



# INTEREST-BASED PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS AND TECHNIQUES

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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION  
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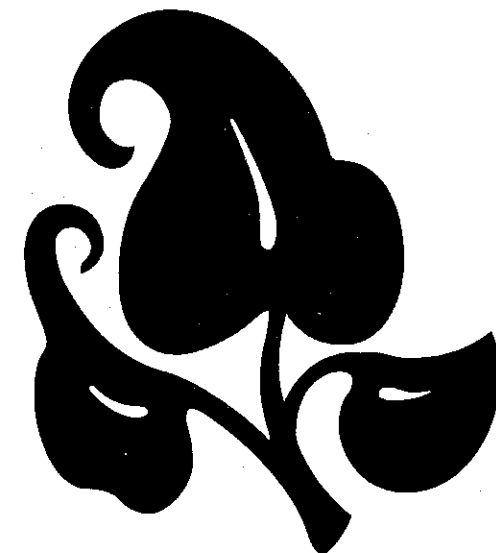
# COMMUNITY VENTURES



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INTEREST-BASED PROBLEM SOLVING PROVIDES  
A STRUCTURED PROCESS BY WHICH  
PARTICIPANTS WORK TO SOLVE PROBLEMS  
WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY FULFILLING  
THEIR OWN NEEDS AND ATTEMPTING  
TO SATISFY THE NEEDS OF OTHERS.

Our culture is not experienced with resolving conflicts in a manner that allows all parties to "win." We have been raised with the "win-lose" or "zero-sum" game model. We have been taught to believe that there are limited resources. If I win, this reduces the amount of resources available to you; therefore, you lose. When loss is a real possibility, controversial issues within the public arena are often side-stepped to avoid backlash and public conflict. Contentious issues are ignored, repressed, or incorporated into a larger political agenda. Many times controversial issues are tied to value judgments, such as right to life, private property rights, or other values that are difficult if not impossible to resolve. Value-based conflicts or those disagreements that are based upon principles and absolute right or wrong are the most difficult to resolve. It may be impossible, for instance, to resolve conflicts when there are only value-based absolutes because there is little to negotiate. Who is willing to negotiate their tightly held value of freedom of speech?

Interest-based problem solving provides the opportunity for people on different sides of a contentious issue to see the values of another without having to jeopardize their own interests or values. When disputing parties understand their interests can be met, communication can begin. Rather than design the process to influence decision makers or the judge, the process can be designed to enable all parties to listen to each other, identify important values and work toward a common resolution.

Recent dispute resolution processes such as mediation, negotiation, and policy forums have become more common in the public issue arena. Interest-based problem solving is a structured process which fits into the broad definition of alternative dispute resolution.

## SATISFACTION = WORKABLE AGREEMENTS

When we think of a conflict, we often think in terms of winning the prize, getting what we want, or substantive satisfaction. The substance or outcome of the dispute is, however, only one of the three types of satisfaction levels necessary to achieve interest-based solutions. These three elements—

## INTRODUCTION

## LEVELS OF SATISFACTION

substantive satisfaction, procedural satisfaction, and psychological satisfaction—form a “three-legged” stool. Unless all three areas are addressed, the solution will probably not last.

### SUBSTANTIVE SATISFACTION

If a party exits a dispute with a sense that he or she got something out of the process, then the type of satisfaction with the process is termed substantive. It may not be total satisfaction, or only a portion of the pie; nevertheless, each person seeks some sense of substantive satisfaction.

### PROCEDURAL SATISFACTION

As important as the content of the agreement is the sense of fairness that must accompany any agreement or outcome. If one party doesn't think the process was fair, or the process can be trusted, even favorable results (substance) will not provide satisfaction with the agreement. This level of satisfaction is especially important if the parties have not worked together before or if their interaction has been contentious and unpleasant.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL SATISFACTION

Everyone within the process needs to feel heard and respected. Even if the outcome is acceptable and the process was fair, an individual can feel that he or she was not listened to and the process may fail. Being respected and listened to is a major psychological need that must be recognized when managing conflicting issues.

