

LEADER'S GUIDE



**citizen
participation
in community
development**

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C O N T E N T

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- This slide/cassette presentation assumes that most viewers will not have prior, in-depth training in this subject matter area. Therefore, an attempt has been made to cover the subject in some detail. In general, the slide/cassette presentation should be accompanied by group discussion for maximum benefits. The cassette may be used alone for review of the essential points.

SLIDE/CASSETTE

- It is recommended that the slide/cassette be reviewed in-depth by the group leader prior to showing it to the target audience. The slide/cassette contains the basic information around each principle. The group leader may wish to show the entire slide/cassette and use the discussion guide to bring each principle back into focus for the group. Another alternative is to turn-off the audio-visual presentation after each principle and discuss.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

- The group leader may wish to reproduce for each participating member all or part of the discussion material. If time is limited, the leader may wish only to reproduce the summary scale for stimulating discussion.

SLIDE SCRIPT

- For manually operating projector or for reading with slides.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

- A series of quotes supporting each principle for leader use and edification.

A DISCUSSION GUIDE
FOR
CITIZEN DECISION MAKERS

Below are listed six principles of citizen participation which describe conditions that tend to encourage people to volunteer.

Principle #1 -- Citizens will voluntarily participate in a community activity when they have an appropriate organizational structure available to them for expressing their interests.

Is your group organized in a way that citizens of your community feel free to ask for assistance with a community problem?

Yes No Don't Know

If no, what keeps them from doing so?

COMMENTS: _____

Principle #2 -- Citizens will voluntarily participate in a community activity when they see positive benefits to be gained.

Do citizens of your community understand the benefits to be gained from participating in projects or activities sponsored by your groups?

Yes No Don't Know

If no, how can you get wider understanding and acceptance?

COMMENTS: _____

Do citizens respond to some projects or activities and not others?

Yes No Don't Know

If yes, why or why not?

COMMENTS: _____

Principle #3 -- Citizens will voluntarily participate in a community activity when they see some aspect of their way-of-life threatened.

Do people view your projects or activities as vital to their way-of-life?

Yes No Don't Know

If no, are your projects or activities addressing the important issues confronting the citizens of your community?

COMMENTS: _____

Principle #4 -- Citizens will voluntarily participate in a community activity when they feel obligated to be supportive of the activity.

Does your group seek participants who feel an obligation to one or more projects or activities?

Yes No Don't Know

If no, what do you feel are the merits or limitations to this approach?

COMMENTS: _____

Principle #5 -- Citizens will voluntarily participate in a community activity when they have better knowledge of an issue or situation.

Do you feel your group makes a real effort to have people understand the basics of an issue or problem?

Yes No Don't Know

If no, what reasons would you suggest that might explain your group's lack of success?

COMMENTS: _____

Principle #6 -- Citizens will voluntarily participate in a community activity when they feel comfortable in the group.

How does your group go about making sure people feel comfortable in your group?

COMMENTS: _____

Do you think some people do not participate because they feel uncomfortable in the group?

COMMENTS: _____

HOW DOES YOUR GROUP RATE?

Instruction: Circle the answer that best represents your opinion on each of the following statements. "SA" means you strongly agree with the statement, "A" means you agree, "U" means you are undecided, "D" means you disagree, and "SD" means you strongly disagree.

- | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Most citizens feel free to participate in this group | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 2. This group represents a cross-section of community residents. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 3. Participation is not a problem in this group. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 4. This group does a good job of informing residents of this community on various issues and problems. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 5. Citizens are generally apathetic about issue and problems facing this community. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 6. This group has good participation from citizens of this community. | SA | A | U | D | SD |
| 7. This group is viewed as a very successful organization by most citizens. | SA | A | U | D | SD |

NOTE: If you have one or more responses in the undecided or disagree columns, members of your group probably should collectively examine the issue of participation to insure group vitality over time.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IS USUALLY A DESIRED AND NECESSARY PART OF EVERY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY. AS SPIEGEL SAYS, "CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IS THE PROCESS THAT CAN MEANINGFULLY TIE PROGRAMS TO PEOPLE."

