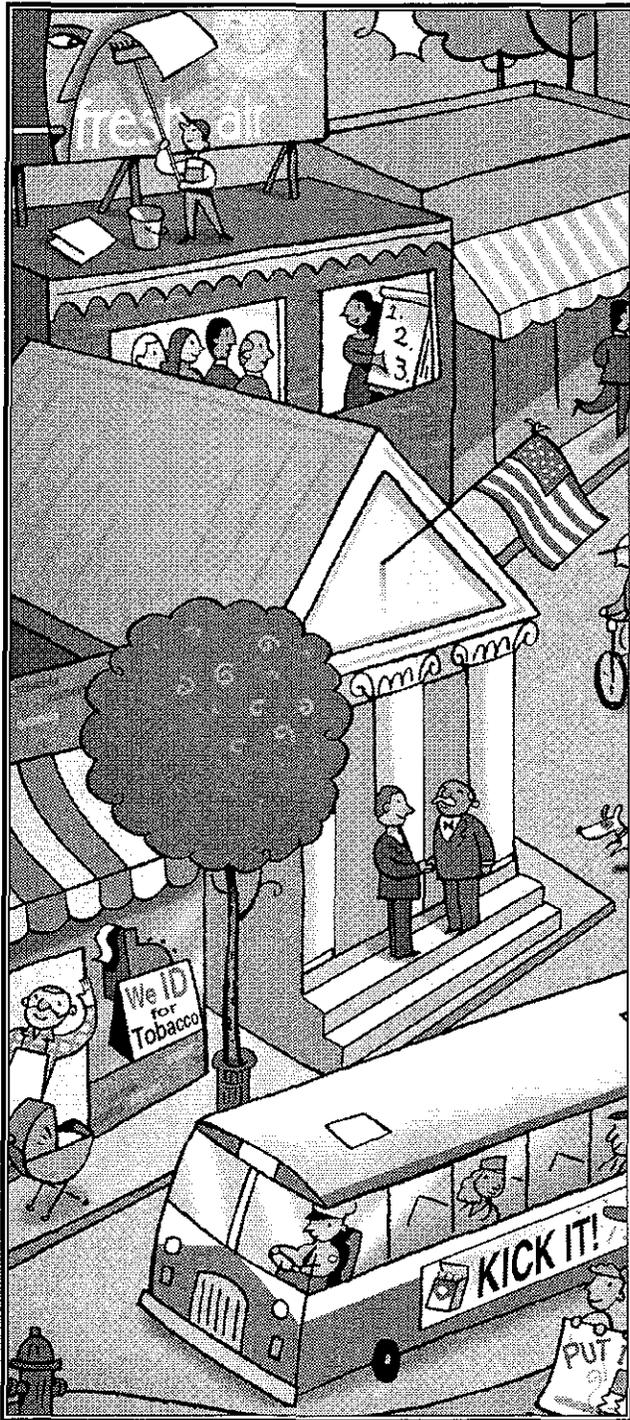


Organizing To Get It Done



As we saw in the last section, it is obviously important to systematically determine what your team is going to do in tobacco control. It is just as important to determine HOW you are going to work as a team to get it done. Identifying roles, responsibilities, decision making processes, communication methods, and timelines are highly critical to the success (or not!) of your efforts. Most everyone has an experience where good people with a good cause and a good plan got together, and it didn't work. You have to address the HOW issues.

But is this the reason the group got together? To deal with operations, administration and management issues? Not likely! When people want to be involved in an important issue like tobacco control, they want to change the world! - not worry about how the group works. Yet the group needs to acknowledge the importance of these issues to be successful. That's what this section is about - identifying the basic list of the HOW's, getting agreement on them, and then moving forward to change the world!

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Creating a “Structure” for the Group to Work Within

A few groups are able to get things done with very little structure. Others need to have a formal structure with by-laws to get their work done. Most need at least a set of clear operating guidelines to work within. As your tobacco control group adds more and different kinds of people, they will want to know what the ‘rules’ are and how the group gets its work done.

There are many considerations in the development of a group operating structure. Some of these are simple to deal with (e.g., how often to meet). Others can be more difficult (e.g., how to resolve conflict in the group).

Many tobacco control groups are looking at becoming not-for-profit, 501 (c)(3) corporations. These require formal by-laws and a legal operating structure. If your group is just starting out, it is generally better not to establish a rigid operating environment or an elaborate organizational structure. Instead, these should evolve over time, based on the plans the group develops. As the group matures, the move towards a more formal structure may be necessary.