Many dispute resolution processes require formal procedural rules. In a criminal court of law the focus is on defining the proof or innocence of an individual or group. *Robert's Rules of Order*, often used as the procedures for meetings and governmental decisions, follows a strict process where a motion for action is required before a discussion can be undertaken. The discussion enables an argument about the pros and cons of a proposed solution. After this point, modifications can be made to the motion or position. At each point in the process, the solution is

## INTERESTS VERSUS POSITIONS

argued and there are winners and losers. This lengthy process enhances our sense of win and lose, right and wrong. Interest-based problem solving addresses the issues from a very different point of view. The assumption is that there is a problem that must be solved and each party has a right to participate in developing a workable solution.

Interest-based problem solving emphasizes understanding each party's values rather than focusing on the positions or solutions. The difference between interests and positions is important to the development of workable resolutions. Why an issue is important allows others to help in the development of a workable solution. When all parties value and respect the interests, there is a better chance of developing a variety of solutions. Interests help to identify what part of the solution is important to each party.

| WIN/LOSE DISPUTE RESOLUTION   | INTEREST-BASED PROBLEM SOLVING   |
|---|--|
| STEP I—POSITION (ANSWER):<br>PROPOSAL OR SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM.                               | STEP I—INTEREST (VALUE OR BELIEF):<br>PRINCIPLES THAT NEED TO BE SATISFIED IF THE CONFLICT OR DISPUTE IS TO BE RESOLVED WITH EACH PARTY WILLING TO PARTICIPATE IN IMPLEMENTING THE SOLUTION. |
| STEP II—RATIONALE (REASONS):<br>LOGICAL ARGUMENTS FOR THE SOLUTION, OFTEN BASED ON DATA.        | STEP II—ISSUES (WHAT):<br>ITEMS ROOTED IN INTERESTS THAT MUST BE ADDRESSED AND RESOLVED IF SATISFACTION IS TO OCCUR.   |
| STEP III—PROBLEM DEFINITION:<br>DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM THAT WILL BE SOLVED BY THE SOLUTION. | STEP III—SOLUTION (HOW):<br>PROPOSALS AS TO HOW THE ISSUES MIGHT BE ADDRESSED IN ORDER THAT ALL PARTIES' INTERESTS ARE MET.  |

For example, when developing land use policy the question or dispute is often assessed as "economic development" vs. "environmental preservation." By assuming opposite sides of an issue the positions are immediately established. One community in southwest Washington State was embroiled in just such a dispute. Should the community be turned into a national scenic area or left for private development? On the surface the positions were clear. There would be winners and losers. When the various parties' interests were clarified and clearly understood, the simple right or wrong answers did not apply. For instance, community members valued the open space, clean air, wildlife, and beauty of the area. They also wanted economic development, but not ruin their quality of life. Recreation may provide jobs, but perhaps there should be limited access to preserve the community for community members. The environmental group sponsoring the national scenic area wanted to preserve open space, natural beauty, clean air, wildlife, and provide for public access for those who wished to enjoy the area. When both sides "heard" the interests and issues (negotiable items) the anger and personal accusations were reduced. With clearer communication the two groups were able to identify over 100 alternative actions which would meet the interests of both groups.

The solution often appears simple when issues and values are not involved. When interests are used as a basis for resolution, there can be a compromise developed that takes into account each interest. Economic development and private property rights remained important for the community. Environmental preservation and recreational access remained important to the environmental community. These values were not sacrificed. Using these values the two groups could identify a series of solutions that addressed each of the values.

The problem solving process enables two or more parties to search for common solutions while maintaining their own values and interests. It is this process that secures long-term satisfaction and workable agreements.

## PHASES OF THE PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS

### PRE-PROBLEM SOLVING

- Getting started
- Representation
- Procedural agreements or ground rules
- Legitimize all perceptions

### PROBLEM DEFINITION

- Problem definition
- Legitimize all perceptions
- Define the issues

### PRODUCTS OF THE PROCESS

- Identify the products of the process

### ANALYSIS

- Identify and clarify interests
- Joint fact-finding
- Cause and effect impact

### CRITERIA DEVELOPMENT

- Clarify interests
- Agree on performance criteria as a basis for defining success

### GENERATING ALTERNATIVES

- Generate alternatives
- Invent options

### DECISION MAKING

- Ratification
- Implementation

### FOLLOW-UP

- Formalizing the agreement
- Monitoring and evaluation

## PRE-PROBLEM SOLVING PHASE

### GETTING STARTED

- Meet with potential stakeholders to help them determine if they are willing to problem solve. Unless the parties see collaboration as a viable alternative to the courts, conflict, or violence, the process is negated before it has begun.