CITIZENS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN COMMUNITY DECISIONS FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS. THE UNITED STATES WAS BUILT ON THE CONCEPT OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION. SUCH RIGHTS AS FREEDOM OF SPEECH, ASSEMBLY, VOTING, AND EQUAL REPRESENTATION SERVED AS THE PILLARS OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY.

HISTORIANS CONTEND THAT AMERICANS HAVE ALWAYS WANTED TO HELP MAKE DECISIONS THAT AFFECT THEIR LIVES. THE TOWN ASSEMBLY WAS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF THIS. TOWN ASSEMBLIES WERE FIRST USED IN PLYMOUTH AND JAMESTOWN, BUT SOON SPREAD WEST AS NEW SETTLEMENTS WERE ESTABLISHED. THEY WERE UNIQUE BECAUSE ALL THE CITIZENS IN THE COMMUNITY GOT TOGETHER TO DECIDE ON ISSUES.

BUT, THE VILLAGES BEGAN TO GROW AND EXPAND, BOTH NUMERICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY. AS THEY GREW, IT BECAME HARDER AND HARDER FOR EVERY PERSON IN THE VILLAGE TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN ALL THE COMMUNITY'S DECISIONS. AS A RESULT, PEOPLE BEGAN TO DELEGATE THEIR INVOLVEMENT TO A REPRESENTATIVE. THE AVERAGE AMERICAN CITIZEN HAD A MORE INDIRECT PARTICIPATION ROLE IN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS. THIS INDIRECT ROLE IS CARRIED ON TO AN EVEN LARGER EXTENT IN TODAY'S SOCIETY.

BUT, EVEN THOUGH DIRECT CITIZEN PARTICIPATION HAS DECLINED, THERE ARE STILL MANY OPPORTUNITIES FOR CITIZENS TO GET INVOLVED IN THEIR COMMUNITY'S DESTINY.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION CAN BE DEFINED IN MANY WAYS. A PERSON TAKES PART IN HIS COMMUNITY'S AFFAIRS WHEN HE PAYS HIS TAXES OR OBEYS THE LAW.

THIS DISCUSSION CONCERNS VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY DECISION MAKING.

INVOLVEMENT VARIES. A CITIZEN CAN PARTICIPATE IN HIS COMMUNITY AT ONE OF FIVE DIFFERENT LEVELS. WHICH RECEDE DOWN THE INVERTED PYRAMID.

THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION IS TO BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED. AT THIS LEVEL, A PERSON MAY SERVE ON A COMMITTEE, ACT AS A CAMPAIGN CHAIRMAN, OR WORK AS AN INTERVIEWER IN A SURVEY.

THE SECOND LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION IS THE PERSON WHO LIMITS HIS ACTIVITY. THIS PERSON BECOMES INVOLVED IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS BY ATTENDING MEETINGS AND VOTING.

AVERAGE PARTICIPATION IS THE THIRD LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT. THIS IS THE ROLE THAT THE AVERAGE CITIZEN IN A COMMUNITY USUALLY TAKES. HE KNOWS AND READS ABOUT AN ISSUE AND DISCUSSES IT WITH HIS FRIENDS, WITHOUT TAKING ANY COURSE OF ACTION ABOUT THE ISSUE.

LEVEL FOUR INVOLVES VERY LITTLE PARTICIPATION ON THE PART OF A CITIZEN. THIS PERSON HAS HEARD ABOUT AN ISSUE, BUT KNOWS LITTLE ABOUT IT.

THE FIFTH LEVEL INVOLVES NO PARTICIPATION WHATSOEVER.

BEFORE ANYONE CAN PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY DECISIONS, THERE MUST BE AN APPROPRIATE ORGANIZATION THROUGH WHICH CITIZENS CAN WORK. THIS MAY SEEM LIKE AN ELEMENTARY REQUIREMENT FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION, BUT MAY BE MORE DIFFICULT THAN ONE MAY THINK.

FOR EXAMPLE, SILLS NOTES THAT VOLUNTARY HEALTH ASSOCIATIONS HAVE SOMETIMES EXCLUDED VOLUNTEERS IN THE PAST. HEALTH RELATED ACTIVITIES WERE OFTEN CARRIED OUT BY PROFESSIONALS WITH EMPLOYMENT STATUS, RATHER THAN BY VOLUNTEERS. IF PEOPLE HAVE A BETTER OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITHIN SUCH ORGANIZATIONS, THEY WOULD PROBABLY BE MORE LIKELY TO VOLUNTEER THEIR SERVICES.

