develop a newsletter and calendar of events.

- Display, in highly visible areas, photographs of group activities. Be sure that each member is in at least one of the photographs.

Model values that AmeriCorps stands for
- Develop yourself as a supervisor/leader.

- Develop members in their roles.

- Practice community involvement to solve problems at the local level.

- Encourage people of diverse backgrounds to work together toward common goals.

Create cultural stories and myths
- Identify AmeriCorps heroes, both individuals and groups, and talk about their accomplishments.

- Tell stories related to the origin of AmeriCorps and the origin of your programs.

- Have members create metaphors to express the vision and goals of their programs. Metaphors are picture words that make abstract ideas easier to understand.

- Use the local newspapers to make program accomplishments public.

- Bring in outside people to tell success stories and pat members on the back.

Match individual member visions and goals with service visions and goals
- Use any one-on-one discussion including performance assessments as opportunities to explore member visions and goals.

- Look for opportunities to match members with challenges that fit their goals.

[Pages **2** 24 and **2** 25 adapted from: *Coaching for Performance: A Practical Guide to Growing Your Own Skills*, by John Whitmore, San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company, 1992.]

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a simple technique for quickly generating a long list of creative ideas. Here's how it works:

1. State the problem you're working on as a question.

2. Tell everyone you are going to brainstorm ideas. This means your group will generate as many ideas as possible in a set period of time (say, five minutes).

3. Tell the group it's all right to "piggyback" on an idea (suggest a new idea that adds to one already given). However, no one is allowed to evaluate or comment on any idea until the brainstorming session is over.

4. Set a time limit. Restate the question. And start. Have a recorder write every idea on newsprint so that everyone can see the growing list. Your role as a neutral group leader is to encourage the group, prod them to give more ideas, and remind them of the time limit. Encourage everyone to participate. If people begin evaluating ideas before time is up, remind everyone of the non-evaluation rule.

5. When time is up, call "stop." Now you can begin evaluating your ideas—eliminating, combining, adding—and developing a winning solution or definition for the problem you're solving.

If your group has trouble generating ideas, have each member first write down a few ideas, then start brainstorming. If some members are very shy or dominant, begin by going around the group and asking each person to share his or her idea one at a time. Success depends on not evaluating ideas during the brainstorming sessions. Every idea is acceptable, regardless of how strange it may seem at first. Remember, the goal of brainstorming is to generate as many ideas as possible, not to discuss those ideas.

Using Force-Field Analysis for Problem Solving

The Supervisor as Advisor

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In every problem there are forces working to make the problem worse or to make it better. Force-field analysis, a technique developed by Kurt Lewin, helps you isolate those forces so you can create strategies to increase the positive forces and decrease the negative ones. It allows you to break up a problem and tackle it one piece at a time, which leads to more concrete and comprehensive solutions.

Using newsprint to record ideas, ask the group to brainstorm a list of "negative forces," those working to make the problem worse or contribute to its existence. Then do the same with the "positive forces," those that would contribute to resolving the problem or keep it from getting worse.

Force-field analysis is one of the most powerful problem-solving techniques available. It will help you quickly generate creative, high-quality strategies for solving problems in your organization. Once you have developed a number of strategies, you can decide which strategies to implement and then plan how to implement them.

An Example of Force-Field Analysis

Scenario

On National Service Day, your AmeriCorps program was to complete a community cleanup. The results were disappointing. Not as many people as expected showed up to participate. Instructions on how the big trash bags were to be handled did not get distributed to the people involved, which caused pickup problems. Animals got into the trash bags that weren't picked up. There was no media coverage. As a result, the city doesn't want to fund next year's community cleanup.

By using force-field analysis, you and your members identify several positive and negative forces occurring in this situation. A sample is shown on .

Once you have a solid list, you and your members begin looking for ways to strengthen the positive forces and reduce the negative ones. For example, to strengthen the positive forces you might put the new member with prior experience in charge of a checklist of tasks that must be done to make sure the event is successful. Or you might decide to build more interest in the community around such themes as

Using Force-Field Analysis for Problem Solving

Problem Analysis

The city does not have confidence in our ability to conduct a successful community cleanup on National Service Day.

POSITIVE FORCES	NEGATIVE FORCES
Strong local government support	No money available from local government
Complaints about trash all over town	Bad history due to last year's problems (lack of planning, no media attention, lack of organization, and coordination)
Top priority from members	Apathetic general community
New member with successful prior experience with cleanup days	Lack of media interest last year
AmeriCorps project commitment to conduct cleanup	Activity not exciting to potential corporate sponsers
Research showing cleanup discourages rodents	Concern over possible low turnout based on last year's experience
School in the area looking for community activity for its students	

beautification. Your community cleanup day can be one part of an overall plan to improve last year's experience by addressing all the issues that were not addressed properly last time. To reduce the negative forces, consider approaches such as these: Be able to show the Parks and Recreation Department your briefing materials on what to do with bagged trash and your arrangements for its prompt pick-up; develop a cordial and ongoing relationship with several people in the television and newspaper media; match them with supportive county leaders interested in media techniques.

[Force-field example borrowed from: *Starting Strong: A Self Help Guide to Effective AmeriCorps Pre-Service Training*, MOSAICA, 1995.]

Using Force-Field Analysis for Problem Solving

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Positive/Negative Forces Analysis

Problem: _____

Strategies for Increasing These Forces	Positive Forces	Negative Forces	Strategies for Diminishing Forces

Responses That Kill Creativity

Nothing can kill the creative flow of ideas faster than a manger's ill-chosen words. If it seems your employees are not generating as many good ideas as they once did, you might check the response of your managers. The following phrases are guaranteed to kill any degree of creativity.

1. Don't be ridiculous.
2. We tried that before.
3. It costs too much.
4. It can't be done.
5. That's beyond your responsibility.
6. It's too radical a change.
7. We don't have time.
8. That will make our equipment obsolete.
9. That's not our problem.
10. We've never done it that way before.
11. Let's get back to reality.
12. Why change it? It's still working.
13. You're two years ahead of your time.
14. It isn't in the budget.
15. Can't teach an old dog new tricks.
16. We're not ready.
17. Too hard to sell.
18. Top management would never go for it.
19. Let's shelve it for now.
20. We did fine without it.
21. Will you guarantee it will work?
22. What we have is good enough.
23. It's against policy.
24. Don't rock the boat.
25. Has anyone ever tried it?

If you have heard or said any of these phrases, chances are you have found an obstacle to creative thinking in your organization.

Common Errors in Problem Solving

1. The problem is not clearly defined or the group does not have enough information to understand the problem.

2. The problem is stated too narrowly. Only a symptom is dealt with—not the real problem.

3. Tentative solutions are chosen too early in the process (before the problem is understood).

4. The range of information gathered is too narrow.

5. Some major constraints to solving the problem are ignored.

6. Traditional solutions are preferred despite lack of effectiveness.

7. Priorities among problems are not established. A plan for carrying out the solution, specifying who will do what when, is not developed or is not well thought out.

8. Resources needed to carry out a solution are not clearly specified and obtained early enough in the process.

9. The cost of a solution is not weighed against potential benefits.

10. Feedback and evaluation procedures are not built into the solution, so there is no mechanism to monitor progress and determine effectiveness.

Coaching for Improved Performance

The GROW model is based on using a series of questions to help a member make appropriate decisions about what course of action to take to improve performance or develop skills. As the "coach," you are helping to unlock the member's potential. The overall goal or context of this process is to coach the member to higher levels of awareness and responsibility. Awareness means two things in this context: First, it is knowing what is happening around you, and second, it is self-awareness or knowing what you are experiencing. Responsibility is being accountable for learning and growing. Together, awareness and responsibility are crucial to the member's performance in any activity.

The components of the GROW model are as follows:

Context: Awareness of self and surroundings, and responsibility for learning and improving (you are striving to help the member attain these two qualities)

Method: Asking questions in the following sequence:

G - *Goal* setting for the meeting, short-term and long-term;

R - *Reality* checking to explore the current situation;

O - *Options* and alternative strategies, or courses of action;

W - What is to be done, when, by whom and the *will* to do it.

Goal Setting

Whether the supervisor or the member has initiated the coaching discussion or session, it is the member who needs to determine what goal he or she wants to work toward. The supervisor asks broad questions that help the member to consider where he or she is going and to state it in goal language. The goal should be SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-phased.

Reality

Once the goal (or goals) is defined, the current reality in which the member lives and works needs to be examined. What is happening right now that relates to the goal? During this phase, it is important to maintain objectivity and detachment. The questions

here should use descriptive rather evaluative terminology. The coach follows the member's lead, allowing a free flow of information exchange and intervening only when the member veers off course and begins talking about a totally unrelated subject.

Options

The purpose of the options phase is not to find the "right" answer, but to create a list of courses of action. The quantity of options is more important here than the quality. The coach's main task during the options phase is to create and maintain an open and safe environment in which the member will feel comfortable. Both coach and member need to guard against snuffing creativity by making negative assumptions (e.g., "it can't be done" or "they'd never agree to that"). If you and the member fall into that trap, counterbalance it by playing the what if game (what if you had someone teaming with you on the project?, and so forth). Once a comprehensive list of options has been generated, it may be a simple matter of picking the best one. However, if the issue is complex, you may need to guide the member in examining the costs and benefits of the options that seem most sound. At this point it is "okay" for you to offer a couple of suggestions based on your own experience and expertise, but these should not be considered any more or less valid than options offered by the member.

Will

In the final phase of the coaching session, the coach facilitates turning the discussion into a decision. This phase also includes developing an action plan to meet the goal set out in the beginning phase. By asking the question "What are you going to do?" (not what could you do, or what do you prefer to do), you help the member make a firm decision. For most coaching issues, the final action plan will incorporate parts of two or more alternatives. Once the decision is made, the coach continues with several more questions that facilitate identifying specific activities and realistic timelines. As you move through the action planning, you and the member should review the original goal to make sure you aren't veering off course.

The list below is a "starter set" of coaching questions. As you begin coaching with members, use the list as a guide first, and then modify and expand it to suit your own needs and style.

GROW Model Coaching Questions

Goal

What is the goal of this meeting (or conversation or discussion)?

The Grow Model: Coaching for Improved Performance

What do you want to achieve (short-term and long-term)?

By when do you want to achieve it?

How is your goal positive, challenging, attainable, and measurable?

Reality

What (when, where, how much) is happening now?

Who is involved?

What have you done about this so far?

What results did that produce?

What is happening both internally and externally?

What are major constraints to finding a way forward?

Options

What options do you have?

What else could you do?

What if...?

Would you like another suggestion?

What are the benefits and costs of the alternatives?

Will

What are you going to do?

When are you going to do it?

Will this meet your goal?

What obstacles could you face?

How will you overcome them?

Who needs to know?

How will you get that support?

Rate yourself on a 1-to-10 scale on what is the likelihood of your carrying out this action?

As you can see from the list, most of the questions begin with words that quantify— *what, when, who, how much,* and *how many.* "W" words are the most effective question starters for helping members explore issues of awareness and responsibility because these questions ask for more specific, factual answers. Asking why on the other hand, often implies blame and may provoke defensiveness on the part of the member. Why questions don't always bring that response, but exercise caution if you do use them.

The GROW model may be applied to both one-on-one coaching sessions and group development. Given some orientation and guidance, members themselves can use the GROW approach for peer coaching.

[Adapted from: *Coaching for Performance,* by John Whitmore. San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company, 1994.]

The Supervisor as Advisor

How You Make It Happen

What is it?

Service learning is a method by which members can learn and develop through active participation in experiences that are thoughtfully organized and that

- meet actual community needs;

- are coordinated with the project site sponsors;

- are integrated into the daily program schedule;

- provide structured time for a member to think, talk, write about, and understand the significance of what he or she did and saw in the actual service activity;

- provide members with the opportunity to use newly acquired skills and knowledge in real-life situations in their own communities and others; and

- help to foster a sense of caring for others.

Characteristics of Quality Service Learning

1. Effective service-learning efforts strengthen service and community learning.

2. Model service learning provides members with the opportunity to learn new skills and to think critically.

3. Preparation and reflection are essential efforts in service learning.

4. Members' efforts are recognized by their peers and the community they serve.

5. Members are involved in planning.

6. The service performed by members makes a meaningful contribution to the community.

7. Service learning connects the program and the community in new and positive ways.

8. Service learning is understood and supported as an integral element in the life of the program and the community.

9. Skilled staff guidance and supervision is essential to the success of service learning.

10. Staff development that includes the philosophy and methodology of service learning is the best way of ensuring that program quality and continuity are maintained.

Core Elements of Service Learning Activities

Preparation

Simply put, preparation is getting to know the community—and the issues you're working on—before you go out to perform the service. For example,

- Discuss member responsibilities and how to perform the service work.

- Get information on the individuals to be served.

- Get information about the social and contextual issues related to the service.

- Get information about the service site (the purpose, functions, etc., of the agency or school…).

- Conduct some problem solving about difficult situations that may arise.

- Do some group building among participants.

Meaningful Service

Meaningful service means serving real needs through the service you perform. Here are questions to help you check your project's appropriateness:

- Are projects designed around real community needs?

- Are the members and the project sponsor involved in defining and designing the service project?

- Are the project sponsors committed to the program goals and willing to work in partnership to achieve them?

- Is the service work engaging, challenging, and meaningful for the members?

Structured Reflection

Structured reflection is time for members to think and talk about the service experience. Members basically answer the question, What did I learn about myself and the community? Structured reflection is

- A reality check to guard against reinforcing inaccurate perceptions of the population being served.

- Problem solving—specific situations, issues, etc.

- Ongoing education on general issues relating to service.

- Clarifying values as members confront new situations.

- Integrating service-related learning with the rest of one's life.

- Community building among the participants.

The following are some suggested reflection questions:

1. What was special about this experience?

2. Will what you learned from this activity help you offer a higher quality of service in future projects?

3. Was the service project meaningful to the community? How?

4. If you faced the same situation again, would you do anything differently?

5. What was an impressive example of leadership you observed today?

6. Why was this example of leadership so impressive?

7. How did you personally exhibit leadership today?

8. How are you doing in meeting the leadership and service goals you have set for yourself?

9. What can you do tomorrow to further the goals you have set for yourself?

[From: *Team Building and Leadership Session Workbook,* United Way/AmeriCorps Workshop, April 30–May 2, 1995.]

Worksheet on AmeriCorps Member Motivation

This worksheet lists some factors that many people consider to be important in their work, volunteer activity, or service assignment.

■ Working individually, please rank these factors in terms of the relative importance to YOU in your AmeriCorps assignment. Put your ranking in the first column, and use the following scale:

1 = The ONE most important factor
2 = Very important
3 = Moderately important
4 = A little important
5 = Not at all important

■ Now share your rankings with the team and come to a consensus about the five most important factors for your team in order of importance.

	Importance to YOU personally	*Importance to the team*
1. Recognition for my efforts	_____	_____
2. Physical working conditions	_____	_____
3. Community or public visibility	_____	_____
4. Having a good supervisor	_____	_____
5. Making contacts	_____	_____
6. Friendly, helpful people	_____	_____
7. The assignment itself	_____	_____
8. Participating in planning and decision making	_____	_____
9. Helping to meet a real need in the country or community	_____	_____

Worksheet on AmeriCorps Member Motivation

	Importance to YOU personally	*Importance to the team*
10. Opportunity for increased responsibility	_____	_____
	_____	_____
11. A feeling of personal accomplishment	_____	_____
12. Developing new skills		
13. Freedom in doing my work	_____	_____
14. Agreement with host program and AmeriCorps missions	_____	_____
	_____	_____
15. Meeting new challenges	_____	_____
16. Educational stipend		
17. Desire for new experiences	_____	_____
18. Opportunity to develop marketable skills	_____	_____
19. Other	_____	_____

[Concept of motivating factors is adapted from: *The 1979 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators*, University Associates, San Diego, pp. 71–76.]

[Different list of factors and method of prioritization developed for volunteers and staff of nonprofits and then further revised for AmeriCorps members by Emily Gantz McKay of MOSAICA.]

Why Members Do Not Do
What They Are Supposed To Do

Most reasons for members' poor performance are controlled by the supervisor. There are specific, effective strategies supervisors can use to influence performance and to circumvent almost all of the reasons people have for not doing what they are supposed to do at work. The following list describes some common reasons why members do not do what they are supposed to do—and what to do about it:

1.

They do not know why they should do it. Members don't understand the reasons for or the importance of doing the task. People are often required to do things a certain way that is clear to supervisors but not as clear to the members.

Give them the big picture, and make it personal. Members should know the benefit to the organization of doing a task right as well as the harm caused by doing it wrong.

2.

They do not know how to do it. Telling is not teaching. Supervisors often want to minimize training time to get members working quickly. Supervisors may be hired or promoted because they know how to do something well, but that does not necessarily mean they know how to teach it to someone else.

Provide training, practice, and testing. Give members practice in simulations of the actual work they will do; test them so you will know if learning has occurred.

3.

They think their way is better. Members resist directions not because they think they are wrong but because they think their way is better; they are being innovative. Most supervisors like members to think for themselves and to be innovative—when it works. When it fails, supervisors tend to say, "Why can't they just follow instructions?" The problem may be that members are misinformed about the success of their method.

Seek members' opinions. Explain in detail the cause-and-effect relationship between the intended action and the expected result. Then compare the performance outcomes of "your way" and "their way."

4.

They think something else is more important. Members don't know the priority of the many tasks and projects assigned to them. They're working on what they think is important rather than on what the supervisor thinks is important.

Why Members Do Not Do What They Are Supposed To Do

The Supervisor as Advisor

Label work according to the priority you assign. Describe the formula you use to differentiate between the most important work and the less important work. Give members the same formula to use when the work they do comes from other sources. When work priorities change, let them be the first to know. Don't label everything top priority.

5.

There is no positive consequence to them for doing it. People keep doing things for which they are rewarded and don't do things for which they are not rewarded. Rewards may be external—i.e., delivered by someone else—and may be tangible (a certificate of excellence) or intangible (a smile). They can also be internal—i.e., delivered to the performing member by herself or himself. All internal rewards are intangible (e.g., a sense of self-worth, satisfaction). External rewards come from only four sources: the work itself, the community, fellow members, and you.

Deliver rewards (tangible and intangible) for the performance you expect. The only rewards you control absolutely are your specific, verbal compliments about performance. Deliver compliments frequently and immediately following effective performance, citing specifically what has been done right.

6.

They think they are doing it. Members don't know they're failing. They are getting inadequate feedback about the quality of their work. If they think they are doing the job; there is no reason to change.

Provide timely feedback, both negative and positive. The timing of feedback is crucial. Many organizations provide feedback only a few times a year during formal performance reviews. To improve performance, feedback, whether it is negative, positive, or neutral, should be immediate. As a supervisor, you should give verbal, positive, specific feedback regularly. When you give a member feedback about poor performance, talk about the performance, not the person.

7.

They are rewarded for not doing it. Performance that is rewarded will increase in frequency. This holds true whether or not the behavior is desirable. Supervisors may intervene in ways that encourage members to perform poorly. For example, members who do difficult tasks poorly are given only easy tasks to perform.

Give members attention for doing things you want them to do. Ignore repeated complaints, require errors to be corrected, and verbally reward improvement. Manage

Why Members Do Not Do What They Are Supposed To Do

closely to eliminate other possible reasons for nonperformance and follow through on negative consequences, such as progressive discipline for continued poor performance until it improves. Hold your discussions about work performance in the work area, and don't buy the members lunch or coffee during these discussions.

8.

They are punished for doing what they are supposed to do. When the things people do are followed by punishment, they tend to do those things less frequently. Assigning all the difficult work to a member who does difficult work well or requiring a member who makes suggestions at meetings to do extra projects to carry out those suggestions are examples of punishment for appropriate performance. Members can avoid punishment by not doing some of the things you want them to do: For example, being ridiculed by the boss when you point out problems can be avoided by not pointing out problems. Some punishment is intrinsic to the job, such as failing at something after repeated attempts or working below one's capacity or ability.

Remove the punishment by changing your behavior. Avoid sarcasm, ridicule, and negativism. Reward appropriate behavior. Where work is inherently punishing, balance a negative consequence with a positive one such as extra compliments, extra time off, or easy work following a difficult assignment.

9.

There is no negative consequence for poor performance. Verbal and written reprimands, unless followed by increasingly severe action, appear to have little effect on members who purposely perform poorly. Supervisors are often reluctant to put a "negative notation" on the member's record, or they believe rewards will motivate better performance.

Take appropriate corrective action. Members must be held accountable. When it seems clear that a person is willfully not improving performance, and your coaching discussion fails, terminate the relationship, following the appropriate guidelines.

10.

Obstacles beyond their control prevent them from doing what they are supposed to do. Real barriers may prevent members from performing their tasks—e.g., unavailable or poor-quality resources or conflicting instructions. Some obstacles are conditions that prevent the member from performing the task appropriately; some are conditions that prevent the member from performing the task because he or she does not know how to overcome them or does not have the skill to use available alternatives.

Remove the obstacle or give the member the strategy or skill to overcome it. When members tell you they are unable to perform

Why Members Do Not Do What They Are Supposed To Do

tasks because of an obstacle beyond their control, don't tell them to work it out themselves. Get involved in the situation. Collect facts. It may be necessary to involve supervisors of other teams or to change procedures or methods. Prepare your members to deal with common obstacles, anticipate ones they may face in the future, and give them the strategies and skills they will need in advance.

11.

They have personal problems. The member may be preoccupied with something in his or her private life that is interfering with job performance. Sometimes performance problems on the job occur only because the supervisor permits them to occur: Sympathetic supervisors may permit a member not to perform because that member has personal problems. Organizations usually have specific guidelines for common situations where nonperformance is justified (e.g., funeral leave, time off for personal business), but they rarely specify, and supervisors often do not know, when it's okay for the member to feel bad but not okay for the member to "work bad." Or supervisors may not know how to talk about a member's personal problems or how deeply to get involved.

Realistically identify which personal problems your organization will accept as reasons for nonperformance. Make provision for people to handle or respond to those personal problems in planned ways. Be available to discuss personal problems, but don't play psychologist or marriage counselor. Acknowledge the personal difficulty, but also ask for the member's cooperation in eliminating the work problem. Permit members to take time off with advance notice to handle personal business.

[Adapted from: *Why Employees Don't Do What They're Supposed to Do and What to Do About It,* by Ferdinand F. Fournies, Liberty Hall Press, 1988.]

The Supervisor as Team Builder

Remember the old axiom, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts? When people work together effectively as a team, they draw on a full spectrum of ideas and diverse experiences to create innovative solutions—solutions that no one person may have discovered alone. As part of a team, members can share and ask each other for job-related help. They can also find support from other members to get through difficult times.

Whether you work with crews or with a group of members assigned to individual sites, your ability to generate and sustain a sense of affiliation, peer support, and collaboration may be one of the most important things you do—not only for members but for yourself. The more your members learn to rely on each other and work together to solve problems, the better their leadership skills become, and the less

they depend on you to do things for them. In fact, an essential part of team building is helping your members develop their own skills in these areas.

To be an effective team builder, you need to use all the skills we've discussed in earlier chapters—active listening, feedback, conflict resolution, problem solving, and coaching—but instead of applying them one-on-one, you use them with your team. As you might guess, when you're working with more than one individual, skills like problem solving and giving feedback become more complex. You need a greater knowledge of the dynamics behind member interaction, and you need a fuller understanding of the leader's role as the group is developing. To help you gain expertise in these areas, we'll introduce the three skills listed above.