### REPRESENTATION

- Identify parties who have an interest or stake in the outcome. Include parties who could benefit as well as those who could be harmed by the outcome. Because parties who have the power to prevent implementation of any agreement must also be involved, this process may include from two to twenty parties.

### PROCEDURAL AGREEMENTS (GROUND RULES)

- Identify procedural agreements which articulate acceptable behavior for all parties. These agreements identify the ground rules for how the parties will work together and also how they will resolve conflicts.
- Use formal voting *after* the consensus has been reached.

Pre-problem solving sets the groundwork for the process. As a first step, the process allows participants to learn about each other and share personal agendas and initial concerns. Issues of interpersonal inclusion characterize the beginning of a group's work together. This step recognizes the need for individuals to raise questions such as: "How will I get along with \_\_\_\_?" "What do I have to do to be accepted?"

Procedural agreements or ground rules provide the first opportunity for disputants to have a positive experience in the problem solving process; hopefully, the first of many agreements. Procedural agreements lay the groundwork for a "sense of fairness" for all parties. The purposes of the procedural agreements include: identifying the rules of conflict, articulating specific behaviors that will and will not be tolerated within the group, determining the steps to be taken in the problem solving process, and providing acceptable procedures to be used when disputants begin to argue over substantive issues.

## TECHNIQUES

### IDENTIFY

- Identify the steps and process which will be followed. Identify all the individuals or groups that may have a legal standing within the issue.

### DEFINE GROUND RULES

- With the participants identify behaviors that participants "want" within the process. This technique puts the process on a positive note and allows the participants to "practice" developing agreements before the substantive issues are addressed.

## EXAMPLE OF A PROCEDURAL OR WORKING AGREEMENT

### PROPOSED GROUND RULES FOR THE INLAND NORTHWEST FIELD BURNING SUMMIT—REVISED MARCH 26, 1991

Each of the participants in the Summit agrees to the following ground rules:

**Legitimacy and Respect.** Summit participants are representative of a broad range of interests, each having concerns about the outcome of the issue at hand. All parties recognize the legitimacy of the interests and concerns of others, and expect that their interests will be respected as well.

**Active Listening and Involvement.** Participants commit to listen carefully to each other, recognize each person's concerns and feelings about the topic, ask questions for clarification, and make statements that attempt to educate or explain. Participants should not assume that any one person knows the answer.

**Responsibility.** Each of us takes responsibility for getting our individual needs met, and for getting the needs of Summit participants met. Participants commit to keeping their colleagues and constituents informed about the progress of these discussions, and to do so in a timely manner.

**Honesty and Openness.** Constructive candor is a little used but effective tool. Participants commit to stating needs, problems, and opportunities—not positions.

**Creativity.** Participants commit to search for opportunities and alternatives. The creativity of the group can often find the best solution.

**De-militarized Discussion.** Participants commit to leave their weapons of war at home (or at least outside the room).

**Consensus.** Participants agree that any decisions will be reached by consensus.

**Separability.** This summit is in no way meant to detract from or interfere with current efforts regarding field burning.

**Media.** Participants agree that to get maximum benefit from the Summit, a climate that encourages candid and open discussion should be created. In order to create and sustain this climate, participants commit to not attributing suggestions, comments, or ideas of another participant to the news media or non-participants. We encourage the participants to use good faith in dealing with the media, and to refer questions to Bill Justus, Spokane Chamber of Commerce, Ag Bureau. No media will be invited to attend, unless cleared with participants prior to the meeting.

**Freedom to Disagree.** Participants agree to disagree. The point of this Summit is to foster open discussion of issues; in order to facilitate this we need to respect each other's right to disagree.

