ABSTRACT

        This booklet is for people who want to improve the
effectiveness of groups: group leaders, facilitators, and group
members. Some of the basic factors that influence how effectively a
group works together are briefly described. Factors that affect group
effectiveness fall into two categories: those that affect the way
group members accomplish tasks, and those that affect the way members
create and maintain satisfaction with group activities. Instruments
are provided to help identify areas of group performance that are
working well and areas that need improvement. (Author/MLF)

Keys to Community Involvement Series

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KEYS TO COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

MEASURING AND IMPROVING
GROUP EFFECTIVENESS

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ABOUT THE SERIES

Keys to Community Involvement is a series of booklets developed for governing boards, community leaders, group members, administrators and citizens. The booklets are designed to help these audiences strengthen their skills in group processes, work cooperatively with others, and plan and carry out new projects. Topics include techniques to maintain enthusiasm in a group, ways that agencies can effectively use consultants, and factors that affect introducing and implementing new projects.

The booklets are written by members of the Rural Education Program of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. The Laboratory is a nonprofit, educational research and development corporation, headquartered in Portland, Oregon.

The booklets in the series are adapted from a much more comprehensive set of materials and training activities developed and field tested by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory over the past several years in dozens of locations throughout the western United States.

Information about other booklets in this series—titles and how to order—as well as information about related services—training, workshops and consultation—can be found on the inside and outside back covers of this booklet.

INTRODUCTION

Today, much of the work that is done, the learning that takes place and the decision making that occurs is accomplished in the context of a group. All kinds of groups are active--citizens advisory councils, neighborhood associations, formal and informal learning groups and work groups of many kinds. With so much taking place in groups, the capacity of a group to be effective, that is, the capacity of members to accomplish work in ways that are satisfying to all, has become increasingly important.

However, if your experiences have been like those of most people, you've undoubtedly been a part of groups that have been more productive, satisfying and successful than others. In some groups the climate or atmosphere is positive, the work goes smoothly and members seem to enjoy working together. In other groups, meetings often seem pointless, decisions are delayed, time and energy is wasted and the climate is cold and impersonal.

This booklet is for people who want to improve the effectiveness of groups: group leaders, facilitators and group members. While this booklet is not a comprehensive discussion of all the forces that affect group work and satisfaction,

some of the basic factors that influence how effectively a group works together are briefly described. In addition, instruments are provided to help identify areas of group performance that are working well and areas that need improvement.

FACTORS OF GROUP EFFECTIVENESS

While many aspects of group life are still the subject of study, several factors have been identified that affect group effectiveness. Generally, such factors fall into two categories;

- those which affect the way group members accomplish tasks

- those which affect the way members create and maintain satisfaction with group activities.

For example, suppose a group is established to raise money for a new community recreational facility. In order for the group to accomplish its tasks with little time and energy wasted, members must be able to communicate with one another and feel good about working together. In other words, to be effective and ensure a balance between accomplishing tasks and maintaining group satisfaction, a group must attend to both functions.

The next section looks at one of the important functions of a group: *accomplishing tasks.*

IMPROVING TASK ACCOMPLISHMENT

Most groups are formed with a charge or around an issue of common concern. This focal point gives a group a sense of its mission or task. Success in accomplishing tasks depends upon some group characteristics as well as some individual behaviors.

GROUP CHARACTERISTICS

An effective group has a clear understanding of its purpose and goals. Because members frequently have different interpretations of the group's purpose and may have goals that differ sharply from one another, the importance of members sharing their views and coming to some common agreements of what the group is about and where it's headed cannot be overemphasized. Unclear and misunderstood goals can seriously limit a group's effectiveness.

If the purpose of the group and its goals are clear and all members are committed to them, then members are able to focus their energies on the tasks and are in a position to continuously check the group's progress against the stated goals.

The instrument on the following page can be used by your group to assess whether or not goals are clearly stated, whether they are commonly understood by members and how the goals have been determined. This instrument is only a sample; feel free to modify it or create a new one that may meet the needs of your group more directly.