In This Chapter

☑ Building a Collaborative Team Environment

☑ Diagnosing and Guiding Your Team Through the Stages of Group Development

☑ Making Decisions in Groups
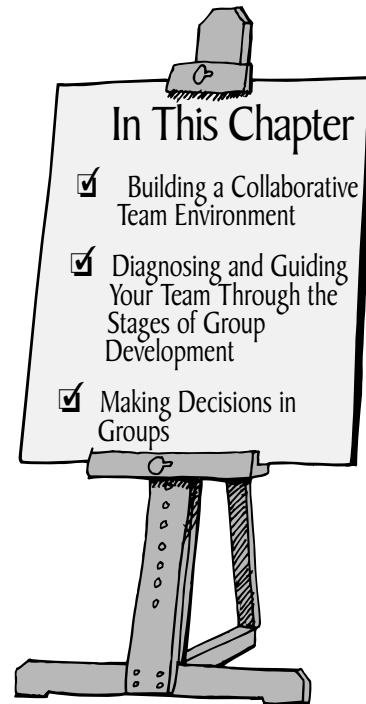
Supervisor's TOOL KIT

These tools begin on page **3** 27)

Building a Team Environment

Effective Teams and Team Problems

Characteristics of effective teams, team leaders, and members with a table of common problems that affect group performance

A Few Things to Watch for

Factors to consider when observing group dynamics

A Dozen Tips for Team Building

Pointers for starting to form a cohesive team

Tips for Working with Diversity

Guidelines for building teams rich in diversity

Disruptive Group Situations

Scenarios that harm or inhibit teamwork and some suggestions for how to deal with each

Stages of Group Development

Stages of Group Development

The "Forming-Storming-Norming-Performing-Adjourning" model of group development

Facilitation Skills

A summary of four essential skills for leading groups: asking questions, paraphrasing, summarizing, and encouraging

Making Decisions in Groups

Facilitating for Consensus

Background on building group consensus and handling disagreement during the process

A Day in the Life ...

Jamal and his crew are in their second month of the project cycle, and until about two weeks ago he was pleased with their progress. From the beginning, he set up regular meeting times every day so members could reflect on service learning and discuss issues that arose in the group. Members showed up on time and seemed enthusiastic about his ideas for starting their park restoration project.

Over the course of the last month, though, Jamal has noticed some disturbing changes. For example, a couple of members have started drifting in late. Several people have formed cliques and are productive only when they work with their "buddies." Members aren't communicating enough with the whole group so they sometimes duplicate work. At times they neglect tasks because they thought someone else was doing them. Jamal is also troubled by how the cliques are composed: Two are organized along racial lines, and a third includes only members with master's degrees. The cliques are friendly with each other, but lately Jamal has noticed that they are more competitive.

His original idea was to give members as much choice as possible in forming their smaller task teams. Now he's not so sure that was a good plan.

The last few meetings with the whole crew haven't gone well. Anthony and Linda don't like any of Jamal's suggestions and challenge him in front of the other members. Jamal is particularly concerned about Linda because she puts him and nearly everybody in the group down. Anthony can't admit when he's wrong or when somebody else has a better idea. He argues with other members until they agree with him just to get on with the meeting. Alicia tries to make everyone feel good by smoothing over the personality clashes in the group. Her only shortcoming is that she is too talkative and tends to side-track the meeting agenda. Everybody enjoys this, but they don't get their work done. Devon, a clock-watcher who gets visibly agitated when members start running over time on activities, often helps by reminding the group about what they're supposed to be doing. Gwen is good at "taking the bull by the horns" and coming up with ideas for accomplishing the work. She even researches relevant topics to get the team going (e.g., she brought in several articles about low-cost playground equipment). The trouble is that some of the members "tune out" when Gwen

starts in on one of her "plans." And this is only half the group!

Jamal senses his members really want to do a good job on the park project. They are keeping to their deadlines. The day their uniforms arrived they seemed to forget about their cliques and, after working hard at the park, went around town together to show off their "new look." Jamal knows they care about each other because of the way they all pitched in to help Linda when she got injured on site last week.

Jamal is thinking about all this because he has to be out of town twice next month, once for a training workshop and later for a conference. He'd feel much better if his team showed more togetherness. His director suggested assigning members to serve as weekly crew leader on a rotating basis. The crew leader would act as Jamal's assistant and would be in charge when he had to be away from the project, even for a couple of days. Jamal would like his team to participate in defining this position and creating a model for the director's approval. He knows that he needs to help them get on the right track before he can fully trust them to assume leadership responsibilities. But how?

Building a Collaborative Team Environment

Why You Do It

As Jamal has discoverd, effective teams don't just happen; they take time and effort to develop. Many factors influence how members of a group interact, including personality, cultural, or ethnic background, and professional motivation. By understanding the dynamics of teamwork, you will learn how to create a favorable environment in which group members may work well together. The aim of team building is to help a group evolve into a cohesive unit whose members not only share and work together toward the same goals but also trust and support one another and respect individual differences.

How You Do It

An effective team gets things done by identifying and removing obstacles that divert the group's attention and energy away from the task at hand. Hidden agendas, unclear roles, and confusion about how to give one another feedback are just a few of the obstacles that distract members and keep them from accomplishing their work. As a team builder, you help members improve their ability to get things done by enabling them to confront and deal with issues that hinder their functioning as a group.

For the purposes of this guide, we'll define a team as follows:

> TEAM: a group of interdependent individuals who share a common goal and work together, often with different roles and functions, to complete the tasks necessary for achieving their goal.
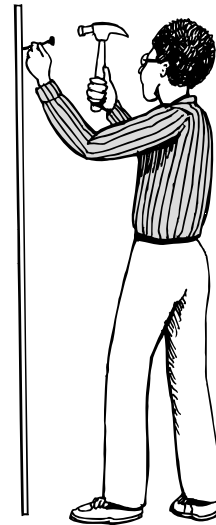
A Team Has Three Basic Elements at All Times:

Structure

How the team is organized in terms of formal/informal authority and leadership; timing, location, and physical environment in which the team operates.

Task

Why the team exists; its work, purpose, and output.

Process

How the team works within the structure to accomplish its tasks.

In group process, team members have three basic needs, and everything they do during team interactions can be linked to one of these needs:

☑   The need to acheive tasks,

☑   The need to maintain group cohesion and well-being, and

☑   The need to express and satisfy individual interests or desires.

Sometimes a team is focused too heavily on achieving the task and may forget to pay attention to relationships among members. When this happens, tensions may arise and simple problems may become "heavy." At other times team members may emphasize maintaining relationships so much that they don't have time to complete their tasks, and they may find the quality of their work slipping. As a result their motivation may decline, and they may begin to blame one another.

When a team has not developed properly and members feel their needs are not being met, they sometimes engage in self-centered behavior to try to draw attention to, or divert attention from, themselves>

You can encourage your members to play team roles that will promote a balance between functions of task (getting things done) and maintenance (developing members). Task and maintenance roles may be played out by separate members or shared by various members at different points.

Task Roles

Initiator
Proposes tasks, goals, and/or actions; defines group problems and suggests procedures.

Informer
Offers facts and opinions, expresses feelings.

Clarifier
Interprets ideas; restates questions and suggestions; defines terms and clarifies issues for the group.

Summarizer
Pulls together related ideas; reframes suggestions; offers decisions and conclusions for the group to consider.

Reality Tester
Tests ideas against data to see if they will actually work.

Energizer
Causes the group to move forward; focuses on the quality of the group's decisions and the progress it's making toward its goals.

Summarizer
Pulls together related ideas; reframes suggestions; offers decisions and pulls together related ideas; reframes suggestions; offers decisions and conclusions for the group to consider.

Maintenance Roles

help the group get
along and work
together.

Maintenance Roles

Gate Keeper

Keeps the group on track; watches time; makes sure that members participate; invites quiet people to contribute.

Harmonizer

Reduces tension; tries to resolve disagreements; tries to get group members to explore their differences.

Encourager

Brings members into the group's task; helps reluctant or shy members to participate; tries to get the group to see the positive aspects of ideas.

Consensus Tester

Presses the group to move toward decisions; tries to get total "buy-in" from all members of the group on the group's decisions.

Compromiser

Lets go of ideas when the group is in conflict over a decision; admits errors and begins to search for alternatives for the sake of the group.

Unlike the task and maintenance roles described on the previous pages, the following roles can be detrimental to the group. Members will inevitably play these roles from time to time. As a leader your job is to work with them to resolve the causes of the behavior and diminish its effects on the group.
[See your tool kit for suggestions.]

Self-Interest Roles

Dominator

Asserts authority or superiority to manipulate the group; interrupts others; forces decisions or choices on the group; controls others by use of flattery or other forms of patronizing behavior; monopolizes the group's "air time" and controls who speaks.

Blocker

Keeps the group from moving forward by being unreasonably stubborn, uncooperative, or disagreeable; has hidden agendas; resists the group's progress toward the completion of its tasks.

Aggressor

Takes "pot shots" at group members, their ideas, and their attempts to work within the group; attacks the ideas and motives of the group; uses humor as a weapon.

Avoider

Takes the group on "wild goose chases," bringing up issues not related to group tasks and insisting that these issues are relevant.

Comedian

Uses humor inappropriately to put down group members and their ideas; keeps the group from focusing on its task

Ask Jamal

Remember Jamal's problems with some of his members during their team meetings?
(see page 3 *3 and* 3 *4)*

Which roles (task, maintenance, or self-interest) would you say Linda, Anthony, Alice, Devon, and Gwen are playing?

Task-Maintenance Balance

It may be useful for your team to determine which roles are played most often by which people in your group. If your group finds that some task or maintenance roles are not being played, you can help members plan ways to fill in the gap. Role analysis also helps members understand their value to the group. For example, members who regularly summarize discussions may not be aware that they are making a valuable contribution. Here are other ways you can encourage the task-maintenance balance:

- Regularly review the effectiveness of team meetings; plan 5–10 minutes at the end of each meeting to evaluate how things are going.
- Celebrate when the team achieves results.
- Praise individual efforts (in addition to team celebrations).
- Design individual performance goals that emphasize both results and teamwork. Individual goals contribute directly to overall team goals.
- Assign certain team members to monitor task functions (e.g., keeping people informed about deadlines); ask others to monitor maintenance functions (e.g., making sure the "quiet" people in the group have a chance to contribute during meetings).

In addition to balancing task and maintenance roles, there are several other components critical to building a collaborative team environment. These include:

Common Purpose

Teams that succeed have a shared sense of purpose and clear goals. To establish a common purpose,

- Create a mission statement with your team.
- Allow every team member to express his or her commitment to the team's purpose, priorities, and guidelines. Members who do not share this commitment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns about the direction in which the team is headed.

- Create mottoes, symbols, awards, songs, T-shirts, or posters that remind team members of their common purpose.

- Use this sense of common focus to stay on track and prioritize team tasks.

Trust

Although trust is crucial to team collaboration, it is often slow to develop and easy to lose. Trust requires the effort of all the team members and the leader. To be trusted, you must be willing to trust others. Encourage yourself and your members to

- Be honest.

- Follow through on commitments.

- Work to get rid of conflicts of interest. In other words, prevent situations where the good of any individual team member is not consistent with that of the team and its other members (over-rewarding one member, for example, may undermine teamwork).

- Avoid talking about one another.

- Give team members the benefit of the doubt. Part of trusting is realizing that people aren't perfect, and that we all make mistakes. In times of doubt, give members your support and show them you are sincerely interested in seeing them succeed.

Clear Roles

Confusion over roles and expectations is a frequent cause of frustration and tension in team settings. Unclear roles can quickly lead to other problems such as distrust and hidden agendas. When people have false assumptions about who is doing what, important tasks can be left unattended. To maintain clear roles on your team,

- Review individual team member responsibilities frequently.

- Clarify responsibilities when you are formulating a plan of action. Every task in your plan should have a team member, or members, assigned to it.

■ Create a plan so that team members learn about each other's roles and responsibilities. Where feasible, rotate members through all roles.

■ Figure out ways for members to help each other. This takes pressure off you and builds better understanding and flexibility among team members.

Open Communication

Effective communication is much more than being able to "make conversation." It means ensuring that important information is constantly being shared and understood by everyone on the team. It also means that members must be candid about their own wishes, needs, and concerns. To open and maintain the lines of communication, you and your team members should

■ Err on the side of overcommunicating. Better to share too much information, at least in the beginning, than to have members trying to work without enough to go on.

■ Try to understand all points of view. This means soliciting input from team members and listening actively until you fully understand their intent.

■ Try to clear up misunderstandings quickly and accurately. When left unresolved, misunderstandings fester among team members.

■ Reinforce and recognize team members' efforts. Sharing information with the group and asking others for their ideas and opinions should be valued activities of the team.

Diversity

Diversity—a mix of backgrounds in terms of race, gender, culture, age, education, physical ability, and job function—can lead to a rich and rewarding team experience. People don't need to be the same or think the same to be unified. The key to success is to value team diversity and use that diversity to achieve the team's common purpose. Here are some suggestions for you and your members:

People don't need to BE the same or THINK the same to be committed to common goals.

- Remember that normal people disagree with each other. Fortunately, no two people are exactly alike. It's the diversity among AmeriCorps members that challenges the status quo and encourages innovation.

- Try to learn as much as possible from others. Learning about the background, ethnic heritage, and job experience of other people can enrich your own skills and knowledge. When members express thoughts or opinions that are not shared widely in the group, give them support. This sets a precedent for other members who want to contribute ideas they think may be "different."

- Encourage members to "mix" their work teams from week to week or task to task. Provide a variety of ways for teams to avoid cliques.

- Evaluate new ideas based on merit rather than on who offered them or how closely they match your own preferences.

- Avoid comments that draw negative attention to a person's unique characteristics. Humor should never be used at the expense of others' identity and self-esteem.

- Don't ignore the differences among team members. Unkindly pointing out individual differences is always inappropriate, but recognizing and celebrating the diversity within the group is never a mistake!

In summary, creating a collaborative team environment requires considerable time and attention, especially early in the life of the group. But the payoff is remarkable!

Ask Jamal

Name three or four things you think Jamal could do to improve the collaborative environment for his team.

Diagnosing and Guiding Your Team Through the Stages of Group Development

Why You Do It

As your members grow from a collection of individuals into a smoothly operating team, they will go through several predictable stages. Each stage requires its own leadership approach, input, and activities. By learning to recognize what your group needs from you at each stage, you can thoughtfully and purposefully plan how to help them continue growing into a high performance team.

How You Do It

There are many models for studying group development. One widely accepted concept about group growth is that

> Groups must move through several phases of development before they become high-performing teams.

While certain stages may be more pleasant for the group and some less, all are necessary if true teamwork is to be achieved. Some teams get stuck at one stage and never make it to their desired end. Other teams digress in response to changes in membership, mission, or leadership.

On the following pages, we outline the Forming-Storming-Norming-Performing-Adjourning model of group development—one model of many we hope you'll discover as you try to become a more knowledgeable supervisor and team leader.

Stages of Group Development

Forming

When a team first comes together, members are primarily seeking structure, guidance, and a safe environment. They are usually polite and formal as they try to figure out who is similar to—or different from—them. The group issue at this stage is establishing common expectations. Members ask themselves: "Do I wish to be included here, and with these people? Will they accept me as I am? What do I risk by working with this group, and is it worth it?" At this stage, members look to the leader to satisfy their needs.

Storming

What quickly emerges from the forming stage is the reality that people have different needs, views, styles, and backgrounds. Individuals begin to challenge these differences, especially as they relate to power and decision making. The issue facing the team at this stage is how to manage the inevitable conflicts. Behavior in the group may be quite dramatic, including verbal attacks on the leader, on other members, or on sub-groups. Or it may be more covert, including things such as long, tedious discussions that go nowhere or a widespread lack of enthusiasm. The leadership issue at this point is "counter-dependency." While members felt dependent on the leader during the forming stage, they now try to pull away from any kind of leadership, formal or informal.

Norming

As group members struggle to create an acceptable process for making decisions and dealing with conflict, they lead themselves into the norming stage. They develop rules or norms of behavior (e.g., one person speaks at a time; every member's opinion is valuable; will solicit and exchange honest feedback). Although the reasons for rules and norms are usually healthy, they are sometimes used in a nonproductive way. The expectation for members to play by the rules may be so powerful that it stifles individual creativity and expression. In crew-based programs, group cohesion may be so strong that members feel they have to do everything—eat, drink, have fun—together and individual members may be reluctant to express ideas that run counter to the will of the group.

Performing

Over time, members begin to care more deeply about each other and about the group's purpose and task. They come to recognize and acknowledge individuality, and tasks are accomplished by using the talents, skills, and abilities of each person on the team. One sign that the group has reached the performing stage is that members can disagree with the majority opinion of the group without being labeled as bad or disloyal. Leadership style at this stage is characterized by "interdependence." Members feel free to develop their skills and learn from the actions and behavior of their peers, and the leader can rely on members to perform—consistently.

Adjourning

The adjourning stage happens when the group has achieved its original purpose or when the time allotted for the group activity has run out. In AmeriCorps programs, this is usually at the end of the project year when members are nearly finished with their service and will soon be moving on to new employment or to new educational and/or service opportunities. Not surprisingly, high-performing teams have a tough time saying goodbye. Members who have learned how to make things happen out of the collective resources and skills of the group must now turn their attention to planning their individual future endeavors. Many feel disoriented and need the group leader's assistance as they begin their transition to "life after AmeriCorps." More than anything, members need opportunities to celebrate their accomplishments and personal growth, to reflect on and share their emotions concerning what the group has meant to them, and to express their hopes and fears about the future.

It is important to note that this group development model is not necessarily linear. A group may form and norm before moving into serious storming. Or a group may go back and forth between storming and norming for some time before they firmly arrive at the performing stage. Use the model as a general guide for understanding what members may need from their leader and from each other at given points during the program cycle.

The chart on the following pages summarizes several typical actions a leader may take at each of the four stages.

Forming-Storming-Norming-Performing-Adjourning

What You Do as Team Leader

☑ Provide structure by holding regular meetings and clarifying roles and tasks

☑ Encourage participation by all, domination by none

☑ Share all relevant information

☑ Encourage members to direct questions to you and to each other

☑ Help members to learn about other members' areas of expertise and preferred ways of working

☑ Establish a norm that supports the expression of different viewpoints

☑ Engage in joint problem solving

☑ Encourage members to state how they feel, as well as what they think, when they have an obvious concern about an issue

☑ Discuss the group's decision-making process and share decision-making responsibility appropriately

☑ Provide needed resources to the extent possible and when it is not possible, explain why.

☑ Talk openly about your issues and concerns

☑ Request and give both positive and (constructive) negative feedback in the group

☑ Rotate the management of meetings, using members as facilitators, process observers, etc. (see Meeting Management in Chapter 4)

Forming

Storming

Norming

Performing

☑ Make consensus decisions on challenging problems

☑ Delegate as much as possible

☑ Jointly set challenging goals

☑ Look for new opportunities to increase the group's scope, and stretch members' talents

☑ Appreciate members' contributions

☑ Develop members to their fullest potential through task assignments and feedback

☑ Help members avoid stagnation and burnout

☑ Question assumptions and traditional ways of behaving

☑ Develop mechanisms for on-going self-assessment

Adjourning

☑ Provide opportunities for members to reflect on and assess their achievements and positive personal change and growth

☑ Provide plenty of opportunities for celebrating success

☑ Help members learn to say goodbye and feel comfortable offering long-distance (or across-town) support after they have said goodbye

☑ Assist members in dealing with any unfinished business

☑ Help members set goals and make timely plans for their post-AmeriCorps lives

☑ Ensure that members have access to resources that will help them make the transition

Added Insights

In many (if not most) cases, your team "begins" when you come together for pre-service orientation or training. You and your members participate in structured activities that focus on role clarification, problem solving, and communication. It is important to integrate this training into daily tasks and continue meeting regularly once your project is in full swing.

During the forming stage, it's possible to overstructure your team to the point of dampening member morale. If guidelines and rules are too strict, members may think you don't trust them or may feel they're not capable.

As you might guess, the storming stage is difficult for the team and the leader. People have very different ideas about how much conflict is "okay"—and even desirable—in teamwork. Many feel a sense of risk when talking about sensitive issues. The leader's role is particularly important in setting a norm that says different viewpoints are not only acceptable but necessary in coming up with creative solutions.

In the norming stage, a team may be so cohesive that its members have trouble relating to others outside the team. For example, your crew members may become so "tight" with each other that they begin to compete against other crews or have trouble relating to community partners. Another tendency during the norming stage is for some members to feel so comfortable in a particular role that they resist changes in assignments for the next project. Rotating members in and out of leadership roles, as well as providing members with cross-training, will help to address these issues.

When teams reach the performing stage, they can pretty much manage themselves. They are successful and proud of it. Sometimes though, high performing teams push too hard and overreach and may risk burnout. In such cases, your role is to help team members keep their work in perspective and in balance with their personal lives.

In the final stage, adjourning, members may need extra encouragement to reflect meaningfully on the group experience. Many people would prefer to ignore the fact that the end is coming in an attempt to avoid feelings of loss and sadness. This is not the time for the group leader to fade away! At this stage the leader needs to be more active than ever in helping members embrace change.

Back to our friend, Jamal...

What stage of group development do you think Jamal's crew is in?

What are some specific actions Jamal can take to help his team develop further?

Just do it.
(Then be sure to talk about it.)

Facilitating Team-Building Activities

Sometimes, during the course of team building, you may want
to use structured games and other activities to help your group
address a particular issue. For example, if group members are
having trouble giving each other constructive feedback, role
playing may give them a better understanding of how to do it.
(See the section on team building in the Suggested Reading List,
Appendix A, for types of structured activities.) When using
structured exercises like role playing (or case studies, etc.), keep
in mind that "processing" the activity afterwards can be as
important a learning opportunity as the activity itself.

> No team-building activity can be successful until it has
> been "processed" by the group. Team members must have
> a chance to discuss what happened and what they learned.

A Few Processing Questions to Get You Started

What are your observations about...?
Where did you have difficulties?
What surprised you?
What worked?
What strategies were used?
What were turning points?
How does what you said relate to...or differ from...?
What would have been a different way of looking at...?
What are some similarities you notice in what people have said?
What were your reactions?
How did you feel about...?

Making Decisions in Groups

Why You Do It

In many small groups, the decision-making process is never defined. The result is that the person with the most formal authority (i.e., the supervisor) makes the decisions after considering the opinions and politics of the group. In cases where the decision does not require a high level of commitment from members, this autocratic approach will probably work. If, on the other hand, the issue is important to the group, you need their support in order to move forward. In these cases, voting or consensus building are more appropriate options. In general, the more commitment or agreement an issue requires, the more difficult the process is to achieve it. When less commitment is required, and less thorough analysis, the group naturally assumes less responsibility for the outcome. As leader, you will avoid conflict and confusion if you clarify with your group exactly how decisions will be made during a meeting or work project. Your members will also acquire a valuable life skill if you help them learn how to reach consensus on important and/or difficult problems.

How You Do It

The four most common types of decisions are autocratic, democratic, consensual, and unanimous.

Autocratic—The decision is made by one individual (usually the supervisor or person in charge) or by a small group.

Democratic—Every one gets a vote, and the option with the most votes wins. Some groups use a simple majority (51%); others require a two-thirds majority. Many group decisions are made by voting.

Consensual—All team members commit to support the decision at hand, though some may not fully agree with it. Those with
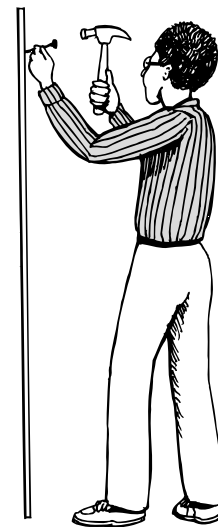
*"Courage happens
when people unite."*

Anonymous

reservations at least feel they are not compromising their ethics, values, or interests by joining in the consensus.

Unanimous—Everyone agrees that the best possible solution has been reached. You will probably encounter few problems that are worth the time required to achieve unanimity. Consensus is more common.

