



# Empowering Leaders

## Empowering Leaders

Like the variety of the coalitions they represent, the variety of leaders and leadership styles is diverse. This chapter highlights practices and tools for sound leadership such as fiscal management, ethical behavior, collaborative leadership, awareness of group dynamics, ability to deal with different personalities and conflict, plus establishing and following procedures to help coalition members feel safe and respected.

### Creating a Collaborative Environment

Keep members working on a task. They need to see outcomes and feel they are really making a difference in their community. Create an environment where they know their input is valued and appreciated. They should realize they are an important part of the team.

*DaNita Carlson, Tobacco Free Coalition of Wood County, Wood County, WI, Northwoods Coalition member*

## Collaborative Leadership

The University of Kansas' Community Toolbox defines collaborative leadership as “taking a leadership role in a coalition, organization, or other enterprise where everyone is on an equal footing and working together to solve a problem, create something new, or run an organization or initiative. The leader is not in control of the group, but has responsibility for guiding and coordinating the process by which the group decides upon and carries out actions to accomplish its goals.” A checklist to help coalition leaders assess their level of collaboration is included in this chapter.

## Leadership Ethics

Sound leadership practices include many of the following elements:

- **Establish and follow procedures:** By-laws should outline certain coalition procedures such as voting and elections. If a particular procedure is not effective, work with the coalition to amend the by-laws.
- **Leadership assessment tools:** Have the Board develop a method for regularly reviewing and evaluating the leadership of the coalition. This process should include a self-assessment on the part of the leadership and Board and/or other outside assessment. Set goals for the future and list training and/or technical assistance needs for professional development of leadership.
- **Be transparent:** Be willing to share budgets with coalition members and the public. Communicate on a regular basis with the coalition about the work that is being done.
- **Be fiscally responsible:** Bring a copy of the most current budget to every meeting. Provide for accountability by requiring two signatures for checks, requiring coalition or Board approval for check amounts over a certain dollar amount, and discussing decisions made concerning expenditures at meetings. If there is a potential conflict of interest, discuss it with the coalition members before taking action.



## Group Dynamics

Group dynamics, the study of groups, involves understanding the structure and functioning of groups and the types of roles played by members. Understanding group dynamics will help leaders navigate the inevitable conflicts that develop when a group of people works together. This section provides tools and suggestions to help leaders set the groundwork for healthy group functioning and also address issues and conflicts as they arise. Tools and suggestions are divided into five categories that contain elements important to the healthy functioning of groups:

- **Stages of Group Development** - Groups normally go through a series of stages as they work together toward a goal. Recognizing these stages and being aware of how to help a group navigate through them, are crucial leadership skills. A fact sheet that details the most widely used model of the stages of group development is offered in this chapter.
- **Establishing Group Agreements** - To ensure that all members understand what is expected and accepted of group members, it is recommended that a coalition establish group agreements at one of its first meetings. If group agreements are not established, a coalition may spend time on issues unrelated to efforts or dealing with negative, uncomfortable situations. If group agreements are discussed, established and followed, they can:
  - Encourage the development of trust in the group as they help members feel safe and comfortable participating in meetings and projects.
  - Provide cohesiveness, as members know what to expect.
  - Let visitors know coalition expectations.
  - Ensure and promote credibility within the community.
- **Effective Decision Making** - Members of coalitions come together for different reasons, but hopefully they share the same vision for the community. In order to plan and implement effective programming, members need to understand how to work cooperatively with others while still being able to express their own opinions. When making decisions, successful coalitions usually follow one of the following processes: Robert's Rules of Order, consensus or an informal combination of the two.
  - **Robert's Rules of Order** - Many coalition members are familiar with this decision making process that is based on parliamentary law and uses motions, points of order and similar actions.

*For a condensed version of rules visit the following Web site:  
<http://www.managementhelp.org/boards/roberts.htm> or visit the official  
Robert's Rules of Order Web site at: <http://www.robertsrules.com>*

- **Consensus** - Consensus allows a group to agree on a solution to a problem. Members might not all feel the option chosen is the best solution, but are willing to compromise in order to move ahead in their planning. This method can take time since it involves exploring differing opinions and discussion instead of using timesaving techniques such as majority vote.

*Learn more about this method of decision making at the following Web site:  
<https://www.msu.edu/~corcora5/org/consensus.html>*

- **Dealing With Conflict** - Conflict, argument and change are a part of life and occur within every organization. Conflict resolution is a way for two or more parties to find a peaceful solution to a disagreement. Recognizing and effectively addressing conflict is possible for leaders who are familiar with common causes of conflict and ways to negotiate solutions.

The University of Kansas' Community Toolbox identifies seven steps for successful conflict resolution: Understand the conflict, Communicate with the opposition, Brainstorm possible solutions, Choosing the best resolution, Use third party mediator, Explore alternatives, Coping with stressful situations and pressure tactics.