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Instrument #1

ANALYZING GROUP GOALS

Directions: Answer the following questions by placing a check (✓) in the box and writing down what you think. The instrument is most useful if all members complete it. The information can then be examined in light of how all members view the group's goals and how they are formulated.

	Yes	No	Don't Know
1. Does your group have goals for its work that most members agree with?	☐	☐	☐
2. Are the goals stated or written down anywhere?	☐	☐	☐

3. In your own words write down your group's goals. _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

	Yes	No	Don't Know
4. Do you feel the goals are appropriate and suitable for the group?	☐	☐	☐
5. Do you feel the goals are realistic and attainable for this group?	☐	☐	☐
6. Do the goals meet your individual needs?	☐	☐	☐
7. Did you have an opportunity to formulate or influence the goals?	☐	☐	☐
8. Does your group periodically review and revise its goals?	☐	☐	☐

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<u>An effective group makes decisions that are
based on data and to which all members feel
committed.</u> The quality of a decision
depends on the data used to make it. Two
kinds of data are important for making
decisions: (1) data related to members'
feelings and perceptions, and (2) data
related to knowledge and experience.

Several factors influence personal feelings
and perceptions. People's logic, their
intuition, and their immediate feelings
about the situation are all part of their
decision making. For example, if a project
staff is trying to decide how to budget its
limited financial resources, members'
feelings about their own job security or
the value they place on certain efforts
will affect their decision.

Information about what people know and what
they have seen or experienced is also an
important part of quality decision making.
For example, suppose a group is debating
about what method to use for a community
survey and several members say that mailed
questionnaires have not worked in the past.
The group can use this information to con-
sider some other ways that are likely to
produce better results or ask an outside
consultant to help them select an appro-
priate survey method.

Finally, it is important that members accept
and support group decisions. Such support
can range from the willingness to abide by
and not sabotage the decision to taking on
the responsibility for carrying out the
tasks involved. When all members have an

opportunity to influence or make group
decisions, those affected by the decision
are more likely to support it and feel
responsible for the decision.

The following instrument can be used to
examine the decision-making procedures of
your group. By collecting and discussing
this kind of information, your group can
plan ways to modify or improve its decision-
making procedures. For more information
about group decision making see Booklet 2,
"Group Decision Making: Styles and
Suggestions."

Instrument #2

ASSESSING DECISION-MAKING PROCEDURES

Directions: For each method of decision making, check how frequently it is used by your group. Compile the responses of all group members and present them to the group.

Kind of Decision Making	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1. Unanimity--everyone agrees that a proposed course of action is the best choice	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Consensus--everyone agrees on a course of action, with perhaps some stated reservations, at least for a specified time period	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Majority support--the majority of people agree, often demonstrated by voting	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Minority support--a minority of people agree, with tacit agreement or lack of open disagreement by the remaining members	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Handclasp--one or two members actively support and lead group to action	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. Topic jump--the topic shifts before an explicit decision is reached	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. Self-authorization--one person initiates action, with implicit consent or no overt disagreement of other members	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Plop--one person initiates action, but the group does not respond one way or another; by default, no action is taken	☐	☐	☐	☐

An effective group systematically identifies and solves problems. All groups face some kind of problems: members don't know how to plan a budget; there aren't enough volunteers to conduct a door-to-door survey; or there is too much to do for the time available. A group can build its effectiveness in solving problems by applying some step-by-step procedures such as those that are shown in Figure 1.
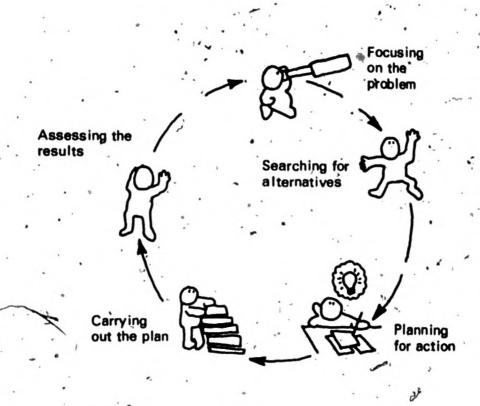

Figure 1: Problem-Solving Steps

For example, suppose a group is planning to conduct a neighborhood survey to find out who wants to participate in a community gardening program. The group needs 20 volunteers to conduct the door-to-door survey; only eight people have volunteered so far. The problem, then, is to find 12 more volunteers.