Decision Making— A Final Note on Consensus

When you are choosing which decision-making approach to use in a particular situation, keep in mind that consensus requires considerable effort and time on the part of the leader and the group members. It is most appropriate in situations where

☑ the group has clear authority to make and implement the decision and

☑ there is a need for total commitment on the part of the entire group.

For example, a crew working on a highly visible and controversial park restoration project may need to reach agreement by consensus on how they will handle hostile remarks from passers-by.

You and your team will need to make consensus decisions and, at least in the beginning, it probably won't be easy.

In your tool kit, the article "Facilitating for Consensus" explains in depth how to facilitate reaching consensus in a group. Use it as a resource and guide when you are preparing to work through an important decision with your members.

REFERENCES
Pages 10–14 aadapted from: *Tips for Teens*, by William Belgard, Kimball Fisher, and Steven Rayner, 1995.

Pages 18–20 adapted from: "Developing High Performing Teams," by Jane Moosbruker, in *Managing in the Age of Change*, pp. 46–55, New York: NTL/Irwin Professional Publishing, 1995.

It's a Wrap

Jamal Takes Action With His Team

Jamal calls Betty for some counsel on working with his crew. After listening for a while, Betty says it sounds to her as though Jamal's group is in the "storming" stage of their development process. She tells Jamal he is probably the best one to determine specific actions, but she offers this general suggestion: that Jamal try to spend as much time as possible with the crew — not do everything for them, but with them. Jamal thinks Betty is probably right, and he begins making specific plans of his own for addressing some of the crew's most pressing problems.

First Jamal realizes he has a tendency to praise individuals (and even individual cliques) more often than the group as a whole. He decides to make a conscious effort to balance the two and notices an immediate positive effect on the team. One of the first things he does is praise the total group's performance in handling Linda's accident.

Next, Jamal decides to address the issue of conduct during meetings. Using an activity he found in a team-building book, he has the group review and modify their original working norms. The norms are posted in the main meeting room, and Jamal has given every member an individual copy. He sets aside the last 15 minutes on the weekly meeting agenda for the group to discuss how well they are respecting the norms. He continues to use this time to get members to talk about their group process (e.g., Did everyone participate during the meeting? Did anyone dominate the floor too long? Did the group finish the agenda? and so on). Jamal decides to keep the issue of punctuality separate from group norms. He formalizes a rule for it and enforces it consistently and fairly. Once he's done this, the crew seems almost relieved.

The third issue Jamal decides to tackle is cliques. He thinks it would be best for the members to address this as a team. He and the crew jointly agree to criteria for selecting and rotating the small work teams each week. Members agree to let Jamal decide how many people should be assigned to each work team. Jamal pushes for this because he wants to break the team of its habit of always dividing into groups of three, no matter what the task required. The work groups are now selected every Friday. Before members disperse for the weekend, they discuss their specific responsibilities and goals for the upcoming week. If the project activities are complicated or require a lot of coordination, the members write out their responsibilities in the form of an action plan.

Jamal wants to build on the enthusiasm and sense of common purpose the crew felt when

they got their uniforms, so he asks the project director to lead the team in a structured activity for creating a mission statement. Jamal doesn't feel confident enough in his facilitation skills to do this alone. Unfortunately, the project director isn't "in touch" with the group, and the activity falls flat. Both Jamal and the director realize they didn't work together enough beforehand. Jamal knows he needs to do something else to follow up, but he'll wait awhile.

Jamal attends a one-day workshop in managing diversity. When he returns, he shares his learning and materials with the crew. The crew members are so impressed with Jamal's enthusiasm and concern for the issues, they ask him to repeat the workshop with them, or to get the trainers to work with them directly. Jamal opts for the latter, and the training is scheduled for the end of the month.

The final issue Jamal decides to address is getting team members to the point where they can work without his constant direction. He is still thinking about the conference he wants to attend. Maybe he can use this opportunity to address the larger issue of moving his team more fully into the norming stage, hoping for high performance as an eventual outcome. He carefully presents the weekly crew leader idea to the group to test their interest in it.

Most of the members think it's "just the thing they need." Predictably, a couple of people are skeptical (though still curious). Jamal uses both the project director and Betty as resources to work out a process for addressing the issue. He wants members to have direct input on developing the team leader model, and he hopes to be able to build consensus around a few issues (e.g., what guidelines the crew leader will follow, how the crew leader will interface with Jamal and the project director, what the parameters of the position will be, etc.).

Both Jamal and the project director make it clear to the members what their overall goals and expectations are, but they let the group implement their own ideas. Jamal sets aside an afternoon for the group to work on the crew leader model. It takes that much time and then some. The group creates the position, decides on an implementation date, and makes assignments for the first three weeks. Ironically, the group chooses Linda as their first weekly leader. Linda is surprised and flattered and takes the assignment seriously. This gives her a chance to demonstrate her best skills, which in turn generates praise from the group. Linda's whole attitude seems to be changing. The crew will be able to test out the model over the next couple of weeks before Jamal's travel dates come up. He is hopeful that by then he will feel comfortable leaving.

Lessons From Geese

Fact 1:

As each goose flaps its wings, it creates an "uplift" for the birds that follow. By flying in "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71 percent greater flying range than if each bird flew alone.

Lesson:

People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are traveling on the strength—i.e., the "uplift"—of the group.

Fact 2:

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of flying alone. It quickly moves back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front of it.

Lesson:

If we have as much sense as a goose, we stay in formation with those headed where we want to go. We are willing to accept their help, and give our help to others.

Fact 3:

When the lead goose tires, it rotates back into the formation, and another goose flies to the point position.

Lesson:

It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership. Like geese, people are dependent on each other's skills, capabilities, and unique gifts, talents, and resources.

Fact 4:

Geese flying in formation honk to encourage those in front to keep up their speed.

Lesson:

We need to make sure our "honking" is encouraging. In groups where there is encouragement—where members stand by their heart or core values and encourage the heart and core of others—the production is greater.

Fact 5:

When a goose gets sick, wounded, or shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow it down to help or protect it. They stay with it until it dies or is able to fly again. Then they launch out with another formation or catch up with the flock.

Lesson:

If we have as much sense as geese, we will stand by each other in difficult times.

The next time you see a formation of geese, remember that it is a reward, a challenge, and a privilege to be a contributing member of a team.

[Source: A speech given by Angeles Arrien at the 1991 Organizational Development Network, based on the work of Milton Olson.]

Characteristics of an Effective Team

Effective Team Members

1. The team members share a sense of purpose or common goals, and each team member is willing to work toward achieving these goals.

2. The team is aware of, and interested in, its own processes and norms.

3. The team identifies its own resources and uses them, depending on its needs. The team willingly accepts the influence and leadership of the members whose resources are relevant to the immediate task.

4. The team members continually try to listen to and clarify what is being said and show interest in what others say and feel.

5. Differences of opinion are encouraged and freely expressed. The team does not demand narrow conformity or adherence to formats that inhibit freedom of movement and expression.

6. The team is willing to acknowledge conflict and focus on it until it is resolved or managed in a way that does not reduce the effectiveness of those involved.

7. The team puts its energy into problem solving rather than allowing its energy to be drained by interpersonal issues or competitive struggles.

8. Roles are balanced and shared to accomplish tasks and improve team cohesion and morale.

9. To encourage risk taking and creativity, mistakes are treated as opportunities to learn rather than reasons for punishment.

10. The team is responsive to the changing needs of its members and to its external environment.

11. Team members are committed to periodically evaluating the team's performance.

12. The team is attractive to its members, who identify with it and consider it a source of both professional and personal growth.

13. Developing a climate of trust is recognized as crucial in the development of all of the above characteristics.

[Adapted from: *Team Building as Group Development*, by Philip G. Hanson and Bernard Lubin, Organizational Development Journal, Spring, 1986.]

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Characteristics of an Effective Team

Effective Team Leaders

1. Communicate
2. Are open, honest, and fair
3. Make decisions with input from others
4. Act consistently
5. Give the team members the information they need to do their jobs
6. Set goals and emphasize them
7. Keep focused through follow up
8. Listen to feedback and ask questions
9. Show loyalty to the company and to the team members
10. Create an atmosphere of growth
11. Are visible
12. Give praise and recognition
13. Criticize constructively and address problems
14. Develop plans
15. Share their mission and goals
16. Display tolerance and flexibility
17. Demonstrate assertiveness
18. Exhibit a willingness to change
19. Treat team members with respect
20. Make themselves available and accessible
21. Want to take charge
22. Accept ownership for team decisions
23. Set guidelines for how team members are to treat one another
24. Recognize, celebrate, and effectively utilize the uniqueness of each team member

[Adapted from: *Teamwork: We Have Met the Enemy and They Are Us*, by M.M. Starcevich and S.J. Stowell, Bartlesville, OK: The Center for Management and Organization Effectiveness, 1990.]

Characteristics of an Effective Team

Effective Team Members

1. Support the team leader
2. Help the team leader to succeed
3. Ensure that all viewpoints are explored
4. Express opinions, both for and against
5. Compliment the team leader on team efforts
6. Provide open, honest, and accurate information
7. Support, protect, and defend both the team and the team leader
8. Act in a positive and constructive manner
9. Provide appropriate feedback
10. Understand personal and team roles
11. Accept ownership for team decisions
12. Recognize that each member serves as a team leader
13. Balance appropriate levels of participation
14. Participate voluntarily
15. Maintain confidentiality
16. Show loyalty to the company, the team leader, and the team

17. View criticism as an opportunity to learn
18. State problems, along with alternative solutions and options
19. Give praise and recognition when warranted
20. Operate within the parameters of team rules
21. Privately confront the team leader when his or her behavior is not helping the team
22. Share ideas freely and enthusiastically
23. Encourage others to express their ideas fully
24. Ask one another for opinions and listen to them
25. Criticize ideas, not people
26. Avoid disruptive behavior, such as side conversations and inside jokes
27. Avoid defensiveness when fellow team members disagree with their ideas
28. Attend meetings regularly and promptly

[Items 1 through 20 adapted from *Teamwork: We Have Met the Enemy and They Are Us* (pp. 118–119), by M.M. Starcevich and S.J. Stowell, 1990; items 21 through 28 adapted from *How to Train and Lead a Quality Circle*, by R.G. James and A.J. Elkins, 1983, San Diego, CA: University Associates.]

Characteristics of an Effective Team

Symptoms of Team Problems

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SYMPTOM	DESCRIPTION	RESULT
Backbiting and complaining	Members of the team openly complain about and find fault with one another	Control over team members is lost because members are not clear about standards
Suspecting a "spy"	Members of the team suspect and distrust new members	New members have difficulty breaking into the established team
Two coalitions	The team has two factions, one of which has very little influence or power	The team is not cohesive
Personal stress	Stress shows in the team members in the form of "blowing up" and physical symptoms	Team members feel threatened and become less efficient and more dissatisfied
Combative behavior	Team members resort to yelling and combative behavior, playing the devil's advocate	Team members express conflict through the use of threats, attacks, and so on
Too much detail	Team members scrutinize every detail and check on all aspects of minor and major decisions	Team members distrust one another and fear being penalized for errors
Too much time	Too much time is spent on decisions on minor issues brought to the leadership	Team members feel a lack of trust directly related to team problem solving
Shifting and changing decisions	Decisions are often changed shortly after being made	Team members are not willing to commit the team to a unified course of action

[Adapted from: *Building Productive Teams* (p. 101), by G.H. Varney, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989.]

A Few Things to Watch for
(when observing a team's process)

Communication

Who talks to whom?
Who is dominant?
Who is quiet?
How concise and clear is the communication?

Leadership

How does the leadership emerge?
Who are the formal leaders?
Who are the informal leaders?

Decision making

Dictatorial?
Voting?
Consensus?
What kind of "games" are being played?

Group style

Aggressive?
Passive?
Assertive?

Conflict management

How does the team handle differences in
Age?
Sex?
Sexual preference?
Race?
Experience?
Expertise?
Education?
Opinion?

A Dozen Tips for Team Building

Tip 1
Be patient and caring with your team.

Teams are like families. They are composed of individuals who have their own special skills, perspectives, and challenges. Remember to be patient and caring with each other as you work through your problems together. Be supportive. Reduce status markers that make some team members seem more important than others. Eliminate inappropriate titles, special treatments, or privileges. Treat everyone fairly. You'll measure your accomplishments in a series of small improvements, often feeling as though you take three steps forward and then two steps back, seemingly losing hard-won ground. More often than not, it is simple perseverance that determines the difference between the winners and the losers. No one ever said teams are easy. But they are usually better than the alternatives.

Tip 2
Assume the best about people.

You will find that very few problems are caused intentionally by carelessness or deviousness. Sometimes, in our frustration, we assume that others we work with are lazy, mean, or stupid. This is counterproductive. Comments about how one group always causes problems, or how only project coordinators are supposed to make decisions, or how the community partners are trying to make things difficult are not likely to improve things and get in the way of teamwork. They cause people to defend their points of view and fight to win for "their side." They make it hard to sit down and work things out together. Good problem solving has to start from a foundation of mutual trust and a common desire to improve. Even though you may encounter a few malicious people, the vast majority share the common goal of wanting their teams to succeed. Effective teams rise above their differences and focus instead on common ground. Assume that the problems you see were caused by good people doing the best they could with the information, systems, and skills they had at the time. Then work to improve their information, systems, and skills.

Tip 3
Fix the problem, don't fix the blame.

Experience shows that placing blame doesn't solve problems; it just causes them to go underground. When people believe that discussing problems will cause them embarrassment or have a negative effect on their job status, they will not discuss the problem. Steady improvement requires open and honest communication. The key is to avoid blaming and focus instead on solving the problem.

Tip 4
Focus on behavior, not attitude.

You can't change other people's personalities and attitudes. But together, you can help each other demonstrate effective behaviors. Remember this when working with others and giving them feedback. Be specific and focus on the real things people say and do. Don't say, "You make me mad," or "You're lazy." There is nothing people can do in response to such comments. Instead say, "When you talk to people about my work performance without speaking to me about it first it makes me angry," or "When you leave without cleaning up your project area, that means I have to do the work you left and my work too." These comments help people know what they can do to make an improvement and set the stage for working through the issue.

Tip 5
Establish regular, effective team meetings.

Most team problems come from miscommunication. Establish a regular time and place for team meetings. Use these meeting times to pass along information, clarify who is supposed to do what, update each other on your assignments, check progress toward your goals, and take some time to talk with each other. Use information systems that provide you with up-to-date job information. Create a team climate that fosters frequent, open, and honest discussion where people can share their feelings and experiences without fear.

Tip 6
Focus on the goal, not the obstacles.

Although your team must learn how to resolve problems successfully, avoid getting caught in an endless downward spiral of problem solving. Just as there are obstacles on the track in a high-hurdle race, there are problems in the way of effective team-based operations. Staying too focused on an individual hurdle can make you lose the race. Too much focus on problems can be discouraging, depressing, and distracting. Teams keep motivation high by focusing on the goal, not by draining their enthusiasm in an endless series of difficulties. Effective teams are purpose oriented rather than problem oriented. They renew their energy and commitment by focusing on their mission and not allowing their normal day-to-day frustrations slow them down. They celebrate their victories, encourage each other, and maintain their team spirit by reminding themselves about the overall race, even when all they can see ahead is a seemingly endless series of hurdles.

A Dozen Tips for Team Building

Tip 7
Involve the right people in problem solving.

People are most committed to implementing ideas that they participate in developing. Remember this when you decide who should be involved in solving team problems. Does this mean that every problem needs to be solved by the whole team? No. Many can and should be delegated to a subgroup, individual, or team leader.

Tip 8
Don't use up all your energy on unsolvable problems.

Serious problems should be resolved immediately before they grow into monumental issues requiring extreme measures. Some problems, however, can't be resolved at all, and continual discussion will aggravate them and distract your team from "running the race" the best they can. Some problems are best ignored and will resolve themselves over time. Only a skillful and well-trained team will know the best course of action. A good team leader coaches the team through these issues successfully.

Tip 9
Develop the skills and discipline of effective problem solving.

Team problem solving is a skill. The tips in this ready reference will not be much help to your team if you haven't properly diagnosed the problem or if you ignore other elements of effective problem solving. Don't worry if you find, as most teams do, that these methods seem a little awkward at first. As your team matures and you regularly practice using these methods, you will find that they feel more natural. Just keep at it.

Tip 10
Know your roles, purpose, boundaries, and resources.

Many problems result from a lack of clarity about what you are supposed to do and how much help you will get to do it. Strive to understand your task as a team and as a team member or team leader. Understand your new roles and responsibilities. Team-based organizations have fundamentally different assignments. If you don't understand these roles, get some help from your team leader or project coordinator.

Understanding these things will keep you focused on results and customers, not on activities and busy work. And once that is clear in your mind, get agreements from the appropriate people about your purpose. Don't assume that, if other people don't say anything, they agree with you. Verbalize agreements to ensure mutual understanding. Good questions to ask when you are developing these performance agreements

A Dozen Tips for Team Building

are: How will we know if we have successfully completed this work? and What time, money, and other constraints are we working with?"

Tip 11
Focus on results.

Remember to stay focused on results. Don't get off track. Avoid the temptation to get swept up in urgent day-to-day demands. It is easy to get carried away by activities or bound up in programs, red tape, and bureaucracy that don't actually produce results. Keep thinking about your goals. Create a solid information system that will tell you regularly how you are achieving results. Post this information where people can see it and use it to make better team decisions. Measure key result areas and make sure you are getting good results in quality, cost, responsiveness, timeliness, or whatever

your team and team leader agree are the overarching purposes of your organization.

Tip 12
Remember that the team is not an end in itself.

Teams are a means to accomplishing something, not an end in themselves. Instead of measuring how many teams you have, measure your results. Instead of asking how to make things more comfortable for the team, ask how to deliver better service to the customer. If your team becomes too inwardly focused, it will not survive. It doesn't matter how good your team is if you don't have products and services that customers value and meet their needs. Team members will be happier and many team problems will dissolve if your operation is successful. People like to be on a winning team.

[Adapted from: *Tips for Teams*, by William Belgard, Kimball Fisher, and Steven Rayner, 1995.]

Working With a Diverse Team—A Few Tips

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Tip 1
Create Diversity.

Create diversity in your team (i.e., work to ensure a mix of backgrounds in terms of race, gender, culture, age, education, physical ability, job function, etc.). It is natural that we are most comfortable around people who are like us—they validate our point of view. We know how to act and what to expect, and we usually avoid offensive behavior. But teams composed of people with the same background are usually not effective over time. They look at problems the same way and usually come up with the same ideas over and over again. Diversity in a team creates fresh perspectives and fosters creativity and innovation. But this requires that we respect people who are different from us.

Tip 2
Encourage Different Ideas.

Respect ideas that are different from yours. Make a personal commitment not to judge new ideas immediately but to try to understand and build on those ideas. You can make a conscious decision to hold back from immediately evaluating ideas and can change your responses to new concepts. You will not only be more open and receptive to new thoughts and perspectives but will also

be a wonderful example to other members of the team.

Tip 3
Raise Awareness.

Do some diversity awareness-raising activities. Appreciating diversity is sometimes difficult when people have never experienced different backgrounds, traditions, values, and approaches—for example, if they have never had a friend of another faith or cultural background.

Tip 4
Confront Issues—NOW.

Confront diversity problems immediately. Even though allowing an occasional comment may seem like the best approach (we don't want to make a mountain out of a molehill), any tolerance of closed thinking will send a strong signal to the team that it is acceptable to shut out others based on bias and prejudice. It is never inappropriate to speak out in support of new and different ideas or to confront subtle biases. Race, gender, age, religious, or cultural jokes are never appropriate in a team setting, even when they have nothing to do with anyone on the team. In confronting these biases you might say something like:

Working With a Diverse Team—A Few Tips

Simon, I know your comment about Dana not working on her Sabbath wasn't intended to hurt her, but her religious commitments are as important to her as yours are to you. Let's try to respect each other's cultures and values—it's what makes our team strong and successful.

Tip 5
Develop Commonalities.

Create common ground. Have diversity in team composition, but share common team values as a way to resolve conflicts and focus on the same overall goals. Each team member must be able to support and commit to the values of the work and the team. These are the fundamentals behind all the decisions and actions that occur throughout the course of doing projects. Use the following guidelines to develop positive team values:

■ Do what is right.
■ Do it together.
■ Do what helps others.
■ Do what makes sense.

[Adapted from: *Tips for Teams*, by William Belgard, Kimball Fisher, and Steven Rayner, 1995.]

Disruptive Group Situations

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In a group environment, members may exhibit certain common types of behavior that can be disruptive or harmful to the group. Not all of them will occur in your group—in fact, maybe none of them. However, you should be prepared to handle any situation. Below are some examples of such behavior and suggested ways of dealing with them.

1. Can't get group started
There is a lot of fooling around and people are wandering. Remind them it's their group, and they are wasting time. Ask, "Can we get started?"

2. Group is quiet or unresponsive
A quiet period in the group is not always something negative; however, if it lasts for an extensive period of time and becomes uncomfortable, then it may be a good idea to directly address the situation by saying something like, "The group seems quiet now." Wait for a response; if there is none, ask, "Why do you think we are being so quiet?"

3. Group lacks seriousness
Lack of seriousness can be a problem if it occurs at the wrong time. Try pointing out the problem and getting feedback from the group by saying, "Some of us don't appear to be taking this seriously. What seems to be the problem?"

4. Everyone talks at once
Everyone is talking at the same time. Simply remind the group of the ground rules by saying something like, "Let's remember our ground rules and listen while others are talking. We all have something important to say, but if we all talk at once we may miss something."

5. Side conversations
Side conversations disrupt the group and cause members to lose focus. To handle this situation, you can say, "There are some side conversations going on and we're losing focus. Let's stay on target." If the conversations continue, it may be a good idea to confront the members directly during the group. If at all possible, however, try talking to them outside the group and sitting between them for the next meeting.

6. Group is off the subject
If the discussion has veered off the subject but is serving a purpose, you may want to let it go or "go with the flow," so to speak. However, if the group is totally off track and the discussion is not serving a worthwhile purpose, try saying, "This is interesting, but we've gotten off the subject. Can we get back on track?"

Disruptive Group Situations

7. Cliques

When cliques form, it's best to talk individually to the group members involved, outside the group. Let them know it's great they are getting to know that person or those persons and encourage them to get to know others. Do more activities in the group that will help them to mingle and get to know others better.

8. Tension

If tension arises in the group and you can't figure out any reason for it, and there are no particular members involved, you may want to address the group directly by saying, "There seems to be some tension in the group. Why do you think that is?" If the tension can be traced to a few particular members, however, it's best to talk to them about it outside the group.

9. Hot debate

When discussion gets too heated, it's best to remind the group of the ground rules. Try saying, "We aren't communicating right now. This seems to be a very controversial subject, and I'm sure everyone has something important to say, so let's give everyone a chance. Remember—listen to others and no negative statements. We should also support each other. That does not mean you have to agree, but let's at least respect each other's opinions."

10. War between two or more members of the group

When two or more members of the group don't seem to be getting along, it should be handled as soon as possible outside the group. If this situation is not checked, it will tear the group apart. If it feels right, and you choose to broach the subject in group, you might say, "I'm sensing some tension between some of us. Can we talk about this?"

11. The quiet person

Remember that each group member has the right to pass; however, if one person is being unusually quiet you may try addressing a question directly to them, such as, "How about you, Jane?"

12. The constant talker

When it becomes obvious that one group member is always dominating the conversation, you should say to that person, "We'd like to hear what you have to say, but let's give everyone a chance."

13. Members interrupting each other

When group members interrupt each other, remind them of the ground rules and say, "John was sharing, let's let him finish." Remember to go back and address the issue of the person who interrupted.

Disruptive Group Situations

14. The reluctant member

A group member who doesn't want to be there is a problem, especially if the person is open or even hostile about it. Try involving that person in a friendly and supportive way. Most of the behavior resulting from the problem can be dealt with through the ground rules. If the behavior continues, however, you may need to talk with the person outside the group. Usually, the group itself will take care of the problem as they realize that, if they don't, it may tear the group apart.

