Developing Effective Coalitions: The 8-Step Process

1. Analyze program objectives, determine whether to form a coalition
2. Recruit the right people
3. Devise preliminary objectives and activities
4. Convene the coalition
5. Anticipate necessary resources
6. Develop a successful structure
7. Maintain coalition vitality
8. Improve through evaluation
Cultivating Common Ground
Linking Health and Sustainable Agriculture

Funded by:
Clarence E. Heller Charitable Foundation
and the Columbia Foundation
DILBERT

DOGBERT, I NEED YOU TO FACILITATE SOME MEETINGS.

WHAT KIND OF MEETINGS?

WE'RE CREATING A PROCESS TO FIX OUR PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS. BUT FIRST WE'RE HAVING SOME PREPLANNING MEETINGS.

...TO DECIDE ON A PROJECT NAME.

HOW ABOUT "DEATH SPIRAL"?
Step 1

Developing Effective Coalitions

Analyze your program’s objectives and determine whether to form a coalition.

- Clarify current objectives
- Examine approaches which might be effective
- Assess current community strengths and needs
Health Impacts of the Current Food System

- Over Production of a Range of Unhealthy Food Products
- Use of and Exposure to Toxins
- Dangers to Farmer and Worker Health and Safety
- Antibiotic Resistance
- Foodborne Illness
- Respiratory Illness and Poor Air Quality
Step 2

Developing Effective Coalitions

Recruit the right people.

- Identify people working on the issue
- Consider who has influence
- Determine who will be supportive
- Identify who may put obstacles in your path
- Consider how many people should be involved
The Food System
Fresh Food Coalition

Grocers / Small store owners

Sustainable Agriculture Groups

Public/ Private transportation

Food Security

Health Care Providers/ Purchasers

Boys & Girls Clubs

Public Health

Farmers

Planners

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NPA1017_WA DoH consult_011105
Coalition Members Wear 2 Hats
Types of Collaborations

Grassroots

Community-Based Organizations

Governmental Organizations
Partnerships Among Systems

Health

Agriculture

Education
Forming Broader Partnerships to Meet Mutual Goals
Step 3

Developing Effective Coalitions

Set preliminary objectives and activities.

- Propose a variety of activities to meet members’ needs and skills
- Identify short-term successes
Source: Prevention Institute, 2004
The Spectrum of Prevention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influencing Policy and Legislation</th>
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<td>Changing Organizational Practices</td>
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<td>Promoting Community Education</td>
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<td>Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills</td>
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Step 4

Developing Effective Coalitions

Convene the coalition...

...through a meeting
...through a workshop
...through a conference
Anticipate the necessary resources.
Anticipate the necessary resources.

- Clerical
- Meeting planning, preparation and facilitation
- Membership recruitment, orientation and encouragement
- Research and data collection
- Participation in activities and projects
Excess Deaths Associated With Underweight, Overweight, and Obesity

Katherine M. Flegal, PhD; Barry I. Graubard, PhD; David F. Williamson, PhD; Mitchell H. Gail, MD, PhD

JAMA. 2005;293:1851-1853
Tradeoffs – taste, cost, and convenience

- Vegetables
- Fruit
- Fats/sweets
- Fast foods

Energy density (MJ/kg)

Energy cost (log cents/10MJ)

(Drewnowski and Specter, AJCN 2004)
Step 6

Developing Effective Coalitions

Devise a successful coalition structure.

- Should coalition be ad hoc or ongoing?
- How long and frequent should meetings be?
- Should agencies officially join the coalition?
- How will decisions be made?
- How will agendas be structured?
- How much will members realistically participate between meetings?
It Depends!
Devise a successful coalition structure.

- Should coalition be ad hoc or ongoing?
- How long and frequent should meetings be?
- Should agencies officially join the coalition?
- How will decisions be made?
- How will agendas be structured?
- How much will members realistically participate between meetings?
Maintain the coalition’s vitality.

- Difficulties generally arise due to:
  - poor group dynamics
  - inadequate membership participation
  - ineffective coalition activities
  - external changes which affect the coalition’s mission
The Tension of Turf
Cultivating Common Ground
Forming Broader Partnerships for Mutual Benefit

Sustainable Agriculture

Chronic Disease Prevention
“I think everyone regardless of income deserves the benefits of organic and pesticide-free food, *but* since these options are usually more expensive, it’s hard to make the case from a strictly anti-hunger perspective.”
Differences in Paradigms and Focus

- Systems Orientation vs. Individual Orientation
- Precautionary Principle vs. Indisputable Proof
- Appropriate Technology vs. High-Tech Fixes
- Movement vs. Discipline
TURF

“The conflict between organizations with seemingly common goals.”

--Peck and Hague
Why Do Turf Issues Arise?

- Coalitions tend to be made up of passionate members
- Non-coalition related issues are brought into the coalition
- Conflicting agendas
- Previous bad relations
- Control over the coalition (identity, ideology, and strategy)
- Who gets recognition and resources
RECOMMENDATION

The Big Picture

◆ When turf issues arise, utilize perceived neutrality of certain members (youth, survivors) to bring the coalition back to its purpose.

◆ **Try this:** If the chair senses turf issues are arising, space should be made during a meeting for a speaker who can remind the coalition of its purpose.
RECOMMENDATION

Make Struggles Overt

◆ Turf battles can only be addressed if members admit that they exist. Acknowledge that conflict exists and discuss potential causes.

◆ *Try this*: Coalition leadership should set the tone that turf is “not a four letter word.”
“The overall frame, best reflective of all the sectors, is ‘fresh food’ or ‘farm fresh.’ The concept of fresh food carries the overall vision of sustainability without tying it to rigidly to the specifics and details that may lead to objections.”

Photo: Lisa Hamilton
Make improvements through evaluation.

- Ask for feedback
- Evaluate the effectiveness of specific activities
- Know when it is time to dissolve, disband, or change the structure of the coalition
Evaluation
The field of evaluation must be expanded to enhance violence prevention results.
### Toward a more comprehensive evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current State:</th>
<th>Must Include:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Linear</td>
<td>Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single programs</td>
<td>Integrated partnerships</td>
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<td>Singular approaches</td>
<td>Multifaceted efforts</td>
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<td>Vacuum</td>
<td>Context</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simplified efforts</td>
<td>Interactive</td>
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Creating a Collaborative Movement

Photo: Lisa Hamilton

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Avoid burnout...

...Find ways to take care of yourself and support your co-workers.

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Recognize Unintended Successes

“Coalition organizers should avoid getting so caught up in any one effort as to view it as ‘make or break.’

Every effort prepares for greater and more sustained efforts in the future.”

-- Cherie R. Brown
# Community Food Environments in Midwest and Southeast

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<th>Industry Group</th>
<th>Low-Wealth Neighborhood</th>
<th>High-Wealth Neighborhood</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supermarkets</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carry out eating places</td>
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<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bars/Taverns</td>
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