The next step is to examine various ways to find the needed volunteers--advertise on the radio; post notices in local businesses or in the newspaper; or have members ask their friends and neighbors if they are interested in volunteering for the job--and select one or two of these as a way to solve the problem.

Once a solution is selected, the next step is to plan how to carry it out. If the group has decided to post notices in the local newspaper and advertise for volunteers on the radio, plans would need to be made for writing the notices, contacting the newspaper and radio station, deciding how those interested in volunteering should contact the group, and so on.

Finally, the plan is carried out and the results are evaluated. Evaluation can focus on the following factors:

- Procedures--were all the planned tasks carried out? Were some modified? Were some added or dropped?

- Timelines--did things occur on time?

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- Cost--was the total cost higher or lower than expected?

- Goals--did we achieve our goal? Did the goal change? Were there any unexpected results?

Problem solving is not difficult nor does it have to take a long time. In the example cited above, the steps were somewhat exaggerated to clearly illustrate the kind of activity that occurs in each step; most of the steps (except for carrying out the plan and evaluation which would be done a little later) could be completed during a meeting.

To use a problem-solving approach fruitfully, a group should keep the following in mind:

1. *Make sure there is a common understanding of the problem.* If some members view the problem as a lack of time and others feel the problem is based on insufficient skills, efforts to resolve it will likely be unsuccessful since members will be seeking solutions for different problems.

2. *Do each problem-solving step.* Frequently groups jump from identification of the problem to implementing a solution. Searching and planning are important steps and should not be omitted. They help a group carefully examine some possible ways and means to resolve a problem.

The following checklist (Instrument #3) can be used to help your group identify the problem-solving steps it is using and ones that could use some improvement.

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Instrument #3

ASSESSING A GROUP'S PROBLEM-SOLVING APPROACH

Directions: Read each item and check (√) which ones are working well and which ones need improvement. The group's assessment can be used to set goals for improving the group's problem-solving effectiveness.

Problem-Solving Activities: This Group Can	Doing All Right	Needs Improvement
1. surface and clarify problems or needs	_____	_____
2. state problems or goals clearly	_____	_____
3. identify blocking or restraining forces	_____	_____
4. gather information about possible solutions	_____	_____
5. generate criteria for successful solutions	_____	_____
6. identify alternative solutions	_____	_____
7. apply criteria to make choices	_____	_____
8. develop step-by-step "Action Plans" for carrying out a solution	_____	_____
9. identify resource needs	_____	_____
10. locate and use resources	_____	_____
11. develop a way to assess results	_____	_____
12. monitor progress in task accomplishment	_____	_____
13. change and adapt as circumstances prescribe	_____	_____
14. evaluate the results of the effort	_____	_____

For a more detailed description of problem solving, see Booklet 3, "Problem Solving: A Five-Step Model."

An effective group uses resources. Groups that explore as well as use a diversity of resources are usually quite efficient in accomplishing their tasks. Resources of all kinds (people, time, money, materials, etc.) are viewed as tools or supports for getting the work done.

An effective group also utilizes the differing abilities and viewpoints of its members as important resources. The success of any group depends on variety, fresh perspectives and original ideas. A group can capitalize on the rich resources of its members by respecting differences of opinion and maintaining a willingness to consider individuals' contributions.

By attending to these characteristics--clarifying the group's purpose and goals, making data-based decisions that members can support, systematically identifying and resolving problems and using resources--a group will greatly enhance its ability to successfully complete tasks.

However, studies of group behavior also reveal a number of *individual behaviors* that, if performed by group members, can help a group accomplish its tasks.

INDIVIDUAL
BEHAVIORS

Five kinds of individual behaviors are important to groups. Ideally, all members of a group--not just the leader--should be capable of performing these behaviors.

