

An Invitation to Participation in Open Discussions

Setting the Stage for
Aligning Expectations
Without Losing
Optimism

Setting The Stage

- In preparation, reflect back to your past experiences with groups
 - What could have been done differently to improve the environment for participation?
 - What qualities put the audience at ease for participation?
- Visualize how you will use your experiences in preparing an environment for participation

Meet Your Audience

- Introduce yourself and share a personal tidbit.
- Invite your audience to become your partner.
 - Focus Groups
 - Encourage individual introductions
 - Town Hall
 - Encourage geographic/categorical introductions

Share The Vision

- Let your partners know why we are here
 - Goal is to empower participants to partner with us to affect change
- Clarify Expectations
 - Participation
 - Openness
 - All input is valuable input
 - Process for recording & plan for breakout groups explained
 - Structure and timeframe of participation (short term/long term)
- What we want to take away from this interaction
 - Experience and expertise of our partners
 - Learn the perceptions of our partners
 - Gather ideas on how to improve



As we learn more, as we continue to build our capacity for inclusion and welcoming diversity and divergence, as we continue to challenge our own biases and pre-conceptions, we will get better over time.

Share Your Topic

- Teach your partners about the intent and purpose of your project
 - This may be in depth if there is not previous knowledge to the project
 - May be brief if there is previous knowledge of the project
 - Step up to challenges on how your project is different from those previously presented

Share Your Topic (cont.)

- Share with them their role in the success of the project
 - Let your partners know that their participation is key
 - Input will be documented and disseminated to workgroups for consideration throughout the many phases of the planning process
 - All questions will receive a response – questions that cannot be answered immediately will be responded to through various communication avenues



No one of us, nor one group, has the answer. We need the multiple voices and the multiple perspectives of people throughout our community to help us discern how best to improve outcomes over time.

Attract Discussion

- **DO**

- Remain Neutral
- Accept all input as valuable and important
- Acknowledge emotions
- Bring perspective at critical moments
 - Be prepared to stimulate discussion when needed
 - Be a “traffic controller” when ideas are coming too quickly for adequate acknowledgement and documenting
 - Assist with staying on task and keeping focus
 - Adjust plans to meet the needs of the group
- Encourage participant to expand on ideas if needed

Attract Discussion

- DON'T
 - Convey Agenda
 - Qualify responses (there is no right or wrong, good or bad)
 - Band-aid emotions or feelings (you **are not** here to fix, you **are** here to acknowledge)
 - Defend responses
 - Allow anyone to monopolize the discussion
 - Let emotions dominate your discussion

Preparing For The End

- How do participants stay involved in the ongoing process?
- What's next?
 - Schedule of events and upcoming meetings
- How do participants access ongoing information?
 - Newsletter
 - Website
 - Events
- Give us feedback
 - Please complete the evaluation so that we may improve our presentation

THE END

- Thank your participants
 - Remember – participation is the key to success
 - Compliment the contributions made today
 - Encourage continued involvement (GREAT JOB!)

This is not fundamentally about transforming the human services system....

This is fundamentally about promoting and supporting the recovery and wellness of children, families, and adults who suffer from or are affected by mental illness. That is, it's about improving outcomes.