**Commitment.** Participants agree this effort is a priority in terms of time and/or resource commitment. Each participant will provide the name of an alternate. The alternate will attend in the absence of the participant. It is the responsibility of the member and alternate to keep each other up to date.

**Rumors.** Participants agree to verify rumors at the meeting before accepting them as fact.

**Freedom to Leave.** Participants agree that anyone may leave this process and disavow the above ground rules, but only after telling the entire group why and seeing if the problem(s) can be addressed by the group.

**Dispute Resolution.** Participants agree that in the event this effort is unsuccessful, all are free to pursue their interest in other dispute resolution forums without prejudice.

## PROBLEM DEFINITION

- Clarify the problem. It is not uncommon for each party to have a different view of the problem.

## PROBLEM DEFINITION PHASE

### LEGITIMIZE ALL PERCEPTIONS

- Understand each definition of the problem could be "right," and that each definition may yield a different "right answer" or solution. If any participant believes that his or her ideas are not being treated as legitimate, the process will be disrupted without an acceptable conclusion. At this point it is critical that each participant feel he or she is being "heard."
- Get agreement on the problem before fighting over proposed positions or solutions.
- Look for ways to break down the problem or redefine the issue to allow each party to "own" part of the problem.
- Re-emphasize the procedural agreements as a basis for moving on.

### DEFINE THE ISSUES

- Present history and the need for change. Issues represent the "what" that will be discussed during the discussions. It is important that each of these tangible issues be articulated and defined. (Tangible means that the issue is negotiable.)

Often each party has a different perception of what the problem really is. How we define the problem leads us toward one type of solution. For example, if the problem is perceived as a lack of money to provide adequate client services, then the "obvious" solution is to find more money. Perhaps the problem is defined as poorly trained staff who do not know how to meet the needs of clients. The solution then may have something to do

with hiring or training policies. If, instead, the problem is defined as the organization not understanding what the client really wants or needs, the solution will revolve around a needs assessment or client involvement. It is very important to realize that the question asked is often more important than the answer proposed; we often spend our time arguing over "answers to the wrong questions."

## TECHNIQUES

### DEFINE

- Write down each definition of the problem on easel paper.

### CLARIFY

- Clarify definitions of the words used. It is very important that each person understand what the question means.

### IS/IS NOT

- What is and is not part of the problem? The group may want to draw a picture of the problem, including who is affected.

### DISCUSSION/QUESTIONING

- *What do you see as the problem?* Accept that each person may understand the problem differently. Write down each definition of the problem on easel paper. Review these definitions for clarification and understanding.
- *How does it feel?* How do you feel about the problem?

- *What is the real problem?* The problem should be stated in the form of a question to enable the group to solve it.

Examples: "How can we \_\_\_\_?" or "What are our options?"

- *Whose problem is it?* Can and/or should we deal with this problem?
- What are the best, worst, and most probable solutions? What is the best, worst, and most probable outcome if we solve this problem?

### IDENTIFY THE PRODUCTS OF THE PROCESS

- Identify "BATNA" (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement).<sup>1</sup> In other words, "if we don't participate, what can we expect?"
- Discuss potential products or outcomes of the problem solving process (legislation, agreement, policy).

"If we come to agreement, how would this agreement be used by each party?" Identifying the expected products of the process helps participants think about the positive outcomes of the problem solving activities early in the process. In addition, as the solution is being developed, participants already know how disputants expect to use the agreement. This step in the process helps develop trust in the process and the participants.

It is important to remember that this step is *not* the solution to the problem. Rather, it helps the group agree on *how* they intend to use the solution to the problem.

### PRODUCTS OF THE PROCESS PHASE

<sup>1</sup> A BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement) is a term used in negotiation where each party identifies the best possible outcome for themselves if there is no negotiation. At this time the "bottom line" or last resort is also identified. Although interest-based problem solving does not use threats or fall-back positions, it is important that the parties be clear about the alternative outcomes with and without the use of interest-based problem solving.



## TECHNIQUES

## DEFINE

- Define the potential products. If we come to an agreement, what form could the agreement be?

## HOW

- How might we use the agreement when it is developed?
- How might each party use the agreement?