Initiating. Whether it is the first meeting of a group or the group is bogged down, someone gets the group going. Often the leader will have an initiating role and will offer a statement of purpose, suggest a procedure or propose a new idea. As a group continues to work, initiating behaviors

will likely be shared by more and more of
its members. For example, to get a discus-
sion started someone might say, "Lynne has
presented her plan and I'd like to check
how others feel about it. What do each of
you think about the plan?"

Seeking and giving information or opinions.
In order to make progress, the group must
get information. To do this, individuals
request facts, express feelings, describe
actions, suggest next steps and so on.
Members offer comments like, "I need to
know how much money we have in our budget
before I can vote on the proposal," or
"I feel really confused about the issue
we're discussing."

Clarifying and elaborating. Members of the
group will need to interpret ideas or sug-
gestions, check their level of understanding,
clear up confusion, define terms, and dis-
cuss issues and alternatives as a part of
completing a task. For example, someone
might say, "I think Joe's idea means that
our services would be available to more
people."

Summarizing and recording. To prevent ideas
and discussion points from being lost,
summarizing needs to take place. Often at
the beginning of a group's life, the leader
fills this function. He or she pulls
together related ideas, reviews the points
that have been made and the feelings that
have been expressed and when appropriate,
makes sure they are written down or recorded.
This function ensures that ideas and impres-
sions are not lost because of either the size
of the group or the length of time available.

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Consensus testing. In order to keep moving along, someone needs to ask, "Are we ready to make a decision?" Consensus testing can also mean voicing an opinion: "I've heard three alternatives, and it seems we're moving toward option number one. Am I right?" This is a matter of sending up trial balloons to test a possible decision.

In most groups, successful accomplishment of tasks does not evolve automatically. It takes a lot of conscious effort, focused on the factors just discussed as well as those in the next section.

BUILDING GROUP SATISFACTION

In addition to completing a task, a group needs to be able to take care of relationships among its members. This section addresses the second major function of a group: *building and maintaining satisfaction in the group.*

An effective group pays attention to how tasks are pursued, how satisfied members are with the group's procedures, and what the general climate or atmosphere of the group is. For example, if a group is preparing a community survey or learning about state land-use laws, problems may emerge that do not seem directly related to the task. A discussion about survey techniques may become dominated by two or three people; several side conversations may become disruptive; or suggestions may be ignored or attacked before they are completely expressed.

When such problems occur, the group needs to shift from pursuing its tasks to examining its own processes and procedures. Effective groups readily move back and forth between task and process.

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Three elements that researchers and practitioners have found to significantly affect group satisfaction and processes include:

- Group communication

- Group norms

- Group cohesion

Each of these elements as well as some individual behaviors that promote group satisfaction are described in more detail below.

GROUP CHARACTERISTICS

Group communication. One of the most important processes in any group is how members communicate with one another. Who communicates? How often? Are messages clear or misunderstood? Communication refers to verbal--written and spoken words--and non-verbal expressions--tone of voice, body posture, and gestures.

Communication requires more than just good will. Members must be able to state their ideas clearly, describe their feelings and seek information about what others are thinking and feeling. The following are suggestions for ways group members can work toward clear and accurate communication.

1. *Listen actively to one another.* Sometimes what you think you hear is not what another is trying to say. Check the accuracy of your listening by asking others to clarify their ideas or by paraphrasing statements made by others in the group. By checking your understanding and telling the speaker

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your reaction to the comments, you are helping the speaker know whether or not others understand what he or she says.

2. *Ensure everyone the opportunity to speak:* Some members are naturally more talkative than others. However, when a few constantly dominate group discussions, there is a danger that others' ideas, feelings or opinions, which may be quite beneficial to the group, will never be shared. Monitoring who participates in group discussions enables you and other members to identify discussion patterns and, if necessary, modify them to make sure everyone has a chance to speak.

3. *Share ideas and feelings openly.* Withholding information or reactions can adversely affect any group or delay its progress. However, the degree to which you and others in the group feel free to share information depends largely on the level of trust among group members and how the group responds to individuals' contributions. If your comments are ignored or put down, you will think twice before sharing your thoughts. On the other hand, if your contributions are at least acknowledged, then you are more likely to openly share your ideas, feelings and opinions.

