

Everything you need to organize a workshop is included!

How to...

START your own COMMUNITY PROJECT

*A Citizen Academy curriculum for
developing community leadership
through grassroots action.*

Citizen Academy

A CityCares Community Education Program Connecting Issues with Action

How to... **START your own COMMUNITY PROJECT**

Table of Contents

Workshop Planning

Introduction to the Curriculum	1
Facilitator and Presenter Recruitment	2
Training Space Location	2
Facilitator and Presenter Confirmation	3
Sample Course Description	4
Participant Recruitment	4
Workshop Content	5
Thoughts On Community Leadership	5
Sample Thank You Letter	6
Sample Press Release	7
Action Steps After the Workshop	7
Tips for Facilitators	8

Facilitator Agenda

Agenda-At-A-Glance	9
Script: Introduction	12
Script: Exploring Community Building Principles	14
Script: Talking About Issues & Solutions	20
Script: Building Effective Teams	21
Script: Action Planning Together	28
Wrap Up	32
Notes	33

Activities for Talking About Issues & Solutions

Community Leadership Panel	35
Yes And...	37
Building Solutions	39
Frierian Fish Bowl	40

How to... **START your own** **COMMUNITY PROJECT**

Get ready to help people of all ages start their own community projects. Whether it's establishing a non-profit, partnering with an existing organization, or mobilizing neighbors and friends for a day of street clean up, this workshop provides the tools, resources and practical information people need to **take action** on the issues they care about.

Workshop Planning

This workshop is **ideal for beginners** and a valuable refresher for people who are already active in their communities. Workshop participants will discuss critical issues, explore an asset-based approach to community building, identify strategies for galvanizing community support, work collaboratively with a team, and **begin action planning**.



Introduction to the CURRICULUM

Everything you need to plan and lead a *How to...Start Your Own Community Project* workshop is included in this customizable curriculum.

The hands-on nature of this workshop will leave participants feeling energized, connected to a new network of peers, and equipped with new skills and information that will have an immediate impact on their work in communities.

The curriculum features:

- Small and large group discussion topics
- Activities that encourage participants to collaborate with one another
- Ready-to-use resources that will inform and inspire participants as they develop their leadership skills
- Suggestions for optional activities that will enhance the workshop content
- Step-by-step facilitator's script that makes it easy for any facilitator to lead the workshop

The curriculum is meant to be your guide, not a prescription. Draw from it but do not rely totally upon it. Customize it to suit your specific workshop needs. Choose an agenda appropriate for your venue and schedule and select the workshop activities that are suitable for your group. Facilitators are encouraged to incorporate into the workshop their own style, stories, sense of humor, and personal experiences.

A variety of templates that can be used to create workshop descriptions, media articles and presenter letters is also included in the curriculum.

Above all, have fun with the curriculum and use it to strengthen people's commitment to make a difference in their community!

[Before the Workshop]

RECRUIT Facilitators & Presenters

Recruit a minimum of two facilitators who feel comfortable with the material in the *Facilitator Agenda* and who can monitor the pace of the workshop, give directions for activities, and lead the group discussions.

Though not required, you may want to recruit one or two guest presenters—perhaps established community leaders - who will contribute to group discussions and give feedback on the participants’ proposed projects. Ideas that come from a variety of voices can enrich the material and perspectives presented. This will also keep things interesting for participants.

If you are organizing a panel (an optional activity), recruit up to four panelists who have taken grassroots action in their neighborhoods or communities. Consider people who have lived in their communities for an extended period of time; worked with a team to accomplish their projects’ goals, weathered unexpected opportunities and challenges during the planning and implementation of projects; and/or developed innovative strategies to start successful projects.

Request bios or resumes from all facilitators, presenters and panelists to include in marketing materials.

LOCATE A Training Space

The *How to...Start Your Own Community Project* workshop requires a space large enough to accommodate a group of approximately 20-30 people. You will need enough room for large group discussions and small group breakouts,

and enough wall space to post signs and flipchart paper. While a traditional meeting space is recommended, this workshop also can be successfully held at a restaurant or cafe.

CONFIRM Facilitators & Presenters

Once you have identified facilitators and/or presenters and know enough details about where and when the training will be held, send a confirmation letter. Use the sample below to help you get started:

Thank you for agreeing to facilitate/present our [YOUR ORGANIZATION]'s upcoming *How To...Start Your Own Community Project* workshop. We look forward to learning from and with you, and know that your wisdom and experience will offer great inspiration to the aspiring activists and emerging grassroots leaders who will register for this workshop. The *How To...Start Your Own Community Project* workshop will be held from [TIME] on [DATE] at [LOCATION], located [DIRECTIONS].

This interactive, hands-on workshop emphasizes an asset-based approach to community building, and encourages community collaboration during the planning and implementation phases of projects.

[If you are including a *Community Leadership Panel* in the workshop and this letter is being sent to a panelist, include information such as: The panel presentation will begin at [TIME] and last about 30 minutes. As a panelist will have approximately 5-10 minutes to discuss your work, and the challenges and opportunities you have experienced along the way. Following the panel presentation, we will have a Question and Answer session.]

Enclosed please find a workshop agenda and a brochure describing the Citizen Academy program. Feel free to contact me with any questions.

I look forward to seeing you on [DATE].

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME AND TITLE]

CREATE A Course Description

Use this template to create a unique and compelling course description to use for flyers, brochures, advertisements, on your website and in any other marketing materials:

Want to make a difference in your community but don't know how to get started? Have an idea for a project and want to find out next steps? Recently started a project and need some expert advice?

