

WORKSHEET

Identifying Opinion Leaders

Start the process by asking a known influential leader, such as a banker, director of the chamber of commerce, or a newspaper editor ONE of the following sample questions. Next, interview one of the persons he/she names in the same manner until those named most often (perhaps 3 or more times) are in turn interviewed. This process can continue until the interviewer can largely predict the interviewee's responses.

Note: The following questions are samples of different ways of asking the same question. Choose one that fits your organization best!

- Would you please name six to eight persons who you think have the most influence in general community affairs in _____ (name the community)?
- Which persons in this community carry the most weight in community affairs?
- Which locally powerful people can get things done or can stop local projects?
- Whose approval is usually needed to get people in this community to accept or reject an important change?

To identify leaders in special areas or minority groups, one could request:

- Would you please name two or three persons who have the most influence in each of the following areas (or groups)?

An approach to identifying influential groups is to ask:

- Would you please name the groups or organizations having the most influence on general community affairs in this community?

Or to be more specific in the area of health:

- Which organization or group in this community do you think would be influential in determining whether or not a program to improve the health of community residents would be successful?