4. *Pay attention to body language.* Gestures and body positions may seem trivial, but they can carry some very powerful messages. A nod of the head can communicate support and agreement whereas a certain facial expression

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may convey rejection. Try to identify some nonverbal behaviors in your group that are both helpful and hindering in promoting cooperation.

5. *Give and receive feedback*. It can be very useful for you to share your thoughts and feelings with another person whose behavior is impacting or affecting you. However, necessary ingredients are trust and a genuine concern to be helpful to each other. Feedback should involve a clear report of the facts, feelings, or a description of actions (rather than interpretations or inferences) and be given at a time when both parties agree to discuss and listen to one another.

The following instrument can be used or adapted to assess how members are communicating in a group and to plan activities for improving members' communication skills.

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Instrument #4

ASSESSING GROUP COMMUNICATION

Directions: Answer the following questions on the basis of your partici-
pation in and experience with this group. A compilation of
all members' responses may be used tp pinpoint communication
problems.

	Frequently	Sometimes	Never
1. I ask questions when I don't know something.	____	____	____
2. I keep my real thoughts and feelings to myself.	____	____	____
3. I have opportunities to talk during group discussions.	____	____	____
4. When I feel irritated or impatient with what's going on, I communicate my feelings to the group.	____	____	____
5. If I am unsure about what someone means, I relay my understanding of their comment and check to see if my understanding is accurate.	____	____	____
6. I withhold personal feelings and stick to the facts in a discussion.	____	____	____
7. I agree with another individual or like what they say without letting them know.	____	____	____
8. I listen to and carefully consider others' ideas.	____	____	____
9. I ask others to tell me what they really think of my work.	____	____	____
10. I ask others who seem to be hurt or upset to express their feelings.	____	____	____

Group Norms: The operating procedures--the rules and standards a group establishes-- greatly influence a group's communication and cohesiveness. Norms or standards are the expectations and assumptions that members have about the kinds of behaviors, actions, and feelings that are right or wrong, appropriate or inappropriate. Examples of group norms are:

- All meetings are held in the same place.

- Members do not challenge the ideas or opinions of the leader.

- Members dress informally for meetings.

- Positive as well as negative feelings are openly shared.

- The role of the chairperson is rotated periodically.

All norms provide a framework for the kinds of behaviors and actions that are accept- able in the group. Some norms are *explicit*, which means they are stated or written down and are understood by all members. Other norms are *implicit*, which means they are not verbalized or recorded anywhere and may or may not be commonly understood. Because members' expectations and ideas about norms are likely to differ among one another, it is advisable to have as many norms open and stated as possible. Stating norms enables members to select and agree on the ones they want to adopt for the group and helps members avoid difficulties that often arise from misconceptions and misunderstandings of what

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they think is expected and acceptable. When norms are clearly understood and agreed upon, members are likely to express more satisfaction with the group.

Norms are often established around such matters as the following:

- *Use of time*--Is it a norm for meetings to begin on time?

- *Planning*--Is there an agenda for the meeting? Who participates in building the agenda?

- *Decision making*--Are decisions normally made by one person? By vote? By consensus?

- *Relationships*--Are members formal or casual? On a first-name basis?

- *Communication*--Do members openly share ideas and feelings with one another? Are discussions dominated by a few?

Norms significantly influence the ways in which group members work together and interact with one another. The following instrument can be used to periodically review a group's norms or to help diagnose misunderstandings or disagreements that may be related to norms.

Instrument #5

GROUP NORMS

Directions: Each member should complete the following items. Compile and share the data with the entire group. Members' comments that differ or are contradictory, which could become a source of conflict, can be dealt with by the group.

1. Based on my understanding, the stated norms of this group are: ____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. From my point of view, the unstated norms of this group are: ____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Current norms that I would like to see changed or eliminated are:

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Norms that I would like to see created or added are: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Group Cohesiveness. Cohesiveness refers to the "we" feeling a group possesses and the sense of "belonging" that group members share. In groups with high cohesiveness, the communication between members is generally effective, intense and valued.