Attend the *How To...Start Your Own Community Project* workshop and get the tools, resources and practical information you need to take action on the issues you cares about. This workshop is ideal for beginners and a valuable refresher for people who are already active in their communities. Workshop participants will discuss critical issues, explore an asset-based approach to community building, identify strategies for galvanizing community support, work collaboratively with a team, and begin action planning .

[INCLUDE FACILITATORS AND PRESENTERS INFO HERE]

Be sure to bring a pad, pen, and your list of ideas - the hands-on nature of the session ensures that you will leave energized, connected to a network of peers, and full of ideas to make an immediate impact. To register for the *How To...Start Your Own Community Project* workshop, please contact [NAME] at [EMAIL] or [TELEPHONE NUMBER].

RECRUIT Participants

Decide whether you'll market the workshop community-wide or target it to specific individuals or groups, such as college students, corporate groups or neighborhood associations.

Start getting the word out to the community no less than two months prior to the date of the workshop to ensure you recruit the desired number of participants. Use your course description to create a concise and attention-grabbing workshop description for local newspapers, radio public service announcements, and/or community calendars. As the date of the workshop approaches, send out reminders about the session to people who have expressed an interest in the topic.

FINALIZE Workshop Content

Review the variations to the workshop agenda included at the beginning of the *Facilitator Agenda* and choose an agenda that is most suitable for your purposes. Then, adapt the following curriculum resources as necessary:

Facilitator Agenda (and script), any optional activities from the *Activities for Talking About Issues & Solutions*, and the *Participant Agenda, Community Action Survey, Community Action Plan, Community Action Strategy Session, Team building Strategies, Resource List, and Team Roster* handouts.

An essential component of any Citizen Academy workshop is a bias towards future action. While the workshop curriculum offers new tools and resources to help participants take action on their own, it is a good idea to develop additional next steps. Communicate these next steps to participants at the close of the workshop. Suggestions are included in the *Facilitator Agenda* script.

Thoughts on Community Leadership

Every social action group should at the same time be an adult education group, and I go even as far as to believe that all successful adult education groups sooner or later become social action groups.
—*Eduard Linderman, The Sociology of Adult Education, 1945*

Some people see things as they are and say "Why." I dream things that never were and say "Why not."
—*George Bernard Shaw*

Better to do something imperfectly than to do nothing flawlessly.
—*Robert H. Schuller*

Vision without action is a daydream. Action without vision is a nightmare.
—*Japanese Proverb*

I can't understand why people are frightened of new ideas. I'm frightened of the old ones.
—*John Cage*

The great French Marshall Lyautey once asked his gardener to plant a tree. The gardener objected that the tree was slow growing and would not reach maturity for 100 years. The Marshall replied, "In that case, there is no time to lose. Plant it this afternoon!"

—*John F. Kennedy*

If I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it at the beginning.

—*Mahatma Gandhi*

Leadership is action, not position.
—*Donald M. McGannon*

The ultimate measure of man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.
—*Martin Luther King Jr.*

[After the Workshop]

SEND Thank You Letters

Send facilitators, presenters and panelists thank you notes within one week of the workshop. Here is a sample thank-you letter to inspire you:

Dear [INSERT NAME]:

What an honor it was to have you present/facilitate at our *How To...Start Your Own Community Project* workshop last week! We cannot thank you enough for your time and energy, and for so generously sharing your wisdom with us. You clearly bring so much excitement to the topic of community leadership, and that definitely came through to the workshop participants. Based on the feedback we have received from participants, they gained new information about critical issues in our community, new advocacy skills as well as inspiration to keep working towards meaningful change.

Since [CITIZEN ACADEMY LAUNCH DATE], Citizen Academy has offered education, inspiration and training to build the advocacy skills and leadership capacity of people who share a passion for social change and grassroots leadership.

We welcome any feedback you would like to share with us concerning your experience with Citizen Academy. If there is anything we can do to contribute to your work in the community, please do not hesitate to call on us. I sincerely hope we can continue to work together towards a stronger, healthier community.

Thank you again for offering you time and talents with us.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME AND TITLE]

CRAFT A Press Release

Highlight the outcomes of the workshop in a press release and distribute it to the appropriate media outlets. Here is a sample media article:

On [DATE], Citizen Academy held its [INSERT NUMBER OF TIMES WORKSHOP HAS BEEN PRESENTED] *How To...Start Your Own Community Project* workshop. The workshop provided a practical introduction to grassroots leadership and effective community building strategies that could, one day soon, result in significant improvements to our local neighborhoods, towns and cities.

The [NUMBER] workshop participants discovered how to identify community assets and develop relationships with their neighbors and fellow community members - best practices that will help turn their project ideas into realities. Inspirational community leaders who have pioneered the way for change also shared their wisdom and experience with participants. [DESCRIBE EACH PRESENTER AND TOPICS, for example: *Mary Tracy, energized from an earlier meeting with the mayor, spoke about her advocacy work with the Society to Reduce Urban Blight. After sharing her inspiring story, Mary offered participants strategies to turn their passions into grassroots action.*]

Revved up and ready, participants worked in teams to address critical issues in their communities, which included [LIST ISSUE AREAS, for example: *education, hunger*]. Here is just a sampling of innovative project ideas that emerged from the workshop: [LIST IDEAS, for example: *establishing a community service group at a suburban high school, revitalizing a blighted community by purchasing and restoring an abandoned building.*] Please stay tuned for ways to get involved in these projects, and for the dates of upcoming workshops offered through Citizen Academy!

