

Foundations of Practice

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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

Component 1

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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.

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 Situational Analysis






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Phil Alexander

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Phil Alexander

Since 1984 Phil has served the 20 counties in the northern lower peninsula of Michigan as the District Extension Educator for Community and Economic Development. In addition, for the past three years he is also the Otsego County Extension Director. He is an active member on two Area of Expertise Teams—Tourism and Community Development

Phil is the author or co-author of several Extension publications. Current programming is focused on strategic planning, leadership development, non profit board development, and local history.

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Learning Objectives

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- A. Understand what is meant by the term Situational Analysis
- B. Increase the level of understanding on how to assess the dynamics of the community
- C. Learn how to determine if it is an appropriate time for a community development program
- D. Explore Extension's role in community development based on current conditions and the community's level of preparedness




Today's Plan of Attack

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1. Basic overview of the situational analysis process
2. Apply concepts to Ourtown case study
3. Discuss roles for Extension and Educator




A. What is Situational Analysis?

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- The ability to analyze a particular issue or situation in a community from a historical, political cultural and community context
- A systematic method of collecting, analyzing, and delivering information about current conditions, issues, problems, opportunities, and challenges facing stakeholders within a defined geographic area



Needs and Assets

Kretzman and McKnight

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Traditional Approach

Based on: Needs

Goal: Institutional Change

Conversation: Problems/Concerns

Change agent: Power

Needs based on community problems:

- Unemployment
- Gangs/ crime
- Housing shortage
- litteracy
- Broken families
- Lead poisoning
- Child abuse

Alternative Approach

Based on: Assets

Goal: Building Community

Conversation: Gifts and Dreams

Change agent: Relationship

Assets based on community "treasures":

- Youth
- Elderly
- Artists
- Businesses
- Parks
- Cultural groups & Civic clubs
- Library


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Why? Desired Outcomes

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- A clear and detailed understanding of the social, economic, and environmental processes operating in a geographic area
- Improved decision making
- Better prepared to plan for the future

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"It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so."

What is the scope?

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- Holistic approach (CAT)
- Focus on a particular dimension or issue (Kitten)
 - Health Care
 - Economic Development
 - Retiree Attraction
 - Poverty
 - Water Quality
 - Sprawl
- Something in between





MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

Community Assessment Team Home Page

Helping Knowledge Grow!

Since 1996, MSU Extension's Community Assessment Team has used a four-part visit to communities to help them develop and assess plans for future development. The team is composed of a multi-disciplinary set of individuals who come together with a cross-section of concerned community members, gather and process information. The Community Assessment Team focuses on alternative approaches to the community's future development. The team produces a set of recommendations that the community then provides for action.


Total sites for available consideration for a Community Assessment Team visit

B. Take Charge model

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- Step 1: Where are we now?
- Step 2: Where do we want to be?
- Step 3: How do we get there?




Take Charge model cont'd

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Step 1:
Where are we now? (and how did we get here?)

- Historical context
- Review the 7 Capitals & Quality of Life
- Assess the community's level of readiness
- Gather information
 - What data already exists?
 - What additional information is needed?

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Case Study: Ourtown

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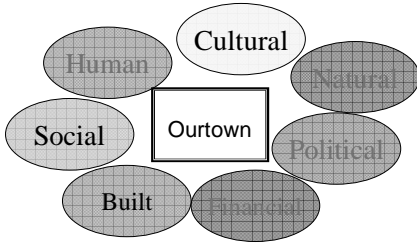
- Overview and Introduction to Ourtown
- Review situational analysis process
- Apply to Ourtown

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Community Capitals

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Capital Defined

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Community Capital

The term "capital" is often used to mean money. However, money is not always capital, nor is capital simply money.

Capital can be defined as resources capable of producing other resources

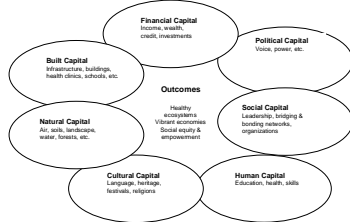
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Examples of each Capital

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Social Capital Analysis


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<h2>Human Capital Analysis</h2>	
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<h2>Political Capital Analysis</h2>	
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<h2>Cultural Capital Analysis</h2>	
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		Financial Capital Analysis
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		Built Capital Analysis
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		Natural Capital Analysis
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Quality of Life