PEOPLE OFTEN HAVE A GENERAL AWARENESS OF A PARTICULAR AREA OR CONCERN, BUT NOT THE SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE THAT IS USUALLY REQUIRED. SO, THEY OFTEN FEEL INCOMPETENT TO ORGANIZE A COMMUNITY RESPONSE UNLESS THE REASONS ARE COMPELLING

TO THEIR COMMUNITY INTEREST. THUS, CITIZENS WILL VOLUNTARILY PARTICIPATE IN A COMMUNITY ACTIVITY WHEN THEY HAVE AN APPROPRIATE ORGANIZATION AVAILABLE TO THEM FOR EXPRESSING THEIR INTERESTS. IF THEY VIEW THE ORGANIZATION AS CUMBERSOME, TIME CONSUMING, OR INEFFICIENT, THEY WILL NOT JOIN A GROUP OR WILL WITHDRAW AFTER JOINING.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION CAN BE VIEWED FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF BENEFITS VS. COSTS. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS TO THE AVERAGE CITIZEN?

CITIZENS WILL OFTEN VOLUNTEER IF THEY FEEL THERE ARE POSITIVE BENEFITS TO BE GAINED. A FORMER EXTENSION AGENT TELLS OF AN INCIDENT THAT ILLUSTRATES THIS PRINCIPLE:

MR. WEBER WAS THE OWNER OF A LOCAL SUPPLY STORE. EACH MORNING HE STOOD OUT IN FRONT OF HIS STORE AND GREETED PEOPLE WHO WENT BY UNTIL HE HAD HIS FIRST CUSTOMER. THE AGENT DIDN'T KNOW MR. WEBER VERY WELL AT ALL, HOWEVER HE DID SEE HIM DAILY. ONE MORNING, MR. WEBER APPROACHED THE AGENT, "YOU'RE ASSOCIATED WITH THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE, AREN'T YOU?" THE AGENT SAID THAT HE WAS AND THE STORE OWNER SAID HE HAD READ ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND TOURIST ATTRACTIONS IN THE COUNTY.

THE STORE OWNER WAS VERY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT WHAT OUGHT TO BE DONE AND WANTED THE AGENT TO CONVEY HIS IDEAS TO THE COMMITTEE. BUT, THE AGENT TOLD MR. WEBER THAT HE COULDN'T POSSIBLY DO AS GOOD OF JOB RELAYING THE IDEAS TO THE COMMITTEE AS WELL AS MR. WEBER HIMSELF COULD. THE AGENT THEN AGREED TO ASK THE COMMITTEE TO INVITE MR. WEBER TO THEIR NEXT MEETING.

IN THE END, MR. WEBER BECAME ONE OF THE COMMITTEE'S MOST ACTIVE MEMBERS. HE WORKED HARD TO ACCOMPLISH THE GROUP'S GOALS BECAUSE HE BELIEVED THEY WERE BENEFICIAL TO THE COMMUNITY.

BENEFITS MAY BE OF A WIDE VARIETY. THEY CAN RANGE FROM PERSONAL WANTS

TO GROUP DESIRES. THEY MAY BE ECONOMIC IN NATURE OR MIGHT INVOLVE THE MORALS OF COMMUNITY RESIDENTS.

"IF YOU'VE GOT A COMMUNITY WHERE THERE'S A HIGH TURNOVER OF PEOPLE, ONE THAT HAS HAD A LOT OF MIGRATION GOING ON, AND WHERE THERE ISN'T THAT TYPE OF SOLIDARITY, THEN YOU REALLY NEED TO BUILD INTO THE SYSTEM SOME KIND OF REWARDS FOR PEOPLE FOR PARTICIPATING.