15. Other issues

Other member issues may crop up, such as an incessant comic, a member with a crush on you, etc. These issues are best dealt with outside the group. The person involved often needs special attention or extra time.

Stages of Group Development

GROUP STAGES	INTER-PERSONAL ISSUES	GROUP BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS	GROUP TASKS/ ISSUES	LEADERSHIP ISSUES
Forming	Inclusion	Awareness of similarities; anger and frustration; superficiality and politeness; ambiguity and confusion	Membership definition; similarities and differences; orientation and introductions	Dependence
Storming	Control	Establishment of operating rules; attempt to create order; attacks on leader; emotional response to task demands	Decision-making process; power and influence	Counter-dependence
Norming	Affection	Cohesion; negotiation	Functional relationships	Inter-dependence
Performing		Growth, insight, and collaboration	Productivity	
Adjourning	Grieving and farewells	Sadness and closure	Conclusion and celebration	Parting

Group Synergy

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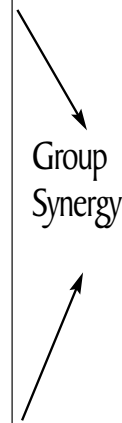
[Adapted from: "The Group: A Cycle from Birth to Death," by Richard C. Weber in *Reading Book for Human Relations Training,* NTL Institute, 1982.]

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Facilitation skills are critical for trainers and group facilitators. They are essential tools to ensure active participation both during training sessions and with work groups. Facilitation skills include the following:

Asking Questions

The facilitator asks open-ended, clarifying, and, occasionally, closed questions to guide the discussion and to expand both the facilitator's and the participants' understanding of the subject being discussed. Open-ended questions usually begin with what, how, when, where and are posed in such a way that the participants cannot answer yes or no, but must expand the base of information. Clarifying questions are posed to help the facilitator clarify the situation and often begin with which, why, do you mean to say..., etc. Closed questions can be answered with a yes or no and are asked to get specific information.

Paraphrasing

The facilitator, using her or his own words, interprets what the participant is saying and how the participant is feeling. The purpose of paraphrasing is to determine if the facilitator understands what the speaker is trying to get across as well as the affective (emotional) aspect of what is being shared. This gives the speaker the opportunity to acknowledge the listener's understanding or to correct it. It also clarifies what has been said for other participants.

Summarizing

The facilitator, at key moments during the course of the training session or meeting, identifies the principal elements or details of the discussion up to that point. The purpose of summarizing is to end one phase of the discussion and either terminate the session or move on to the next phase. Summarizing is valuable in controlling the pace of a session or meeting and keeping the discussion on track.

Encouraging

The facilitator—aware that certain types of behaviors can be interpreted as encouraging and certain others as discouraging—encourages the speaker to say more about the situation through facial expressions, body language, and comments.

Facilitating for Consensus

Problem-solving work groups are composed of people who are close to the problem. In general, these groups have two purposes. First, they attempt to analyze problems and generate creative solutions. Second, they try to build understanding on the issues and secure agreement to carry out the solutions that the group develops.

Facilitating groups to achieve these two purposes may seem like a simple process. Unfortunately, it's not. To facilitate problem-solving work groups well involves some fairly refined skills. In this chapter, we'll discuss some pre-event issues you should consider, and offer guidelines and specific techniques you can use to help groups reach sound decisions.

Considerations Before the Event

As a facilitator, you should begin with a very clear understanding of the goals of the problem-solving group. Identify the outcomes that would make the situation better. This does not mean that you must determine exact solutions or agreements in advance. But, you need to be clear about problems the group needs to analyze and the kinds of solutions that should be developed.

A clear understanding of the issues will help you determine what key decisions must be made. It will also enable you to determine, during the meeting or event, whether the group's discussion is generally on target or whether it is focused too much on less important issues. When you think something is important, it's critical to push the group to make certain they have examined all aspects of the issue or to test rigorously for agreement. When you think something is less important, you need to help the group move on. Your ability to make these facilitation decisions rests on how well you understand the issues under consideration.

On the other hand, you can also know "too much" about the problem area, and you can get in the way of group progress or stop it altogether. To be effective, you need to be honestly aware of your own biases about the issues. Beware of the facilitator who says, "Oh, I'm neutral on this issue" or "I'm an objective party here." There is no such thing. Be aware of your own biases about issues or people so you can adjust for them. As the facilitator, you have power during a meeting because you know both the process and the content. You can negate the group's effectiveness or ensure that solutions will not work.

Facilitating Decisions During a Meeting

Keeping Focused

When moving a group toward a decision, the first requirement is to keep the group's attention focused on common purposes. There are several ways to do this.

■ Start the meeting by sharing or reaffirming common purposes, making sure everyone is clear about them and getting agreement.

■ When you see the group drift off target, bring them back to the central purpose. (For example, say, "What we are talking about now is [x] and our purpose here today is [y]; let's make sure [x] is related to [y], or move back to the main topic.")

■ Relate key points and summaries to the purpose. (For example, you could say, "We have explored these two aspects of the problem. If we can agree on an approach to dealing with these aspects, we'll achieve one of the purposes here today—[x].")

■ Restate the purpose to help group members who are having a prolonged disagreement. (For example, you could say, "Let me interrupt here for a second. We all need to remember that we are here to address {the purpose}, which is affecting all of us.")

How much you call attention to the common purpose will depend on the length of the meeting, how many people are involved, the working style of the group, and the complexity of the purpose.

Limiting Discussion

To be an effective facilitator you need a second key characteristic: the ability to gauge when the group has talked about something "just enough." Too much discussion causes the group to lose interest and feel that they are not using their time productively. Too little may result in an unsatisfactory solution—or not enough group commitment to carry out the solution successfully.

Determining when a group has reached the "just enough" point is not an exact science. However, there are some behavioral signs that it's time to push the group toward a decision.

■ Points or arguments begin to get repeated, and no new information or ideas are developed. You get the sense that people are trying to convince each other by talking louder or being repetitive.

■ Individuals in the group have all had a reasonable opportunity to participate in the discussion. If you have any doubts, ask someone who has been silent if they have anything to add.

■ You notice that while there was participation by everyone at the outset of

the discussion only two or three people still appear to be interested. The best way to find out what's happening is to ask, "Have we finished examining this issue?" or "It seems like most of us are ready to move on. Does anyone have a concluding point before we do?"

Any of these actions will work well, no matter what happens. If the group is ready to move on, the members will breathe a sigh of relief and plunge ahead. If they aren't, they will recognize it and make a conscious decision to continue deliberating about an issue.

Then there are time constraints to consider. It is the facilitator's job to note the amount of time remaining for the meeting and assess this against progress made toward achieving goals and making appropriate decisions. Even if things are not finished to a satisfactory degree, even if you could use more time, it may sometimes be necessary to move on in order to accomplish the overall purpose.

In either case, you have carried out an appropriate part of your role—keeping the group conscious of process and time and continuing to make progress toward achieving the group purpose.

Achieving Consensus

At certain key times during the meeting, you'll help the group reach decisions through consensus. These decisions should be directly related to the purpose of the meeting and should come after the group has had a reasonable amount of time to discuss the issue. At that point, you can take the following actions.

■ Ask the group, "Are we at a point where we can make a decision about this issue (or recommendation, or action item)?" If so, record a clear statement of that decision. If not, ask, "Keeping aware of our time limits, what do we have to do to arrive at a decision?"

■ Summarize the decision. "Here is the decision I hear us moving toward. Correct me if I've misstated it or left something out." Ask the group members if they all agree with this decision. Look around to see if every person has nodded or said yes.

■ When reaching consensus is getting a little tougher, take action to help people modify their position enough to achieve what might be called a "real world" consensus. Here are some examples of what you might say in these instances.

"Do you agree that this is a decision or solution that you can support or carry out?" Better yet...

Facilitating for Consensus

"Do you agree that this is the best solution that we can develop collectively?" Or...

"Based on this discussion and our need to take action, can you agree to this as a practical solution—perhaps one that is not ideal and not exactly what you want, but nonetheless achievable." Or...

"Remembering that we all have to keep our common purposes in mind, do you agree that this is the best action we can jointly take?"

These steps may help the group achieve consensus, however grudgingly. If you get agreement, acknowledge it, summarize key points, identify actions, record the results, and move on. If you do not get consensus, what happens? If people simply disagree, what can you do?

Facilitating Disagreement

As a facilitator, you need to manage disagreement openly and positively. Out of disagreement will often emerge creative solutions and agreements that people will carry out with energy. However, this creativity and energy cannot happen if disagreements are pushed under the table or if they get out of hand and dominate the group proceedings. Here are some things you can do to be a positive force in facilitating disagreements:

- Summarize major points of disagreement or key alternatives. Ask if all have been able to contribute their views and query the group to see if all major points have been discussed.

- Go around and ask each person to recommend a decision. If five of eight people agree, ask the three who did not the following questions:

  "What would it take to change your mind?"

  "Now that we have clearly heard each of our positions, what would it take to get consensus on this problem?"

  "What are the areas of disagreement and are they resolvable?"

Whatever questions you use, you may then need to facilitate a discussion to sort out the answer.

- Another approach is to ask group members to think about what is keeping them from reaching agreement. Allow some discussion and then ask these participants what can be done. Then test for consensus again.

- At a certain point, you may decide for a vote. If the vote is not clear-cut, you can simply go with the majority or table the issue and agree not to decide.

Facilitating for Consensus

When do you decide to push for consensus as opposed to going with a simple (and quick) vote? This is a judgment call, and it is made based on three factors:

- The importance of the issue,

- The degree to which each person's or each unit's support is really needed for success, and

- Whether a decision has to be made about a particular issue during the meeting.

When making this kind of judgement, you are trying to strike a balance between

1. Pushing participants to make a decision by voting, which doesn't ensure everyone's commitment to the action, and

2. Taking too much time to reach consensus, which may result in a sense of wasted time, heightened disagreement, and failure to achieve results.

[Excerpted from: "Facilitating for Consensus," by James A. McCaffery, in *Facilitation Skills for Trainers, Facilitators, and Group Leaders*, Volume II, Training Resources Group, Inc., Alexandria, VA.]

The Supervisor as Planner and Manager

S upervisors frequently offer two reasons for not planning as much as they should. The first is lack of time, the common complaint being, "I'm so busy putting out fires, I don't have time to plan." The other is the supervisor's tendency to take immediate action when something goes wrong or when the unexpected happens. In crises, most supervisors feel more comfortable doing something about it before taking the time to think and plan how to deal with it. Unfortunately, this often leads to further crises. Supervisors find themselves fixing one dilemma, then hurrying on to the next. Caught in this stressful cycle, they quickly use up one of their most precious resources: time. Sound familiar?

By learning to successfully plan and manage your work, you will have fewer crises, lower stress levels, and more productive members. And you will be more likely to achieve a healthy balance between the two critical AmeriCorps supervisory functions—developing members and getting things done.

To help you gain better control of your work, we will focus this chapter on four essential and interrelated skill areas:

- Planning;

- Setting Priorities and Delegating Tasks;

- Managing Time; and

- Managing Meetings.

In This Chapter

☑ Planning

☑ Setting Priorities and Delegating Tasks

☑ Managing Time

☑ Managing Meetings

Supervisor's TOOL KIT

(These tools begin on page **4** 31*)*
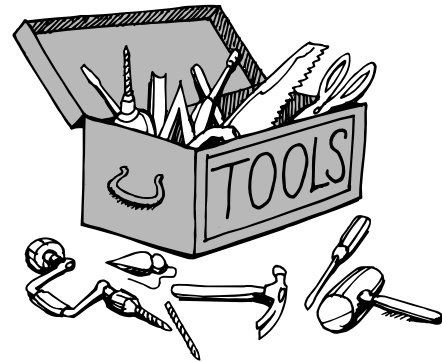
Planning

25 Reasons to Plan

Reminders to yourself and others on the importance of planning

Sample Project Planning Form

A format for writing down project plans

Setting Priorities and Delegating Tasks

Priority To-Do List

Sample formats for listing and prioritizing tasks

Managing Time

Sample Weekly and Daily Personal Planning Forms

Several types of planning tools for scheduling time and managing information

Managing Meetings

Conducting Effective Meetings

An explanation of how to facilitate smooth meetings by using "preventions" and "interventions" to solve problems when the group gets off track

A Day in the Life ...

Betty is an AmeriCorps supervisor for 12 members in their fourth month of service. It is Tuesday morning at 8:30 a.m., and Betty arrives at her office. She stops to chat for ten minutes with folks in the office next door, gets coffee, and settles in at her desk. At 9:00 a.m., she begins work.

On her desk she finds a letter from her boss, Martin, with an agenda for next month's training. The agenda highlights the two-hour session on effective community presentations she volunteered to do but hasn't started to plan yet. Also included in Martin's package are two other notes. The first says that three of her members (Jeff, Imani, and Renny) turned in their time sheets late again. Betty makes a note to call them later and discuss this recurring problem. She sighs.... The other note from Martin is a memo saying he'd like her to give him a brief project plan for the Resource Mother's Day Fair scheduled in April. Even though the project is two months away, Martin and Betty both know the fair is strategic in terms of community relations and the public's view of the Resource Mothers project. Betty tacks the memo to the bulletin board over her desk.

As Betty begins to move some of the books on her desk, she notices a note stuck on the underside of one of them. It's a reminder to herself to call three members (Kay, Joel, and Gary) she has not heard from since she saw them at last month's training session.

Betty looks at her in-box and immediately notices something from Ayesha, one of her members. It's a plan for the team project scheduled for Thursday and Friday. Betty reads it immediately and thinks it looks good. She is excited about Ayesha leading the project because of the excellent job she did coordinating another project last month. Although she has a lot of faith in Ayesha, Betty herself wants to participate because she knows so much about the issues being addressed. This team project is scheduled at The Options Center, her favorite organization, and she is looking forward to spending two days there making contacts and seeing friends. Looking over Ayesha's plan, she thinks of several great ideas to enhance the project. She grabs a pencil to make some notes to herself.

Betty gets a phone call from one of the agency partners, Christine, who has a question about the invoice they received for their share of the members' stipends. Christine says she does not know who else to call. Betty doesn't know anything about this—it's strictly Dora's domain. She offers to call Dora at the main office and then call Christine back with an answer.

On her voice mail is a message confirming a meeting at 3:00 p.m. that day that she had forgotten to write in her calendar. The meeting is with two key community leaders (Malcolm and Sarita) with whom her program has been trying to partner since last fall. She writes it in her calendar and writes a note reminding herself to look for her agenda and materials from a similar meeting two weeks ago. The next message is from Marcia, a member who was going to attend this meeting with Betty. Marcia's car has broken down, and she won't be able to make the meeting unless Betty can pick her up. Unfortunately, Betty has to pick up her son from day care by 5:30 p.m. and might not make it across town in time.

Other messages include a call from the local community cable station about filling a vacant time slot on tomorrow's "Around Town" segment and a call from the local community college financial aid officer with whom she would like to do a recruitment pitch for next years' members. The last message is from Keith, telling her about how well his presentation went with the youth committee at his neighborhood community center last night.

While listening to her messages, Betty receives a fax from her boss Martin. It's an outline of the things he would like her to cover in her next report. He is requesting an evaluation of the project and member development to date, complete with specific examples, for his quarterly report to CNS. He wants it by Friday! She looks in her calendar and sees a reminder note she overlooked. Now she will have to try to jog her memory about major project events and member accomplishments to include in the report. She wonders if she kept anything written from past meetings....

Betty glances at the clock. It is now 10:00 a.m.

Planning Work

Why You Do It

Good planning pays off in a number of ways. By setting clear objectives and defining how those objectives will be achieved, you provide needed structure and direction to your members, and you give them a vision for where they are going. Clear plans help members work together and help each person understand his or her role in relation to others. Planning helps you to anticipate problems and take the necessary steps to prevent them. For example, identifying the resources you will need to conduct a home rehabilitation will help you prevent costly delays halfway through the project. By getting into the habit of planning, you will improve your day-to-day decision making; rather than getting hung up on the details, you will tend to keep the longer-term objectives in mind. Contrary to the notion that "there's no time to plan," supervisors who plan regularly have more time, waste less energy, and are generally more efficient than their colleagues who are "crisis managers." Finally, since planning builds in mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation, it is the principal means by which you can measure your project's progress and you own success as a supervisor.

How You Do It

Most AmeriCorps supervisors work with plans that cover a period of one year or less. Depending on your organization and assignment, you may be asked to participate in the development of programs and projects which address the strategies of your agency and AmeriCorps. A program is defined as a set of activities which accomplish broad objectives over a relatively long period. A project is a more narrow set of activities designed to accomplish an objective within a relatively short time period. For example, you and your members may be assigned to a three-year program for improving the environmental surroundings of public housing; within that

*If you fail to plan,
you plan to fail.*

Unknown

program, specific projects may include graffiti removal, a cooperative vegetable garden, and restoration of an abandoned recreational park. In short, projects differ from programs in scope, time, and degree of complexity. As a supervisor, you will probably spend much of your planning time at the project level.

Project plans usually include the following components:

Goals—an overall broad but clear statement of what you want to achieve in a given period of time. "By the end of one year, we will have developed strong community partnerships with the Housing Authority and the Bureau of Family and Children Services."

Objectives—similar to goals but more specific and focused on short-term results needed to meet the long-term goal. Objectives should be "SMART:" specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound. "By the end of March, we will have established monthly partnership meetings with two representatives from each agency." (If the project is small in scope, it may be possible to collapse goals and objectives into one component.)

Tasks or Activities—steps you need to do in order to reach your objectives. Tasks include information about who does what by when.

Resources—human, physical, or monetary resources you will need to complete the tasks/activities.

Monitoring/Evaluation Plan—checkpoints for measuring your progress on the tasks and your overall success in reaching the project's objectives.

Betty's Draft Plan for the Resource Mother's Day Fair (on the following pages) is a good example of a simple project plan. Although Betty hasn't completed the plan, she's made a good start identifying the major project components.

Contingency Plans

No matter how great a planner you are, there will always be times when things go wrong. An illness takes you away from the office for several days, the local computer store decides they can't donate the two used "demo" computers they promised, or a key community partner suddenly backs out of a critical project assessment meeting. Contingency plans are alternative plans you may use when the unexpected occurs. The following three questions will help you begin developing contingencies:

☑ What might go wrong in my project?

☑ How can I prevent it from happening?

☑ If it does occur, what can I do to minimize its effect?

A number of planning tools are available to help you design and organize your work. Several of the simplest tools include the telephone, the clock, meetings, calendars, and to-do lists. We'll talk more about these later in the chapter. In your Tool Kit, we include a few blank planning forms for you to experiment with and adapt for your purposes. We also suggest you try your local bookstore and library for additional reference materials and sample planning formats.

Community service agencies vary greatly in their approaches to planning. Many AmeriCorps supervisors find themselves in a complex world of coalitions and partnerships where they must constantly share information, develop relationships, and co-plan across organizations. Sometimes it seems nearly impossible to channel all the creativity and organize all the ideas into one cohesive plan. If you find collaborative planning with partner agencies to be one of your greatest challenges, you'll want to review Chapter 5, Supervisor as Community Partnership Builder.

Are you planning enough?

Do you

Always plan before you begin something new?

Plan every week and every day (see "managing time")?

Spend more time on developing new plans than on revising old ones?

Spend as much time planning as is necessary to get the job done right the first time?

Then you're doing great!

Betty's Sample Project Plan for the Resource Mothers' Fair

GOAL

To expose the community at large to the accomplishments of the Resource Mothers' Program and its potential to meet needs that are not being addressed elsewhere.

OBJECTIVE 1

Conduct a 6-hour "Fair" on May 12 (the day before Mothers' Day) at the civic library atrium; program will feature presentations, games, exhibits, and an award ceremony, all led by AmeriCorps members and mothers participating in the program.

OBJECTIVE 2

Secure media coverage of the fair including pre-event PSAs, day-of-event spots on a local news channel, and a front-page article in the local newspaper.

OBJECTIVE 3

Have a minimum of three partner organizations attend and participate actively in the events of the Fair.

Tasks

Objective 1

Conduct Fair on May 12 at civic library atrium

TASKS/ACTIVITIES	WHO	BY WHEN
Book atrium space and make all arrangements for furnishings and equipment with library staff	Keith	3/15
Set up program committee composed of Betty, Ayesha, two other AmeriCorps members, and one representative from each of the partner organizations who will participate in the fair; chair the committee	Betty	3/20
Design overall program agenda and make assignments to activity leaders	Program committee	3/31
Hold orientation meeting with mothers' group to identify lead mother to serve on program committee and sign-up mothers for their preferred activities	Ayesha	4/7
Match up mothers with appropriate activity leaders	Ayesha	4/10
Get list of mothers' concerns and requests for preparation	Ayesha	4/10
Design activities; give written outline to program committee for review and comment	Activity leaders and mothers	4/15
Review/approve activity outlines	Program committee	4/20
Get equipment and supply lists from all activity leaders; acquire items or arrange with library to supply them; distribute/store items as appropriate	Keith	4/20
Draft program agenda, award certificates, and other formal written materials; get program committee's okay; make adjustments and produce final pieces	Jeanne	4/30
Practice activities/games, etc.	Activity leaders, mothers, with Ayesha	5/10

Objective 1 Checkpoints

☑ Keith checks the site/supply needs list with Betty before contacting the library; reports to her on meeting with library representative; gets the go-ahead to make bookings.

☑ Betty uses the program committee as the main point of contact to inform and check on status of preparations (activities, materials, etc.); the committee meets twice in March, then weekly until the Fair date; the committee may schedule a rehearsal if necessary.

☑ Betty and Ayesha have weekly check-ins to discuss any problems relating specifically to the mothers.

Objective 2

Secure media coverage of the fair

TASKS/ACTIVITIES	WHO	BY WHEN
Draft and send initial promotional piece to Channel 10, *The Chronicle,* and WXRT	Betty with Quentin	4/10
Do follow-up calls; if possible, schedule and have meetings with each media representative; get sign-offs	Quentin	4/20
Get firm commitment on pre-event PSAs; write and deliver announcements to media representatives	Quentin	4/25
Draft flyers; get approval and final print; set up distribution procedures through program committee	Quentin with Jeannie	4/25
Reconfirm day-of-event coverage; send schedule to media representatives; field questions, get ready for remote-site video	Quentin	5/7
Orient activity leaders and mothers to media presence and participation in the Fair; practice interviews with mothers.	Quentin with Ayesha	5/10

Objective 2 Checkpoints

☑ All publicity information is approved by Betty before it is submitted to the media.

☑ Quentin keeps Betty informed by weekly e-mail and bi-weekly check-in meetings.

☑ April 30 meeting of the program committee reviews media commitments and determines alternative sources should be contacted.

Objective 3

Have a minimum of three partner organizations attend

TASKS/ACTIVITIES	WHO	BY WHEN
Announce the Fair at the March coalition meeting and send faxes to other partners; get tentative okays from as many partners as possible	Betty	3/7
Follow up on initial commitments; get partners to assign representative to program committee; arrange for first meeting with program committee	Betty	3/15
Participate in program committee design meeting; take individual assignments to plan exhibits and other information exchange activities for the Fair	Partner Reps.	3/31
Plan exhibits, etc.; inform the program committee chair (Betty) about partner space, equipment, and other needs; give the program committee a preview packet of all materials to be distributed at the Fair	Partner Reps.	4/20

Continue listing other tasks and checkpoints

Resource Needs for Project

Site to accommodate maximum of 200 people at a time

PA and multimedia systems (from library if possible)

Equipment and supplies for all activities, presentations, etc. (activity leaders will supply lists; AmeriCorps members and mothers' group will make as many of the items as possible)

Exhibit booths (five provided by the library; the rest provided by partners)

■ Signs and decorations for entrance and general atrium area (check with library regarding restrictions)

■ Paper stock for flyers, programs, award certificates, etc.

