

Foundations of Practice

*Community Development
Core Competencies for
Extension Professionals in
the North Central Region*



Foundations of Practice

SLIDE

2

The Foundations of Practice: Community Development Core Competencies for Extension Professionals is composed of three major components:

- Understanding Communities and their Dynamics
- Developing Successful Community Initiatives
- Areas of Specialization and Emphasis

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Component 1

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3

The first component, Understanding Communities and their Dynamics, is a series of seven core competencies that focus on:

- The ability to understand community of place.
- The nature of public issues.
- The dynamics and interdependencies of the various segments of the community.
- The basics of community development work.

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Understanding Communities and their Dynamics

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Basic Understanding of Community

Community Demographics

Community Economics

Community Power Structure

Natural Resources and Sustainability

Community Situational Analysis

Community Development Process

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Community
Power Structure



Janet Ayres



Janet Ayres

SLIDE

6

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- Senior Fellow at NCRCRD developing *The Foundations of Practice* program
- 29 year career at Purdue in Leadership & Community Development; served as program leader for 6 years
- Developed the *Indiana Natural Resources Leadership Development Program*
- Developed over a dozen state-wide leadership development programs
- Past involvement in over 20 regional projects including the *Take Charge* program
- Currently working with a new College of Agriculture undergraduate leadership certificate program.
- Teaches undergraduate leadership course titled, *Leadership in a Changing World*.
- Developed leadership development programs in Poland and Russia.

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Learning Objectives

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- Learn how to identify key power actors and structures in the community and why it is important to know.
- Understand key concepts of power, authority, leadership & social capital.
- Understand how the concepts have changed, yet many people & institutions have not.
- Understand that community issues in today's reality call for a different type of power and leadership.
- Learn how community development addresses these issues.

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Discussion on Activity

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In your community...

- Who are the people who influence major community decisions?
- Why did you identify him/her?

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Traditional Characteristics of Power Actors

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- Majority in 40-65 age range
- Above average income
- Above average education
- Business/professional occupations
- Long-term residents
- Do not reflect the diverse population
- Control key resources in community

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Community Power Actors Determine...

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- Which community issues are addressed, or not addressed.
- The outcomes of community decisions.
- Allocation of internal or external resources needed for community action.

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Support Block



Importance of Understanding Community Power Dynamics

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In order to develop more inclusive, effective community programs, we need to know...

- Who has the *authority* to make community decisions.
- Who controls/influences *resources*.
- Who is not part of the decision making process that *ought* to be there.
- How to build community power from both *within* and *outside* the community.