The following are four ways to build group cohesiveness:

1.   *Identify with your group.* Think of your group as a team rather than a collection of separate individuals. Recognize your common purpose and talk about what <u>we</u> can do rather than what I can do.

2.   *Build a group tradition.* Once a group forms, it begins to create its own history. By creating traditions or customs that members like, feel proud of and are enthusiastic about, group cohesiveness is strengthened. Examples might be a monthly social gathering or annual awards and commendations for services.

3.   *Get the group to recognize good work.* A group that appreciates the efforts of its members will promote a feeling of acceptance and caring. When good work occurs, compliment the individuals responsible, mention their contributions in newspaper articles, or give awards for outstanding accomplishments.

4.   *Set clear, attainable group goals.* Each group is likely to have long-range goals. The group also establishes short-term goals. For example, "The

goal for this meeting is to decide what
to do about unnecessary student noise
in the halls." End-of-the-meeting or
weekly reports on goals that have been
met increase a group's sense of
accomplishment.

In cohesive groups, members feel a strong
kinship to one another. In a sense, every
member is essential to the group. If some-
one is late or absent, the group may feel
incomplete and less able to function.

Instrument 6 on page 24 can be useful in
discussing the degree to which members
feel included and a vital part of the group.

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Instrument #6

ASSESSING GROUP COHESIVENESS

Directions: Please give your opinion for each item by circling the appropriate number. Compile the data from individual responses, post the results and discuss them as a group.

1 = Strongly Agree

2 = Agree

3 = Undecided

4 = Disagree

5 = Strongly Disagree

		SA	A	U	D	SD
a.	Members are committed to the purpose and goals of the group.	1	2	3	4	5
b.	Communication is open and honest in this group.	1	2	3	4	5
c.	What I say is recognized and valued in this group.	1	2	3	4	5
d.	Members display a high degree of mutual trust.	1	2	3	4	5
e.	Members are genuinely concerned about one another.	1	2	3	4	5

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Each of these elements--group communication, group norms and group cohesiveness--significantly affect group interaction and the degree to which members can work together to accomplish tasks.

INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIORS

Again, there are some individual actions that members can take to help the group pay attention to how it's working and build and maintain satisfying relationships and experiences within the group.

Harmonizing--getting people to explore their differences in a non-threatening way, reconciling disagreement or reducing tensions.

Gatekeeping--ensuring that everyone gets a chance to speak. All of us have been in groups where one person continually interrupts. When this happens, less assertive people tend to withdraw from the discussion. The gatekeeper helps to keep communication channels open, facilitates the participation of all those present and suggests procedures that permit sharing remarks.

Encouraging--establishing a climate of acceptance by responding to other members and acknowledging their contributions.

Compromising--offering a compromise that allows individuals to maintain some status and self-respect while admitting error, particularly when communication has broken down or tempers flare. Compromise is often necessary in order to maintain group cohesiveness and productivity.

Diagnosing and norm testing--assessing the satisfaction of the group with the procedures and norms which have been created. This is a time for the group to look at its

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procedures and review areas of dissatis-
faction in order to identify necessary
changes or reward itself for effective
actions.

As members perform these activities, they help a group
give consideration to each member and maintain good relation-
ships among all members. Each member, not just the leader,
is encouraged to use these techniques so that all can have a
part in increasing the effectiveness of the group.

CONCLUSION

In this booklet ideas about what influences group effec-
tiveness and sample instruments for measuring such elements
have been presented. By using this information and the
instruments, a group can identify what aspects of their group
are working well, pinpoint what needs improvement and plan
activities to increase overall effectiveness.

In addition to the instruments included in the text, two
more sample instruments which incorporate and combine many of
the concepts presented in this booklet have been included in
the appendix. Feel free to modify these to meet your needs.

