


CIVIC ENGAGEMENT MADE EASY



USING THE ASPEN INSTITUTE GUIDE


WELCOME !

- Introductions
- Objectives for this afternoon
 - Encourage you to consider an Aspen dialogue in your community
 - Empower you with a framework and simple tools for conducting the dialogue



SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY DIALOGUE: A TEMPLATE FOR ACTION

- Why focus on Civic Engagement?
- Why partner with your public library?
- What is the Aspen Action Guide?
- How can I use the Action Guide in my community?



WHY CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT ?

- Build relationships, build trust
- Creative solutions to tough problems
- Encourage involved citizens instead of demanding customers



WHY LIBRARIES?

- Libraries Support Government Service Delivery and Information
- Libraries Provide a Neutral Place to Engage Citizens in the Governing Process
- Libraries Create New Opportunities to Bring People of Different Backgrounds Together

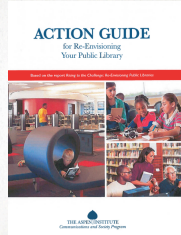


ASPEN GUIDE IN COLORADO - SPRING 2017



WHAT IS THE ASPEN INSTITUTE ACTION GUIDE?

- 1) Based on the Work of the *Rising to the Challenge: Re-Envisioning Public Libraries*
- 2) Provides steps to convene a public dialogue on important issues



HOW DO I USE THE GUIDE?

- Take time for preliminary community analysis
 - Who are the People we serve?
 - How do our public Places serve the community?
 - What Platforms for service do we provide?
- SOAR assessment
 - Strengths
 - Opportunities
 - Aspirations
 - Results



CONVENING YOUR COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

STEP 1: IDENTIFY COMMUNITY LEADERS

- Both formal and informal - key influencers
- Cut across boundary sectors
- Add a dimension of diversity - race, age religion, occupations, area of focus or expertise

STEP 2: LOGISTICS

- Venue, Date and Time
- Send personalized invitations
- Provide round tables for discussion and snacks
- Ensure AV set up and printed materials are ready



STEP 3: AGENDA

- Welcome
- Introductions
- Review purpose of the discussion session
- Present Guidelines for Discussion
- Explain the format
- Respect participants' time

STEP 4: CHOOSE A SKILLED FACILITATOR

- Take time to find a neutral, respected person
- Keep the discussion going forward. Invite everyone to participate
- Probe for deeper thinking
- Summarize and record key points - flip charts work well
- Respect participants' time



SAMPLE FACILITATION QUESTIONS

- What kind of community do we want?
- What are the core factors that give life to this community?
- When you first came to this community what were your most positive and powerful impressions?
- As you reflect on the many shifts happening in the world today, describe one that gives you hope. How might this community respond to this one big hope?
- What exists now that will enable our community to realize its dreams and aspirations?

FOLLOW UP: NEXT STEPS

- Consider formation of an advisory groups or steering committee
- Consider outreach to key stakeholders like community foundations or other philanthropic partners to share the outcomes of the meeting and invite their participation in next steps
- Publish a report, share and market it widely
- What has your initial dialogue revealed about what your community's priorities and needs are?
- What opportunities to forge new partnerships and strengthen existing ones has the dialogue created?

**STORIES OF SUCCESS:
PINE RIVER LIBRARY**

Used the Action Guide to find creative solutions to the problem of limited opportunities for young people in the community

Led to a partnership with the Boys and Girls Club, the town of Bayfield, and grant funding to build a park and improved facilities on vacant ground by the library



**YOUR LIBRARY: A PARTNER IN BUILDING A
BETTER COMMUNITY**