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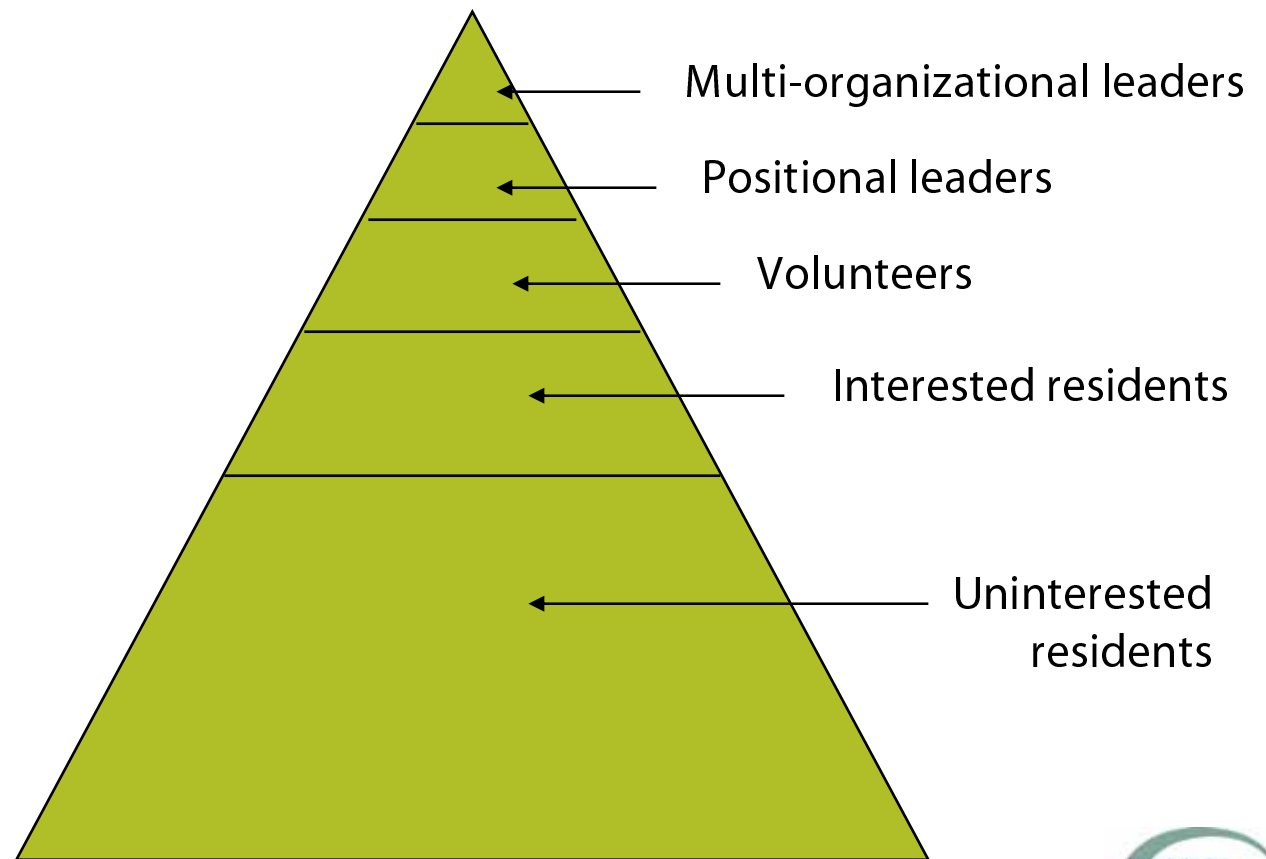


Community Involvement

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Identifying Community Power Actors

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Reputation

Those with the reputation for community power among knowledgeable members of the community.

Positional

People in organizational positions with *authority* to make decisions.

Event Analysis

People who participate most actively in community events.

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Community Power Structures

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The community's power structure is the way in which those with community power relate to each other.

- Pyramid
- Factional
- Special Interest
- Coalition
- Amorphous

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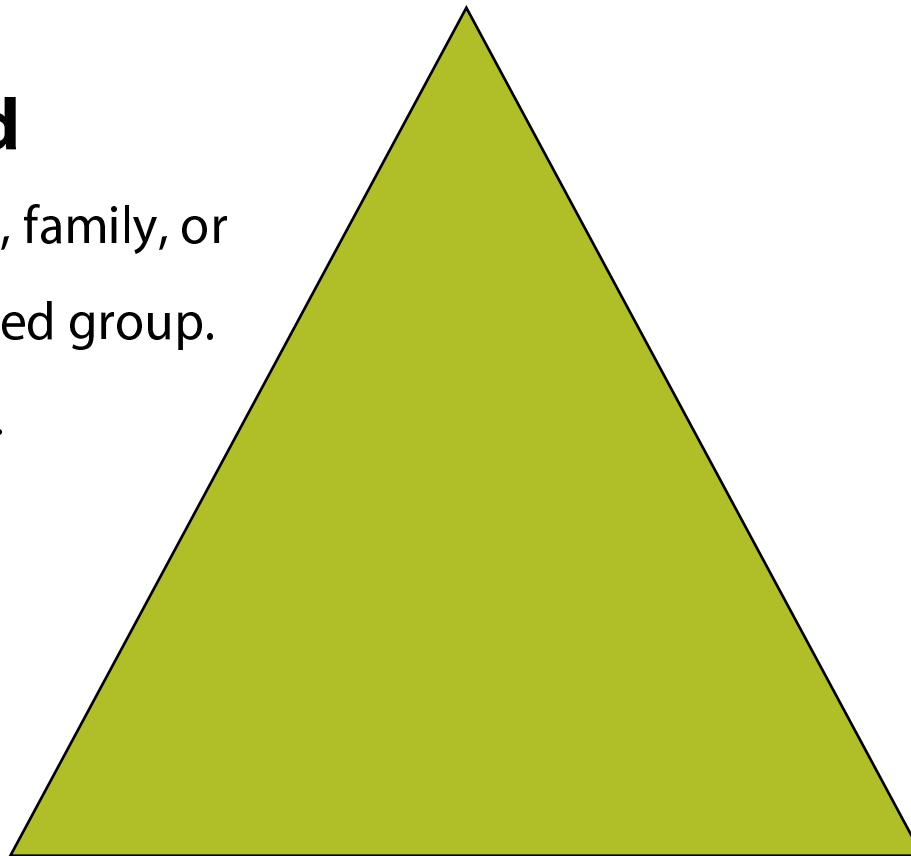
Types of Community Power Structures