Finally, the Keys to Community Involvement Series
includes other booklets related to effective group functioning
that may be of interest. They are:

9. "Effective Groups: Guidelines for Participants"

10. "Group Progress: Recognizing and Removing Barriers"

15. "Group Leadership: Understanding, Guiding and
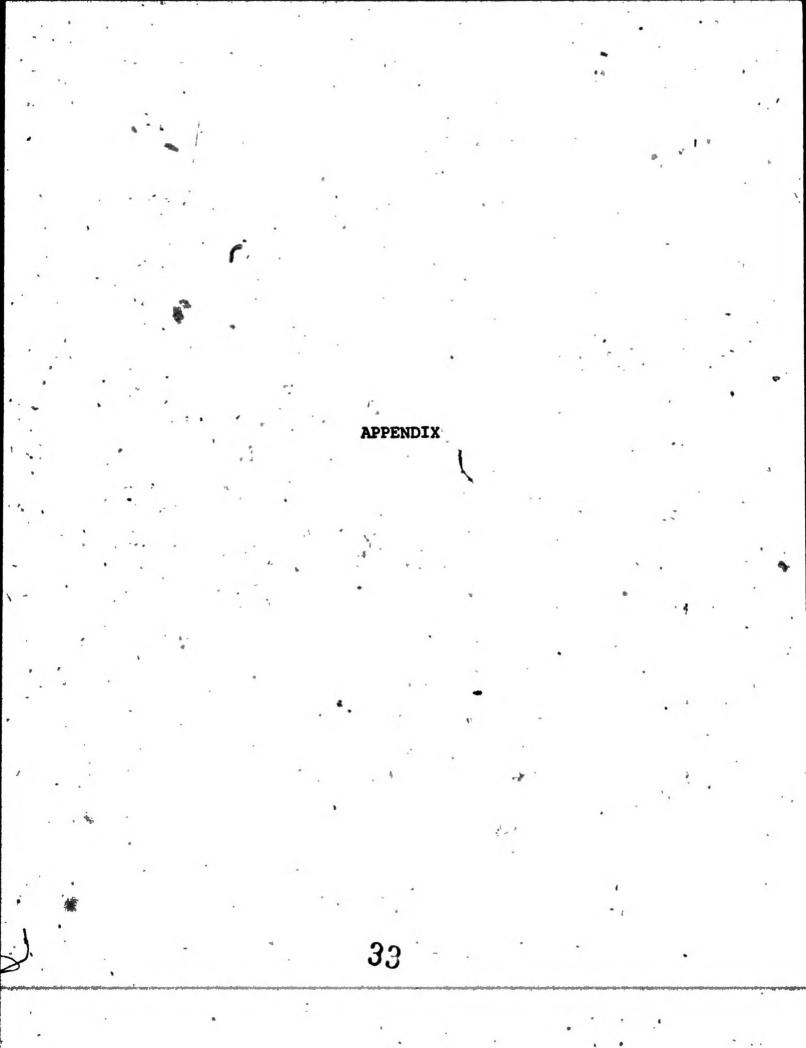   Sharing"

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APPENDIX

Sample #1

EFFECTIVE GROUP SURVEY*

Group leaders, group facilitators, and group members may sometimes want to assess the group's capability for working productively. This survey can be used by one or many, with the results posted and discussed toward the end of a meeting.

Directions: Circle the letter opposite each item on the survey below that best describes, for you, the group's interactions.

The scale used is:

A = All group members
B = Most group members (two-thirds or more)
C = About half the group members
D = A few group members (one-third or fewer)
E = None of this group

During this (or the most recent) session, how many group members, including yourself:

	All	Most	Half	Few	None
1. Gave due consideration to all seriously intended contributions of other group members?	A	B	C	D	E
2. Checked (by paraphrasing, etc.) to make sure they knew what was really meant before agreeing or disagreeing?	A	B	C	D	E
3. Spoke only for themselves and let others speak for themselves?	A	B	C	D	E
4. Viewed all contributions as belonging to the group, to be used or not as the group decided?	A	B	C	D	E
5. Had the opportunity to participate in the group if they desired to do so?	A	B	C	D	E
6. Tried to find the reason if the group was having trouble getting work done?	A	B	C	D	E
7. Helped the group make decisions openly rather than by default?	A	B	C	D	E
8. Helped bring conflict into the open so the group could deal with it?	A	B	C	D	E
9. Looked upon behavior which hindered group process as a group problem, rather than as a "problem member?"	A	B	C	D	E

*Reprinted from Systematic and Objective Analysis of Instruction Training Manual. Portland, Oregon: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1970.