Take ACTION

Keep any commitments you have made to assist participants in their efforts to start community projects. As a first step, fulfill any participant requests for technical assistance or resources immediately following the workshop. Three to six months after the workshop, follow up with all participants to assess their progress.

[For the Facilitators]

Your Approach: Take time to prepare adequately for each topic by testing out the *Facilitator Agenda* script and making it your own. Adults learn best when they are relaxed and engaged, so a creative and playful approach will make the script "come alive." Do your best to create a safe, inclusive learning environment and prevent conversations from becoming one-sided or dominated by one or two people.

Promote Learning by Doing: Throughout the workshop, seek ways to "make it easier" for participants to learn. One way to make it easier is to ensure that participants are learning by doing. As the adage goes: "Tell me and I'll forget. Show me and I may remember. Involve me and I'll understand!" (Confucius)

Mutual Learning: Demonstrate an openness towards mutual learning. Contribute from your own experiences by sharing mistakes as well as your successes. Respond positively to the suggestions and comments offered by participants. We have much to learn from one another despite any formal training or experience we might have. In the arena of community building none of us know it all, need to know it all, or need to give the appearance of knowing it all.

Repeat, Repeat, Repeat: Repetition is a good thing, and you should plan to repeat some of the key concepts throughout the workshop. Adult learners typically need to hear something 6-7 times for it to sink in.

Self-Evaluation: When possible, build in times during the training for "stepping back" and reflecting on both the content and process of the training. Ask participants questions like, "What has especially caught your attention thus far?"; "What new ideas are being raised for you?"; "Is the training meeting your needs?"; "Are we focusing on the right things?"; and "How is the pace?"

(Adapted from: Outreach to People Experiencing Homelessness, A Curriculum for Training Health Care for the Homeless Outreach Workers, June 2002, <http://www.nhchc.org/Curriculum>)

How to... **START your own** COMMUNITY PROJECT

The *Facilitator Agenda* includes an **agenda-at-a-glance** that gives an overview of the workshop, and lists the handouts and/or advance prep required for each topic. The step-by-step **training script** provides facilitators' with all the information they need to lead the workshop, regardless of their level of experience.

Facilitator Agenda

During the workshop, facilitators will need flipchart paper and markers, plus the handouts, visuals and supplies listed in the agenda. **Recommended visuals** can be found throughout the facilitator agenda, and should be prepared in advance using flipchart paper and markers, overheads, or PowerPoint slides.

Facilitator Agenda At-A-Glance

WORKSHOP LENGTH

Recommendation for a 2-Hour Workshop:

Do not include the section, *Talking About Issues & Solutions*

Recommendation for 2.5-Hour Workshop:

Include the section, *Talking About Issues & Solutions*

Recommendation for a 90-Minute Workshop:

Time will pass quickly, particularly if you encourage and receive group participation. To shorten the agenda, try the following:

- Eliminate “Definition of Community” in the *Exploring Community Building Principles* section.
- Eliminate the *Talking About Issues & Solutions* section
- Eliminate steps 4-6 in the “Team-Based Approach to Projects” in the *Building Effective Teams* section.
- Eliminate the “Web of Teamwork” activity in the *Building Effective Teams* section.
- Shorten the “Debrief of the Community Action Strategy Session” in the *Strategizing Together* section.
- Do not engage participants in any activities listed as OPTIONAL throughout the facilitator’s script.

WORKSHOP AGENDA

A detailed outline of the workshop agenda follows. Facilitators should read through the entire Facilitator Agenda to familiarize themselves with the material and make adjustments as necessary. Assign times and facilitators for each agenda topic you are including in the workshop.

Facilitator Agenda At-A-Glance

Introduction (pages 12-13)

Time	Topic	Handout(s)	Advance Prep
5 min	Goals & Agenda	<i>Workshop Agenda</i>	Create visuals
10 min	Community Action Survey	<i>Community Action Survey</i>	-

Exploring Community Building Principles (pages 14-18)

Time	Topic	Handout(s)	Advance Prep
5 min	Definition of Community	-	-
15 min	Identifying Community Assets	-	Create visuals
5-10 min	What Qualifies a Good Project?	-	Create visuals

Talking About Issues And Solutions- OPTIONAL (page 19)

Time	Topic	Handout(s)	Advance Prep
15-25 min	Talking About Issues and Solutions [choose one activity]: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Leadership Panel • “Yes And...” • “Building Solutions” • “Frierian Fishbowl” 	-	Follow specific activity instructions included in the “Activities for Talking About Issues and Solutions” kit.

Facilitator Agenda At-A-Glance

Building Effective Teams (pages 20-26)

Time	Topic	Handout(s)	Advance Prep
10 min	Team-Based Approach to Community Projects	-	-
15 min	Web of Teamwork	-	Gather 2 rolls of crepe paper AND approx. 6 inflated balloons
10 min	Team Building Strategies	<i>Team Building Strategies</i>	Create visuals

Action Planning Together (pages 27-30)

Time	Topic	Handout(s)	Advance Prep
20 min	Community Action Strategy Session	<i>Community Action Strategy Session AND Community Action Plan</i>	Write issue areas (from the <i>Community Action Survey</i>) on separate pieces of paper and post on the walls around the meeting space.
15 min	Debrief of Community Action Strategy Session	-	-
5 min	Additional Resources	<i>Local and National Resources</i>	-

Wrap Up (page 31)

Time	Topic	Handout(s)	Advance Prep
5 min	Next Steps and Workshop Evaluations	<i>Workshop Evaluation</i>	Determine the Call to Action , or next steps, for participants

Introduction

TOPIC WORKSHOP GOALS AND AGENDA [5 min]	FACILITATOR TIME _____ : _____ - _____ : _____
--	--

1. **DISTRIBUTE** the *Workshop Agenda*.
2. **INTRODUCE** yourself and the organization you are representing. Convey your enthusiasm for the workshop topic.
3. **SCRIPT** ■ During this workshop, we will learn how to develop community projects - whether it's organizing a block party or street clean up with a few friends and neighbors, or creating an after-school program with a large number of stakeholders.