## MAPPING

- In small mixed groups, ask each group to map or diagram the potential uses of the agreement. Emphasize potential legislation, organizational agreements, newspaper articles, or any other avenue that advertises the success of the process.

## ANALYSIS PHASE

## IDENTIFY INTERESTS

- Why does the problem exist now?
- Agree upon technical background information that is pertinent to the problem. What type of qualifications are necessary for expert witnesses to be seen as credible?

## JOINT FACT FINDING

- Share information.
- Receive expert opinions.
- Summarize stakeholder perspectives for use by all parties.

## CAUSE/EFFECT/IMPACT

- What are the long- and short-term impacts to this problem?
- How is the problem uniquely affecting each stakeholder?

The purpose of this step is to find out why the problem exists. It is also important to gather any information about the causes of the problem and impacts on each interest group. This is a step that may be repeated throughout the problem solving process.

What are all the forces keeping the situation from getting better? What are the forces keeping it from getting worse? Who and/or what wants the problem to exist? Who and/or what wants it to change? Each stakeholder's opinion is used. Often an interview or survey process can be developed to ensure that all opinions are included.

It is at this time that the issue of expert witnesses or testimony may come into play. One or another party may argue that the witness is biased and cannot give objective information to the process. For instance, environmental groups have argued that chemical companies should not be able to provide research information on the impacts of pesticides because they have their own agendas and interests.

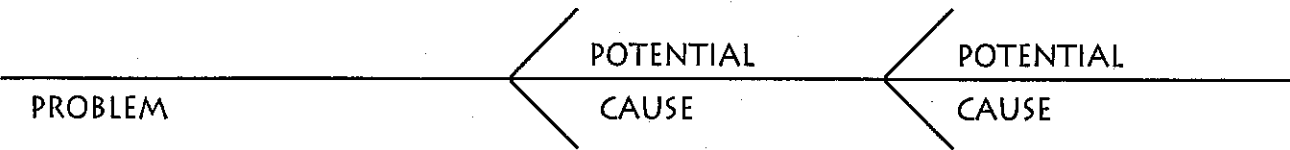
TECHNIQUES

BREAK DOWN

- Break down the problem into manageable parts. In small groups the parties can break down the problems identifying the causes and effects of the problem.

FISHBONE

- A fishbone or cause and effect diagram is a visual tool that allows the groups to “see” the interdependence of the issues related to the problem.



“SNOW CARDS”

The use of snow cards or an affinity diagram is an analysis tool which helps to organize and categorize total causes and effects. Each person is provided with 3x5 cards and asked to answer several questions related to problems. These answers written on individual cards are posted for everyone to see. The group then organizes and categorizes the cards to provide issue definition. Through this visual technique a picture of the major issues is developed. This technique helps a group learn what information they need, where overlaps are, and provides an opportunity for the group to “picture” the problem.

SNOW CARD EXAMPLE:

The following depicts the results of a Snow Card exercise. Participants first identified potential causes, posted these cards, followed by categorization of the ideas.

*Question: Why are students harassing younger students?*

| CATEGORIES | LACK OF SUPERVISION                | ACCESS AND AVAILABILITY                                      | LACK OF EDUCATION                            | OUTSIDE INFLUENCES                            | ACCESS TO WEAPONS                |
|------------|------------------------------------|--|--|---|----------------------------------|
| CARDS      | Too few teachers                   | No detention for skipping classes                            | Students don't know the impact               | Gangs come into the school                    | No check for weapons             |
|            | Few officers of the law            | Nothing to do  | Children are not taught mediation techniques | No way to separate students from outside kids | Kids say other kids have weapons |
|            | Unsupervised playground activities | Younger and older students are out of class at the same time |  |   |                                  |

## CRITERIA DEVELOPMENT PHASE

### CLARIFY INTERESTS

- Help parties fully understand real interests and/or needs.
- Do not focus on solutions or positions, rather search for "bottom-line" interests (see *techniques* footnote on page 11).

### UNDERSTAND AND AGREEMENT

- Understand and agree that each party's interest must be recognized as an important part of the solution development process.
- Continually ask "why." Why is this issue important for you? What would it be like if the problem were solved? What do you want? Why do you want it? Each person must have a chance to add his or her needs or interests to the list.

### PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- Agree on performance criteria as a basis for defining success.
- All parties consent to use the agreed-upon criteria in developing solutions.

This stage may be the most important phase of the process. It is at this time that the criteria for development of alternative solutions are agreed to. By using these criteria as a performance evaluation tool, the group can develop alternatives and evaluate these alternatives against the agreed-upon criteria. It is important to note that the participants are asked to develop and agree upon criteria before they develop alternatives or decide upon a solution. It is this stage that offers the difference between interest-based problem solving and interest-based mediation. These criteria provide an opportunity for the disputants to work together to develop solutions that address several criteria.

What are the major needs and interests that must be satisfied for everyone to agree on a solution? Interests are the principles, values, and beliefs that are the basis for solutions or positions. Interests answer why something is of importance.

As an example, an individual desiring quiet at 10 p.m. in order to go to sleep is a need and/or interest. Lack of noise in the evening hours becomes a performance criteria. Land use or noise abatement regulations become the solution or position which determines *how* that need is met.

## TECHNIQUES

### "WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO ME?"

- What is most important about this issue for you? What would it be like if the problem were solved? What do you want? Why do you want it? Each person in the group must have a chance to add his or her needs and interests to the list. This list becomes a set of criteria against which the alternative solutions are judged. It is important that participants identify one or two of the most important reasons why these issues are important.

### BUILDING CONSENSUS

- It is important that everyone "live with" the list of criteria. This does not mean that each criterion is important to you, but it does mean you will respect each of the expressed needs and interests and work toward their accomplishment. Consensus is based upon the term "to consent" or to "grant permission." The criteria may not be your first choice or important to you, but you agree to "live with the decision." To live with the criteria means that, "I will work towards its implementation, and I will not sabotage the use of the criteria in the development of a workable solution."

## GENERATING ALTERNATIVES PHASE

- This agreed-upon list of needs and interests should be posted and available to all participants. Alternatives are generated based on these agreed-upon criteria.

### GENERATE ALTERNATIVES

- Generate a wide range of possible solutions. It is at this time that the parties suggest their ideas, solutions, and/or positions.

### INVENT OPTIONS

- Challenge participants to try new ideas.

### NO JUDGMENT

- It is important that all ideas be heard and no judgments be made at this time.

The key to generating alternatives is to remember that there is always more than one right answer. Always ask, "How else might we meet our criteria?" It is important that all parties be able to suggest ideas and solutions. It is at this stage that interests may put forward their "positions" which will be evaluated based on the agreed-upon criteria.

## TECHNIQUES

### BRAINSTORMING

- Toss around ideas, but don't evaluate them. Record the ideas on easel paper.

### BRAINDRAIN

- Braindrain is a form of brainstorming with a time limit of two to three minutes. Groups are put in competition with each other to generate the most ideas in a short amount of time.

### "WHAT I LIKE ABOUT . . . ."

- After the brainstorming session, each person gives positive feedback on each idea. "What I like about this idea is . . . ." Using this technique, alternatives can easily be narrowed to a workable number.

### SNOW CARDS OR AFFINITY DIAGRAM

- Generate ideas through the use of 3x5 cards posted on the wall. (See preceding example of a snow card exercise.) Each person is asked to answer "what if" or other future-oriented questions and post their answers. For example, "In two years we implemented our criteria by developing . . . ." Using this technique in the Pacific Northwest, environmentalists and residents developed over 100 ideas which both protected the environment and generated economic options for the area.

## CATEGORIZE

- Break down the ideas by category or interest.

## SMALL GROUPS

- Mix participants representing opposing interests to form small groups. Give them the job of designing a solution based upon the criteria. Create subcommittees to draft options and present to the total group.

DECISION MAKING  
PHASE

## EVALUATING AND CREATING AGREEMENTS

- Using the agreed-upon criteria as a basis for evaluating all the alternatives, solutions can be developed in such a way that the various interests are met.

## RATIFICATION

- After the agreement or solution is developed, each interest will need to take the agreement to his or her group for ratification.

## IMPLEMENTATION

- After the solution is agreed upon, an implementation plan or agreement must be developed.