As an alternative to formal by-laws at the outset, developing some mutually agreed upon ground rules is a good idea. These ground rules should, at a minimum, address the following:

- *What does the group expect/require of its members?*
- *How will group leaders be selected and what are their roles?*
- *How will new members be brought into the group?*
- *What kinds of issues will require a group decision?*
- *What are the rules for making decisions in the group?*
- *How will financial resources be managed and monitored?*
- *What internal and external communication methods will be used?*
- *How is conflict handled in the group?*
- *How and how often will we assess our progress?*

Learning From Other Tobacco Use Prevention Groups

Many communities across the nation have become involved in tobacco control over the past several years. With increasing resources becoming available, it can be expected that the number of communities involved in tobacco control will grow at a substantial rate over the next several years.

The experiences of communities in developing tobacco control efforts are often dynamic, personal and difficult to evaluate. Unlike information on program results, information about group development is not typically found in published materials. For the most part, this information is shared informally, verbally and in response to requests. This means we need to ask others about their experiences and lessons learned. Your team should actively seek out other groups who can give you some tips (and you need to share your experiences with others). Here are some suggestions on how:

***Network** - Go to tobacco control and community development conferences to meet people. Start calling around to others nearby who have been involved in tobacco control. Introduce yourself and ask specific questions about what they are doing, what has worked, and what hasn't. Don't just talk about tobacco control programs and activities. Also ask about how they are doing as a group. Share with others your experiences and lessons learned.*

***Collaborate** - Join other groups in their tobacco control efforts and ask them to join yours. Working closely with others will provide the opportunity to see how other groups and organizations have structured themselves. You might be very surprised at who else is working on tobacco issues (e.g., did you know that some cities have gang diversion programs through law enforcement agencies that include tobacco interventions?). Through better collaboration and coordination, resources, strategies, and implementation can be streamlined and leveraged to have a bigger impact.*

***Plug In** - Read several of the wonderful resources that have been developed by experts in this field. Get online - there is a wealth of information from the federal and state governments, private, and not-for-profit organizations on the Internet. Many of these have 'bulletin board' methods of communicating with other tobacco control advocates across the nation. Use these methods both to share your experiences and learn from others!*

Recognizing and Rewarding The Group's Efforts

Recognizing and rewarding exemplary efforts in your community tobacco control program is important for many reasons: enhancing community relations and visibility, positioning the group to obtain funding, increasing community and member involvement, reinforcing positive actions, setting standards for behavior that can be copied by others throughout the community, and creating comradery within the group.

People who work in tobacco control are often working very hard to get the job done. They are so focused on the 'mission' that they sometimes forget to take time out and reward others - and themselves! When was the last time you went up to a restaurant owner and thanked her/him for maintaining a smokefree environment? Sometimes that's all it takes. But we also need to formally recognize the people who contribute their time and energy to the effort or who demonstrate the kinds of behaviors we are trying to promote in tobacco control.

Celebrate small successes (and the bigger ones too!).

LESSONS LEARNED

About Creating a Group Structure

- *If there is a small group that is the nucleus for launching the community tobacco control effort it should be positioned as a 'start up' group to avoid power struggles as other people come into the group later.*
- *Expectations of group members should be clearly articulated. Equally, group members should express their needs and expectations from the group (e.g., the need for public visibility).*
- *The fiscal affairs of the group should be managed in a fully open and transparent manner, including establishing fiscal policies at the outset.*
- *The group should have a member(s) with skills in marketing, communications and media that is also committed to tobacco control, to enhance the development of your internal and external communication strategies.*
- *The group might consider an annual 'celebration' event for itself to acknowledge progress made as a group and the individual contributions of members.*

About Learning from Others

- *Periodic (e.g., quarterly) conference calls with other groups in different cities or states are a good way to bridge communications, to share experiences, new ideas, problems and solutions with each other.*
- *Chances are someone has developed and implemented the same or similar tobacco control program activities that your group is considering. Before developing a new program, check around and see if one already exists that can be adopted or adapted for your community.*
- *A frank and honest approach to sharing your group's experiences - especially the ones that didn't turn out as expected, is just as helpful to others as sharing what did work.*

Recognition and Rewards

- *Create simple recognition and reward programs early in the program. Reward and recognition plans can be for individual efforts, group efforts, and for those inside and outside the group.*

- *Link recognition and rewards to dates and places that have significance. For example, Kick Butts Day, Volunteer Recognition Week, World Tobacco Day, the Great American Smoke Out, etc.*

- *There are multiple ways to provide recognition and rewards for successful efforts. These can be as simple as thank-you notes and as elaborate as a formal awards ceremony.*

- *When rewarding individual, group or community efforts remember that different people and organizations have different levels of skill, expertise and capacity. Account for these differences in the recognition and reward plan.*

GETTING STARTED

Here are a few things your group can do to begin developing a working structure.