The purpose of this workshop is to:

1. Get to know each other better.
2. Learn the basics of project development that can be applied to projects of any size and scope.

By the end of this workshop, we will have:

1. An understanding of community building principles so that we can develop projects with positive impacts.
2. A team-based approach to planning community projects.
3. An action plan for starting community projects.

4. **REVIEW** the workshop agenda and facilitator roles.
5. **CLARIFY** any questions about how the workshop will be conducted.

Introduction

TOPIC COMMUNITY ACTION SURVEY [10 min]	FACILITATOR
	TIME ____:____ - ____:____

1. **DISTRIBUTE** the *Community Action Survey* handout to participants.
2. **ASK** participants to take 2-3 minutes to fill out as much of the survey as they can.
3. **INSTRUCT** small groups or pairs to introduce themselves and discuss their surveys with each other.
4. **BRING** the large group back together.
5. **INVITE** some participants to talk about their (or their group's) current level of community involvement, key issues, and project ideas.
6. **OPTIONAL** ■ Check the pulse of the group either by reading aloud from the list of issues from the *Community Action Survey* and asking participants to raise their hands when the #1 issue they selected is called; OR go around the room asking participants to reveal the issues they are most passionate about.
7. **SCRIPT** ■ When we volunteer, advocate, or start community projects, we want to address *the issues that matter to us*. In doing so, we help build strong, safe, healthy communities.

Exploring Community Building Principles

TOPIC DEFINITION OF COMMUNITY [5 min]	FACILITATOR
	TIME ____:____ - ____:____

1. **ASK** participants, "What do we mean when we talk about community? What is the definition of community?"
2. **INVITE** participants to call out responses.
3. **SCRIBE** responses on flipchart paper.
4. **SCRIPT** ■ From this list, it's clear that our communities are the people, places and institutions around us that most largely impact our lives.
5. **TELL** participants that during the next activity, they will focus on the communities where they have engaged in volunteer service.

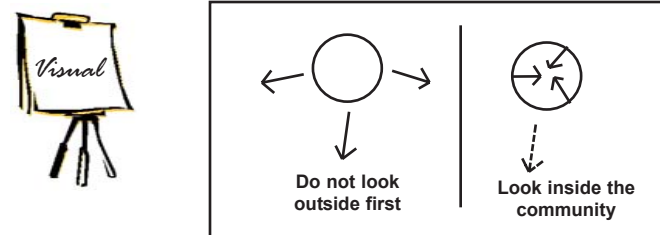
Exploring Community Building Principles

TOPIC Building on Strengths and Relationships [15 min]	FACILITATOR TIME _____ : _____ - _____ : _____
--	--

- 1. VISUALIZATION EXERCISE** ■ Ask participants to visualize a neighborhood where they have participated in volunteer service. Tell participants to close their eyes if they wish. Give participants a few moments of silence to think about these neighborhoods. If appropriate, ask questions such as, “What do you see in this neighborhood as you walk or drive down its streets?”
- 2. INVITE** participants to call out what they saw in these neighborhoods. *[Examples: graffiti, littered streets, manicured lawns, homelessness, teens playing basketball]*
- 3. SCRIBE** a list of their responses on flipchart paper.
- 4. REVIEW** the list with participants, Put a “-” mark by each item that can be classified as a negative aspect.
- 5. SCRIPT** ■ Oftentimes, we get to know the communities where we serve by its problems or deficiencies because we want to fix what’s wrong or unhealthy. But thinking about our communities in this way can prevent us from uncovering and building upon the assets, or positives that exist. So let’s go back to our list.
- 6. REVIEW** the list again. Put a “+” mark by the positives that were listed. If no positives are on the list, brainstorm some with participants.

Exploring Community Building Principles

- 7. SCRIPT** ■ As you develop your own community projects, begin by identifying and utilizing the strengths and resources in the community. Find out what skills residents have that they could contribute to your project. Learn who in the neighborhood is passionate about the same issues you are. Identify local businesses or institutions that want to help.



This does not mean that we forget about the negatives and ignore the problems. It means that we utilize the positives to address the negatives. When we do this, we do not look outside the community for solutions. We look inside.

Here is an example: If some unknown residents are breaking windows in our neighborhood, just getting a crew in to repair the windows may not fix the problem. The windows will most likely be damaged again. So let’s think about working from inside the community to develop solutions that will have a longer lasting result.

- 8. TELL** participants to turn to their neighbor on the right and discuss strategies for working inside the community to address the issue of broken windows. What would be the critical first steps to developing a solution? Give participants a few moments to talk with each other.
- 9. INVITE** a few participants to share their ideas.

