BRINGING PEOPLE TO THE TABLE

PITFALLS AND CHALLENGES OF COLLABORATIVE ORGANIZING

Andrew Thomas
Fundraising & Membership Director
WHY BOTHER WORKING TOGETHER?

A camel is a horse designed by a committee…

What does this mean to folks here?
IMPORTANCE OF COMMITTEES AND TEAMS

Why do we work together?

• Shared work load.
• Ability for work to continue as people come and go.
• Better ideas come from groups.
• Allow for varying levels of participation.
PROBLEMS WORKING IN COMMITTEES OR TEAMS?

What things sometimes keep us from coming together?
• Difficult people
• Unresolved or unresolvable conflict.
• Different visions of purpose.
• Lots of talking, not much doing.
• Unreliable participation.
• Imbalance of workload
• Cultural differences based on race, age, language, etc.

What are some things that help us overcome these obstacles?
• Defining roles
• Effective recruitment
• Meeting facilitation
• Using tools for evaluation

Today we’re going to talk about what it takes to do these things well.
ESTABLISHING CLEAR ROLES AND GROUP NORMS

CHAIR
Pulls together meetings and keeps committee moving towards goal.

CO-CHAIR
Supports chair, but focuses internally on strength of committee and officers.

SECRETARY
Keeps notes and makes sure tasks are clearly assigned to individuals.
ESTABLISHING CLEAR ROLES AND GROUP NORMS

- Norms seek to meet the needs of the group
- Establish common reference points
- Creates opportunities for handling conflict productively
RECRUITING PEOPLE EFFECTIVELY: OFFER THEM A PROPOSITION

A proposition is a self-interested ask into a role, a deeper relationship, and a great vision.

Propositions are about creating clarity for a person and giving them a real choice.

A good proposition includes:
1. My self-interest in the work
2. What I think their self-interest is
3. My interest in working with them
4. A plan for getting around obstacles
5. Restated commitment & next steps
FACILITATION 101

PRE-MEETING
Agenda creation and distribution
Do you know the purpose of each section of your agenda?
  - Decision making?
  - Distribute work?
  - Open discussion with no intention of decision?
  - Informational?
Do you have a rough goal in mind for each section?
Do you have a process that makes sense to reach that goal?

DURING MEETING
Setting, evaluating, and reinforcing norms of participation
Sticking to the agenda
Facilitating productive discourse
Helping the group arrive at decisions
Make sure a follow up meeting is scheduled

POST-MEETING
Check in with meeting participants
Follow up on action items
Resolve any feedback or points of contention from previous meetings
FACILITATION 101: DECISION MAKING

CONSENSUS

1. Initiative: idea for action
2. Proponent develops a case for the action
3. Proposal introduced to the group
4. Questions of clarification/More information sought?
   a. Test for consensus - Members support, oppose or abstain*

   No opposition
   - Motion carried. Determine timeframe and responsibility for action. Record abstentions (if any).

   Opposition expressed by one or more members
   - Specify reason for opposition. Defer decision to future date. Ask proponent to provide further information or redraft proposal.

   Significant number of abstentions:
   - The group may resolve not to carry the motion. Identify reasons for abstention. Ask proponent to provide further information or redraft proposal.

* Abstaining is distinct from opposing; the member is prepared to abide by the group's decision.

MAJORITY VOTE

1. Initiative: idea for action
2. Proponent develops a case for the action
3. Proposal introduced to the group
4. Questions of clarification/More information sought?
5. Opportunity for members to speak in favour of or against the motion
6. Members vote on motion
   a. Majority support
   - Motion carried. Determine timeframe and responsibility for action.

   b. Majority opposition
   - Motion rejected
USING TOOLS OF EVALUATION

- Provide a sense of closure
- Creates a space for productive disagreement about process
- Allows facilitators to collect feedback
USING TOOLS OF EVALUATION

Fist to Five

- No way! I’ll block this.
- I see MAJOR issues we need to resolve.
- I see MINOR issues we need to resolve now.
- I see minor issues we can resolve later.
- I’m fine with this as it is.
- I love this! I will champion it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lack of Consensus</th>
<th>Consensus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
CLOSING & QUESTIONS