OUR COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM HERE IN NEBRASKA IS KIND OF AN EXAMPLE IN THAT BOTH COMMUNITIES THAT ARE VERY MUCH TRADITIONALLY ORIENTED AND ONES THAT ARE VERY MUCH OF THE MODERN ORIENTATION WITH HIGHLY MOBILE POPULATIONS PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS. AND, THE PRIMARY MOTIVATION FOR THAT IS NOT ONLY THE THINGS THAT THEY DO FOR THEIR COMMUNITY, BUT THE FACT THAT WE HAVE A STATE-WIDE AWARDS PROGRAM. THEY HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO COME TO A BANQUET TO RECEIVE PUBLIC RECOGNITION FOR THE WORK THEY DID. AND, TO POSSIBLY WIN A PRIZE FOR WHATEVER THEIR SIZE OR COMMUNITY CLASS IS. AND, THIS PROVIDES MOTIVATION FOR PEOPLE WHO PUT RESOURCES INTO THE PROGRAM EVEN THOUGH THEY MAY NOT HAVE A REALLY STRONG AFFINITY FOR THE PARTICULAR ITEM THAT THE COMMUNITY WANTS TO WORK ON THAT YEAR." (PAUL GESSAMAN)

HOWEVER, BENEFITS ARE SELDOM OBTAINED WITHOUT SOME KIND OF COST. THE COST MIGHT REQUIRE TIME, MONEY, SKILLS, SHUNNING, OR LOSS OF FRIENDS.

"VOLUNTEERISM IS A COST. I HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO SOME CALCULATIONS WITH A GENTLEMAN WHO LIVES IN THE SMALL TOWN OF WOODVILLE THAT HAS BEEN AN EXAMPLE OF SUCCESS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT. THIS PERSON HAD WORKED WITH HIS COMMUNITY FOR 25 YEARS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, WHETHER IT WAS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, A NEW SHOPPING CENTER, HOUSING FOR THE AGED--JUST A WHOLE VARIETY OF COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES.

I ASK HIM TO GIVE ME AN IDEA OF WHAT HE HAD CONTRIBUTED OF HIS OWN TIME FOR 25 YEARS AND TO PUT A PRICE VALUE ON IT. IT CAME OUT, IN TERMS OF HIS

MONEY-MAKING ABILITY AND THE HOURS SPENT, HE WAS AVERAGING IN CONTRIBUTIONS TO HIS COMMUNITY OF SOMEWHERE AROUND \$25,000 A YEAR FOR OVER 25 YEARS, WHICH IS A TREMENDOUS SUM OF MONEY." (PALMER McCOY)

MANY TIMES, THERE ARE COSTS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING. PEOPLE OFTEN GET MANY THINGS PUSHED UPON THEM THAT THEY DON'T WANT BECAUSE THEY DON'T STAND UP FOR THEIR BELIEFS. THE QUESTION IS -- ARE THESE COSTS WORTH THE TRADE-OFF?

CITIZENS MAY PARTICIPATE IN A PROJECT BECAUSE THEY FEEL AN OBLIGATION TO RESPOND. THEIR PERSONAL VALUES MAY COMPEL THEM TO SUPPORT A PARTICULAR ACTIVITY.

"PEOPLE VOLUNTEER BECAUSE THEY FEEL THAT THEY REALLY CAN HAVE SOME AFFECT ON THEIR COMMUNITY. BASICALLY, THEY'RE INTERESTED IN GETTING A STREET LIGHT IN, THEY'RE INTERESTED IN THEIR COMMUNITY HAVING MORE PARK FACILITIES, THEY'RE INTERESTED IN SPECIFICALLY SOME ASPECT OF THEIR COMMUNITY." (CURTIS GEAR)

SCHOOLS HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN SUCH AN ISSUE BECAUSE EDUCATION IS SO HIGHLY VALUED IN AMERICAN SOCIETY. RESEARCH HAS SHOWN THAT PEOPLE WHO VALUE EDUCATION FEEL OBLIGATED TO SUPPORT ACTIVITIES RELATED TO SCHOOLS. MANY CHARITIES AND YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS USE THIS MOTIVE TO GAIN SUPPORT FOR THEIR CAUSES.

PEOPLE ARE LIKELY TO PARTICIPATE IN A COMMUNITY PROJECT IF THEY FEEL THAT THEIR WAY OF LIFE IS BEING THREATENED. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE OF ISSUES THAT HAVE A PARTICULAR IMPACT, SUCH AS THE CONSTRUCTION OF A DAM, THE LOCATION OF A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT, OR THE CONSOLIDATION OF SCHOOLS.