Exploring Community Building Principles

10. SCRIBE participant ideas that focus on relationship building.

[Example: “Talk to residents,” “Organize a community meeting,” “Visit the schools”]

11. SCRIPT ■ Your ideas are great. Let’s focus on one of the key steps to starting a successful community project, which is to talk to people and build relationships. Through relationships you will identify existing resources, gain broader support for your project and motivate residents to work together to improve the community. This might mean talking to the Reverend at the corner church; identifying and getting to know a neighborhood matriarch; or attending community meetings. Generally, anyone you talk to at a community institution will act as a sounding board for your ideas and know who else you should speak with about your project.

12. ASK participants, “Would anyone like to share an experience in which you accessed the positives or built on relationships in a community to accomplish something?”

13. INVITE a participant to share his/her story. **OPTIONAL:** Relate one of your own experiences or share this real-lif example: A group of AmeriCorps members in Atlanta worked in an elementary school. They decided to transform an empty plot of land near the school into a community garden. It was easy, they organized a day of volunteer service with their students and planted the garden. However, the community garden was destroyed a few weeks later by older students from a different school. The AmeriCorps members decided to try again, but this time they started by going to Neighborhood Association meetings to get ideas on involving the community so that the garden would be

Exploring Community Building Principles

looked after and protected by residents. The association became excited about the garden and referred them to landscapers and others who would offer in-kind support. Next, they involved students from other schools and age groups in the creation of the garden. They held a community-wide day of service and recruited students, their families and friends and other community leaders. After the project, they sent out regular updates on the garden to all of those who participated in the project, and involved the school and local teachers in maintaining it and using it as a learning space.

14. TELL participants to keep three principles in mind when starting a community project:



1. Look inside the community for solutions before looking outside
2. Focus on the positives first
3. Power and solutions come from the relationships you build in a community

15. SCRIPT ■ Your takeaway homework is to challenge yourself, and others, to think about the opportunities and positives first, even in those areas traditionally considered “bad neighborhoods.”

Exploring Community Building Principles

TOPIC WHAT QUALIFIES A GOOD PROJECT? [10 min]	FACILITATOR TIME _____ : _____ - _____ : _____
---	--

- SCRIPT** ■ Now that we've talked about identifying positives and building relationships in communities, let's start to think about our actual project ideas. What makes a project successful? What qualifies a good project?
- INVITE** participants to call out responses.
- SCRIBE** responses on flipchart paper.
- SCRIPT** ■ In addition to what has been suggested, here are some additional questions you can ask to measure the quality of your project. You want to be able to answer "yes" to all of these questions.



- Does the project build from relationships and the positives in the community?
- Is it a project that the community really wants?
- Will volunteers be utilized effectively during the project? Are there appropriate skills to tasks, opportunities to be trained in new skills, leadership opportunities?
- Will it make volunteers feel like they have completed something when they are done, i.e. can they see some result from their efforts? (smiling faces, a cleaner yard/park, freshly painted walls, etc.)?
- Will it generate or save you or your community money?

Talking About Issues & Solutions [OPTIONAL]

TOPIC INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY [15-25 min]	FACILITATOR TIME _____ : _____ - _____ : _____
--	--

ADVANCE PREP NOTE ■ *This part of the workshop is OPTIONAL.* If including this in the workshop, choose one of the following activities from *Activities for Talking About Issues & Solutions*, starting on page 32:

- Community Leadership Panel
- Yes And...
- Building Solutions
- Frierian Fishbowl

OR...use another activity of your own choosing.

- FOLLOW** the instructions of the *Talking About Issues & Solutions* activity selected for this workshop.

Building Effective Teams

Building Effective Teams

TOPIC TEAM-BASED APPROACH TO PROJECTS [10 min]	FACILITATOR
	TIME _____ : _____ - _____ : _____

ADVANCE PREP NOTE ■ A variation to this portion of the agenda can be found on page 21.

- 1. SCRIPT** ■ Planning and implementing community projects takes a lot of work. The best projects are those that are supported by a team of people working towards the same goal. It's the difference between planting a community garden by yourself, versus partnering with neighborhood residents to plant the garden. The ability to team up with others is essential.
- 2. PRESENT** a personal example of an experience that required teamwork.
- 3. OPTIONAL** ■ Invite one or two participants to share their personal stories of teamwork in action. *[Keep this brief, 1-2 minutes]*
- 4. ASK** all participants to think for a moment about a personal experience serving on a team. Who were the members of that team? What roles did they play?
- 5. SCRIBE** these roles and responsibilities on flipchart paper. *[Examples: leader, logistics expert, treasurer]*
- 6. SCRIPT** ■ We are going to continue exploring team dynamics through an activity called the *Web of Teamwork*.

VARIATION TO THE AGENDA

If you do not have a personal example of teamwork, or would like more control over the direction of the discussion, try the following:

- 1. SCRIPT** ■ To improve our communities -- to make them places where people are healthy, safe, and cared for -- takes a lot of work. Therefore, the ability to team up effectively with other individuals and organizations is absolutely essential. Let me give you an example:

A few people from my neighborhood want to clean up a littered area around an abandoned building. But we are not sure how to tackle this project. We first need to find people who are willing to help us, but we are all very busy and have never organized anything like this before.
- 2. INVITE** participants to call out responses to the following question: "What are the possible roles and responsibilities for the volunteers and/or team members that will help with this project?"
- 3. CONTINUE** with step #5 on page 9.