SLIDE 15

Pyramid

One person, family, or tightly knitted group.

A hierarchy.



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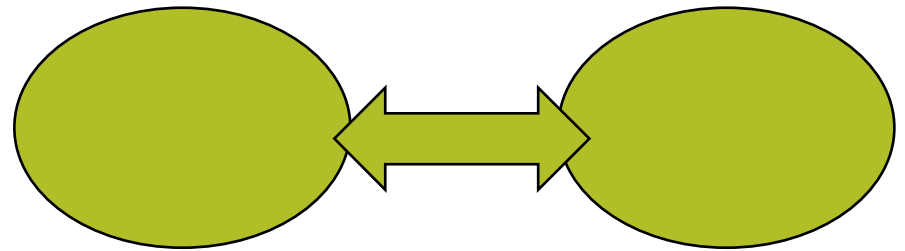
Types of Community Power Structures

SLIDE 16

Factional

A community split by more than one group.

- Labor/Management
- Religious groups
- Political groups
- Others?



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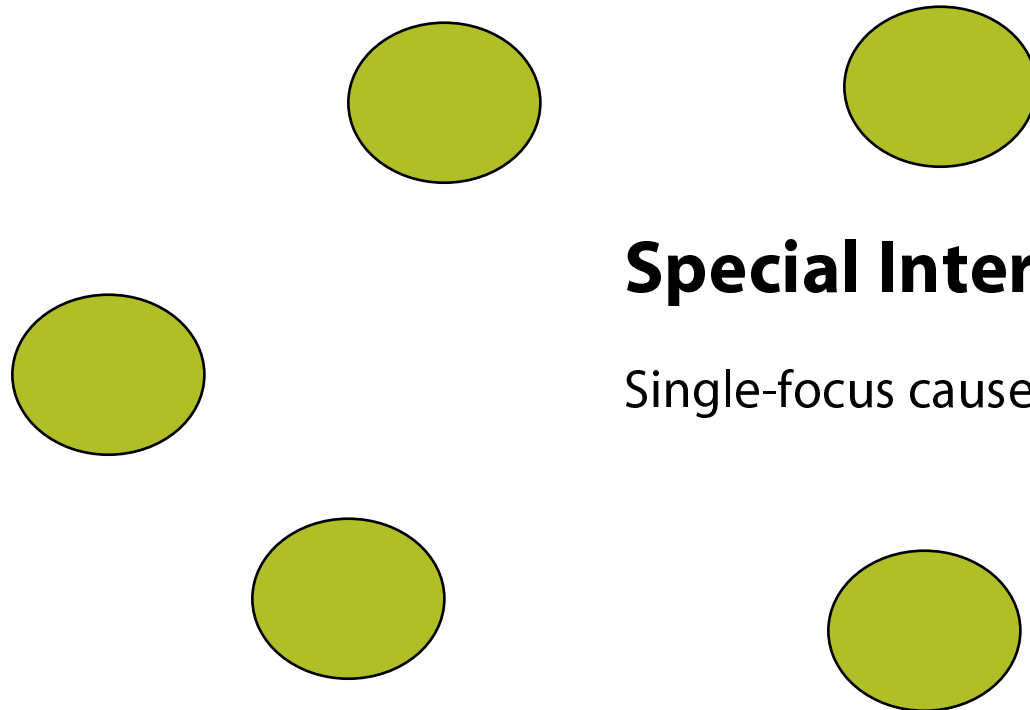