Sample #2

ASSESSING MEETINGS*

The following questionnaire measures reaction to meetings. Please consider what usually or never happens in most of your group's meetings. For each item below, circle the number that indicates how often the thing happens that is mentioned in the item.

5 This is very typical of this meeting; it happens repeatedly.
4 This is fairly typical of this meeting; it happens quite often.
3 This is more typical than not, but it doesn't happen a lot.
2 This is more untypical than typical, though it does happen some.
1 This is quite untypical; it rarely happens.
0 This is not typical at all; it never happens.

	Never					Repeatedly
1. When problems come up in the meeting, they are thoroughly explored until everyone understands what the problem is.	0	1	2	3	4	5
2. The first solution proposed is often accepted by the group.	0	1	2	3	4	5
3. People come to the meeting not knowing what is to be presented or discussed.	0	1	2	3	4	5
4. People ask why the problem exists and what the causes are.	0	1	2	3	4	5
5. There are many problems which people are concerned about which never get on the agenda.	0	1	2	3	4	5
6. There is a tendency to propose answers without really having thought the problem and its causes through carefully.	0	1	2	3	4	5
7. People bring up extraneous or irrelevant matters.	0	1	2	3	4	5
8. The average person in the meeting feels that his or her ideas have gotten into the discussion.	0	1	2	3	4	5

*Adapted and reprinted by permission from Richard Schmuck, Philip Runkel, S. Saturen, R. Martel, and C. B. Derr, Handbook of Organization Development in Schools. Palo Alto, California: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1972.

9. Someone summarizes progress from time to time.   0   1   2   3   4   5

10. Decisions are often left vague--as to what they are, and who will carry them out.   0   1   2   3   4   5

11. Either before the meeting or at its beginning, any group member can easily get items onto the agenda.   0   1   2   3   4   5

12. People are afraid to be openly critical or make good objections.   0   1   2   3   4   5

13. People do not take the time to really study or define the problem they are working on.   0   1   2   3   4   5

14. The same few people seem to do most of the talking during the meeting.   0   1   2   3   4   5

15. People hesitate to give their true feelings about problems which are discussed.   0   1   2   3   4   5

16. When a decision is made, it is clear who should carry it out, and when.   0   1   2   3   4   5

17. There is a good deal of jumping from topic to topic--it's often unclear where the group is on the agenda.   0   1   2   3   4   5

18. The same problems seem to keep coming up over and over again from meeting to meeting.   0   1   2   3   4   5

19. People don't seem to care about the meeting, or want to get involved in it.   0   1   2   3   4   5

20. When the group is thinking about a problem, at least two or three different solutions are suggested.   0   1   2   3   4   5

21. Some very creative solutions come out of this group.   0   1   2   3   4   5

22. When conflicts over decisions come up, the group does not avoid them but really stays with the conflict and works it through.   0   1   2   3   4   5

23. The results of the group's work are not worth the time it takes.   0   1   2   3   4   5

	Never				Repeatedly	
24. People feel very committed to carrying out the solutions arrived at by the group.	0	1	2	3	4	5
25. People feel antagonistic or negative during the meeting.	0	1	2	3	4	5
26. There is no follow up on how decisions reached at earlier meetings worked out in practice.	0	1	2	3	4	5
27. Solutions and decisions are in accord with the chairman's or leader's point of view, but not necessarily with that of the members.	0	1	2	3	4	5
28. There are splits or deadlocks between factions or subgroups.	0	1	2	3	4	5
29. The discussion goes on and on without any decision being reached.	0	1	2	3	4	5
30. People feel satisfied or positive during the meeting.	0	1	2	3	4	5

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