■ Computer time in Graphics Department to use desk-top publishing.

Contingency Plans

Library auditorium available in case of severe weather

Person designated to take still photos if Channel 10 a is no-show

Martin to serve as back-up for Betty

Ayesha and designated assistant to serve as back-ups for leading/participating in activities in case of illness or no-shows

If PSA's do not get out, Jeannie to mobilize Resource Mothers participants (i.e., AmeriCorps members, mothers, and kids) to increase flier distribution

Setting Priorities and Delegating Tasks

Why You Do It

Setting priorities and delegating tasks go hand-in-hand for the AmeriCorps supervisor. First of all, supervisors almost always have more tasks to do than time to do them. By setting priorities, you learn which tasks should be delegated and which you should handle. Once you begin delegating some lower priority tasks, you have more discretionary time to address tasks of higher priority. Secondly, one of the organizational goals of AmeriCorps is to develop members' capabilities. Properly handled, delegation will do just that. Members will generally regard delegation not only as an opportunity to practice technical skills but also as a sign of trust and confidence from the supervisor.

How You Do It

As mentioned earlier, there will almost always be more work than you and your members can handle in a given time period. Your success as a supervisor largely depends on your ability to set priorities so that you and your team get the most important work done. In other words, in your scheduling and allocation of work, you need to give preference to those tasks and activities that will be most beneficial in meeting the objectives of AmeriCorps, your agency or organization, and you as a professional worker.

In his book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen Covey counsels that, rather than focusing on things and time, we should think in terms of building and preserving relationships and accomplishing results. He says that the most important work-related tasks are those that, if done on a regular basis, would make "a tremendous, positive difference" in your job and professional life. In broad terms, these are activities such as planning, preparation, crisis prevention, values

clarification, relationship building, reflection time, and recreation.

Make a list of your current activities or tasks and circle the ones that if done on a regular basis, would make a tremendous, positive difference in your work life. Move these activities to the top of your priority list. As for the remaining activities, use the following questions to help you determine their relative importance.

Questions for Determining Priorities

1. Do I personally need to be involved because of my unique knowledge or skills?
   (yes or no)

2. Is the task within my area of responsibility, or will it affect the performance of my team?
   (yes or no)

3. When is the deadline? _____ Is quick action needed? (yes or no.)

Use the following formula to interpret your answers:

"No" to question #1—delegate the task.

"Yes" to all three questions—assign a high priority (the task is clearly your responsibility and calls for quick personal action).

"Yes" to question #1 and "No" to question #2 OR #3—assign a medium priority (you must be personally involved and it's your responsibility, but quick action is not needed).

"Yes" to question #1 and "No" to questions #2 AND #3—assign a low priority (you must be involved, but it's not your responsibility and quick action is not needed).

The Priority To-Do List in your Tool Kit summarizes these three questions and helps you organize your answers onto a worksheet you can keep at your desk. Once you have a solid list, you'll be able to organize and manage your time around your priorities rather than the other way around. We'll talk more about weekly and daily planning and time management later in this chapter.

The key is not to prioritize what's on your schedule, but schedule your priorities.

Stephen Covey

Setting priorities is not something you have to do alone. You should regularly ask your director as well as your members for their input. Checking in with your director may be particularly important if you have other projects and staff to oversee in addition to your AmeriCorps work. Balancing AmeriCorps-related tasks against other assignments can become confusing and problematic, and setting priorities becomes proportionately more critical.

Delegation

As an AmeriCorps supervisor, you are responsible for achieving your project objectives through your members. Delegation means assigning responsibility and authority to a member or members to accomplish a given objective. We have cited several benefits of delegation in the introductory paragraph of this section. Unfortunately, there are obstacles that can prevent supervisors from delegating as much as they should. For example:

Your boss may be a poor delegator and unable to help you learn how to do it. This doesn't mean you can't learn, it just makes it more challenging.

You and everyone you supervise may have too much work to do already. When projects are grossly understaffed, it's difficult to ask people to do something else.

You may have an "I can do it better/faster myself" attitude. It isn't your job to be able to do everything better and faster than your members. It's your job to get things done through members and develop their expertise along the way.

You may not trust your members to do the task well enough and fear that, if they don't, you will be held accountable by your boss. On the other hand, you may fear that members will do a better job than you can—i.e., upstage you in front of others.

You may not understand your job enough to know what or how to delegate. Maybe you were an AmeriCorps member yourself and then got promoted to supervisor. Without adequate

preparation, you may be more accustomed to doing than delegating.

Your members may lack confidence in their ability to do the job you want to delegate to them. They may also fear criticism from you if they don't perform well.

Your members may lack incentive or initiative to do the job. They may not perceive any reward for or benefit from taking on additional responsibility.

What to Delegate

Delegate things that don't require the skills or background that you and only you have. Delegate not only the "easy" activities (paperwork, routine tasks) but also some of the "tougher" ones that will help your members develop their skills. Some possibilities may include:

Paperwork	Reports, memos, letters, etc.
Routine tasks	Checking equipment at a project site; securing and replenishing project supplies; morning calisthenics for crew teams
Tasks with developmental potential	Co-facilitating a workshop; public speaking/ media interaction opportunities; representing the project at community meetings
Solving members' problems	Helping members learn how to solve their own problems rather than doing it for them

When you consider opportunities to delegate, make certain that the tasks are related to project goals and/or members' personal development goals so you don't inadvertently take members away from their direct service assignment.

Signs that you may be delegating too little:

Taking work home

Performing member tasks

Falling behind in supervisory work

Feeling continual stress or pressure

Rushing to meet deadlines

Responding to members seeking your approval before acting

(Do any of these strike a familiar chord?)

What Not to Delegate

As a rule, don't delegate anything for which you and only you have the skills or background—or the organizational authority. This might include:

Personnel matters Hiring, firing, disciplining, counseling, etc.

Confidential issues Performance appraisals; conflict meditations; certain CNS paperwork such as time sheets

Crises There is no time to delegate!

Activities assigned For example, an assignment from your boss to sit on a committee (you should not delegate such responsibility to a member unless you have permission).

Steps in Delegating

Step 1—Explaining why

Explain to the member why you need to delegate the task and why she or he was selected. By doing this you are helping the member to see "the big picture" and understand the importance of the task. You also make the member feel valued by the team and/or organization.

Step 2—Setting objectives

Set objectives that define responsibility, scope of authority, and deadlines. The objectives should state the end result for which the member will be held accountable. Authority means the right to make decisions, issue orders, and utilize resources. Supervisors have a certain scope of authority over their projects, and when they delegate they pass some of their authority along to the member. How much authority you decide to give your member will depend on two things: the capability of the member and the difficulty of the task. Never give away more authority than you have been delegated.

Step 3—Developing a plan

Develop a plan with the member. Be sure to identify the resources the member will need to meet the objective and give the member the authority to get needed resources. If other people are involved in the task or its outcome, let them know of your intention to delegate. Don't impose your own way of doing the task on the member's plan but rather base your input on the capability of the member (delegee): If the member is highly capable, let him or her develop and carry out the plan with minimal help from you. If the member is somewhat tentative about his or her ability, provide more guidance and oversight. Remember that part of your plan may be to train the member in some aspects of the task.

Step 4—Checking progress

Establish monitoring checkpoints. Even though you give the member a specific deadline for finishing the task, it is useful to check progress at predetermined points along the way. The basic idea is to communicate with the member in some regular, agreed-on mode—e.g., via meeting, phone call, memo, visit, or report. As with planning, the more capable the member, the fewer the checkpoints needed.

Step 5—Evaluating performance

Hold the member accountable. Generally, workers perform better when their performance is measured and evaluated. Following the rules (in Chapter 1) for good performance feedback, you should assess the member's work at each checkpoint and give praise or pointers as appropriate.

Delegation Summary:
Rules to Remember

1. Once the task has been delegated, don't "Hover".

When you delegate, your role changes from doer to enabler, clarifier, answer person, resource provider and/or advisor. The more you hover, the less members feel that they truly have the responsibility to do the task. If you hover, you will still spend time making sure the task gets done properly (i.e., YOUR WAY!) Members will not develop self confidence, you will not perceive them as competent (because you are still spending too much time on the task), and you will rightly be perceived as a micro-manager.

2. Effective delegation is built on trust.

Trust builds slowly but can be destroyed quickly.

3. Effective delegation can be a great developmental tool.

Members must not perceive delegation as one test after another. A stretch is good, but you have to calibrate members' limits carefully. If they fail frequently, they are likely to remember only the failures and avoid responsibility and authority in the future.

4. Abdication of responsibility can occur under the guise of delegation.

Delegation can amount to abdication of responsibility when you give little task definition or unilateral directions with no dialog, do not make yourself available to the employee, provide no oversight or follow-up, and basically forget the task, leaving the member with virtually no support.

5. Confidence in members allow you to let go of a task.

Delegating well means that you never forget about the task...only your role in its completion changes.

More in the Life
Of Betty

Let's check in on Busy Betty, our not-so-organized supervisor in the case study at the beginning of this chapter. If Betty asked us for help on planning, setting priorities, and delegating tasks, we might offer the following suggestions:

1. The fact that Betty hasn't heard from three of her members since last month's training means, she doesn't have relationship building with members high enough on her list of priorities. She needs to plan ways to communicate regularly with them—e.g., through a combination of monthly visits and weekly scheduled phone calls. Since Betty's members work at different sites, she might consider conference calls to link them together so they can share experiences and help each other.

2. Betty doesn't seem to place a premium on planning activities either. She is in a precarious position with her quarterly report and generally seems to be responding to daily details instead of looking at the larger picture. She needs to design a plan for systematically gathering and storing the information that goes into the quarterly report. She could delegate some of this responsibility by having members, on a rotational basis, write a "weekly highlights report."

3. Betty seems to recognize the value of delegation, as evidenced by her assignment of the team project to Ayesha. But she needs to be careful about imposing her own ideas on Ayesha, especially if Ayesha's plan "looks good." Betty also needs to consider that, if she decides to attend the entire two-day program at The Options Center, Ayesha may interpret this as a sign of "no faith." There are other compelling reasons for Betty to reconsider her decision to attend the entire program: She doesn't have the time, and she is confusing relationship building with "hanging out" with friends. An alternative might be for Betty to set aside one afternoon to attend the project. This would give her an opportunity to observe Ayesha's facilitation, and she could stay around to socialize with friends into the evening.

4. Betty has several other possible opportunities to delegate meaningful tasks to members. If Keith performed well in his presentation at the youth center, Betty should consider asking him to facilitate or at least co-facilitate the two-hour session on "Effective Community Presentations" at next month's training.

Keith and Ayesha might be able to help Betty put something together for the "Around Town" television segment as well as for the recruitment pitch to the community college financial officer.

5. Betty may need to establish clear procedures and rules for how members should handle their time sheets. Regular contact by Betty with members would also diminish their tendency to slack off.

6. Contingency planning may solve problems like how to get to an important meeting when the car breaks down. Members who know what transportation modes are available and reimbursable will be more likely to take the initiative to get to the meeting.

[We'll save the rest of our suggestions to Betty until we've discussed time management.]

Managing Time

Why You Do It

Time is one of the supervisor's most precious resources. There's too little of it; other people are always trying to steal it from you; and though you know it's scarce, you squander it! When supervisors try to meet unrealistic deadlines, whether self-imposed or set by others, they put unnecessary stress on their minds and bodies. Over time, stress may negatively affect not only job performance but health as well. Timely planning of your priorities on a weekly and daily basis will diminish stressful situations and give you greater control over how you carry out your roles and responsibilities. Effective time management means getting as many important tasks accomplished as possible, while maintaining the flexibility to meet members' emerging needs.

How You Do It

One of the first things you can do on the road to effective time management is to consider the ways in which you currently waste time. It's easy for us to blame others for wasting our time—e.g., "My boss makes me attend useless meetings." But, if we take a hard look at ourselves, we will probably find that there are just as many internal as external reasons for wasting time. Here's a list of the most common ones:

- Unexpected assignments from your boss

- The inability to say no

- Trying to do too much for too many people

- Too many meetings

- Unclear priorities

- Competing demands

- Too many phone calls

If you have a lot of things to do, get the nap out of the way first.

—8 year old

- Junk mail

- Lengthy socializing

- Unrealistic deadlines

- Can't see the top of your desk

- Waiting for upper management to approve routine decisions

To remedy time pressures created by external circumstances, you need help from others around you. For example, members can be asked to think through the desired outcomes of a meeting before it begins. If your boss often interrupts you, you can try to establish regular morning and afternoon times for checking in with him or her and have a list of things the two of you need to discuss.

To deal with internal factors that cause you to waste time, such as procrastination or trying to do too much for too many people, you must look inward and find logical ways to order your work and organize yourself. Here are several guidelines to help you meet the challenges of managing time:

1. Know where your time goes. We can often feel exhausted at the end of the day but still wonder if we got any meaningful work done. This feeling may be a sign that you are doing (taking action) without planning. Make yourself aware of how you currently spend your time by keeping a detailed log of your activities for at least a week.

2. Plan a week at a time, then make daily adjustments. If you only plan daily, your tendency will be to do busy work and respond to crises. A weekly plan provides a larger framework in which to identify and schedule high priority activities such as those we discussed earlier—planning, building relationships, crisis prevention, reflection time, and so forth. You can put these high-priority activities on your schedule, fill in part of the remaining time with less urgent or important tasks, and still leave time for unexpected events. Then, as each day unfolds, you make adjustments for the unexpected events as they relate to your high priorities.

   Most people adapt planning formats to suit their own situation and style. In your Tool Kit, we include samples of

weekly and daily planning logs. Whatever tools you select to organize your information, make sure they are portable enough to carry with you as you travel from work site to meetings to home.

3. Learn to say no (graciously) to activities that are not among your high priorities. Sometimes you don't have a choice in such matters but, more often than not, people let themselves be "talked into" joining committees, giving presentations, or other activities that are praiseworthy but not necessarily important in the context of their longer-range goals. Learning to say no may also help you achieve a healthier balance between your professional and personal lives.

4. Do important tasks during your "prime-time" hours. Most people function best in the morning hours but a few do better a little later in the day. Figure out when your high- and low-productivity periods are and plan accordingly. Doing too many tasks at once is often a result of having unclear priorities.

5. Schedule "open time" instead of an "open door." Members need access to you, but that doesn't mean you always have to be on call and for unlimited time. When members know that you are available to them during certain time frames for 15- to 20-minute visits, they tend to be more thoughtful and focused about what they want to discuss. Of course, there will always be more serious situations that cannot be accommodated by an open-time policy.

6. Use available technologies. Make sure people have an effective way to leave you messages when you are unavailable. Written notes, voice mail, and e-mail are all possibilities. Use your own voice mail and home answering machine to leave yourself reminder messages. Written memos provide a "paper trail" for documenting decisions and plans, but be aware that they also take time.

7. Be phone smart. Most supervisors and managers regard the phone as a classic and chronic time waster. If you get a lot of phone calls, you may find it helpful to limit phone conversations by telling callers you have only a few minutes before you have to begin a meeting.

8. Delegate appropriately. If it takes you more than two days to catch up after you've been away from your office for a week, then you probably aren't delegating enough.

9. Focus on results. Supervisors often look at what needs to be done rather than the results to be achieved. To avoid getting caught up in operational details, it is important to state goals in clear, measurable terms that relate to outcomes, not just processes and procedures. If you are delegating appropriately and empowering your members, then you can and should hold them accountable for what they accomplish, not just how they work.

10. Take time off. Some supervisors believe that their project will fall apart if they leave for longer than a couple of days. Maybe it will, but so will you if you never get away to relax and change the scenery. Stress is a real and potentially hazardous factor.

Again, With Betty's Life ...

Back to our friend and colleague, Betty. What can we suggest she do to manage her time better? Here are a few ideas:

1. Betty should keep an eye on how long it takes her to settle in and get started in the mornings. If she habitually takes half an hour in the mornings before she begins any meaningful work, then other people around her may follow her lead.

2. Betty appears to be responding to things as they happen. She needs to set aside time every week and every day to make and update her plans for accomplishing priority tasks.

3. There are indications in the case study that Betty has trouble keeping track of and accessing important information: She writes herself notes on Post-Its and then loses them; she forgets to write down important items like meeting dates; she can't remember where she may have put notes from previous meetings; and she doesn't refer to her agenda book notations often enough. Betty needs to consolidate all her scheduling notes in two places—for example, an agenda book and a desk calendar. The agenda book is portable; the desk calendar shows the week at a glance and also serves as a backup list if the agenda book should get lost. Betty also needs to improve her filing system for maintaining notes and other materials from past meetings and project events.

4. Betty's offer to call Dora on Christine's behalf is a good example of trying to be helpful at one's own expense. Betty would save herself time and trouble by suggesting Christine call Dora directly to get an answer to her question about the invoices.

5. It would help if Betty kept a file of previous public relations pieces, statistics, and other useful information for quick reference when unexpected media and recruitment opportunities come along.
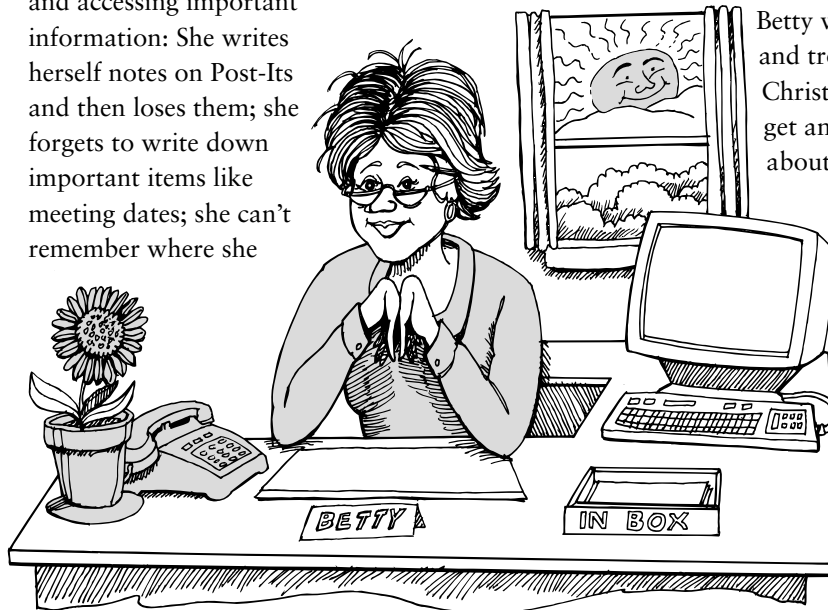
Planning and Managing Meetings

Why You Do It

Meetings are one of our primary planning tools. We develop, revise, and communicate plans during meetings. Meetings are also the main means of staying in touch with members and co-workers and a primary venue for making decisions or gathering information to inform decision-makers. If you work as a supervisor in a crew-based program, you probably hold meetings daily. Your meeting agenda may include reflection, planning for the next assignment, clarifying roles, solving problems that come up, and so forth. If you are in an individual-placement program, you may call meetings with your members on a weekly, bi-weekly, or even monthly basis. Your agenda may look something like this: sharing experiences at work sites, generating new ideas about how to accomplish program goals, discussing tough problems at the project sites, and so on. In addition to your sessions with members, you also have other meetings to attend—meetings with agency partners, community groups, and staff colleagues, to name a few. Considering how much time and energy is devoted to meetings, it is amazing how few of us are truly effective meeting managers!

How You Do It

Good meetings involve three phases of activities: preparation, running the meeting, and follow-up. As you might guess, the better you prepare the more smoothly your meeting will run, and the more smoothly your meeting runs the easier the follow-up becomes. The following outline provides a simple guideline for managing most types of meetings.

Preparation

- Clarify the purpose of the meeting; What is the overall goal or reason for bringing these people together?

- Determine who should attend the meeting. Check the list again after you've developed the agenda.

- Develop the agenda. Solicit suggestions or pertinent information from others as necessary.

- Prioritize the agenda, putting the most critical items highest on the list.

- Organize the agenda in terms of
  —What the issue is,
  —Who has responsibility for leading the discussion of each issue,
  —How much time is allocated for each issue, and
  —What outcome is expected in relation to each issue—e.g., a decision, common information, list of options, recommendations.

- Identify and announce, with lead time, any preliminary work that needs to be done by people attending.

- Let all attendees know the time, place, and duration of the meeting in writing; and clarify any special roles you may want them to assume during the meeting.

Running the Meeting

- Start the meeting on time.

- State the purpose of the meeting.

- Present the agenda and adjust if necessary.

- Introduce meeting participants and explain their roles and relations to the issues on the agenda.

- Introduce any visitors and explain why they have been invited.

- Manage the process of the meeting:
  —Keep people on track.
  —Work from the agenda.
  —Check with the group to see that each item has been completed.

—Manage the time spent on each item.

—Keep notes on flipcharts if possible (a visible record helps the group focus on the task, eliminate repetition, achieve clarity, and review complete notes for analysis and decision making).

■ Review the action items that were generated in the meeting before adjourning.

■ Critique the process of the meeting:
   —How well did the meeting go?
   —How well did we work together?
   —What could be done to improve the next meeting?

■ If the leadership is being rotated, identify the leader for the next meeting.

■ Decide and confirm the date, time, and location of the next meeting.

■ Thank participants and adjourn the meeting on time. (Ending ahead of time is great, too!)

Follow-up

■ Prepare and distribute the minutes of the meeting within three days.

■ Be sure that anyone who missed the meeting is informed of decisions or actions taken that will affect them or issues that they will be responsible for handling at the next meeting.

■ Take a deep breath and start the process all over again!

Rotating Roles in Meeting Management

If you are going to be conducting regular meetings with the same group of people, you can encourage leadership and share responsibility by using a management technique called "rotating roles." In rotating roles, you select or ask four people to volunteer for the role of facilitator, timekeeper, recorder, and process observer for each meeting. At the end of every meeting, four more people sign up to perform the same roles the next time. Group members continue rotating through the roles and,

over time, polish their skills in meeting management. The roles can be briefly defined as follows:

The FACILITATOR runs the meeting, working through all of the items on the agenda as productively and efficiently as possible. The facilitator keeps the group focused, ensures everyone's participation, and manages people's "air time." (As supervisor, you work one-on-one with the facilitator ahead of time to make sure she or he understands the meeting purpose, the agenda, and the desired outcomes.)

The TIMEKEEPER acts as an alarm clock, not as a judge. If a given agenda item needs more time, the facilitator negotiates that with the group. If the group decides to allocate additional time, the timekeeper "resets the clock" as necessary. The timekeeper stays aware of the time at which the meeting is to end and reminds the group to save time for the process observer's report.

The RECORDER'S job is to write down ideas and information generated by the group so everybody can see it and read it. Before the meeting, the recorder makes sure newsprint, markers, and other needed supplies are in place. She or he does not usually take part in the discussion except as necessary to capture what someone said (e.g.,"Dave, have I got what you said?" or "Could you repeat that, Leticia? I missed part of it.").

The PROCESS OBSERVER watches (like a camera, without judgment) how the members work together and how the facilitator, recorder, and timekeeper perform their respective roles. At the end of the meeting, the observer shares key points with the group e.g., "Ron, you did a good job facilitating the meeting today by keeping us on track and encouraging all of us to express our opinions about the community clean-up idea; once we finished that agenda item, I noticed that the folks on this side of the table withdrew and didn't participate in the remaining discussion...," etc.

REFERENCES

Pages **4** 27 through **4** 29 adapted from: "Managing Time Effectively," by Roger Ritvo in *Managing in the Age of Change,* eds. Roger Rituo, Anne Litwig, and Lee Butler, New York: NTL/Irwin Professional Publishing, 1995.