Building Effective Teams

Building Effective Teams

TOPIC WEB OF TEAMWORK [15 min]	FACILITATOR
	TIME _____ : _____ - _____ : _____

1. **TELL** participants to stand up and form a tight circle by standing shoulder-to-shoulder.
2. **GIVE** one person in the circle a role of crepe paper.
3. **CREATE THE “WEB”** ■ The participant with the crepe paper calls out another participant in the circle by his/her first name, announces the role this person will play on the team, then tosses the roll of crepe paper to him/her while holding on to one end of the roll. The process continues until each person in the circle is holding on to a piece of the crepe paper, and a web-like structure is created. Two rules: 1) Participants may not toss the crepe paper to the person next to them and 2) Roles may be repeated multiple times. Tell participants to remember the role they have been given. When everyone in the circle has been tossed the crepe paper and given a role to play, the web is complete.
4. **INTRODUCE** inflated balloons into the web, tossing one in at time. Toss in approximately 6 balloons.
5. **SCRIPT** ■ These balloons represent the components and stakeholders of a project. Like a juggler keeps several balls in the air at one time, so does a team keep multiple components of a project going at once. Keep the balloons from hitting the ground using the web of teamwork you have just created.

7. **INSTRUCT** the team to juggle the balloons on the web for about one minute.
8. **ASK** people in different roles to drop their crepe paper and step away from the web, while remaining team members attempt to keep the balloons in the air. Call out enough roles so that the web begins to collapse and the balloons begin to hit the ground.
9. **TELL** participants to stop juggling the balloons and return to their seats.
10. **DEBRIEF THE ACTIVITY** ■ Ask the large group to respond to some or all of the following questions:
 - “What did you observe about the variety of roles called out?”
 - “How did you choose the person who you tossed the crepe paper to? Could there have been another way to select a team member?”
 - “What happened to the web of teamwork as people stepped out/back? What happened to the project components (balloons)? Can you think of a case when this happened to you?”
 - “Can a team operate fully without the support of each other?”
 - “Why are teams important?”
2. **SCRIPT** ■ As we’ve experienced through the “Web of Teamwork” activity, teams need the support of every member in order to reach their goals. No one person can do it alone. Now, let’s start exploring how to recruit and maintain a team.

Building Effective Teams

Building Effective Teams

TOPIC TEAM BUILDING STRATEGIES [10 min]	FACILITATOR TIME _____ : _____ - _____ : _____
---	--

- SCRIPT** ■ To build a team, you must decide who you want on your team, how to recruit them and, once you've got a team together, how to keep people involved and excited about your project. First let's think about who should be on your team. If possible, it is beneficial to recruit team members who have diverse backgrounds, experiences, skills, and perspectives. Why?
- INVITE** participants to call out responses.
- SCRIBE** responses on flipchart paper.
- PRESENT** the following reasons as outlined in the handout *Team Building Strategies*. Refer to the section on *Identifying Diverse Team Members*



- Teams are more representative of the full community and gain broader community support
- Different opinions are expressed and discussed, which may lead to better decisions
- You will have more talent, and more varied kinds of talent, on your team
- The contacts and connections you make in a diverse, multi-sector group will lead to new community relationships which can also spark new community initiatives that might not have otherwise existed
- Team members will increase their understanding of one another and their community through service

- SCRIPT** ■ Once we know who we want on our team, it's time to recruit. Here are some tried and true recruitment strategies.
- PRESENT** the following recruitment strategies as outlined in the handout *Team Building Strategies*. Refer to the section *Strategies for Recruiting Team Members*:

- Ask team members to invite others - 80% of volunteers say they started volunteering because they were asked
- Go to where people are, instead of trying to get people to come to you
- Never miss a chance to collect names and contact info
- Try to include those who are under-represented (minority language groups, low-income residents, the disabled, the elderly and youth)
- Hand out community interest surveys to find people interested in similar issues
- Produce newsletters, flyers and emails
- Create membership lists and keep people up-to-date with your efforts, but be careful not to bombard potential team members with too much information
- People may ask themselves or you, "What's in it for me?" Know the answer to this question and communicate it.



- ASK** participants to turn to the neighbor on their left and take a few moments to discuss these recruitment strategies. Which strategies are most effective? Which would you feel most comfortable employing and why? Are there any other strategies not listed here?
- INVITE** a few participants to share with the large group their thoughts on the recruitment strategies.

Building Effective Teams

9. **SCRIPT** ■ Remember, that once you do form a team, the players involved may not be sure of their roles, or how those roles can come together to meet everyone's needs and interests. Let's discuss some strategies to keep people involved, energized and excited about a project.

10. **REVIEW** with participants *Strategies for Keeping People Involved* (section 3 of the handout).



- Communicate regularly the goals of the project
- Assist team members/volunteers with becoming acquainted
- Call new contacts to invite them to events or pass on information
- Provide orientation and training to prepare everyone for the project
- Involve people in meaningful and rewarding ways. One way to do this is to involve each team member in at least some amount of work with people or materials that results in tangible community improvement
- Stay in touch with team members and/or volunteers
- Pay attention to group process - most volunteer groups do not give adequate attention to how they work together
- Discuss the team commitment: set aside occasions when members describe what they expect of the team and what they expect in terms of time and responsibilities
- Act more, meet less
- Keep time demands modest
- Work in pairs to improve communication, make work less lonely and ensure that tasks get done
- Schedule social time at meetings and turn routine tasks into social events; for example, stuff envelopes while sharing pizza
- Send thank you notes or hold a recognition lunch
- Expect conflict, it's normal.