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Community Quality of Life Survey
University of Nevada Extension
SP-03-08

UWEX -- Indicator Checklist

Building Healthy Communities Checklist
by David Darling

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Gather Information

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- Existing Information
 - Census
 - Economic Profile
 - Previous Studies and Reports
- Additional Information Needed
 - Surveys
 - Focus Groups
 - Public Meetings and Forums
 - Interviews

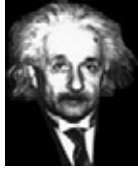
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Secondary Data

Source: Conducting Community Situational Analysis
Loretta Singletary
University of Nevada Cooperative Extension

Advantages	Disadvantages
1. Easily accessible and readily available at a low cost.	1. Reliability of data is highly dependant on the reliability of the source.
2. Provides a quick snapshot of a community over a period of time.	2. Time lags. Depending on the indicator and source of the data, may not reflect the current year.
3. Provides a quick comparison to other communities, state, and national.	3. Interpretation of data may only be in the eyes of the beholder. Community may not agree with data.
4. When combined with primary data, provides a comprehensive assessment of the community.	4. Subscribing or purchasing data can be very costly.



**"Not everything that can be counted counts
and
not everything that counts can be counted"**

C. Community Readiness

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- Is the community ready for change?
- Political Climate
- Level of Controversy
- Timing

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Checklist

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Dr. Duhi suggests six characteristics which determine the health of a community. A healthy community has:

- A common sense of community, including its history and values that are strengthened by a network of leaders,
- People and community groups who feel empowered and have a sense of control,
- An absence of divided turf, conflict and polarization,

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Checklist cont'd

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- Structures where people from diverse groups can come together to work out decisions about the community,
- Leadership that functions both from the top down and the bottom up,
- Effective channels for networking, communication and cooperation among those who live and lead there.



Analysis

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Examine and summarize the data collected

Try to remain open-minded & avoid being bias

Based on SWOT and Level of preparedness

Risks, Consequences and Payoff

So what? – Recommendations and Action




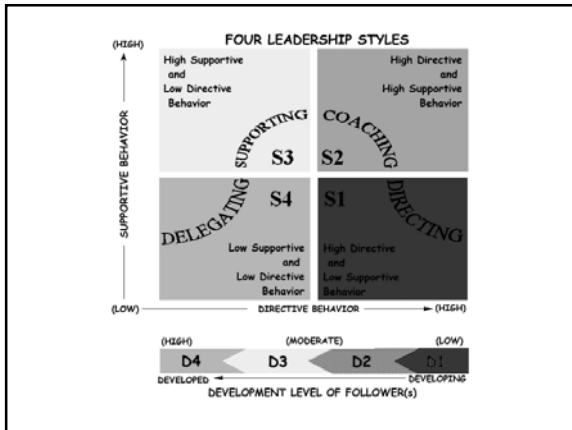
D. Roles for Extension

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- Convener
- Facilitator
- Resource Person / Information Provider
- Teacher / Educator
- Practitioner
- Participant / Collaborator
- Other? (maybe no role)






Summary

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- A systematic method of collecting, analyzing, and delivering information about current conditions, issues, problems, opportunities, and challenges facing stakeholders within a community
- Use an Holistic Approach
- Be Inclusive
- Means to and End

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Reflection Questions

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1. How do we understand what's really going on in a community? To whom do we listen? How do we obtain our information? What are our biases? Are we inclusive? Are we holistic in our thinking?
2. How do we really know if it's the "right time" for an educational program?
3. How do we assess risks? Risks to self? Risks to Extension? Risks to community?

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References

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Using a Multidisciplinary Approach to Conduct a Situational Analysis. USDA NRCS Social Science Institute. www.ssi.nrcs.usda.gov


Conducting Community Situational Analysis: A field guide to dynamic Extension programming. Loretta Singletery, editor. University of Nevada Cooperative Extension

Situation Analysis. By Roger Rennekamp, Julie Zimmerman, and Martha Nall. University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service

Leadership for Healthy Communities: Characteristics of Healthy Communities. By David Darling and Gayla Randel. Cooperative Extension Service—Kansas State University—Manhattan

Conducting Your Own Survey by Salant and Dillman


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Next Session

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Community Development Process and Evaluation of the Series



Tim Borich

The ability to know how to organize and mobilize resources for action, as well as possible barriers, is necessary in developing programs that are meaningful and effective.

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