Types of Community Power Structures

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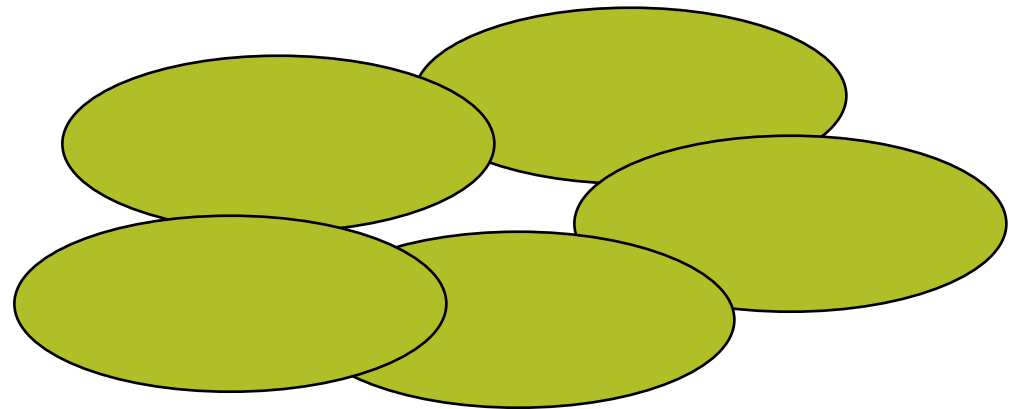


Types of Community Power Structures

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Coalition

Collaboration of
multiple groups



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Types of Community Power Structures

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Amorphous

Lack of clearly identified leadership

Often during a time of transition

External Power

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While a community has internal power, power is also derived from external sources.

Can you identify some external power sources?



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Concepts Have Changed

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How we think about *power* and *leadership* has changed over the last few decades. Technology, the Internet and the globalization of our world have affected our lives in many ways, including leadership.

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Traditional Leadership

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- Focus on individual or few people with power
- More emphasis on authority of individual/position
- More homogeneous population
- Change occurred over longer time periods
- Limited involvement by residents
- Information not shared/processes not open
- Decisions made by those in authority

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Community Issues Today

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- Rapid change
- Complex – no simple solutions, multi-party
- Controversial – many perspectives
- Cross multiple jurisdictions – “no one in charge”
- Different levels of power exercised
- Different levels of knowledge exercised
- Strongly held values
- Largely left unmanaged

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Contemporary Leadership

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- Focus on leadership as a process, rather than on individual
- Change & conflict are prevalent
- Vision is essential
- Influence others toward vision & action
- Inclusive of stakeholders, diverse people & cultures
- Transparent processes (information & decisions)
- Ability to create a path as it is walked (courage & ambiguity)
- Ability to work across jurisdictions/boundaries

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Contemporary Leadership

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“Leadership is the inspiration and mobilization of others to undertake collective action in the pursuit of the common good.”

-- John M. Bryson and Barbara C. Crosby

Leadership for the Common Good Fieldbook

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Shifts in Key Concepts -- *Authority*

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Related to the concept of power is *authority*.

Authority entails the rights, expectations, and responsibilities given to a person who occupies a *position*.

Examples: Mayor, county commissioner, editor of local newspaper. These individuals are frequently referred to as *community leaders*.

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Shifts in Key Concepts -- *Authority*

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Ronald Heifetz at Harvard says that those in positions of authority often find it difficult to be a leader because of the expectations that person and others have of the position and the resistance to change.

Authority is a *position*; leadership is a *process*.

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Shifts in Key Concepts -- *Power*

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Power – a definition...

The ability to control or influence the decisions and/or actions of others.

The concept of power *over others* has changed to *shared power with others*.

