



# Foundations of Practice

Community Development Core Competencies for Extension Professionals in the North Central region

Community Power Structure

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## Janet Ayres



SLIDE 2

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- Senior Fellow at NCRCRD developing *The Foundations of Practice* program
- 30 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

SLIDE 3

- Learn how to identify key people who influence community decisions in the community and why this is important to know.
- Understand key concepts of power, authority, leadership & social capital.
- Understand that community issues in today's reality call for a different type of power and leadership than in the past.
- Learn how community development processes address these issues.




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## Discussion on Activity

SLIDE 4

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 Key Influentials

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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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## Contemporary Characteristics of Key Influentials

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Do the people you identified reflect these traditional characteristics?

How is your community different?

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## Key Community Influentials Determine...

SLIDE 7

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

**Support      Block**

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## 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 key decision making processes that *ought* to be there.
- How to build community power from both *within* and *outside* the community.

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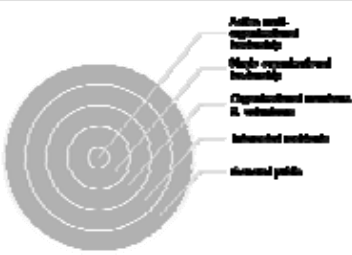
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## Levels of Community Involvement

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## Identifying Key Community Influentials

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### Reputation

People with the reputation for influencing what happens in the community among knowledgeable people.

### 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

SLIDE 11

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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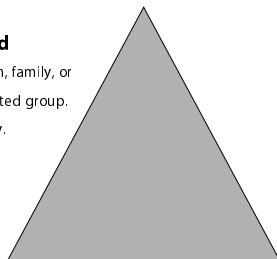
## Types of Community Power Structures

SLIDE 12

### Pyramid

One person, family, or tightly knitted group.

A hierarchy.



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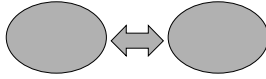
# Types of Community Power Structures

SLIDE 13

## Factional

A community split by more than one group.

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



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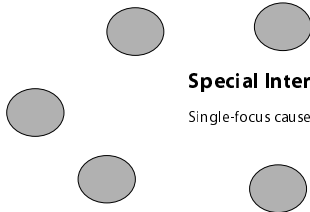
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# Types of Community Power Structures

SLIDE 14

## Special Interest

Single-focus cause



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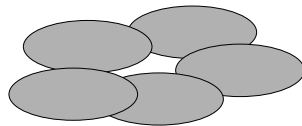
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# Types of Community Power Structures

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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



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# 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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# A Changing World

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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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**SLIDE 19**

**Traditional Leadership**

- 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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**SLIDE 20**

**Community Issues Today**

- 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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**SLIDE 21**

**Contemporary Leadership**

- 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**

SLIDE **23**

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**

SLIDE **24**

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

SLIDE 25

A traditional definition of power:

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

The concept of *power over others* has shifted to a perspective of *shared power with others*.

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## Shifts in Key Concepts -- Power

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If power is defined as the ability to do, to act, then what does it take?

Motivation + Resources = Power

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## Shifts in Key Concepts -- Power

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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
- Political connections
- Other resources?



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## Building Community Power

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Fundamental to building community power, is the ability to motivate and engage more and diverse people with skills & knowledge to be able to participate effectively. And, to connect people and organizations with the resources needed to accomplish their collective goals.



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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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## Does a Community Have Power?

SLIDE 31

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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## Extension's Role in Building Community Power

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How does Extension help communities build their power, their ability to take action?

What is Extension's role?

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## Reflection Questions

SLIDE 33

- How do we engage more people, and those not previously involved, in meaningful community work?
- 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 within the community?
- How do we negotiate reciprocal external relationships?

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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>

Krile, James F. 2006. *The Community Leadership Handbook*. St. Paul, MN: Fieldstone Alliance Publishing Center.

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 35

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Anne Heinze Silvis

**Community Situational Analysis**  
**October 16 and 17, 2007**  
**1:30 to 3 p.m. CST**

The ability to analyze a particular issue or situation in a community from a historical, political, cultural and community context and determine Extension's role in the issue is an important competency of community development.



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