




The Art of Consensus

Florida League of Cities' eLearning Series


Kristin Jacobs — June 30, 2016



The **YES** Plan



- know your material
- educate your staff
- understand your colleagues
- bring champions
- share the stage
- be gracious

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educate
your staff



- make sure they know exactly what is expected of them, next steps should be clear...create an outline of transition from one step to the next, what happens next
- craft agenda item to be clear, bullets, facts
- if fiscal impacts arise, item will be back for their approval
- work with management and agree which staff member will lead internal workgroup



understand
your colleagues

- unanimous vote v. majority vote
- internal motivations
- being a good listener
- ensure your colleagues understand the compact only commits to work collaboratively, internally across departments and externally across jurisdictions


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On
Adoption
Day

- Bring champions
- Share the stage
- Be gracious
- Be flexible, open to suggestions


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Rafael Montalvo — June 30, 2016

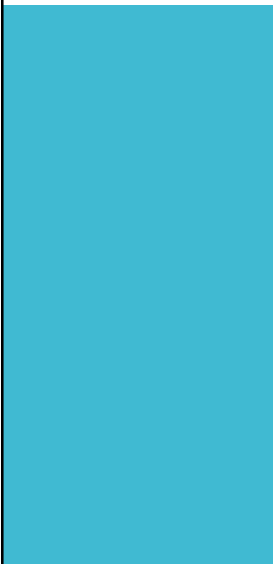





Basic Concepts

- Issues
- Positions
- Interests
- Values

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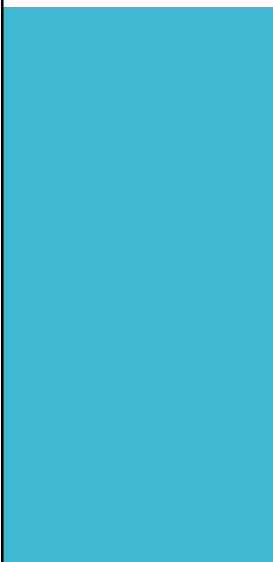




Issues

An issue is a topic to be addressed by participants in a discussion or problem-solving process.

In siting a wastewater treatment facility, one of the issues might be the effects, if any, of discharges to the local rivers.

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Interests

An interest is a an underlying need or concern that is important to a satisfactory outcome on an issue.

In siting the waster treatment facility, one interest of recreational fishermen, related to the effects of discharges, might be to maintain the health of fish stocks in the river.

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Positions

A position identifies one way to meet an underlying interest.

In siting the waster treatment facility, the fishermen might adopt a position opposing the facility. This position may or may not be the only or best way to address their interest in protecting fish stocks.


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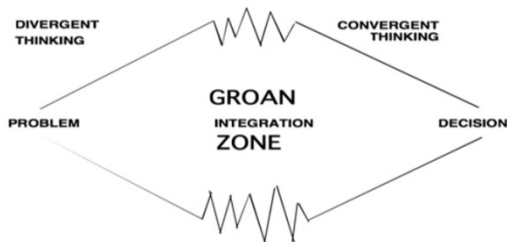
Values

Values are beliefs about what is more important or less important, about what is right or wrong.

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It's Always a Process!



The diagram illustrates the GROAN Integration Zone process. It is a diamond-shaped flowchart. At the top left is 'DIVERGENT THINKING', at the top right is 'CONVERGENT THINKING', at the bottom left is 'PROBLEM', and at the bottom right is 'DECISION'. In the center is 'GROAN INTEGRATION ZONE'. Wavy lines connect 'DIVERGENT THINKING' to 'CONVERGENT THINKING' at the top, and 'PROBLEM' to 'DECISION' at the bottom. Straight lines connect 'DIVERGENT THINKING' to 'PROBLEM' on the left, 'CONVERGENT THINKING' to 'DECISION' on the right, and 'PROBLEM' to 'GROAN INTEGRATION ZONE' and 'DECISION' to 'GROAN INTEGRATION ZONE' at the bottom.

From: *The Facilitators Guide To Participatory Decision-Making*, by Sam Kaner et al, New Society Publishers, 1996.

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It's Iterative!

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Consider

To provide flexibility for discussion, consider:

Workshop within the meeting

Committee of the Whole

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What to do:

- Actively Listen
- Express your own objectives clearly
- Use questions constructively
- Reframe for inclusion

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Actively Listen

Be attentive

Seek to understand, not merely tolerate

Confirm your understanding – reflect/paraphrase the interests you hear

Acknowledge what you hear

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Phrases that Can Help:

Help me understand your thinking on this.

What do you think is important about this?

If I understood you correctly . . .
Is that correct?

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Express Your Objectives Clearly

Clarify your assumptions

Explain your interests in tangible terms

Adapt your message to your listener

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Phrases that Can Help:

I've been assuming that if we pursue this, X would happen. Is that your understanding?

At the end of the day I would like to see (e.g. lots of people out there catching fish). That is important to me.

Even if you don't fish, you benefit from the tourist dollars the industry brings.

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Use Questions Constructively

Explain the question's relation to the issue and why you are asking it.

Ask questions about the interest and values behind the positions of others.

Use open-ended questions.

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Phrases that Can Help:

I am asking this because I still don't understand x.

Help me understand what is important to you about this.

If we do this, what kinds of outcomes do you expect?

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Reframe for Greater Inclusion or Acceptance

Acknowledge areas of agreement and disagreement.

Reframe the issue in a way that reflects the interest and values of all involved.

Shape a shared understanding of the problem.

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Phrases that Can Help:

It sounds as if we all agree that we need to do X while still doing y (e.g. find a low cost way to satisfy the regulation, while protecting the fish populations and allowing the recreational fishing industry to thrive.)

We still don't have agreement on the probable impacts of technology Z.


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Be Flexible

- Listen for different levels of agreement
- Consider modifications to make the item more acceptable or appealing
- Would additional discussion or information help?

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And

one more


thing...

- Other city partners may make changes to the compact in order for it to pass their Board... your city may have to re-agenda and adopt the amended language.
- Be prepared.
- Be flexible.
- Don't let words become weapons.
- Reiterate next steps for staff, for mission, for colleagues


Questions?



Rep. Kristin Jacobs



Rafael Montalvo




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Join us next week.
Sustaining Success
Thursday, July 7, 2016 – 2 p.m.

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Thank You!

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