"THEY HAVE A HOPE OF DOING SOMETHING ABOUT SOLVING COMMUNITY PROBLEMS, DOING SOMETHING ABOUT HELPING OTHERS, AND OF COURSE, THERE ARE ALSO THOSE WHO WILL JOIN ORGANIZATIONS BECAUSE IT IS SOMETHING TO DO. BUT PRINCIPALLY, I THINK WE FIND THAT MANY OF THE VOLUNTEERS HAVE HOPES OF BETTERING THEIR COMMUNITIES. INCIDENTALLY, I DON'T THINK THEY'RE GOING TO STAY WITH THESE

GROUPS ONCE THEY'VE VOLUNTEERED UNLESS THEY ARE DOING SOMETHING USEFUL OR SOMETHING THEY THINK IS OF DIRECT IMPORTANCE TO THE COMMUNITY." (PAUL R. THOMAS)

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHETHER PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS ARE ACCURATE OR INACCURATE. IF THEY FEEL THREATENED, THEY OFTEN ORGANIZE VOLUNTEER GROUPS TO OPPOSE THE CHANGE. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION OF THIS NATURE IS OFTEN SPONTANEOUS AND EXTENSIVE.

THREATENING ISSUES FREQUENTLY SEEM MORALLY UNACCEPTABLE TO A GROUP. SUCH ISSUES AS HOMOSEXUALITY AND PORNOGRAPHY HAVE ELICITED EXTENSIVE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

HOWEVER, PEOPLE ARE RELUCTANT TO PARTICIPATE IN A COMMUNITY ACTIVITY WHEN THEY DON'T HAVE ENOUGH INFORMATION TO ACT RESPONSIBLY. ISSUES SUCH AS WATER FLOURIDATION OR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS REQUIRE KNOWLEDGE THAT MANY CITIZENS DO NOT HAVE. THEY SIMPLY DON'T KNOW HOW TO ACT. THUS, THEY AVOID PARTICIPATION AS LONG AS POSSIBLE OR UNTIL THEY HAVE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION. IF FORCED, THEY WILL USUALLY ACT NEGATIVELY.

"THERE'S A READINESS ON THE PART OF CITIZENS TO PARTICIPATE IN SOLVING THEIR COMMUNITY PROBLEMS. YOU'VE GOT TO ASK THEM, THAT PERHAPS IS SOMETHING WE OVERLOOK AT TIMES. AND, ONCE YOU'VE INVOLVED THEM AND THEY'VE AGREED TO PARTICIPATE, I SUSPECT THE NEXT MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO REALLY GIVE THEM TOOLS THAT WILL ALLOW THEM TO PARTICIPATE IN A SATISFACTORY WAY, BOTH FOR THEIR OWN SATISFACTION AS WELL AS CONTRIBUTING TO THE SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM YOU ARE TRYING TO WORK WITH." (RON POWERS)

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IS ESSENTIAL IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT. COMMUNITY DECISIONS THAT INVOLVE CITIZENS ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE ACCEPTED BY THE LOCAL PEOPLE.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION ALSO SERVES AS A CHECK AND BALANCE FOR POLITICAL ACTIVITIES. A CROSS SECTION OF PEOPLE FROM A COMMUNITY REDUCES THE CHANCE OF LEADERS MAKING SELF-SERVING DECISIONS.

IN OTHER WORDS, CITIZEN PARTICIPATION CAN LEGITIMIZE A PROGRAM, ITS PLANS, ACTIONS, AND LEADERSHIP. THIS CAN MEAN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SUCCESS AND FAILURE. UNSUPPORTED LEADERS OFTEN BECOME DISCOURAGED AND DROP ACTIVITIES THAT MIGHT BE BENEFICIAL TO THE COMMUNITY.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION CAN REDUCE THE COST FOR PERSONNEL NEEDED TO PERFORM THE MANY DUTIES ASSOCIATED WITH COMMUNITY ACTION. WITHOUT VOLUNTARY HELP, MANY PROJECTS WOULD NEVER BE ACHIEVED IN MANY COMMUNITIES.