25 Reasons to Plan

1. Focus effort where action is needed and productive.

2. Avoid the "business as usual" trap.

3. Maximize use of existing resources.

4. Uncover new resources.

5. Reflect and incorporate changes in the real world.

6. Create a road map to reach goals.

7. Make it easier to check progress and results.

8. Bring problems into manageable focus.

9. Help make goals clearer, more solid, and more achievable.

10. Aid in establishing priorities.

11. Help identify milestones.

12. Establish evaluation criteria and baseline.

13. Galvanize forces for action.

14. Develop clear choices and alternatives.

15. Help minimize confusion and frustration.

16. Improve communication and reduce conflict.

17. Sustain commitment.

18. Spotlight basic assumptions for re-examination.

19. Help control events instead of letting events control.

20. Check perceptions of problems against realities.

21. Act and prevent more, react and control damage less.

22. Focus on results rather than process.

23. Develop shared agenda for the future.

24. Solve problems and improve conditions.

25. Deal more effectively with contingencies and emergencies.

Sample Project Planning Form

PROJECT NAME: _____   DATE: _____

PROJECT MANAGER: _____

PRIMARY GOAL: _____

_____

OBJECTIVE 1: _____

_____

Task/Activities: _____   *By Who:*   *By When:*

_____

_____

Checkpoints: _____

_____

_____

_____

OBJECTIVE 2: _____

_____

Task/Activities: _____   *By Who:*   *By When:*

_____

_____

Checkpoints: _____

_____

_____

_____

Sample Project Planning Form

OBJECTIVE 3

Task/Activities: *By Who:*   *By When:*

Checkpoints:

RESOURCE NEEDS:

APPROXIMATE BUDGET:

APPROXIMATE DEADLINE:

CONTINGENCY PLANS:

Priority To Do List

D Delegate—no to #1

H High priority—yes to all three questions (YYY)

M Medium priority—yes to #1 and #2 or #3 (YYN or YNY)

L Low priority—yes to #1, not to #2 and #3 (YNN)

#1 #2 #3

ACTIVITY	INVOLVEMENT NEEDED	RESPONSIBILITY PERFORMANCE/FINANCES	QUICK ACTION/DEADLINE	TIME NEEDED	PRIORITY

[From: *Supervision: A Skill Building Approach,* by Robert Lussier, Boston: Irwin Publishing, 1994.]

Sample Personal Planning Tools

Deadlines for the Week

Week of _____

CHECK DAY NEEDED					TIME NEEDED		FOLLOW-UP	✔
M	T	W	T	F				

The Supervisor as Planner and Manager

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Sample Personal Planning Tools

Planning for Today

TODAY'S DATE _____

FROM YESTERDAY	✔

TODAY'S APPOINTMENTS	✔
7:00	
8:00	
9:00	
10:00	
11:00	
12:00	
1:00	
2:00	
3:00	
4:00	
5:00	
6:00	
7:00	

PHONE CALLS	✔	REMINDERS	✔

Conducting Effective Meetings

Facilitative Behaviors

What they are	Facilitative behaviors are actions anyone takes to make the meeting run smoothly.
	Preventions are facilitative behaviors done at the start of or during the meeting that prevent the meeting from getting off track.
	Interventions are facilitative behaviors done during the meeting that help get the meeting back on track.
Why they are important	Facilitative behaviors are tools that everyone in the meeting can use. By using them, everyone shares the responsibility for making the meeting a success.

I. PREVENTIONS

At the beginning of a

meeting get agreement on

- Desired outcomes
- Agenda
- Role
- Decision-making method (including fallback method if consensus)
- Ground rules

During the meeting

- Make a suggestion on how the group could proceed (a process suggestion)
- Get agreement on how the group will proceed (a process agreement)
- Listen as an ally
- Educate the group (process commercials)
- Ask open-ended questions
- Be positive—encourage participation

Conducting Effective Meetings

Sample Ground Rules

A sample of ground rules to be used in meetings

- We're all colleagues—let's respect each other
- It's OK to disagree
- Listen as an ally
- Everyone participates, no one person dominates
- Honor time limits

Using Preventions

Get agreement on desired outcomes, agenda, roles decision-making, ground rules

- Review and check for agreement on important meeting start-up items:
  "Before we get into our agenda for today, I'd like to make sure we all agree on how we're going to work together..."

Make a process suggestion

- Suggest a way for the group to proceed:
  "I'd suggest looking at the criteria before trying to evaluate options."

Get agreement on how the group will proceed

- Check for agreement on a process that has been suggested:
  "Is everyone willing to identify criteria first?"

Listen as an ally

- Listen to understand before evaluating.
- Listen positively, not as an adversary.
  "Let me be sure I understand your view of the problem. You're saying that.... Is that right? Now I'd like to express my view."

Educate the group (process commercials)

- Heighten the group's process awareness through education:
  "There's no one right way to solve a problem. Which way do you want to start?"

Ask open-ended questions

- Ask a question that doesn't have a single right answer:
  "What do you think we should do?"

  "Say more about your idea for tracking errors."

Conducting Effective Meetings

Be positive—encourage participation

■ Exhibit a positive, win-win attitude:
"I know this issue is quite emotionally charged, but if we take our time and work our way through the problem, I'm sure we can find a solution we can all live with."

II. USING INTERVENTIONS

Boomerang

■ Return a question to the person who asked it or to the group so that the leader or facilitator does not take responsibility for all questions:

Group Member: "I don't like the track we're taking here."

Leader: "What do you think we should be doing?"

Maintain/regain focus

■ Make sure everyone is working on the same content, using the same process, at the same time:
"Let's stay focused on identifying problems. Are we all together?"

"Just a moment, one person at a time. Joe, you were first, then Don."

Say what's going on

■ Identify something that isn't working—i.e., get it out in the open so the group can deal with it:
"It's very quiet here. What does the silence mean?"

Avoid process battles

■ Prevent lengthy arguments about which is the "right" way to proceed. Point out that a number of approaches will work and get agreement on one to start.

Enforce process agreements

■ Remind the group of a previous agreement:
"We agreed to brainstorm, but you're starting to evaluate the ideas. Would you hold onto that idea for now?"

Conducting Effective Meetings

Accept, legitimize, deal with, or defer

■ Deal positively with difficult people or situations that might get a meeting off track. Accept an idea without agreeing or disagreeing. Legitimize it by writing it on the group memory. Then decide as a group if the issue or idea is more appropriately dealt with here or deferred to another time. Record ideas or issues that are deferred and agree on when they will be addressed:

> "You're not convinced we're getting anywhere? That's OK, you may be right. Would you be willing to hang on for 10 minutes and see what happens?"

> "Thanks for raising this issue that wasn't on the agenda. Do we need to address that now or should we put it on the issues list for our next meeting?"

Don't be defensive

■ Arguing back when criticized will only provoke more argument. Accept negative comments and boomerang the issue back to the individual or group:

> "I cut you off? I'm sorry. Please continue."

> "You think I'm pushing too hard? (lots of nods) Thank you for telling me. How would you like to proceed from here?"

Use body language

■ Reinforce words with appropriate body language. Ask for ideas with palms open. Regain focus by standing up and moving to the middle of the room.

Use humor

■ Make a joke to relieve the tension. Be sensitive enough not to joke at someone else's expense.

Protect others from personal attack

■ Intervene to stop one person from verbally attacking another:

> "Joe, you've criticized Sue several times in the last few minutes. I'd like to hear what she has to say as well as hearing your view."

CHAPTER 5

The Supervisor as Partnership Builder and AmeriCorps Representative

C ommunity partners are key to getting things done in America's communities. In a sense, building a partnership is like building a team, only on and with a broader base of people and organizations. Partnership building involves AmeriCorps supervisors and community residents in developing a common vision, belief, and strategy to address a problem. Partnerships are formed out of need and are built on trust and inclusiveness. Strong community partnerships mean more comprehensive ways to address community problems, increased coordination between community agencies and the community at large, development of new leadership, and promotion of an ethic of collaboration and resource sharing.

To help you begin the process of partnership building, we focus on three areas in this chapter:

■ Community needs assessment,

■ Building and sustaining collaboration, and

■ Conducting effective public relations.

Community needs assessment and building and sustaining collaboration are major skill areas. And because partnering activities tend to push the supervisor into the role of AmeriCorps representative, we include tools and techniques for conducting effective public relations so you can clearly and succinctly communicate your program's mission and efforts to partnering organizations and to the community at large.

In This Chapter

☑ Community Needs Assessment

☑ Building and Sustaining Collaboration

☑ Conducting Effective Public Relations

Supervisor's TOOL KIT

(These tools begin on page 5 21*)*
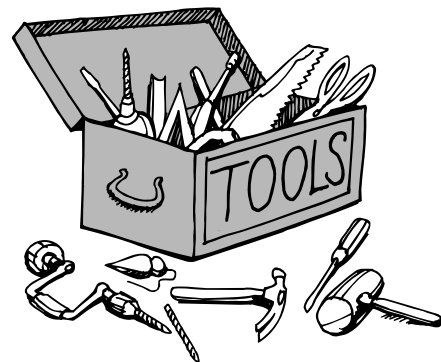
Community Needs Assessment

Checklist for Surveys

Helpful points for designing your own surveys

Sample Community Survey and Sample School Survey on Crime and Crime Prevention

Two prototype surveys you can adapt for your own assessment process

Building and Sustaining Collaboration

Basic Planning Questions for Your Group

A comprehensive set of questions to guide collaborative project planning

Community-Oriented Problem Solving

A description of the steps and principles involved in identifying and solving problems with community and agency partners

Factors Influencing the Success of Collaboration

What leaders in the field have identified as essential elements for building collaboration

Meeting Agenda and Summary Form

A form for organizing meeting agendas and documenting meeting outcomes

Cost-Benefit Analysis

A format for considering the advantages of a particular solution in relation to its costs

Conducting Effective Public Relations

Eight Strategies for Getting People to Listen to You

Helpful hints for the public speaker

Fourteen Questions to Ask About Your Audience

Figuring out the people on the other side of the podium

Sample Media/Public Relations Pieces

Samples of a press release, a public service announcement, and a media advisory

A Day in the Life ...

Betty walks into her office and, before she can hang up her coat, the phone rings. It's Alicia, and she's upset about a situation at the community center where she serves as a youth aide. Alicia alternates between tears and anger as she tells Betty how the local tenant association is trying to ruin the community center. In a soothing voice, Betty asks Alicia to slow down, take a deep breath, and start from the beginning. Alicia tells her about how much the community needed the center and that the center programs were running fine until this past week when the tenant association published a scathing article about how the center was run by outsiders. Alicia's voice rises on this last word.

The center had opened after three of Betty's AmeriCorps members were assigned to the East Side Community Action Agency. The agency decided to set up the center to conduct general education courses, make community social service referrals, and sponsor some recreation programs for kids. The East Side is an old section of the city located near a bustling business district. Once a proud neighborhood of African Americans and Hispanics, it is now considered a marginal area where housing and drug problems are becoming more serious every day. Alicia explains that the placement of a community center was ideal. It would bring valuable services to the community, give young people an alternative to hanging out on the street, and generally help the community reestablish its feelings of pride.

According to Alicia, just when things seemed to be going really well at the center the tenant association put an article about the center in their biweekly newsletter, which is read by nearly the whole neighborhood. One of the young people who attends classes at the center brought Alicia a copy. The article basically accused the center staff of not having the interests of the local people at heart and, in so many words, characterized the center staffers as people who only come in to "help" the community as long as the work can be accomplished during business hours. The article also identified a couple of the community center's activities as "examples of inappropriate use of local resources and energy." Alicia notes that several people have abruptly stopped coming to the center activities this week, apparently in response to the negative publicity. Alicia tells Betty that she remembers calling the tenant association at the time they were planning the new center, but she never heard back from them directly. Someone on the community center staff had mentioned a long

time ago that the tenant association didn't do that much in terms of community development activities, so Alicia and her colleagues forgot about them after that.

As Betty listens to this story, she notes Alicia's genuine commitment to the East Side community. She also senses the disappointment and frustration Alicia is experiencing from seeing her community service work challenged. After a while Alicia calms down and asks Betty for some advice on what she and her fellow members should do now. Betty looks down at her writing pad, where she has jotted down some rough notes. She tells Alicia she wants to ask her a few questions that she hopes will get Alicia started thinking about some positive next steps. Betty's questions are:

1. Who from the community was involved in the decision to establish the center?

2. Who from among the people working at the community center (AmeriCorps members and/or East Side Community Action Agency staff) lives in the community where the center is located?

3. How was the decision made to establish a community center? What kind of information was gathered to help the decision makers?

Betty tells Alicia to take several minutes to think her responses through, then call her back to continue their discussion. She also asks Alicia to fax her a copy of the newsletter article. We'll check in with Betty and Alicia a little later to see what they decide to do about the community center predicament.

Assessing the Community's Needs and Strengths

Why you do it

As a supervisor, you have to start with the notion that the community knows more about their vitality and their problems than you do. Until you find out from community members what they think their needs truly are and what they have already done for themselves, you cannot begin to work alongside them to help them solve or build anything. You must talk to people, particularly community leaders and project stakeholders, and listen to what they have to say. Some of this information gathering should be informal, some more structured and focused. Once you discover which groups of people are interested in and perhaps already trying to achieve the same objectives you are, you can safely begin building collaboration.

How you do it

Assessing community needs requires three important steps:

- Identifying a broad range of community leaders and seeking their input into the appropriateness of your AmeriCorps project;

- Identifying community needs and resources—i.e., gathering information, opinions, and ideas to determine where and how community needs and strengths match with the general goals of the project; and

- Identifying stakeholders in the community who are affected by the problem or issue at hand and your project's proposed activities for addressing it.

Identifying Community Leaders

Community newcomers sometimes make the mistake of assuming that the neighborhood lacks leadership. Every community has an indigenous leadership structure. If you are
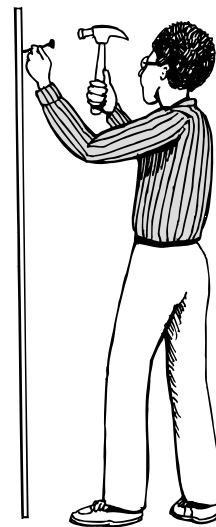
We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.

Martin Luther King
(1929–68)

working in a public housing development, there are formal leadership structures such as neighborhood councils composed of tenants who set policy and make decisions on behalf of the residents. In less organized neighborhoods, there are less formal leaders. Grassroots neighborhood leaders have been anointed by the community as the people who should be included in all important decision making affecting the community. Churches and schools are other important sources of leadership. Your role, as an AmeriCorps supervisor working to build partnerships, is to do enough homework to identify the leadership structure of the community. Suggested ways to identify community leadership are:

- Asking residents who live in the community;

- Going to community association meetings; and

- Using the following contact points to locate the leadership: social service agencies, businesses, churches, law enforcement, government agencies, youth groups (Girl and Boy Scouts, 4-H, YMCAs/YWCAs, etc.), judicial systems, housing authorities, schools, and city councils.

This list is only a starter and will differ from community to community.

Identifying Community Needs and Resources

To determine what the community needs, ask thoughtful questions and listen carefully to community leaders and residents. The problem or issue you are working on has probably been addressed in some form or to some degree by others in the past. If so, you need to find out what their specific experiences have been and how successful they were. The following questions will help you get started on the quest for opinions and ideas:

1. Who is the target community? What are its boundaries?

2. What groups of people and physical characteristics are in the community?

3. Who are the leaders and communicators in the community?

4. Are there any special subgroups that hold informal community power?

5. What are some of the problems or issues community residents have identified?

6. What are some of the resources available to work on these problems?

7. Given what they know about AmeriCorps, what assets or resources do they think members can bring to the problem-solving process?

8. What other kinds of help might be needed?

9. What are some obstacles to developing and implementing service programs that will respond to community problems?

To help community members share and discuss their answers to these and other questions, you need to offer them a structure and a forum. For example, you may want to hold informal talks with people from different social sectors and geographic areas in the community. One structured and objective format for gathering information is the community survey. Using mailed questionnaires, door-to-door canvassing, or telephone interviews, you can survey residents' views about what they regard as high-priority concerns. You can also focus the survey to collect information on a particular concern or issue.

Conducting a survey is a serious activity in the sense that people in the community will base their perceptions of your program on how well you and your members interact with them. Most members will benefit from training in how to approach and interview the public. Role-playing, for example, is a pleasant way to practice social interaction skills and build members' confidence.

See your tool kit for samples of community survey questionnaires and a checklist for designing and implementing your own surveys.

Identifying project stakeholders

Stakeholders are people who have an interest in the problem your project intends to address and/or the solutions your project proposes to implement. Some of these people will be community leaders you have already identified; others may be less obvious and you will need to ask community members and groups to

help you recognize them. Once you know who the stakeholders are for your particular project or service emphasis, you need to analyze their potential interest in and impact on the work: Are they in favor of or opposed to your project goal(s)? Can they be convinced to support the project and influence others to do the same? What interests and resources (positive and negative) do they bring to bear on the project? If they won't give their support, should you and your directors substantially modify or even scrap the proposed work?

The important point to remember in stakeholder analysis is that any key person who can contribute to a clearer understanding of the problem should be included in the collaboration process. As the planning and implementation unfolds, your most supportive stakeholders will become your primary partners.

Building and Sustaining Collaboration in the Community

Why You Do It

AmeriCorps supervisors need to build and maintain collaborative relationships because community members (individuals, organizations, and agencies) know more about their problems than anyone. The more you involve community members in defining and developing your service activities, the more they will buy into the project and sustain their efforts over the long term. If you are from outside the community, you will gain insights from your partners' institutional memory; they will remember who has tried what in the past. Community partners increase your program's potential to offer better services and accomplish things neither group could do alone because you are pooling your ideas and energy along with other resources.

How You Do It

Successful collaboration requires the application of nearly all of the skills presented in the earlier chapters of this guide. Here are several critical elements:

Setting mutual goals and defining meaningful roles for each community partner

(See Chapter 3—The Supervisor as Team Builder)
As community partners, you need to establish the reasons why you are joining forces—i.e., what it is you hope to accomplish together that you cannot do as well alone. As the relationship becomes more defined, you need to assign distinct but complementary roles so that everyone understands what is expected of them. It is also important that you recognize the different motivations each partner may have for wanting to be involved in the project. Look for ways to meet the expectations

of individual partner without sacrificing the larger goals of the service work.

Collaborating on problem identification and solutions

(See Chapter 2—The Supervisor as Advisor)

When you are working with partners, it is extremely important to use a structured problem-solving process to help you work through what it is you want to change and how you plan to go about it. Without structure, you risk vague problem definitions and impractical solutions. See your tool kit for an outline of problem solving adapted for use with community groups.

Careful planning of project activities

(See Chapter 4—The Supervisor as Planner and Manager)

Once you and your community partners have selected solutions and strategies for addressing an issue, you need to draw upon your planning skills to help you flesh out the project. This step includes defining the human and physical resources each partner can contribute, defining partners' roles and responsibilities; setting specific timelines; and establishing milestones for monitoring the work. Help one another stay realistic on what the partnership can accomplish given everyone's work load. Your tool kit has a list called "Basic Questions for Your Group" that will guide you through the planning sequence.

Managing meetings effectively and establishing communication channels

(See Chapter 4—The Supervisor as Planner and Manager)

Meetings are where community partners do most of their communicating, decision making, and planning. People need to be clear on the meeting agenda and what outcomes are expected. The facilitator in particular should be organized and efficient, or the partners will feel their precious time is being wasted. During one of the first meetings, you should work out a process for communicating information in a clear and timely manner. Be sure to address the need for written documentation, such as records of meeting agendas and minutes, and memoranda of understanding.

Sharing leadership and building capacity among partners

(See Chapter 3—The Supervisor as Team Builder)
All partners in a community collaboration need opportunities to gain new knowledge, enhance skills, and assume leadership roles. Partnerships are not just about getting things done—they are also about capacity building. Share the control and make sure everyone has a chance to lead activities.

Listening and feeding back to the community

(See Chapter 1—The Supervisor as Communicator)
Let community residents know that you are listening to and taking action on their concerns. Give them clear examples of how you are using their insights and ideas. If possible, use forums such as a town meeting to learn about what people have on their minds and how they are perceiving your work.

Celebrating successes

(See Chapter 3—The Supervisor as Team Builder)
Just as AmeriCorps team members need recognition of their accomplishments, so do community partners. When you do something well, pat each other on the back in public. Celebrate however your community sees fit.

Community partnership building is a complex process that requires considerable time, commitment, and elbow grease. Everyone on the AmeriCorps staff needs to help establish and maintain collaborative efforts in the community. Your most important role is to get the process going and engage your members, colleagues, and program directors in the effort.

Checking Back in With
Betty and Alicia...

Let's listen in on the rest of Betty and Alicia's phone discussion about the community center dilemma. If you recall, Betty asked Alicia to think about three questions relating to partnership building. (Who from the community was involved in the decision to establish the center? Who among the people working at the center lives in the community where it's located? How was the decision made to establish a center?)

A: When I stopped to think about it, I realized there was no one from the community involved in planning the project. The East End Community Action Agency folks felt they knew the issues, and we just followed their lead. They had all kinds of statistics that made the idea of the center sound appropriate. Plus, we'd heard about a similar and very successful AmeriCorps project downstate, so we got excited about trying the same type of thing.

B: Do you see how important it was for the community to play a role in identifying the problem and the responses? This doesn't mean they wouldn't have come up with the same ideas you guys developed, but the ideas would have been theirs, not from outsiders.

A: Yeah, I see how we could have made a better effort at engaging the community. We could have held a public meeting right there in the neighborhood—at one of the churches, maybe—to discuss our preliminary ideas and ask for their help. Maybe the tenant association would have come forward and shown their interest and any reservations at that point. We really underestimated their interest and influence in the community. One of my first reactions to their letter was to sit down at the computer and pound out a rebuttal, but everything I wrote sounded defensive. Betty, do you think I should try to write a letter to the editor stating our intentions and clearing up some of the misinformation in that article?

B: Alicia, just as you pointed out, it's very hard to write rebuttals without sounding defensive. Sometimes "letter wars" get started and do harm to everyone involved. I think I'd look for other ways to establish some kind of contact. You know, Alicia, earlier today I was struck by your strong desire to work with the East Side community.

Your commitment is heartwarming. But neither you, nor anyone at the community center, can offer help without the community's permission. In the case of the tenant association, we're maybe talking about more than permission. Reading between the lines of that article, I think the tenant association has heard some positive things about what the center is doing, but they feel left out of the decisions and plans that get made there— decisions and plans that affect the residents in their association. I'd say we're identifying a potential partnership here, but at the moment you seem to be competing against one another. What do you think you could do to change that to collaboration?

A: I think we can start by acknowledging our mistakes to both the community and the association. We need to arrange a meeting with the key people at the association and get their issues, and ours, out in the open. Actually, there's a part-time worker at the center who lives in one of the housing projects and is involved in the association. He's very quiet during our meetings, so we kind of forgot about him. I think we should get him more engaged and ask him to introduce us to the association leadership. You know how we did that visioning and goal-setting session a few weeks ago at the AmeriCorps conference? Maybe we could try to do something similar with the association. I'm pretty certain we have similar goals, but maybe different ideas about how to get there. If we put our ideas and

resources together, who knows what kind of community center we might end up with! They have lots of contacts within the neighborhood families; we don't. We have things like meeting space and computers that they may not have access to and....

B: [Betty breaks in.] That's the idea, but don't move so fast you forget about the community at large. How will you involve them in the center's future and start to build their trust?

A: Maybe the tenant association and our center could jointly organize and co-host a community meeting. We could have an open house at the center: ask for volunteers from the community, ask them for their ideas for new programs, and things like that.

B: Good. Now keep going with this idea. Can you think of anyone else to include in planning the open house event? Maybe someone who's shown some interest already in the center's activities?

