

Dilemmas of Soul, Spirit, and Savvy

This workshop will allow participants to discuss three dilemmas of community-based leadership program development and maintenance. Members will be given time to discuss each issue and present possible solutions. The solutions used by the Leadership Program of Juneau, Wisconsin and their outcomes will be presented to add to the discussion. Examples of the positive and negative effects of the various solutions will be given. A Power Point presentation will give a summary of the dilemmas enhanced with various blues background music.

The objective of this session is for participants to gain at least one solution to each of the following dilemmas

The dilemma of **SOUL** - The soul represents the basic philosophy of the driving force behind the formation and the maintenance of the group. The basic philosophy that drove the Advanced Leadership Program of Juneau County (ALP) was "All have worth." This philosophy applied to choosing program participants as well as board members.

For program development, one usually chooses a homogenous group so that the decision making process moves strongly forward to a unified goal. Another choice is to accept the local movers and shakers based on their interest in the program and their willingness to seek funds and program participants rather than their philosophic stance.

Questions that arise: Should local leader input be limited in favor of the education experts? Should choices for selection be based on personal influence and fund raising ability? Should Board selection be limited to those that can produce a desired end i.e. fund raise, develop program, secure grant moneys, develop interest in the community to secure participants? These questions and those that arise from the group will be addressed by evaluating values of the driving force.

ALP's solution:

A brainstorming session was held with as many "movers, shakers, and interested parties as could be gathered. After the group set goals and the requirements for participation on the Board, the group found its size at 17 Board members. This number was based on those that wanted to be on the Board rather than any other criteria. By-laws were written to reflect this number. This did mean that formation of a group focus was more difficult and time consuming. It also meant that many view points and options were open to the group.

The dilemma of **Spirit** – The spirit represents the thread that holds the leadership learning together. It gives participants a framework and begins the development of a philosophical base for leadership. Community leaders and program

participants tend to want hard facts, lots of tours, and the ability to meet local leaders. Those involved in the development of leadership program tend to want a program that will build values and a philosophical base for the participants.

Some programs have taken to give their participants “bonding” time with overnights or ropes courses. How often in community meetings have you been asked to do a “sleep over”? Maybe there is another way to promote these working relationships. Possibly soft skills should be eliminated from the curriculum because of time constraints.

These issues will be discussed along with the solution that the ALP program used to insert some value building in just brief moments.

ALP’s solution:

Various leadership “soft skills” were presented at the beginning of each day’s session. This was done through the use of a “frog story or parable”. The story also related to the topic of the day. Since the first presentation of this concept, the committee has developed a pamphlet called Start with a frog, end with a leader

Which is now required reading for the leadership course. A short 37 pages, the pamphlet holds short frog stories and parables that are linked to the topics that are presented during the course.

The dilemma of **Savvy** – Savvy is being computer literate. For some, computer literacy and technology is the breath of life. Yet for others, one must drag them kicking and screaming into this arena. Is it worth all that pain? Should those who want to use snail mail be left alone? Is computer literacy a necessary leadership skill? Why not just accept the individuality of accepting the person as they are?

Group discussions will be used to allow individual to address and respond to this dilemma. The solution to these dilemmas and the results of those choices as made by ALP will be shared.

As staff and participants have come familiar with the computer-learning program, additional information has been made available on the site. The goal for future programs is to have the majority of handouts and information available on the site. Links to other sites is also possible.

Outside viewers can be a guest at the site and have limited access. The web site address is

<http://uwex.courses.wisconsin.edu>.

The login name is Juneau.guest and the password is county. An additional click to the Advanced Leadership Program of Juneau County will allow the guest to view materials available. The guest is not able to participate in discussions or take surveys and quizzes. The guest can access areas such as the course home, content, links, discussions (view only), classlist and the drop box.

ALP's solution:

The program committee decided that computer literacy has become increasingly important in our world. Therefore, it would be a disservice not to require and teach at least some minimal computer skills. The distance learning program "Desire 2 Learn" was used through the University of Wisconsin. However, most computer distance learning programs should be comparable.

Since there was a lot of difficulty for some participants, additional training has been added to the program. This is an addition of time and is on an as needed basis only. Two hours have been set aside at a local library computer lab to complete this training. It is hoped that this change in programming will enhance the computer experience for future trainings. The philosophical stance that the computer training was valuable did not change because of those difficulties but the training did.

Preprogram training in the lab as well as a notebook with copies of the computer screens and screen help information will be provided this coming year. Also, the computer use will be linked to the frog stories to reinforce that learning as well.

Solving the dilemmas of soul, spirit and savvy, has been an additional journey through leadership training for Board members and staff involved. The continued goal in leadership training is to maintain the values that the group has embraced and to share them with the participants that pass through the program.