- ▲ *Have the group brainstorm a list of all the administrative, operational and management issues that they feel should be addressed. Put each item from the brainstorm in one of three categories - 1) Need to make decisions about now, 2) Need to make decisions about in 3-6 months, 3) Need to make decisions about over the rest of the year. Address the first list as soon as possible and schedule dates to deal with the other two lists.*

- ▲ *Have the group identify online tobacco control websites, resources and listservs that group members could access. Make a list of phone numbers, Internet addresses and mail addresses and provide a copy to everyone. Some of the **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES** mentioned in this manual are a good starting place. Update the list periodically and as members discover other resources.*

- ▲ *Have a group discussion and identify key contacts to provide the group with insight into group development barriers, challenges and solutions for their community. Think about inviting someone from this list to one of your regular meetings to share ideas.*

HELPFUL TOOLS

Several tools included in this section can be used to assist your group as it considers how to structure itself, as it communicates both internally and to the public, and as it develops a recognition and reward plan.

Organizing the Group - to provide a sample of structure, operations and management questions to start a group discussion.

Communicating with Group Members - to provide a series of questions that will help shape the communications plan for your group.

Getting the Word Out About Your Tobacco Control Plans - to provide tips for communicating tobacco control messages to the public.

Preparing the Group Prior to Communicating With the Public - to provide some strategy suggestions for preparing group members for public and media response to its communications.

Sample Recognition Letter - to provide a sample letter recognizing an individual, group or organization for their outstanding tobacco control efforts.

Sample Certificate - to provide an example of a certificate of recognition.

Tool 5 A

Organizing the Group

There are different ways to organize a tobacco control group. Some options are informal (i.e., no official legal organization). Other options involve creating a legal entity, such as a 501(c)(3), not-for-profit corporation. If your group decides to incorporate, obtain legal advice on the entities that can be created in your state consistent with the group's long-term interests.

The following questions and examples can be used to stimulate a discussion with the group about its preferred operating procedures. Remember that the structure you start with can always be changed later if need be. The purpose of this discussion is to make some early decisions about structure so that everyone will have the same understanding of how things will work.

Sample Questions to Ask:

What does the group expect from the individual members?

Example: Attendance at every meeting. If unable to attend, an alternate may be sent. The member must attend at least 70% of the meetings held in one year.

How often will we meet?

Example: Once a month, with ad hoc meetings as necessary.

How will meetings be recorded?

Example: Each group member will take turns writing a summary of the meeting and distributing it to all the others. The summary will clearly state any decisions made by the group.

How will we make decisions and resolve conflicts?

Example: All decisions about priorities and group activities will be made by the group as a whole. All viewpoints will be heard and discussed. When there are opposing viewpoints on an issue, a group vote will be taken. A 70/30 % (pass/no pass) rule will be used.

How will budget decisions be made?

Example: Budget decisions over \$500 will be made by the group. Below that amount the Chair of the group can approve expenditures.

Do we want to appear to the public as one group, or as separate individuals and organizations?

Example: We will form a legal entity "TitanTown Against Tobacco." All correspondence and activity by the group as a whole will have the organizational name on it whenever the group supports it with more than the required 70% vote. If a member organization objects to the idea, despite the vote, it may make a public statement to that effect as long as it acknowledges that it agrees with the core goals of the organization and supports it on most issues.

How is leadership decided?

Example: A Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer will be elected by the full membership for 2 year terms.

How do we recruit new members?

Example: New members are identified and agreed on by the group as a whole. No group members that have ties to the tobacco industry will be asked to join. All new members must sign a statement that they do not and will not have ties to the tobacco industry. There is no limit on the number of members in the group.

Other infrastructure and organizational issues should be identified by the group, discussed and documented. These decisions may be put into formal by-laws, or more informal but written, "Ground Rules for Group Operations."

Tool 5 B

Communicating with Group Members

Regular and effective internal communication will help group members better understand and carry out their roles. They are also more likely to feel a sense of commitment and ownership of the group's decisions and plans.