A: [Thinks for a few seconds, then nods her head.] Of course! Reverend Carson. He's come by the center a couple of times to check out what we're doing and seems interested, or at least curious. If he has the time, I'm sure he'd be helpful planning such an event. His church does similar things all the time. I've seen the fliers around town. You know something else? He'd be a valuable partner because he's not directly affiliated with either the tenant

association or the community center. He'd have an objective perspective on the current situation and future direction of the community center.

One other thing I could do is call the AmeriCorps project downstate and ask them how they got collaboration from their community...Hey, I think I'm having a breakthrough here!

B: [Laughing.] I think you're right. And I think you don't need any more assistance from me, at least for now. Call me when you've had some initial contact with the association. Perhaps I can help you work out an approach for discussing the major issues. And if you start making any concrete plans for that open house, I'll look for my invitation in the mail!

A: Thanks, coach!

Conducting Effective Public Relations

Why You Do It

As you begin to build partnerships with community groups and other service agencies, you will find your program increasingly in the public eye. People in the community will want to know more about AmeriCorps and see its members in action. You in turn will want to take advantage of the community's curiosity to spread the message about AmeriCorps' commitment to grassroots development through local community service. Whether it's giving a presentation to a local social services association or organizing a public service announcement for an up-coming fundraising event, effective public relations involves sending clear, accurate, interesting, and timely messages about your project to people who need or want the information. By developing your public speaking skills and learning to work with the media, you'll be able to take advantage of opportunities to highlight your members' real and potential contributions to the community. More importantly, you'll be able to train your members to speak for themselves and serve as AmeriCorps ambassadors.

How You Do It

Public Speaking

If you are the type of person who has always feared being asked to "say a few words," please keep in mind that effective public speaking is an acquired skill. Some people may appear to be "born speakers," but they have probably developed their
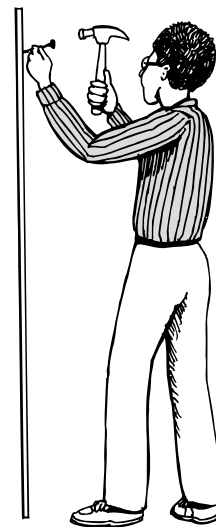
eloquence and grace through emulation, careful preparation, and lots of practice. You can start by keeping in mind the three Vs:

Vocal Speak clearly and loudly enough to be heard.

Visual   Smile! Create visual images with your words. Use props, charts, etc.

Verbal Make sure that what you're saying is easy to understand and interesting. The words you choose and the way you organize your talk will determine your influence on the audience.

Organizing Your Presentation

The introduction

- Get to the point quickly; introduce your topic or theme within the first two minutes of your talk.

- Use an attention getter, a personal annecdote or a specific example (this will create a visual for the audience), a startling statistic, relevant quotes, or an analogy or comparison.

- Then make a smooth transition into the main body of your talk.

The main body of the talk

- Keep the main body of the talk simple and concise. Stick to three or four main points, support each one briefly and colorfully, then move on.

- Make your "call to action" early in the main body of the talk. Create a feeling of common bond or shared purpose.

- Use specific examples, visual language, props—anything to keep the audience tuned into your message.

- Vary the length of your sentences and phrases. (For example, "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty. This much we pledge, and more."—John F. Kennedy)

The conclusion

- Let the audience know you're getting near the end. ("In the last few minutes of our time together today…")

- Summarize your main points.

- Use another attention getter to build momentum for your "clincher," the final thought you leave with the group.

Ways to stay cool and calm

- Before the presentation, cruise the room by yourself. Sit in a chair in the audience. Stand behind the podium. Make sure any equipment you're using (VCR, monitor, overhead projector, etc.) is working and cued. Checking the room and equipment is critical. Nothing is more disconcerting to the audience or the speaker than when the equipment fails to work properly. It's like paychecks: when they come on time nobody thinks twice about them, but let them be late and…. The same is true of presentations. People expect things to go smoothly and when they don't, that's what they remember about the event.

- Take deep breaths, count to ten, shake out your arms and hands.

- Practice, practice, practice your talk. Then do something calming just before you're about to speak. Read something funny. Do something physical.

- Imagine that the audience is a gathering of your best friends who desperately need the information you have.

- Focus on a friendly face until you loosen up.

- Slow yourself down as you speak. It may seem like you've been talking forever, but you haven't. Keep your pace, don't rush.

- Take care of your hunger and thirst before you begin your presentation.

Remember that being nervous is a natural response. Even the most experienced speakers get a little anxious, or at least "pumped up," before speaking in front of a large group. Use this extra energy to send your message clearly and strongly to your audience!

Your tool kit includes more tips on how to construct and deliver speeches and other types of presentations.

Working with the Media

Getting the word out about what your project has done or what you are planning to do is beneficial to your program and your community. You want to inform, educate, excite, and persuade people. So do the media. There's a natural match-up—a partnership if you will—between your community service program and the news service.

The CNS Office of Public Affairs publishes a short but comprehensive booklet entitled, "Guide to Working with the Media." The booklet begins by describing the relationship between AmeriCorps and the media. Getting your story out can help you

■ Recruit AmeriCorps members and sponsors,

■ Reach potential funding source,

■ Educate the public about your project, and

■ Highlight members and activities that are getting things done in your community.

Reaching the news media starts with doing some homework, planning a strategy, and applying some objectivity. When making a decision about media relations, remember this fact of life: You've got a lot of competition. Many other organizations will be trying to get their stories and events covered. Understanding the media is the crucial first step in public relations. Publicity is simply a means of telling people what you want them to know. For AmeriCorps, you want your audience to know the purpose of the program, who's involved, how it operates, and why it's important to your community. Rather than sharing this information with one person or a small group, the media takes your message to thousands of people instantly.

The media guide provides information on the following themes:

■ Types of media (newspapers, magazines, wire services, television, radio, public affairs programs)

- Reaching the media (developing a media list, working with reporters, getting information to the media)

- Developing a media plan

- Planning an effective press conference

- Communicating through public service announcements

- Tips on writing for the media, sample press releases and public service announcements, etc.

The "Guide to Working with the Media" will serve you well as you begin to develop your public relations approaches. Check with your project director to see if your site already has a copy of this publication. If not, call the CNS Office of Public Affairs and order one right away. Your tool kit includes several sample media pieces from the booklet. The suggested reading list also offers other publications related to working with the media.

Courage happens when people unite.

—Anonymous

Checklist for Surveys

☑ **Rationale:** Why are you doing this survey? What do you want to know from or about your subjects? Make sure those objectives are related to your program.

☑ **Subjects:** Whom should you survey? For instance, if your concern is with crime in elementary schools, talking with parents of high school students will not be helpful.

☑ **Unit and Sampling:** Decide what your unit of measure is. Are you looking at classrooms or individual students' attitudes, a neighborhood block's concerns or residents' individual concerns? Do you intend to ask everyone, or just pick a sample? How will you be sure the group you sample reflects the makeup of the community as a whole?

☑ **Questions:** Write clear, simple questions. Ask only one question at a time. Avoid negatives and words that suggest a specific kind of answer. Generally, it is better not to ask "essay type" questions.

☑ **Test:** Try your questions out on a small group to make sure the questions are understood as you meant them to be and the answers give you information you can use.

☑ **Method:** Decide whether you will mail the survey (which is cheaper but risks low returns), use in-person teams for interviews (which can be accurate but time consuming), or ask questions by telephone (which can be efficient but may anger people who want to be able to read the questions).

☑ **Execute the Survey:** Create a questionnaire, based on your tested questions, that allows appropriate space for answers to be filled in. Train interviewers as necessary to ensure they will all discuss the survey the same way. Administer the survey to the group selected and collect the data.

☑ **Disclosure:** Make sure that the survey interviewers disclose 1) who is asking for the information, and 2) how that information will be used. Even if

Checklist for Surveys

your survey seems relatively simple and straightforward to you, it may appear threatening to the person on the receiving end.

☑ Tabulate: Tally up the different answers you get, by type. Don't forget to include a space for tallying those who did not answer the question. Decide whether to count them or not; once you do decide, be consistent.

☑ Analyze: What's surprising? What's expected and what's not? Negative as well as positive results and divided responses (such as "no clear majority agreed on liking ketchup") are important findings.

[Adapted from: *Charting Success,* National Crime Prevention Council, 1995.]

AmeriCorps Community Needs Assessment

Demographic Data

Respondent is:

Age 15–20	☐	Male	☐
Age 21–35	☐	Female	☐
Age 36–50	☐		
Over 50	☐		

Add other pertinent data you need to know, such as ethnic background and site of the interview (respondent is a community member interviewed on her front stoop; respondent is a public official interviewed in his office; respondent is a student interviewed on the playground, etc.)

1. Please place a check mark next to the items you believe are problems in your community in each of the categories below.

2. Of everything you have checked, circle the three most important items.

3. What do you think AmeriCorps members can do to help solve these problems? Please write your suggestions in the space provided.

Sample Survey

Education

_____ High student dropout rate
_____ Overcrowded schools

_____ Need for quality teachers
_____ Other

Health

_____ Teenage pregnancy
_____ Substance abuse (drugs, alcohol)
_____ Emotional problems
_____ Other

Law Enforcement

_____ Gang activity
_____ High crime rate
_____ Vandalism/graffiti

_____ Other

Social Services

_____ Lack of quality child care
_____ Lack of service for seniors
_____ Lack of available, affordable healthcare
_____ Other

Recreation

_____ Lack of programs
_____ Lack of facilities

_____ Lack of supervision in parks
_____ Other

Employment

_____ Lack of job opportunities
_____ High unemployment rates for youth
_____ Inadequate job training
_____ Other

Cultural

_____ Lack of tolerance in the community
_____ Conflict between ethnic groups
_____ Lack of knowledge about ethnic groups
_____ Other
_____

Please write your suggestions on the back of this page on the lines provided.

Thank you! Suggestions:

Sample Survey

Suggestions:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

[From: *Handbook for Continuous Improvement*, Corporation for National Service, 1994.]

A Questionnaire for Parents of Children in the Sunnyside Day Care Program

Please tell us which of these elements of our program are most important to you

	Very Important	*Important*	*Neither Important nor Unimportant*	*Doesn't matter at all*
The staff likes my child	1	2	3	4
The program's hours fit my needs	1	2	3	4
I want to be kept informed about my child's successes and difficulties	1	2	3	4
The staff gives my child enough help and supervision	1	2	3	4
I want to be informed about program activities	1	2	3	4
I want to be informed about program decisions	1	2	3	4
I want the staff to tell me about agencies or funds that could help me	1	2	3	4
I want to feel free to visit whenever I can	1	2	3	4
I can afford the fees	1	2	3	4
My child is safe	1	2	3	4
My child is given enough to do	1	2	3	4

Sample Survey

What do you feel is the most important purpose of this program? Please CIRCLE one sentence

- ■ Be a safe place for my child while I work

- ■ Be open during the hours I can't take care of my child

- ■ Be a fun place where my child can play with friends

- ■ Be a place where my child learns new skills and interests

- ■ Be a place where people care about my child and share ideas with me about my child's well-being

- ■ Other (please describe)

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

If there is anything else you would like us to know, please write it here.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

[From: *Handbook for Continuous Improvement,* Corporation for National Service, 1994.]

The Supervisor as Partnership Builder

5 27

Basic Planning Questions for Your Group

Assess the Need

What is your target community?
What are the facts about that community?
What are some of the problems in the community?
What are some ways to address those problems?
What assets can your group bring toward solving those problems?
What other kinds of help might be needed?
What are the drawbacks or possible difficulties?
What would each of you like to do to help with the problem?

Plan a Successful Project

What will your project do?
What changes should or could happen because of your project?
What are your goals, objectives, and strategies?
What are the steps for getting started?
Whose approval must be obtained?
Who should be involved in planning, reviewing, and doing the tasks?
How long will the project take? Can this be broken into several shorter
    projects or separate phases?
How will you know whether your project has been successful?
How will you thank workers and celebrate success?

Line Up Resources

What specific talents do members of the group bring?
What other help must be provided—goods, services, people, money?
Who might want to help? Who else shares an interest in solving this
    problem?
What are the best ways to recruit the kinds of help needed?
What can be done to build the individuals in the group into a team?
How will it be clear that the resources belong to this project, not some
    other one?
What kind of event should be held to thank those who helped?

Basic Planning Questions for Your Group

Act on Your Plan

Who will handle problems?

What kind of training—of who and to do what—is needed?

Who (including teens) can provide training?

What will you do to keep and build on participants' enthusiasm?

How can you be sure you are most efficiently using resources?

Nurture, Monitor, Evaluate

What did you decide would be the indicators that your project was successful?

   How can you measure those indicators?

How will you ensure that the project results in a quality product?

What information should be collected, who should collect it, and how
   frequently should it be obtained?

How will any needed "mid-course" corrections be made?

What do participants—workers and those who benefit—think of the
   project?

What would have happened if your group had not done the project?

How can you find out about special stories of success in your project?

How can workers best be honored individually? As a group?

[From: *Charting Success*, National Crime Prevention Council, 1995.]

Community-Oriented Problem Solving

Most community organizers and managers find that identifying and addressing problems is a substantial aspect of their work. The basic steps for doing this are the same whether you are working on a problem by yourself or within a group to solve a problem that affects everyone. These steps include

- Identify and state the problem

- Clarify the problem

- List potential solutions

- Evaluate solutions and make recommendations

- Develop a work plan to implement solution

- Implement the work plan

- Evaluate the plan and modify it as needed

Identify and State the Problem

This step is important because you must have a clear idea about what is going wrong before you can take steps to correct it.

This is especially important when working on the problem in a group because different group members may identify the problem differently. There must be agreement in the group as to what the problem is before solutions can be identified.

Clarify the Problem

In many problem situations, there is a larger issue or problem that can be readily identified but must be better understood before it can be resolved. Perhaps the problem needs to be broken down into a number of smaller problems that can then be addressed. Or, to better understand the problem the cause of the problem must be identified. Another way to clarify the problem is to discuss why it is a problem or how is it related to other problems.

To clarify the problem it is necessary to obtain more information about it through written materials and reports, interviews, etc. Further discussion is then needed. This often results in a restatement of the problem. Once it is more clearly understood, the problem can usually be stated in simpler terms. Occasionally, the problem as originally identified needs to be changed to better reflect the new information.

List Potential Solutions

This is the time for creative thinking. Don't prejudge ideas. Get as many different thoughts and ideas as possible.

When a group is trying to solve a problem, a technique such as brainstorming can be extremely effective at this step.

Community-Oriented Problem Solving

The result of this step is a list of all possible solutions to the problem, even though only one idea becomes the chosen solution. It is important to keep them all, because it may be necessary to come back to others if the selected one doesn't work out.

Evaluate Solutions and Make Recommendations

All of the possible solutions should now be reviewed to determine whether they are likely to solve the problem and whether their implementation is feasible.

Techniques that are valuable at this step include identifying the pros and cons of each option, conducting a cost-benefit analysis, and applying a specific criterion for success.

The result of this step is the identification of the most desirable options for solving the problem (usually two to four options) and a recommendation of the one most desirable option.

When others who are affected by the problem and must make a decision about it have not been involved in the problem-solving process, this step should also result in a written report that could be used to make the decision. This report should state the results of the problem-solving steps to this point and conclude with the recommendation.

Develop a Work Plan to Implement the Solution

To ensure that the solution is carried out and has a chance to work, a detailed work plan should be developed. This should include

■ Goals and objectives to be achieved (objectives should be SMART—i.e., specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound),

■ Strategies to be implemented,

■ What specific activities are to be carried out,

■ When each activity is to be completed,

■ Who will be responsible for each activity (implementation and supervision),

■ What resources will be needed and how can they be secured,

■ What training and technical assistance is needed to achieve the goals and objectives,

■ Potential problems or barriers that may occur and how they could be addressed,

■ When reports will be needed and how monitoring is to be done and when, and

■ How results will be determined.

Community-Oriented Problem Solving

When the problem is being addressed by a group, the group needs to develop and understand the work plan and commit the resources necessary for its implementation.

Implement the Work Plan

The result of this step is a detailed plan of action.

This step involves following the work plan as it was developed. It requires monitoring the plan to determine whether progress is being made or modifications are needed in light of new problems or information.

When the work plan has been developed by the community, communication during implementation is critical to ensure that activities are coordinated and everyone is informed of the status and progress of the solution. When modifications are needed, they are appropriately identified for the group so that everyone understands and agrees how the changes are to be carried out.

The result of this step is the implementation of the identified solution to the problem.

Evaluate the Plan and Modify It as Needed

This step requires measuring the results of your action and determining whether the problem has been resolved. Using the objectives from your work plan, you assess both the process and the outcomes of the group's work. The evaluation often produces more information about the original problem and indicates that additional work needs to be done; therefore, the steps should be repeated.

The result of this step is clear information about how well the chosen solution worked.

Problem Solving Techniques

Techniques to Define and Clarify the Problem

Brainstorming

The group is asked to generate ideas quickly and the ideas are recorded on a flipchart. As many ideas as possible are obtained but none of them is evaluated until all ideas are put forward and recorded. (See the Chapter 2 Tool Kit.)

Nominal Group Technique

Each person writes down ideas before sharing them with the group, allowing everyone time to think about the topic and offer an idea.

Graphic Illustration

Each member, either individually or in a team, illustrates the problem as he or she sees it, through drawings, cut-outs, or illustrations.

Card Exchange

Group members describe the problem, as they see it, on cards and put the cards in a large envelope or box so that each idea can be considered anonymously.

Key Word Analysis

Each group member is asked to give his or her definition of key words in the problem statement.

Round Robin

The leader goes around the group, asking each person in turn for his or her input.

Role Reversal

Members adopt one another's roles in an effort to understand one another's positions.

Ways to Break the Problem into Small Pieces and Generate Solutions

Positive and Negative Forces

Group members work together to identify forces working to make the problem worse and better. (See the Chapter 2 Tool Kit.)

Negative Brainstorming

The group generates ideas about all the things that can possibly go wrong in this situation. They can then consider strategies to overcome these difficulties.

Major Questions

The group is asked to answer the who, what, where, why, when, and how of each issue.

Choosing the Best Solution or Setting Priorities

Applying Criteria

The group identifies its criteria for an acceptable solution by completing the statement "An ideal solution to this problem would have these characteristics..." and then comparing each solution with the list of criteria to choose the best one.

Straw Votes

Straw votes are nonbinding votes that "take the temperature" of your group. Each member votes informally by a show of his or her hand. This process usually lets you dismiss some solutions to concentrate on others.

Rank Order

Members are asked to rank-order the alternatives. The least popular alternatives are omitted.

Weighted Voting

Each participant gets 10 votes to distribute among alternatives as he or she sees fit. The most unpopular alternatives are eliminated.

Cost-Benefit Analysis

Cost-benefit analysis is a way to determine the cost of implementing a solution. (See the next tool.)

Negative Voting

Ask if any member cannot live with a specific decision.

List the Pros and Cons

Ask the group to list the advantages and disadvantages of the various solutions to help you decide which is best.

Principles of Problem Solving

Don't Take Anything for Granted

If part of the program is not working, ask whether the organization should be doing it in the first place.

Old Patterns May Hinder Solutions

Every organization has someone who, in answer to why something is done, replies, "We've always done it that way." Maybe that's the problem. There may have been a reason for doing something a certain way one time, but that reason may not hold good now. Look at everything to see if needless work is being done out of force of habit.

Trial and Error May Work as Well as Logic

Some solutions cannot be thought through in an orderly manner. If an idea sounds good, try it. If one person can't make a program work, give someone else a chance. To find out whether two people will work well together, let them try out as a team.

Community-Oriented Problem Solving

Find the Essential Similarities in Problems

Several seemingly unrelated problems may be solved in similar ways. After solving a problem, take time to state its solution in general terms that will apply to situations in the future.

Pay Attention to Group Process

In the organization's efforts to identify, analyze, and solve problems, have observers note how the solution was reached and the various roles the participants played. What was said that helped two factions reach agreement? What was said that hindered or blocked action? What helped the participants really hear what was said? Sharing these notes on process can turn it into a learning experience for everyone.

Look at Problems from Different Angles

The more people that are involved in problem solving, the more points of view are brought into play. The story is told of a large truck stuck under a bridge. The best efforts of the highway patrol, truck drivers, and garage mechanics could not pry it loose. Finally, a four-year-old boy who had been watching found the solution when he suggested letting the air out of the tires. For many problems, an outsider can often put his or her finger on the trouble quicker than those who are emotionally involved.

Divide Problems into Parts

Some problems are too large to deal with as a whole, such as a ten-year plan for the first year.

Anticipate Problems

Once a course of action is decided on, establish a "disaster position." Say, for example, that a large conference is to be held. List all the things that could possibly go wrong and what will be done in each case if the worst happens.

Take the Emotion Out of Problems

If $1,000 is missing from the organization's funds, think about what steps would be taken if a dollar were missing. It is basically the same problem. If an opponent makes a suggestion, think about how it would be received if a supporter had made it. In stating any problem, stick to the facts.

Anticipate the Consequences

Before deciding on a solution, think about how it will affect everyone else in the organization. If one person is given more responsibility, who is likely to be jealous and what can be done about this in advance?

Learn from Losing

It's as important to know why a suggested solution did not work as it is to know why another one did. If a community meeting attracted only a few people, was it because the people did not have transportation in from the rural areas? Was the meeting held on the wrong night?

Factors Influencing the Success of Collaboration

1. Factors Related to the ENVIRONMENT

A. *History of collaboration or cooperation in the community*
A history of collaboration or cooperation exists in the community and offers the potential collaborative partners an understanding of the roles and expectations required in collaboration and enables them to trust the process.

B. *Collaborative group seen as a leader in the community*
The collaborative group (and by implication, the agencies in the group) is perceived within the community as a leader—at least in relation to the goals and activities it intends to accomplish.

C. *Favorable political and social climate*
Political leaders, opinion makers, persons who control resources, and the general public support (or at least do not oppose) the mission of the collaborative group.

2. Factors Related to MEMBERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

A. *Mutual respect, understanding, and trust*
Members of the collaborative group share an understanding and respect for each other and their respective organizations: how they operate, their cultural norms and values, limitations, and expectations.

B. *Appropriate cross section of members*
The collaborative group includes representatives from each segment of the community that will be affected by its activities.

C. *Members see collaboration as in their self-interest*
Collaborating partners believe the benefits of collaboration will offset costs such as loss of autonomy and "turf."

D. *Ability to compromise*
Collaborating partners understand that the many decisions in a collaborative effort cannot possibly fit the preferences of every member perfectly.

3. Factors Related to PROCESS and STRUCTURE

A. *Members share a stake in both process and outcome*
Members of a collaborative group feel "ownership" of both the way the group works and the results or product of its work.

B. *Multiple layers of decision making*
Every level (upper management, middle management, operations) within each

organization in the collaborative group participates in decision-making.

C. *Flexibility*
The collaborative group remains open to different ways of organizing itself and accomplishing its work.

D. *Development of clear roles and policy guidelines*
The collaborating partners clearly understand their roles, rights, and responsibilities and how to carry out those responsibilities.

E. *Adaptability*
The collaborative group has the ability to sustain itself in the midst of major changes, even if it needs to change some major goals, some members, etc., in order to deal with changing conditions.

4. Factors Related to COMMUNICATION

A. *Open and frequent communication*
Collaborative group members interact often, update one another, discuss issues openly, convey all necessary information to one another and to people outside the group.

B. *Established informal and formal communication links*
Channels of communication exist on paper so that information flow occurs. In addition, members establish personal connections, producing a better, more informed, and cohesive group working on a common project.

5. Factors Related to PURPOSE

A. *Concrete, attainable goals and objectives*
The goals and objectives of the collaborative group are clear to all partners and can realistically be attained.

B. *Shared vision*
Collaborating partners have the same vision and clearly agreed-upon mission, objectives, and strategy. The shared vision may exist at the outset of collaboration or the partners may develop a vision as they work together.