*For more details, visit [The Community Toolbox – Chapter 20, section 6: Training for Conflict Resolution](http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/sub_section_main_1164.htm) at: [http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/sub\\_section\\_main\\_1164.htm](http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/sub_section_main_1164.htm)*

- **Dealing With Personalities** - Conflict can also arise as a result of the dynamics between differing types of personalities. Effective coalition leaders understand this dynamic and use a number of approaches to deal with the diversity of personalities. A tool that explores differing personalities and how to respond to problematic behaviors is offered in this chapter.

#### **Resolving Conflict within the Coalition**

Everyone has different ideas on what would work best. We resolve differences by coming back to our mission and vision. We also need to do a “reality check” at times, look at what has worked in the past and what hasn’t and look at our capacity.

*DaNita Carlson, Tobacco Free Coalition of Wood County, Wood County, WI, Northwoods Coalition member*

**Tools which are provided on the following pages include:**

Collaborative Leadership Checklist- University of Kansas' The Community Toolbox

Stages of Group Development Fact Sheet- Tuckman, B. Psychological Bulletin

Tips for Establishing Group Agreement

Dealing with Personalities- Harrison, C.& Killion, J., Dealing with Personalities

**The enclosed workbook CD includes the tools listed above plus the following:**

Collaborative Leadership: Self-assessment questionnaires- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



## Collaborative Leadership Checklist

*Directions: Put a check next to the recommended accomplishments to see if you are helping your coalition to successfully collaborate. Possible “areas of improvement” are any of the sections in which you have checked “no.”*

Accomplishments	Yes	No
Help the group set norms – for meetings, communication, and general operation that encourage respect, participation and trust.		
Assure that everyone gets heard. Actively solicit opinions of those that have not spoken at meetings. Record everyone’s ideas.		
Communicate news and developments to people on a regular basis, giving others a chance to respond.		
Invite all community organizations to become involved and encourage members to do the same.		
Help people make connections with those who might have formally been seen as competitors or enemies by providing an open and honest atmosphere. Provide time for people to get to know one another.		
Mediate conflicts and disputes through creative resolutions.		
Create mechanisms for soliciting ideas such as brainstorming research and gaining knowledge of non-members that can assist in helping the coalition examine complex issues.		
Avoid having small groups run away with projects. Ideas should be brought to the large group first.		
Push the group to be effective by coming to decisions after there has been enough discussion.		
Help the group create logic models and action plans.		
Assist people in planning for the implementation and evaluation of projects and programs, holding them accountable for tasks they commit to.		
Pick initial projects that are doable to build confidence and demonstrate collaborative success.		
Be realistic about what the group can take on at any given time.		
Help the coalition identify and obtain the necessary resources to do the work.		
Protect an open process by allowing yourself no predetermined decisions until after the coalition has had a chance to discuss.		
Keep the group focused on the coalition’s mission, vision and goals rather than on individual’s interest.		
Motivate the group, keeping them focused on the goals, and encouraging new ideas.		
Be flexible in dealings with people and ideas; sacrifice the need to satisfy your own ego.		
Be protective of the inclusive, open, collaborative process.		
Encourage new leadership from within the group, stepping aside- temporarily or permanently-when appropriate.		

*Adapted from the University of Kansas The Community Toolbox, Chapter 13, Section 11 – Collaborative Leadership at the following Web site: [http://ctb.ku.edu/tools//section\\_1874.htm](http://ctb.ku.edu/tools//section_1874.htm)*

## Stages of Group Development Fact Sheet

When working with a coalition, it is helpful to realize that groups normally go through several “stages” of development. The most widely used model of the stages of team development is sometimes called the ‘Orming Model. Developed in 1965 by researcher Bruce Tuckman of the Naval Medical Research Institute at Bethesda, Maryland, it identified four stages through which a group normally proceeds:

**Stage 1 - Forming:** Individual behavior is driven by a desire to be accepted by the others and to avoid controversy or conflict. Serious issues and feelings are avoided as people instead focus on more impersonal routines such as team organization, tasks, meeting dates, etc. However, during this initial stage, individuals are also gathering information and impressions about each other, and about the scope of their task and how to approach it. This is a comfortable stage for members, but the avoidance of conflict and threat means that not much actually gets done.

**Stage 2 - Storming:** As important issues start to be addressed, individuals in the group only remain nice to each other for so long. Some people’s patience will break early and minor confrontations will arise that are quickly dealt with or glossed over. These may relate to the work of the group itself, or to roles and responsibilities within the group. Some will note that it’s good to be getting into the real issues, while others will wish for the comfort and security of stage one. Depending on the culture of the organization and individuals, the conflict will be more or less suppressed, but it will be there, under the surface. As this stage progresses, there will be a growing need for group agreements to be adhered to, and revised as needed to help the scope of the coalition tasks and responsibilities to become more clear.

