

# **TIP SHEET**

## **Understanding Diversity**

Members of a health promotion group may come from many different backgrounds. Some members may be much older or much younger than other members; some may represent different cultural, racial, or ethnic groups; some may represent different educational levels and abilities. Diversity can enhance health promotion efforts by better reflecting the communities our programs serve. Extra awareness and flexibility are required for the facilitator and other group members to remain sensitive to different backgrounds. Below are suggested a few ways to improve your awareness of differences. In general, new information is acquired so that different perspectives can be understood and appreciated.

- Become aware of differences in the group by asking questions and getting involved in small-group discussions.
- Seek involvement and input and listen to person of different backgrounds without bias, and avoid being defensive.
- Learn the beliefs and feelings of specific groups about particular issues.
- Read about current and emerging issues that concern different groups, and read literature that is popular among different groups.
- Learn about the language, humor, gestures, norms, expectations, and values of different groups.
- Attend events that appeal to members of specific groups.
- Become attuned to cultural clichés, stereotypes, and distortions you may encounter in the media.
- Use examples to which person of different cultures and backgrounds can relate.
- Learn the facts before you make statements or from opinions about different groups.

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### **Five Ideas That Motivate People to Join a Coalition**

- 1- A shared interest or mutual need. Health promotion may be one of many functions of an organization. Joining a coalition can fulfill the health promotion mandate of the organization.**
- 2- The general need for improving health in the community. All segments of the community need to work toward making their community a healthier place to live. A joint effort is a stronger effort.**
- 3- Improving community services by avoiding duplication of efforts.**
- 4- The need to share resources: money, staff, and materials are all in short supply in this time of limited resources. Working alone cannot accomplish what working together can.**
- 5- Participation can provide visibility in the community and demonstrate civic responsibility.**

## **TIP SHEET**

### **Typical Tasks of the Coalition**

- Elect officers**
- Review data and write, approve and prioritize the goals and objectives**
- Develop an action plan**
- Disseminate information**
- Coordinate existing programs**
- Identify one or two key leaders and recruit them as spokespersons for the project**
- Identify one or two organizations in the community to use as role models (organizations whose health promotion programs or policies can serve as examples)**
- Carry out public awareness campaign**
- Recruit volunteers to serve on problem-specific task forces, e.g., smoking, nutrition, worksite, and media**
- Review and approve evaluation plans**

## **TIP SHEET**

### **Guidelines For Effective Coalitions**

- 1. Be sensitive to turf issues.**
- 2. Make sure the coalition is genuine.**
- 3. Clarify the exact purpose of the coalition.**
- 4. Limit the number of agencies involved in the coalition.**
- 5. Allow enough time for decisions to be made.**
- 6. Communicate with other coalitions from other geographic areas dealing with the same problem.**
- 7. Make sure the visibility and recognition of the agencies involved in the coalition are increased as a result of their participation.**
- 8. Secure a financial commitment from agencies involved in the coalition.**
- 9. Have infrequent but worthwhile meetings.**
- 10. Make sure someone is accountable for the work of the coalition.**
- 11. Be sure to distribute the workload of the coalition among participating agencies.**

# **TIP SHEET**

## **Reaching Consensus**

**Groups sometimes find it hard to reach a consensus, or general agreement. Remind participants of the following guidelines to group decision-making.**

- Avoid the “one best way” attitude; the best way is that which reflects the best collective judgment of the group.**
- Avoid “either, or” thinking; often the best solution combines several approaches.**
- A majority vote is not always the best solution. When participants give and take, several viewpoints can be combined.**
- Healthy conflict, which can help participants reach a consensus, should not be smoothed over or ended prematurely.**
- Problems are best solved when participants try both to communicate and to listen.**

**If a group has trouble reaching consensus, consider using some special techniques such as brainstorming, the nominal group process, and conflict resolution.**

## **TIP SHEET**

### **Typical Task Force Activities**

- Identifying specific target group(s) -the high risk populations to be the focus**
- Generating ideas for implementing strategies**
- Analyzing the pros and cons of various approaches**
- Pre-testing (trying out) the plan and revising if necessary**
- Setting a timetable for activities and submitting to the coalition for review (if more than one task forces exists, activities must be coordinated)**
- Determining resources necessary to carry out the plan**
- Developing specific evaluation procedures (who will collect what data and how?)**
- Obtaining the approvals and commitment of necessary resources (materials, space, funding, training of volunteer leaders or instructors).**

# **TIP SHEET**

## **Tips on Working With Volunteers**

**Volunteers work for self-satisfaction, personal growth, fun, and other intangible rewards. Each volunteer should be treated as a colleague and recognized as an official part of the team. However, offer volunteers more flexibility than you can to employees, and adjust your expectations accordingly. For example, because volunteers can not contribute as much time as paid, full-time workers do, they cannot complete tasks as quickly.**

**Get to know each volunteer personally so that you can learn about special abilities and limitations and match responsibilities to skills. Vary responsibilities as desired by volunteers.**

**Be sure to assign specific and clearly defined tasks and to explain procedures and expectations. Develop a work plan or job description for the volunteer to help ensure that roles and responsibilities are understood. Provide training and give credit for work done. Give lots of feedback, encouragement, and signs of appreciation. Be willing to change the placement of volunteers, if that seems appropriate, or even dismiss a volunteer if necessary.**

**Keep in mind the following key points of working with volunteers. They want to be:**

- appreciated for the work that they do,**
- busy with worthwhile and varied tasks,**
- provided with clear communication about tasks and expectations, and**
- developed through training.**