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Shifts in Key Concepts -- *Power*

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Power...

the ability to do, to act.

Motivation + Resources = Power

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Shifts in Key Concepts -- *Power*

SLIDE **30**

What might **motivate** a person to get involved in the community?

- Be involved with others; socialize
- Do something important; make a difference
- Obligation/expected – the “right” thing to do
- Feels good to help others; learn something new
- Other reasons?

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Shifts in Key Concepts -- *Power*

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Community resources might include:

- Volunteers, knowledge, skills, talents, time, labor
- Money, grants, loans
- Networks with resources outside community
- Natural resources
- Physical resources
- Moral standards
- Political connections
- Other resources?

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Power Exists Within Many Entities

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- Individuals
- Families
- Groups
- Organizations
- Agencies/institutions
- Community – the network/relationships among these units is referred to as **social capital**

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Social Capital

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The ability of a community to address its important issues, to take collective action, is related to the levels of relationships and trust that exist between individuals and organizations in the community.

Fundamental to effective community development work is the ability to engage more and diverse people who are motivated and with skills & knowledge to be able to participate effectively.

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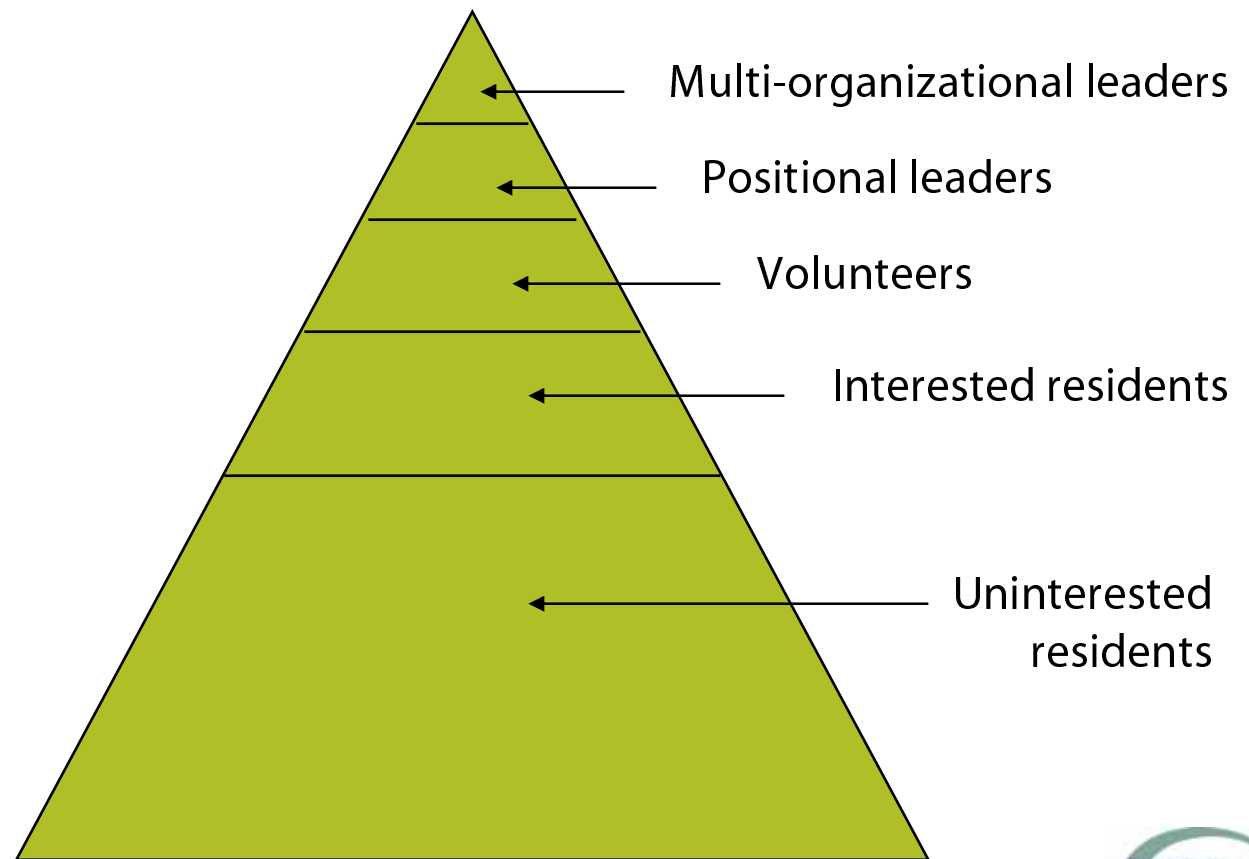


Community Involvement

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Why Do So Few Participate?