HOWEVER, PARTICIPATING AS A MEMBER OF A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP MAY PRESENT A VARIETY OF OBSTACLES. SOME OF THESE INVISIBLE BLOCKS TEND TO MAKE CITIZENS UNCOMFORTABLE AND WILL DRIVE THEM AWAY FROM A GROUP. A SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER SHOWED THAT MOST AMERICANS ARE NOT LIKELY TO JOIN A VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION. MEMBERSHIP IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS. PEOPLE WITH LOWER INCOMES, LESS EDUCATION, AND LOWER LEVELS OF LIVING ARE LESS LIKELY TO PARTICIPATE IN VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS THAN PERSONS OF HIGHER BRACKETS.

FEAR IS ANOTHER CONDITION THAT BLOCKS CITIZEN PARTICIPATION. FEAR MAY BE IN THE FORM OF INFERIORITY, WHICH IS A FEAR OF EXPOSING ONE'S IGNORANCE, WHETHER REAL OR IMAGINARY. MOST PEOPLE FEEL INFERIOR UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES. FOR EXAMPLE, PEOPLE WITH LESS EDUCATION FREQUENTLY FEEL INFERIOR TO PEOPLE WHO HAVE MORE SCHOOLING.

NEW GROUPS OFTEN ATTRACT PEOPLE OF DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS, EXPERIENCE, AND TRAINING. WHILE THIS DIVERSITY IS USUALLY A GOOD THING, IT NEVERTHELESS CASTS PEOPLE INTO UNFAMILIAR ROLES AND SITUATIONS. WHEN A PERSON CAN'T PREDICT WHAT IS LIKELY TO HAPPEN, HE EXPERIENCES ANXIETY, OR A FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN.

DIFFERENCES IN STYLE OF DRESS AND LANGUAGE BRING APPREHENSION AND A FEAR OF BEING RIDICULED TO MANY PEOPLE. IF THE DIFFERENCES ARE GREAT ENOUGH, THEY MAY RESULT IN A LOSS OF PARTICIPATION.

WE CAN ONLY BEGIN TO DISCUSS THE POSSIBLE CONDITIONS WHICH CAN AFFECT VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION. BUT, LET'S SUMMARIZE THOSE FACTORS WHICH CAN FACILITATE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION.

FIRST, MAKE SURE AN APPROPRIATE ORGANIZATION IS AVAILABLE FOR PEOPLE TO EXPRESS THEIR INTERESTS.

STRESS THE BENEFITS THAT MAY BE GAINED. THIS WILL WORK ONLY SO LONG-- THEN, THE BENEFITS MUST BE OBVIOUS. EMPHASIZE THE INTANGIBLE BENEFITS AS WELL AS THE TANGIBLE. THESE ARE FREQUENTLY OMITTED AND ARE THE REAL GAINS OF COMMUNITY ACTION.

EMPHASIZE THE OBLIGATION CITIZENS HAVE TOWARD IMPROVING THEIR COMMUNITY. THEN, MAKE SURE THAT WHEN PEOPLE DO PARTICIPATE THEY HAVE A REWARDING EXPERIENCE.

HELP CITIZENS FIND POSITIVE WAYS TO RESPOND WHEN THEIR WAY-OF-LIFE IS THREATENED. MOST PEOPLE WANT TO ACT RESPONSIBLY.

PROVIDE CITIZENS WITH KNOWLEDGE ABOUT A PROJECT. WHEN PEOPLE UNDERSTAND SOMETHING AND KNOW THE FACTS, THEY WILL USUALLY ACT ACCORDINGLY.

HELP VOLUNTEERS FEEL COMFORTABLE WITH THE GROUP. THIS PROBABLY HAS THE GREATEST POTENTIAL FOR GETTING AND KEEPING CITIZENS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORK. PEOPLE MAY SAY THEY ARE TOO BUSY TO PARTICIPATE OR DON'T HAVE THE TIME. BUT, THE REAL REASON MAY BE THAT THEY ARE UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THE GROUP.

REMEMBER, CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND PROJECTS DOESN'T USUALLY OCCUR BY CHANCE ALONE. IT HAPPENS BECAUSE THE PRINCIPLES OF ORGANIZATION ARE OBSERVED AT A LEVEL THAT IS ACCEPTABLE TO THE PARTICIPANTS.