Action Planning Together

TOPIC COMMUNITY ACTION STRATEGY SESSION [20 min]	FACILITATOR TIME _____ : _____ - _____ : _____
---	--

ADVANCE PREP NOTE ■ Write issue areas on separate pieces of paper and post on the walls around the meeting space. Sample Issue Areas:

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Aging Services | Animal Support |
| Arts & Culture | Civic Engagement |
| Disability Services | Disaster Relief |
| Education/Literacy | Employment |
| Environmental Issues | Family Violence Prevention |
| Health & Wellness | Housing & Shelter |
| Hunger & Homelessness | Revitalization/Repair |
| Technology | Youth Development |

1. **SCRIPT** ■ Planning is an essential phase of starting any community project. You will now have the opportunity to plan a project collaboratively with a team. In doing so, you'll begin to explore your own ideas for taking action in communities. First, we'll divide into teams based on our areas of interests.
2. **DIVIDE** into teams by asking participants to stand or sit by the issue (posted around the room, see **Advance Prep Note** above) they would like to address. Ideally, participants will be interested in similar issue areas and can be easily teamed up. However, group two issue areas together if you have individuals who are not part of a team.

Action Planning Together

Likewise, divide very large teams into smaller teams, if necessary. Teams should consist of three or more people.

4. **PROVIDE** each working group with flipchart paper and markers.
5. **DISTRIBUTE** a *Community Action Plan* to each participant and a *Community Action Strategy Session* handout to each team.
6. **EXPLAIN THE ACTIVITY** ■ Teams will complete the steps outlined in the *Community Action Strategy Session* by focussing on one issue and project idea. This project could be as simple as helping neighbors with a street clean up, or as complex as starting an after-school tutoring program. Since each team will focus on only one project idea, team members will need to come to some agreements during this process, especially if everyone in the group has a great project idea to share.

Review the steps in the *Community Action Strategy Session* handout. Teams will use the *Community Action Plan* during Step 4 of this activity. It is okay if teams cannot answer all the questions in the *Community Action Plan* - they should just do what they can. Let participants know that they have about 15-20 minutes to complete the *Community Action Strategy Session*.
7. **INFORM** participants when there are two minutes remaining for this activity.

Action Planning Together

TOPIC DEBRIEF OF COMMUNITY ACTION STRATEGY SESSION [20 min]	FACILITATOR TIME _____ : _____ - _____ : _____
--	--

1. **BRING** the large group back together.
2. **ASK** a spokesperson from a few (or all) of the teams to provide a brief report on the results of their *Community Action Strategy Session* and project ideas. [*Report-outs should be no more than 2-3 minutes*]
3. **FACILITATE** a large-group conversation after the presentations using a plus/delta exercise (see page 31 for an example) or by asking some or all of the following questions:
 - “What was it like to work with a team you didn’t really know?”
 - “What process did you follow to complete the *Community Action Strategy Session*?”
 - “What new ideas did you learn by participating in the strategy session?”
 - “Why is it important to define your project’s mission, values and images of success?”
 - “How can you use the *Community Action Plan* once you leave here today?”
 - “What action do you think you can take in the near future?”
 - “What did you like about the *Community Action Plan*?”
4. **SCRIBE** key items during the large group discussions on flipchart paper.

Action Planning Together

TOPIC LOCAL AND NATIONAL RESOURCES [2 min]	FACILITATOR
	TIME ____ : ____ - ____ : ____

1. **DISTRIBUTE** the *Local and National Resources* handout.
2. **FAMILIARIZE** participants with the resources listed in this handout.

Wrap Up

TOPIC DEBRIEF, NEXT STEPS & EVALUATION [5 min]	FACILITATOR
	TIME ____ : ____ - ____ : ____

1. **CALL TO ACTION** ■ Discuss with participants possible next steps. For example, facilitators could pass around a sign up sheet for participants who would like to be contacted after the workshop to discuss their project ideas further. Or, facilitators could list ways for participants to continue their involvement, through additional trainings or service opportunities.
2. **ANSWER** any final questions.
3. **PLUS/DELTA FEEDBACK EXERCISE** ■ First, ask participants to talk about the pluses, or positive aspects, of this workshop. Record responses on flipchart paper. Second, ask participants for the deltas: What about this workshop could be improved? What were the challenges? What would you change? Thank participants for their feedback, ensuring them that their ideas and suggestions will be incorporated into future sessions.
4. **DISTRIBUTE** the *Workshop Evaluation* form for participants to complete and turn in before they leave.
5. **COLLECT** the sign-up sheets, notes and any other materials you need to keep.
6. **THANK** participants for attending the workshop.

How to... **START your own** COMMUNITY PROJECT

The *Activities for Talking About Issues & Solutions* are optional. You can include any one of these in the workshop agenda if you want to engage participants in additional **problem-solving and dialogue** and/or increase the length of the workshop.

Activities for Talking About Issues & Solutions

The **four activities** offered here - *Community Leadership Panel, Yes And.., Building Solutions* and *Frierian Fishbowl* - are just recommendations. If you know of another activity you like better than the ones included here - use that one instead!

[Community Leadership Panel]

Facilitator Instructions

1. **SCRIPT** ■ You don't have to run for office or be given a title to be a community leader. In fact, no one has to appoint you a leader. Most community leaders are self-appointed. All you need to do is decide to take responsibility for some corner (or bigger chunk) of your community.

Community leaders believe they have a responsibility for the well-being and improvement of their communities. In other words they feel they have something to contribute that will improve the community and they don't wait around for someone else to get the job done.