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Ability to Participate

- Don't have or take the time
- Don't have the energy
- Feel powerless, it won't make a difference
- Not knowledgeable of community issues
- Feel they lack communication or other skills
- Lack the self confidence or courage
- Have never been asked

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Why Do So Few Participate?

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Sense of Civic Responsibility

- Don't see community issues as their concern
- Not interested in community issues
- Feel powerless to make a difference

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Community Power

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Fundamental to building community power is:

- Capacity building to increase the skills and knowledge of individuals and organizations
- Trusting relationships between individuals and organizations
- Frequent and open communication
- Transparent processes
- External power

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External Power

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While there is power internal to the community, power can also be derived from external sources.

- Can you identify external power sources?



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Leadership Concepts & Community Institutions

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- While individuals may embrace new concepts of leadership and power, they may not know how to put the concept into action. Different skills are needed today.
- Institutions are slow to change and may be based on traditional models.
- Communities are composed of both, creating a **disconnect** between talk and action.

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Does a Community Have Power?

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A way to think about whether or not a community has power to act, is to assess the following:

- When a community faces a critically important issue, how is the issue resolved? What is the process? Who is involved? How is the decision made and by whom?
- Do people come together to discuss and debate community issues which affect them?
- Is there a sense of trust in the community?

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Collaboration – A Way to Build Community Power

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Collaboration is ...

“A process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible.”

B. Gray in *Collaborating*.
San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1989.

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Criteria for Successful Collaboration

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1. Is the strategy likely to produce substantial, systemic, and sustainable results?
2. Is the strategy likely to bring people together in ways that heal rather than divide?
3. Does the strategy engage citizens in the process, in new and deeply democratic ways?
4. Will the strategy enhance the civic culture of the community or the region? Will it build the civic community? Will it make us stronger, more capable of dealing with future issues? Does it build trust among us? Does it build networks of reciprocity? Does it build the skills of collaboration?

David Chrislip. <http://www.well.com/~bbear/chrislip.html>

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Community Development Challenges

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Community development is about developing the capacity of residents to more fully engage in their community and the public issues that affect them. This work creates challenges:

- How do we engage more people in community development work?
- How do we engage people who have not been involved in the community?

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Community Development Challenges

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- How do we develop the capacity of people to be able to participate effectively?
- How do we address traditional mind sets & institutions?
- How do we develop more trusting relationships?
- How do we negotiate reciprocal external relationships?
- What is Extension's role?

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Foundations of Practice

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Many of these “how to” questions will be addressed in the up-coming Foundations of Practice in Fall 2006:

- Component 2 (processes)
- Component 3 (programs, workshops and interest groups)

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Resources

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Chrislip, David D. 2002. *The Collaborative Leadership Fieldbook*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Joe Flower's Conversation with David Chrislip. *Collaboration: The New Leadership*. Available on-line at:

<http://www.well.com/~bbear/chrislip.html>

Joe Flower's Conversation with Ronald Heifetz. *Ronald Heifetz: Leadership without Easy Answers*. Available on-line at:

<http://www.well.com/~bbear/heifetz.html>

University of Minnesota Extension. *Leadership for the Common Good Fieldbook*. Available on-line at:

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/distribution/citizenship/DH8118.html>

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Next Session

SLIDE

47

Natural Resources and Sustainability

October 17 and October 18, 2006

1:30 to 3 p.m. CST



Mary Emery

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The ability to understand the impact of decisions on the quality of natural resources and the long-term sustainability of the environment is an important component of community development.

