Facilitating Community Groups

Chapter 11 in Community Health Education Methods by Bensley
Types of Community Groups

- Communication and Decision-Making Groups
- Task-Specific Groups
- Oversight and Advisory Groups
- Planning Councils
- Commissions
- Steering Committees

Ensure the community-based program reflects and serves community needs.
Communication and Decision-Making Groups are established for:

- communication
- decision making
Types of Groups

Communication and Decision-Making Groups

- **Staff groups** (*staff meetings, department meetings, faculty meetings*)
  - Stimulate and nurture vision and shared commitment

- **Standing Committees** (*working group*)
  - Helps the committee meet its commitment.

- **Subcommittees** (*specific segment of the work*)
  - Helps the committee stay focused

- **Committee-of-the-whole** (*informal discussion group to address specific issues*)
  - Helps the committee stay focused
Discuss with your neighbor...
The different types of communication and decision-making groups.
Task-Specific Groups are established for:

- exploring a specific issue
- taking a specific action
- a specific period of time
Types of Groups

- **Task-Specific Groups**
  - **Ad hoc committees** *(have a specific timeframe to formulate recommendations)*
    - Keep the committee ‘on task’
  - **Task forces** *(has to complete a specific task)*
    - Keep the committee ‘on task’
  - **Coalitions** *(a large group formed from other groups, with the specific purpose of sharing information, raising awareness, advocating for an issue)*
    - Keep coalition energized & productive
QW: Describe the different Task-Specific Groups
Types of Groups

- Oversight and Advisory Groups convene experts to guide the community group.

Facilitate full participation and encourage the group to make recommendations.
Planning Councils are advisory groups that have a specific charge, formal operating procedures, and clear objectives...the end result of their work is their decision or recommendation.

Supports ground rules for parity and inclusion and ensures the objectives and the funding requirements are met.
Commissions is a formal group appointed by an organizational or government leader to make recommendations on a specific issue.

Manage competing interests, passionate advocacy and decision making within a specified time frame.
Types of Groups

- Steering Committees oversee the implementation of programs.

Keep the committee on task
Discuss with your neighbor how to differentiate these groups:
Steps for Effective Group Facilitation

- Plan the Meeting (purpose, who should attend, where, when, how long)
- Develop an agenda and distribute ahead of the meeting time (focuses discussion, establishes order of issues addressed, provides road map for meeting)
- Arrange for minutes (impartial, written record of what happened during the meeting, taken by someone acting as secretary or historian, which are distributed to participants soon after meeting and is part of the public record)
- Attend to the details (setting accessible to all and comfortable, all equipment tested, use of microphone if large group, name tags, refreshments, roster, meeting tone, scheduled breaks, timeliness of discussions, closure)
- (Consider meeting by conference call or via the internet)
Call to Order
Welcome and Introductions
Agenda review
Consideration and approval of minutes
Standing reports and announcements
Discussion and action items
New business
Closure
Meeting adjournment
Tips for Effective Group Facilitation

- Have a genuine belief in the power of groups
- Have a genuine interest in others
- Exhibit an open and respectful interaction style
- Support and assist group members in accomplishing their tasks.
- Have a sense of humor
- Establish a climate of inclusion
- Keep discussions on task
- Evaluate the meeting

Avoid gossip or judgmental small talk

The greater the level of trust, the greater the level of group effectiveness

Self-reliance is central to group efficacy

Robert’s Rules of Order
Discuss, with your neighbors, the steps for effective group facilitation.
Overcoming challenges to Group Facilitation

- Encourage Participation
- Maintain attendance
- Minimize technology disruptions
- Resolve conflict
- Avoid burnout

Group comes up with ground rules that the facilitator, fairly, enforces
How to encourage participation

- Notify the group, at the beginning of the meeting, that ‘participation’ is a goal.
- Round of introductions/ice breakers.
- “I’d like to hear first from those who haven’t yet offered their opinion”.
- ‘Check in’ with participants privately.
- Hold small group discussions in the middle of the meeting for 5-10 minutes.
- Host a ‘drop-in for light refreshments’ for 20-30 minutes right before the meeting.
Characteristics of Effective Group Meetings

- Careful time management
- Facilitator and members are sensitive to each other’s needs and expressions
- Goals and objectives are clearly defined
- Interruptions are not allowed
- Facilitator is prepared
- Atmosphere is engaging
- Members are qualified and have vested interest in the group’s purpose
- Accurate minutes are maintained
- Members feel validated
- The group’s recommendations are actually used.
Discuss, with your neighbors, the characteristics of effective group meetings.
Facilitation is:
A. To promote, aid, simplify, or make a task easy
B. Smoothing the progress of a group
C. To make possible strategic planning efforts
D. Integrating goals and objectives

Communication and decision-making groups include the following:
A. Staff groups
B. Standing committees
C. Subcommittees
D. Ad hoc committees
E. All of the above
F. A, B, and C above

Advisory groups:
A. Enable health educators to obtain direction and guidance from people who understand the key issues and dynamics of a community-based initiative or program
B. Discuss the implementation of a public act in a local situation
C. Might include local employers and experts in the program content areas
D. All of the above.
Steering committees oversee the implementation of programs or initiatives. Some are involved in _______ stages while others become standing committees to oversee the operation of an ongoing program.

A. Late  
B. All  
C. Early  
D. No

A commission is another type of formal body. A commission is usually appointed by:

A. Government leader  
B. Organizational leader  
C. Both A and B  
D. None of the above

Steps of effective group facilitation include all the following EXCEPT:

A. Plan the meeting  
B. Develop an agenda  
C. Arrange for minutes or proceedings recording  
D. Attend to details  
E. Maintain a commitment to capacity development
According to the textbook, attending to details for meeting facilitation includes:
A. Providing a comfortable and appropriate setting for the meeting
B. Giving participants name tags
C. Beginning the meeting in a way that sets a tone for the remainder of the meeting
D. All of the above
E. None of the above

Which of the following is NOT a detail that can enhance a meeting’s tone and productivity?
A. Ensuring that the meeting site is accessible to all potential participants
B. Setting and testing audiovisual equipment in advance
C. Using microphones if necessary to enhance group communication
D. Allowing participants to use electronic messenger software to send messages during the meeting
E. Taking planned breaks, particularly in long meetings
F. Attending to ambiance details such as lighting, noise, and temperature control

When hosting a meeting via conference call or the Internet, the facilitator should:
A. Organize introductions at the beginning of the meeting and check periodically to see if anyone joined the call
B. Remind participants to speak clearly and slowly into the communication device
C. Ask that people place their phones on mute unless talking
D. Send materials, including the agenda, to all participants in advance
E. All of the above

A health educator should remain _________ while facilitating a group both during and outside of the meeting.
A. Positive
B. Neutral
C. In contact with the majority of participants
D. Manipulative among members who are not in agreement
True/False

It is best that health educators—when acting as facilitators—should separate themselves from the issue under discussion in order to attend to the communication and the progress of the group.

The decision to create an ad hoc committee, task force, commission, or coalition is usually made when specific work needs to be done within the structure and expectation of an existing group.

Effective facilitators enjoy the process, the people, the challenges, and the rewards of groups, which are bolstered by a healthy sense of humor.

Even a difficult meeting should be evaluated for productivity, organization, and discussions.