C. *Unique purpose*
The mission and goals or points of view of the collaborative group differ, at least in part, from the mission and goals or points of view of the member organizations.

6. Factors Related to RESOURCES

A. *Sufficient funds*
The collaborative group has an adequate, consistent financial base to support its operations.

B. *Skilled convener*
The individual who convenes the collaborative group has organizing and interpersonal skills and performs the role

with fairness. Because of these characteristics (and others), the convener is granted respect or "legitimacy" by the collaborative partners.

[From: *Collaboration: What Makes It Work?,* by Paul Mattessich and Barbara Monsey, St. Paul, MN: Wilder Publishing Center.]

Meeting Agenda and Summary

Call the Next Meeting (send to participants in advance of next meeting)

Collaboration name or purpose:

Purpose of next meeting:

Meeting date:
Location:
Start and end times:

Convener: Phone:

Participants (see membership roster for addresses and phone numbers):

Action Agenda

Item	*For information, discussion, or decision* Disposition	Responsibility	Time

Meeting Agenda and Summary

Summary of Decisions Made/Actions to be Taken

This summarizes the previous meeting and accompanies the agendas for the next meeting

Decision Made/Action to be Taken   Responsibility   Deadline

Summary of Achievements to Date

This is a log of all achievements. It provides an excellent history and basis for evaluation. Update it regularly.

Achievements   Responsibility   Date

[From: *Collaboration Handbook*, by Michael Winer and Karen Ray, St. Paul, MN: Amherst Wilder Foundation Publishing Center, 1994.]

Cost-Benefit Analysis

Its important to consider the advantages, disadvantages, and relative costs of any solution you consider. This is especially important when you have a number of alternative solutions to a problem and the group must somehow choose between them.

Using newsprint to record the ideas and opinions of the group, consider the price of each solution—in money, people, or adverse effects. Then list the advantages or disadvantages of that solution. You may want to ask group members to do this individually first, to give them time to think, or have them do it in groups of two or three. Whichever method you choose, be sure that everyone is encouraged to participate.

After completing the lists of costs, advantages, and disadvantages for each solution, have the group make an overall evaluation of that solution, indicating whether or not to pursue it.

COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Problem:

1. Possible Solution	2. Price	3. Advantages	4. Disadvantages	5. Overall Evaluation

Strategies for Getting People to Listen to You

1. Picture your communication goal

Know exactly what response you want from the listener. Before you speak, visualize what you want the listener to look like, feel like, and do as a result of your words. In other words, how do you intend to change the listener? Ask yourself what you can say and how to say it to get the change you want.

2. Know your listeners.

Who are they? What do they already know? How much detail do they need? What have they experienced prior to your message? How do they feel? What do they want to hear? Are they paying attention? Do they care about you and what you have to say?

3. Know yourself as a communicator.

Every human being has a unique way of sending messages. What is your uniqueness? How do your values, thought patterns, vocabulary, tone of voice, speech habits, moods, body language, and overall presence affect the meaning listeners receive?

4. Put your listeners in the picture.

Use vivid language, tell complete stories, and paint full pictures that listeners can "see" with their ears. Use examples, metaphors, and analogies. Use fewer words and steer clear of euphemistic language. Choose words that convey specific, concrete images.

5. Convince your listeners.

Show your conviction, confidence, and enthusiasm through tone of voice and body language. Don't overqualify, excessively preface, or apologize for messages as you send them. Shun exaggeration and overstatement. Appeal to the self-interest of listeners, who continually ask, "What's in it for me?"

6. Stroke your listeners.

Leave your listeners feeling good about themselves and about you. Be supportive and caring. Don't accuse, belittle, violate expectations, or overgeneralize. Be a good listener to your listeners. Use their names in your message. Make them glad they listened to you.

7. Control time and place.

Time the sending of messages so that listeners are ready for them and see and feel the need for them—not when you want to send them. Choose a location that is consistent with and reinforcing to the meaning you want listeners to receive.

8. Assess and respond to results.

What are your listeners telling you? What did they do as a result of your message? Have you been understood? Why or why not? What will you do differently next time?

[From: *The Managers' Book of Lists,* by Sam Deep and Lyle Sussman, Glenshaw, PA: SDD Publishers, 1988.]

Questions to Ask About Your Audience

1. What do they already know about this topic?

2. How do they feel about this topic?

3. What do they know about me?

4. How do they feel about me?

5. Are there any extenuating circumstances that are likely to affect the audience's response to me or the speech?

6. Do they want me to be here?

7. Who are the major opinion leaders in the group?

8. Who is the formal leader? The informal leader?

9. Are there different purposes to accomplish with various audience members?

10. Is there an expert on my topic in the group?

11. What are the most common questions or objections the audience is likely to have?

12. What is the best way to create positive rapport with this audience? What do they value? What do they hold dear?

13. What demographic characteristics of the audience do I need to keep in mind?

14. What strategies have worked well with this audience in the past?

[From: *The Managers' Book of Lists* by Sam Deep and Lyle Sussman, Glenshaw, PA: SDD Publishers, 1988.]

Sample Press Release

5   44

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 1, 19XX

CONTACT:
Joe Smith
212/555-1212 or

Jane Smith
212/222-3333

AMERICORPS MEMBERS INCREASE STARKVILLE LITERACY RATE

Starkville, Miss.—AmeriCorps members working in Starkville to tutor adults and children have improved the literacy rate by 5 percent since the program began in September, program director Debbie Walker announced today.

Fifteen AmeriCorps members have been working with local churches to provide after-school tutoring lessons with the Starkville Literacy Program, a statewide effort to combat illiteracy.

"The AmeriCorps members have been instrumental in helping to lower our illiteracy rate," Ms. Walker said. "Their total dedication and hard work has meant so much to the people they are helping."

Jill Lawson, 23, an AmeriCorps member who came to Starkville from New York to work on the project, said, "Teaching others to read and improve their writing skills makes me feel I'm really making a difference. We get up every day and know we are helping people improve their lives."

AmeriCorps is the national service program that engages thousands of dedicated Americans in meeting the critical needs of communities in the areas of public safety, education, human needs, and the environment. In exchange for one or two years of service, AmeriCorps members receive educational awards to help finance their college education or pay back student loans. The Starkville Literacy Program is one of approximately 400 AmeriCorps sponsors across the country.

-end-

The last paragraph can be used in your press release to provide general information about AmeriCorps.

[From: "A Guide to Working With the Media," Office of Public Affairs, Corporation for National Service.]

Sample Media Advisory

CONTACT:
Joe Smith
212/555-1212 or

Jane Smith
212/222-3333

GOVERNOR TO VISIT AMERICORPS SITE

When: Friday, January 12, at 11:00 a.m.
Where: Starkville Literacy Program, at Emerson Elementary School, 235 Main
           Street
Who: Mississippi Governor John Doe; 15 AmeriCorps Members; Starkville
           Mayor Don Jones; literacy program director Debbie Walker

Governor Doe will visit the AmeriCorps Starkville Literacy Program to congratulate the participants on their highly successful effort to teach adults and children to read and write. Since the program's inception in September, it has improved the city's literacy rate by 5 percent.

The Governor and Mayor Jones will present a citation to the program director Debbie Walker that commends the accomplishments of this community effort.

The press is invited to cover the event.

AmeriCorps is the national service program that engages thousands of dedicated Americans in meeting the critical needs of communities in the areas of public safety, education, human needs, and the environment. In exchange for one or two years of service, AmeriCorps members receive educational awards to help finance their college education or pay back student loans. The Starkville Literacy Program is one of approximately 400 AmeriCorps sponsors across the country.

-end-

[From: "A Guide to Working With the Media," Office of Public Affairs, Corporation for National Service.]

STARKVILLE LITERACY PROGRAM

723 Scenic Drive

Starkville, MS 38759

Start Using: Upon Receipt

Stop Using: January 1st

CONTACT:

Debbie Walker

Program Director

(601) 555-7825

-15 Seconds-

AmeriCorps means getting things done.

In Starkville that means increasing the literacy rate

by tutoring children and teaching senior citizens how to read.

If you are over the age of 18, join us.

Be an AmeriCorps Member. Call 555-5555.

AmeriCorps. Getting things done.

That's 555-5555.

[From: "A Guide to Working With the Media," Office of Public Affairs, Corporation for National Service.]

APPENDIX A

Resources

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Resources From NCPC

The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) operates demonstration programs with youth, youth-serving agencies, schools, neighborhood groups, and municipal leaders. NCPC publishes books, kits of camera-ready program materials, posters, and informational and policy reports on a variety of crime prevention, youth development, and community-building subjects. Proceeds from the sale of materials, which are funded by public and private sources, are used to produce more materials and to help support the full range of NCPC's work, including the National Citizens' Crime Prevention Campaign.

For more information about NCPC programs, call 202-466-6272. The following is a list of NCPC materials that may be of special interest to the AmeriCorps supervisor. To order publications, mail your prepaid order to the National Crime Prevention Council Fulfillment Center, PO Box 1, 100 Church Street, Amsterdam, NY 12101. Or fax credit card and purchase orders to 1-518-843-6857 or order by phone at 1-800-NCPC-911.

Changing Our Course: Youth as Resources Program Guide
The how-to-do-it guide for starting this program in your own community in which youth design and lead projects to address neighborhood and community needs and problems. This hands-on manual shows each step for setting up a Youth as Resources effort in your area; provides forms, guidelines, program examples, and checklists; extensive samples of useful materials; helpful list of resources (Item M25, $24.95).

Changing Perspectives: Youth as Resources
Presents a landmark, tested, powerful approach in which communities involve youth in solving local problems. Three Indiana cities undertook to view young people as sources of solutions, not problems. Youth designed and led projects tackling drugs, homelessness, dropout rates, literacy, community safety, and more. Results? Community betterment, personal growth, and new perspectives by civic groups on youth (Item M16B, $14.95).

Charting Success: A Workbook for Developing Crime Prevention and Other Community Service Projects (Third Edition)
Extraordinary popular workbook for teens (also popular with adult groups) explores crime's impact on youth; presents sample program and project ideas young people themselves have

carried out; assists readers step-by-step to develop a workable plan for action on community problems (Item M11B, $7.95).

Creating a Climate of Hope: Ten Neighborhoods Tackle the Drug Crisis
Based on three years of work, 10 neighborhoods across the nation show how to partner with civic leaders and policymakers to reduce crime, drugs, and fear as well as build community spirit and capacity. Explains process, strategies, start-up. Inspiring and encouraging: a must for communities beset with drugs and violence (Item M23A, $14.95).

Helping Communities Mobilize Against Crime, Drugs, and Other Problems
Treasure-trove of lessons learned around the country about success in spurring communities to action. Style, approach, and operations are touched on in this compact guide (Item M43A, $5.95).

Ink and Airtime: Working Effectively With the Media
Soup-to-nuts basic guide for setting up local press relations, from how to write and present a news release to ideas for active partnerships with media. Frames approaches to coverage in a community context. Includes forms for developing press contact list, profiling media outlets, developing catchy story leads. Explains use of news conferences, special events, handling of "bad news." A must for groups that want to tell their story (Item M5B, $14.95).

Making Children, Families, and Communities Safer From Violence
A 24-page booklet is action-packed with a range of things individuals can do to prevent or reduce violence, including gun-related violence against family and friends, neighborhood, or community. Profiles of real-life programs that help curb

violence are complemented by tips for success in talking with children, working with neighbors, and building community strength. Extensive resource list, family-neighborhood-community checklist, referral phone list, and two posters to help in talking with children are included. Call 1-800-WE PREVENT for a free copy.

More Adventures With Scruff
Colorful comic/activity book continues the adventures of Scrufff. Helps children handle situations that involve guns, bullies, and drugs. Individual copies free by writing Scruff-McGruff, Chicago, IL 60651.

National Service and Public Safety: Partnerships for Safer Communities
Describes new national service legislation, wealth of public safety opportunities for AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America programs. Demonstrates how law enforcement, community groups, prosecutors and probation and parole, and corrections staffs can benefit from AmeriCorps services (Item NS1, free while supplies last).

Planning is a Verb
How do you focus community energy and effort? How can citizens decide what problems to tackle and how to proceed? How can planning itself strengthen community spirit and commitment? This idea-packed book shows how planning benefits everyone; provides easy-to-follow road map through process; explains how civic leadership can be tapped; offers forms and checklists for identifying community needs. Full of practical examples of communities that have used planning techniques with exciting results (Item M10B, $14.95).

Preventing Violence: Program Ideas and Examples
Extraordinary guide to ways to invest community in violence prevention. Shows how and why to

recruit key partners including law enforcement, schools, community groups, policymakers; explains crucial strategies for anti-violence work. In-depth profiles of 27 programs—from gang prevention for youth and adults to conflict management, from domestic violence prevention to dealing with violence on TV—demonstrate diversity of approaches that can help with this major social problem (Item M21A, $11.95).

Reach and Teach Your Peers!
This handbook is designed to help teens become peer educators. Explains how to research and design a presentation, and provides hints on delivering the presentation (Item M61, $5.95).

Reaching Out: School-Based Community Service Programs
Shows how schools around the nation have laid the groundwork for community service. Packed with ideas, tips, and examples of effective programs in wide range of settings. Describes choices in designing and starting up a program; profiles more than two dozen successful efforts; provides reproducible worksheets and training aids for implementing programs and working with youth (M8A, $14.95).

The Power to Change (Video)
As told by youth and community residents, this video protrays the powerful impact youth can have on improving community environments in inner city neighborhoods. Through participation in Youth as Resources, youth tackle social problems through volunteer service projects which are designed and directed by the youth themselves. Youth and adults partner to take responsibility and make changes in their communities. The application of this program to public housing and other urban settings is the focus of this video (Item V7A, $19.95).

What, Me Evaluate?
Shows how local program evaluation can be a positive tool for documenting achievements and

improving future efforts; links evaluation to program goals in clear, practical terms. Debunks myths that evaluation must be complex to be useful; explains how to avoid common errors. Provides sample evaluation plans, community survey forms; discusses basic survey techniques. Helpful to numerous community-grounded programs (Item M4B, $14.95).

Youth as Resources: The Power Within (Video) Compelling 15-minute video shows how youth solve community problems and how communities and youth benefit on many levels. Presents concept; provides basis for discussing both Youth as Resources program and youth-community relationships (Item V5A, $19.95).

Frequently Asked Questions
Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA)

Frequently Asked Questions

Training and Technical Assistance is offered at the State and National level to strengthen the capacity of grantees and sub grantees to accomplish their program objectives. Training and technical assistance provides the tools, challenge, and support that makes quality possible. The training and technical assistance network has been established with the expectation that program and commission staff including supervisors will ask for help when needed.

Q. What assistance is available?

A. Various types of T/TA services include:
- On-site consultations
- Training workshops
- Strong and relevant information materials, drawing on the best from the field
  —Sample forms
  —Guidelines and checklists
  —Easy to use training curricula
  —Bibliographies of best practices
- Phone consultation and troubleshooting
- On-line consultation and materials
- Peer exchange opportunities—in person, on the phone, or on-line

Q. At what levels is T/TA provided?

A. AmeriCorps Training and Technical Assistance is provided at the level of the individual AmeriCorps program using T/TA funds that are included in every program budget, it is provided by State Commissions or by the national offices of National Director grantees, and it is provided by the Corporation through national T/TA providers.

In Programs:

Programs include T/TA to sharpen member skills, improve management, and to keep finding new and better ways to serve their communities.

From State Commissions:

State Commissions provide T/TA through PDAT grants (Program Development Assistance and Training) which are competitively awarded by the Corporation. Activities to be funded are those aimed at developing program staff and their organizations. Member training specific to the local program is usually included in the sub grantees budget. Only member training in the form of statewide or regional events conducted collaboratively by multiple programs may be supported by PDA funds.

From the Corporation:

The Corporation's national T/TA providers

- Fill in and balance T/TA offerings provided by the programs and the States;
- Target areas, like supervisory skills, where national materials and trainings need to be created;
- Make available high quality offerings to all regardless of location or local resources;
- Draw from the many traditions of service, including
  —Organizations experienced in traditional volunteer efforts—the United Way, the Catholic Network of Voluntary Services
  —The corps community—National Association of Service and Conservation Corps (NASCC)
  —Skilled service providers—the Visiting Nurses Association, the National Crime Prevention Council, and others
  —Education and service-learning professionals—through the National Youth Leadership Council's Service-Learning Clearinghouse
- Reinforce national identity;
- Collect and disseminate nationally the best materials and training designs developed in the field; and
- Facilitate peer exchange.

Q. How can T/TA services be accessed?

A. Requests for TA can be made at any time through your State Commission or national Direct Headquarters or by direct contact with the provider. A grid showing the T/TA providers and the services they offer can be found the next page.

Q. Who decides which T/TA requests will be funded?

A. Requests for on-site consultations are reviewed jointly by the State Commission or National Direct Headquarters, the CNS program officer, and CNS TA staff before funding decisions are made. Space at training workshops can be reserved with a telephone call to the provider. Telephone assistance is available from some providers by calling them directly.

Training and Technical Assistance Providers

Providers

Agency/Contacts	T/TA Focus Area	Phone, Fax, and E-Mail Address	Workshops, conferences, seminars	On-site T/TA	T/TA by phone and teleconferencing	Providing and/or developing written materials	On-line materials and e-mail communication	Facilitating peer exchange and site visits	Referral to other resources
Aguirre International 　Jo Ann Intili	Technical Assistance to State Commissions	415-349-1842 fax 415-345-3648 jintili@ai.web.com	■	■					
American Medical Student Association Foundation 　Erin Fuller 　Martha Cockrell	Preventive Health Care	800-491-AMSA 703-620-6600 x209/256 fax 703-620-5873 erin_f@www.amsa.org martha_c@www.amsa.org	■	■	■	■	■		
Catholic Network of Volunteer Service 　Simon Park 　Maggie Fogarty	Peer Exchange; The Basics of National Service	800-543-5046 202-529-1100 fax 202-526-1094 cnvs@mtolympus.ari.net	■	■	■	■		■	
Center for Democracy and Citizenship 　Harry C. Boyte 　Nan Skelton	Citizenship	612-625-5509 fax 612-625-3513 NSkelton@HHH.umn.edu						■	
Center for National Service and the Environment 　Brian Trelstad 　Hayley Mortimer	Environment	415-561-5950 fax 415-561-5955 americorps@igc.apc.org	■	■	■	■	■		
Constitutional Rights Foundation 　Todd Clark 　Kathleen Kirby	Citizenship	213-487-5590 fax 213-386-0459 CRFCitizen@aol.com						■	
Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center/DHHS 　Betty McLeod 　Ray Collins 　Anne Goldstein	School Readiness/Early Childhood Development	800-616-2242 fax 800-716-2242 rcollins@acf.dhhs.gov agoldstein@acf.dhhs.gov	■	■	■	■	■		■

Agency/Contacts	T/TA Focus Area	Phone, Fax, and E-Mail Address	Workshops, conferences, seminars	On-site T/TA	T/TA by phone and teleconferencing	Providing and/or developing written materials	On-line materials and e-mail communication	Facilitating peer exchange and site visits	Referral to other resources
ETR Associates Susan Hillyard Ian Shearer Jennice Fishburn	National Service Resource Center	800-860-2684 408-438-4060 fax 408-438-3618 susan@etr-associates.org ian@etr-associates.org jennice@etr-associates.org			■	■	■		■
Human Resources Development Institute Linda Clemons Sondra Lewsey	Financial Management Services	202-638-3912 fax 202-783-6536 71112.103@Compuserve.com	■	■		■			
Indiana University Center on Philanthropy: The Fund Raising School Jennifer Staashelm	Fundraising	800-962-6692 fax 317-684-8939 jstaashe@indyvax.iupui.edu	■						
Mosaica Diane Cabrales	Pre-Service Training	202-887-0620 fax 202-887-0812 mosaica@ix.netcom.com				■			
National Association for Community Mediation Bill Ferguson Joanne Hartman	Conflict Resolution Skills Training	202-467-6226 fax 202-466-4769 nafcm@igc.apc.org	■			■			
National Association of Service and Conservation Corps Emilio Williams Harry Bruell	Technical Assistance to Crew-Based Programs	800-666-2722 202-737-6272 fax 202-737-6277 ewilliams@igc.apc.org hbruell@igc.apc.org	■	■	■	■		■	
National Crime Prevention Council Maria Nagorski Gary Lacy Laurie Richardson	Public Safety; TA for Front-Line Supervisors	202-466-6272 x151/163/182 fax 202-785-0698 Nagorski@NCPC.org Lacy@NCPC.org Richardson@NCPC.org	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■	■ ■			

Agency/Contacts	T/TA Focus Area	Phone, Fax, and E-Mail Address	Workshops, conferences, seminars	On-site T/TA	T/TA by phone and teleconferencing	Providing and/or developing written materials	On-line materials and e-mail communication	Facilitating peer exchange and site visits	Referral to other resources

National MultiCultural Institute
  Manny Brandt
  JoAnn Cohn
  Rossana Miranda-Johnston
	Diversity	800-808-4359
		202-332-4359
		fax 202-483-5233
		lfvw06a@prodigy.com
			■	■	■	■	■		

NorthWest Regional Educational Laboratory Nancy Henry	AmeriCorps Network Northwest (Northwest states: ID, WA, OR, MT)	800-547-6339 x611 503-275-9611 fax 503-275-0443 henryn@nwrel.org	■		■		■		■
Presidio Leadership Center Lisa Spinali	Leadership	415-561-5950 fax 415-561-5955 americorps@igc.apc.org	■			■		■	

Project STAR (Support and Training for Assessing Results)
  Ken Terao
  Paula Bilinsky
	Evaluation	800-548-3656
		fax 415-345-3648
		star@aism.attmail.com
				■	■	■	■		

Shimberg Center for Affordable Housing, University of Florida
  Dr. Robert C. Stroh
  Dr. Marc Smith
	Housing	800-259-5705
		fax 904-392-4364
		affhsng@nervm.nerdc.ufl.edu
				■	■	■	■		■

Southern Regional Council
  Tenera McPherson
  Marcia Klenbort
	School Success	404-522-8764
		fax 404-522-8791
		73251.2024@compuserve.com
			■	■	■	■	■		

United Cerebral Palsy Associations/Access AmeriCorps
  Susan Finisdore
  Charlotte Foster
	Disability Issues (T/TA for State Commissions)	202-973-7119
		202-973-7103
		fax 202-776-0414
		103213.1725@compuserve.com
		CharlotFos@aol.com
			■		■	■	■		■

Agency/Contacts	T/TA Focus Area	Phone, Fax, and E-Mail Address	Workshops, conferences, seminars	On-site T/TA	T/TA by phone and teleconferencing	Providing and/or developing written materials	On-line materials and e-mail communication	Facilitating peer exchange and site visits	Referral to other resources

United Way of America/Volunteerism Project (lead agency)
  Jim Patterson
  Nora Silver
	Program Management/ Organizational Development	415-772-4333
		fax 415-391-8302
		uwayta@aol.com
		volpjct@aol.com
			■		■				

United Way of Allegheny County Silchen Lee	Atlantic	412-456-6841 fax 412-394-5376 uwaclee@city-net.com	■		■				
United Way of Chicago Eileen Cronin	North Central	312-580-2812 fax 312-580-2860 uwcecronin@aol.com	■		■				
United Way of the Mid-South Pat Daum	South	901-272-5029 fax 901-272-5099 mryxmaspat@aol.com	■		■				
Vounteer Center of Austin, TX Sandy Duncan	Southwest	512-338-9377 fax 512-345-9752	■		■				
The Volunteerism Project Jackie Jordan-Davis	Pacific	510-245-0450 fax 510-245-0453 jjdvolpcjt@aol.com	■		■				
Visiting Nurses' Association of America/University of Maryland Laura Wilson	Independent Living	410-992-8051 fax 301-314-9167 lw20@umail.umd.edu	■		■				

CLUSTERS