What is regular communication? What is effective? Deciding how your group will communicate would be helpful to do as early as possible. Use the following questions in your group to reach agreement on your communications plan.

Routine Communications

- What needs to be communicated?
- How will you communicate with each other (mail, e-mail, phone)?
- How often will you communicate with each other on non-urgent issues?
- Who will take the responsibility for communications in the group?

Urgent Communications

- How will you communicate with each other on urgent issues (phone tree, email, ad hoc meetings)?
- Will you need to communicate with each member of the group at the time an urgent matter arises? Or will the group empower a few people to address urgent matters on behalf of the group? If only a few people will be involved, which ones (e.g., elected officers, communications subcommittee)?
- How and within what time period will you update the rest of the group if only a few of you are communicating about the urgent issue while it is happening?

Communicating with the Public

- Who has responsibility for communicating with the public or the press on behalf of the group (e.g., all members, a designated 'spokesperson,' the Chair)?

Tool 5 C

Getting the Word Out About Your Tobacco Control Plans

What do you want to say? Who do you want to reach? How will you get the message across? Who is the best person/organization in your group to convey the message?

Each of these questions is important to consider as you begin to think about how to get the word out about your tobacco control plan and efforts.

What do you want to say?

- Consider the purpose of your message. Is the message intended to raise awareness or is it intended to motivate people to take a certain action?
- Consider the tone of your message. Will you convey only the facts or do you want the message to evoke an emotion (e.g. interest, obligation, compassion)?
- What are the 2-3 main points you want to make? Remember that with tobacco there are many, many points to be made. Each public communication should only try to make a few.

Who do you want to reach?

- Who are you trying to reach with your message? What interest will they have in it? What would make them more likely to pay attention to your message?

How will you want to get the word out?

- Once you have decided who you are trying to reach, you will be better able to decide how best to communicate with them. Consider how the people that you are trying to reach usually get their information, as well as the outcome that you are trying to achieve. You probably will want to use different strategies and channels.

Organizing To Get It Done

- Some ways to get the word out about your plan include:

Newspaper articles/advertisements

Radio stories, PSAs, announcements

Television stories, PSAs, announcements

Brochures/flyers

Newsletter articles

Postings on websites

Announcements at meetings

Town hall meetings

Billboards

- Using a combination of some of the channels listed above will help you reach a greater number of people with information about your tobacco control efforts.

Who will get the word out?

- Knowing your community, consider who or which agency should be the one to get the word out. Who has the most credibility within the community?

Tool 5 D

Preparing the Group Prior to Communicating With the Public

Before you get the word out about your group, plan or efforts, you will want to prepare the group members for questions that will inevitably come from the press and/or the public. Planning proactively will help to ensure that everyone conveys the same information that you want rather than reacting in an uncoordinated manner.

Before the public communication goes out:

- Decide on the main message(s) your group wants to convey. Keep them few, short and simple. Make sure everyone knows them. Repeat them often.
- Decide who will respond to inquiries (everyone or a spokesperson for the group).
- Anticipate hard questions. As a group, brainstorm a list of the hard questions and agree on how you will respond to them. Be sure to discuss how you will transition from the answers to the hard questions back to the main points your group wants to make.
- Keep a written list of the main messages that you want to convey and the answers to the hard questions close at hand.

Tool 5 E

Sample Recognition Letter

[CX letterhead]

Dear _____,

On behalf of the people of [name of community], I would like to thank you for your efforts at helping to make our community a healthier place to live by reducing tobacco use and exposure to second hand smoke. As you may know, tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, causing more than 400,000 deaths each year.

[Personalize by thanking individual, organization for their specific efforts. Highlight the positive health, business, and/or community outcomes of their actions.]

It takes individuals, families, neighborhoods, organizations and businesses from every part of [name of community] to make ours a community of excellence in tobacco control. Thank you for your leadership, for taking a stand on behalf of the health of the people in our community and for encouraging others to do the same.

Working together for health,

CX leader

Tool 5 F

CX Sample Certificate

[CX Logo]

[name of individual or organization]

is a leader

*in helping our community become a healthier place to live
by reducing tobacco use and exposure to second hand smoke.*

[program logo]

[signature]

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Community Toolbox

University of Kansas

<http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu>

Includes practical guidance for improving community health and development. There over 3,000 downloadable pages of specific, skill-building information on over 150 community topics. Specific sections of this website include:

- Community Building Tools
- Helpful Links to Other Web Sites
- Forums and Chatrooms
- Community Troubleshooting Guide
- Guide for Writing a Grant Proposal