Today we have a unique opportunity to hear from a few community leaders who have gained tremendous experience and insight into what it takes to start a community project. They are here with us today because one of the central and long-term jobs of a community leader is to develop new leaders. Developing leaders is how we build strong communities of individuals that can work together to achieve goals over time.

2. **INTRODUCE** each of the panelists.
3. **ASK** panelists to describe:
 - Why they decided to start a community project
 - How they overcame challenges and embraced opportunities
 - How they collaborate(d) with others to plan and/or implement the project
4. **GIVE** each panelist approximately 5-10 minutes to speak.

5. **INVITE** participants to ask questions after all the panelists have spoken.
6. **OFFER** a 2-5 minute break before starting the next activity.
7. **ENCOURAGE** participants to ask panelists any final questions during the break.

[Yes And...]

Facilitator Instructions

1. **ASK** participants to form a circle and count off as “A”s and “B”s, then instruct the B’s to step inside the circle to form a second, inner circle. Each B should be face to face with an A.
2. **TELL** participants that there will be three two-minute rounds. A’s will pitch ideas to B’s who will respond according to the instructions you give at the start of each round:

Round One (2 minutes)

1. Each A pitches one of his/her own ideas to B’s.
(i.e. “I want teenagers to volunteer at a senior center.”)
2. B’s respond by starting the sentence with “No...”
(i.e. No, teenagers don’t like old people!)
3. A’s respond.
4. Call time and instruct A’s move to the next B.
(B’s remain stationary)

Round Two (2 minutes)

1. A’s pitch the same idea as in Round One to B’s .
2. B’s respond by starting a sentence with “Yes, but...”
(i.e. Yes, but it won’t work out in the long run.)
3. A’s respond.
4. Repeat Step 4 in Round One

Round Three (2 minutes)

1. A’s pitch the same idea a third time.
2. B’s respond by starting a sentence with “Yes, and...”
(i.e. “Yes and we could have teens write about it in their high school newspapers.”)
3. A’s respond.

3. **SWITCH** A’s and B’s and start again [OPTIONAL]

4. **WRAP UP** by asking the group how A’s felt during each round.
Was it easier for B’s to shoot down, to hesitantly agree, or to totally affirm an idea?

5. **EMPHASIZE** that our responses to people who are striving to take action in the community does have an impact.

6. **SCRIPT** ■ It is critical that we support each other and build on each other’s ideas. Even if we disagree, or see something that won’t work, it is often more productive to find a constructive way to help as opposed to shutting someone down.

[Building Solutions]

Facilitator Instructions

1. **ASK** participants to form a circle.
2. **INVITE** one participant to identify an issue in his/her community that he/she feels needs action or resolution. Here are some sample issues:
 - Teenagers need something productive to do after school.
 - People in my neighborhood are not involved in the political process of our community.
 - It's hard for families to find affordable housing in the city.
3. **ASK** a second participant in the circle to volunteer a solution through action. He or she might say something like, "Community members should get together and identify a space in the neighborhood that could be turned into an after-school activity center."
4. **GO** around the circle and asking each person to build on this solution until the group feels it has reached a consensus on how the problem can be solved.

Please note: you can choose not to include consensus as part of this process.

5. **CLOSE** the activity by asking participants questions such as:
 - If these solutions exist, why haven't they been implemented?
 - Would the people affected by this problem agree with these solutions? Who might not agree?

[Frierian Fishbowl]

Preparation

1. **GATHER** a bowl, scratch paper and a pen or pencil for each participant.
2. **PREPARE** questions in advance, choosing from the questions below or creating your own:
 - What can be done to solve homelessness in our community?
 - How can youth become more involved in the civic life of a community?
 - What are the ways we can decrease the highschool dropout rate in our community?
 - How can we encourage more neighborhood residents to volunteer in their community?
 - Why don't more people vote in our community?

Facilitator Instructions

1. **HAND OUT** scratch paper and pens to each participant.
2. **READ ALOUD** one of the questions selected for the activity.
3. **ASK** participants to jot down a brief response to the question on their scratch paper (make sure participants do not write their name on the paper).
4. **COLLECT** the papers in a bowl.
5. **PASS** the bowl among the group and ask each participant, without looking, to draw a piece of paper out of the bowl.
6. **READ ALOUD** the question again.

7. **ASK** each participant, one at a time, to respond to the question with their interpretation of the written comment on the paper. If they like, they can then voice their personal reaction to the comment on the paper.
8. **REPEAT** with up to two additional statements, if time allows.
9. **CLOSE** the activity by talking about the importance of listening to other people's viewpoints as we consider solutions to our most pressing issues. Also, discuss why or why not they would voice the opinion they wrote on the paper at a public meeting or to their elected government representative.
10. **ASK** a final question such as:
 - How can we help build a more compassionate community?
 - How can we make it easier for everyone to take action to improve our community?
 - How can we get to know our neighbors or encourage others to do so?"
11. **SCRIPT** ■ When you start a community project, it is vital to understand different viewpoints regarding the issues your project addresses. Engaging in discussions with people about these important issues will help you build relationships in the community as well as help you to evaluate your project and its potential impact on your community.

Acknowledgements

Portions of the Facilitator Agenda reference the following sources:

Community Toolbox, <http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu>

Community Action Institute Participant Handbook, Hands On Nashville Citizen Academy program, 2002.

Changing the World - Or Your Corner of It, Philadelphia Cares Citizen Academy program, 2002.

Start Your Own Community Project, Hands On Atlanta Citizen Academy program, 2002.

Managing Successful Community Volunteer Projects, Make A Difference, 2003.