**Stage 3 - Norming:** Having had their arguments, group members now understand each other better, and have a growing appreciation of each other’s skills and experience. Individuals listen to each other, appreciate and support each other, and are prepared to change pre-conceived views. They feel they’re part of a cohesive, effective group. However, individuals have had to work hard to attain this stage and may resist any pressure to change, especially from the outside, for fear that the group will break up or revert to a storm.

**Stage 4 - Performing:** Not all groups reach this stage, characterized by a state of interdependence and flexibility. Members know each other well enough to be able to work together, and trust each other enough to allow independent activity. Roles and responsibilities change according to need in an almost seamless way. Group identity, loyalty and morale are all high, and everyone is equally task-orientated and people-orientated. This high degree of comfort means that all the energy of the group can be directed towards the task(s) in hand.

Ten years after first describing the four stages, Dr. Tuckman revisited his original work and described another, final, stage:

**Stage 5 - Adjourning:** This stage is about completion and disengagement, both from the tasks and the group members. Individuals will be proud of having achieved much and glad to have been part of such an enjoyable group. They need to recognize what they’ve done and consciously move on. Some authors describe this stage as “Deforming and Mourning”, recognizing the sense of loss felt by group members.

(Tuckman, 1965)



## Tips for Establishing Group Agreements

It is recommended that the following discussion occur during a coalition's first few meetings. However, group agreements can be developed at any time.

- Brainstorm with the group- “What rules or agreements could we establish to help you feel comfortable participating at meetings and events?”\*
- Scribe group member suggestions on easel paper.
- Discuss and gain consensus on the agreements by asking the following:
  - “Any questions/comments about these?”
  - “Any that you feel will cause problems?”
  - “If not, are we all in agreement on functioning under these rules/agreements when working together?”
- Copy the final list onto easel paper and note them in meeting minutes.
- After adoption of group agreements:
  - Post them at coalition meetings on the agenda, wall chart or table tents.
  - Share the listing of agreements with potential members.
  - Revisit the rules/agreements as needed with the group, and always when there are new members or guests present.
  - As the coalition works together, add to or revise the list as the need arises.

### Some commonly used group agreements are:

- Respect the agenda/Start and end on time.
- Give everyone an opportunity to speak.
- Respect others opinions.
- Decisions will be made via (i.e., consensus, majority vote, Robert’s rules of order, etc.)

## Dealing with Personalities

How He/She Acts	Why	What to Do
Inarticulate	Lacks ability to put thoughts into proper words. He/she needs help. He/she is getting the idea but can't convey it.	Don't say, "What you mean is this..." Say, "Let me repeat that..." (then put it in better language). Twist their ideas as little as possible, but have them make sense.
Definitely wrong	Member comes up with comment that is obviously incorrect.	Say, "I can see how you feel" or "That's one way of looking at it." Say, "I can see your point, but can we reconcile that with the (true situation)?"
Rambler	Talks about everything except subject. Uses farfetched analogies; gets lost.	When member stops for breath, thank him/her, refocus attention by restating the relevant points and move on. Smile, tell him/her that their point is interesting, point to blackboard and in friendly manner indicate that we are a bit off subject. Last resort: glance at watch.
Personality clash	Two or more members clash. Can divide your group into factions.	Emphasize points of agreement, minimize points of disagreement (if possible). Refocus on objectives. Cut across with direct question on topic. Bring a sound member into discussion. Frankly ask that personalities be omitted.
Obstinate	Won't budge! Prejudiced. Hasn't seen your points.	Open the member's view to group discussion, have group members help clarify views. Say that time is short, you'll be glad to accept the group viewpoint for the moment.

(Harrison & Killian, 2001).

*continued*

## Dealing with Personalities

How He/She Acts	Why	What to Do
Won't talk	Bored Indifferent Feels Superior Timid Insecure	Your action will depend upon what is motivating the member. Arouse interest by asking for his/her opinion. Draw out the person next to him/her, then ask the quiet participant to tell the person next to him/her what he/she thinks of the view expressed. If he/she is seated near you, ask his/her opinion so that he/she will feel he/ she is talking to you, not the group.
Overly talkative	He/she may be an “eager beaver” or a show-off. He/she may also be exceptionally well informed and anxious to show it or just naturally wordy.	Don't be embarrassing or sarcastic. You may need their traits later on. Slow them down with some difficult questions. In general, let the group take care of them as much as possible.
Side conversation	May be related to the subject. May be personal. Distracts members and you.	Don't embarrass them. Call one by name, and ask an easy question, or call one by name, then restate last opinion expressed or last remark made by group and ask his/ her opinion of it. If, during session, you are in habit of moving around the room, saunter over and stand casually behind members who are talking.

(Harrison & Killian, 2001).