By following this type of process, the decision making stage is often easier than expected. The criteria has already led to alternatives, and the alternatives provide options which many times the parties have already agreed to "live with." Sometimes there is more than one agreement, or agreements are packaged around time periods, evaluation procedures, and/or progress reports.

## TECHNIQUES

## CONSENSUS

- A consensus is an agreement which incorporates the views of all the members. Consensus is based on the term "to consent" or to "grant permission." The solution may not be my "first choice," but I will "live with" the decision. Consensus means there is some level of commitment to implementing the agreement, and there is agreement on not sabotage of the implementation.

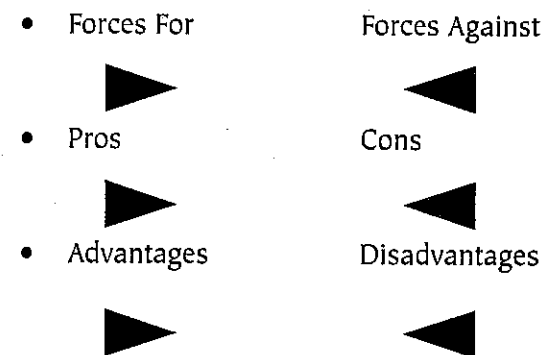
## BOTH/AND

- This method helps dispel the win/lose attitude. Perhaps a choice between alternatives is not necessary. Building a solution from several ideas helps the group identify timelines, check points for evaluation, and outcome strategies.

## FORCE-FIELD ANALYSIS

- Force-field analysis was developed by Kurt Lewin in the 1940s. Within the elements of a decision, the relationship between various "forces" can encourage or discourage the implementation of the decision.

Force-field analysis allows participants to examine the probability of implementing their decisions.



- What can be done to reduce the effect of this force?
- What can be done to increase the effect of this force?
- This technique allows members to analyze the agreements with respect to the likelihood of implementation.

#### SURVEY/STRAW VOTING

- This is not an official vote, but the process allows the group to get a sense of how the participants feel about the agreement. The questions posed in a survey are: "Can you live with this decision?" If the answer is "no," it is important to ask the follow-up question, "What would it take for you to live with the decision?" Never ask, "Why don't you like it?" This provides an opportunity to complain about the decision without taking responsibility for developing new pieces in the agreement which would work for the entire group.

#### NEGATIVE VOTING

- Is there any suggestion that would be unacceptable under any circumstances? This technique provides a final check when the group seems to have consensus.

#### FOCUS ON AGREEMENTS FIRST

- What have we agreed on? Agreements ensure fairness by involving all participants and establishing a sense of ownership and equity.

#### AGREEMENTS

- Divide the agreement into parts. Subcommittees can be asked to prepare each part. Each agreement must have substantive satisfaction. The key is that the major interests and needs have been satisfied.

#### FOLLOW-UP

- Produce a written document. Members from each party should sign the document. Within the document should be contingencies to cover unforeseen circumstances.
- A group or person with the responsibility for monitoring the solutions and implementation plan should be jointly agreed upon.
- Reassemble the parties for evaluation and monitoring. This also provides an opportunity for the group to revise the agreement, or tackle new problems or issues.

Follow-up is important for holding the parties to their agreements. Developing provisions to ensure the parties will honor the terms of the agreement promotes trust as well as an opportunity to return to the group if there is a problem. If an agreement is broken and there is no follow-up, the initial reaction is often blame and disappointment. With an agreed-upon mechanism for troubleshooting and reassembly there is an opportunity for problem solving rather than fighting.

#### FOLLOW-UP PHASE

## TECHNIQUES

## PUBLICITY

- Publicly signing the document lends a formality and finality to the effort. It also allows celebration and promotes a sense of camaraderie.

## TROUBLESHOOTING

- A trouble-shooting subcommittee with the authority to call the parties back together if there are problems, helps to continue the implementation of the agreement.
- This formal monitoring and troubleshooting committee should be set up with representatives from each of the parties. Communication mechanisms and an agreement "not to act without checking with the other members of the troubleshooting committee" is necessary to prevent undue disputes. This committee develops a procedure to affirm outcomes, resolve problems, renegotiate terms, and reconvene the group.

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