

Public Engagement Training Session Options

Topic: Public Engagement - What? When? Why? and How?

Required Reading:

- [After scandal, City of Bell's fiscal revival shows importance of civic engagement](#)
- [12 Elements of Emotional Intelligence](#)
- [Roadmap for Public Engagement](#)

Facilitator: Maureen Tobin

Description: This introductory session sets the context for a deep dive into public engagement by offering an overview of the current state of public engagement factoring in the pandemic and providing a shared vocabulary and framework. It also invites participants to consider what level of engagement is appropriate to the issue at hand and consider pitfalls to effective engagement.

Key Concepts:

- Why civic engagement? Why now?
- Government as decider v. convener: determining the appropriate level of engagement and matching process to purpose
- Roles (customer v. citizen)
- Avoiding common pitfalls in public engagement
- What successful engagement looks like

Effective Virtual Public Engagement: Tools, Techniques, and Best Practices

Required Reading:

- [PACER Meeting Worksheet](#)
- [Facilitating Effective Meetings Cheat Sheet](#)
- [Facilitating Online Meetings Advice](#)
- [EDR Program tools and resources](#)

Facilitator: Danya Rumore

Description: With a move to virtual operations nationwide during COVID 19, online engagement shifted decisively from an optional add-on to in-person processes to the primary method for engaging people who live and work in our communities. We have learned a lot about how to design virtual meetings and workshops using live streaming and virtual conferencing tools, lessons that will serve us well even when we are able to re-introduce face-to-face engagement. This session helps participants think through how the purpose of engagement determines an appropriate online platform and process and offers some practical tips and tools for using popular platforms. Participants also learn to think strategically about incorporating online and offline engagement as we look beyond the pandemic.

Key Concepts:

- Allowing purpose to determine online process
- Best practices for live-conferencing
- Creative online processes and platforms

- What about the digital divide?
- Incorporating online and offline engagement

Topic: How to Have Difficult Conversations

Required Readings:

- [Why Facts Don't Change Our Minds](#)
- [Difficult Conversations Lead to Stronger Communities](#)

Facilitator: Kit Cole

This session takes a deep dive into having difficult conversations between communities and local governments and bridging the divide. Drawing on techniques from the field of dispute resolution and collaborative government, participants learn strategies for engagement, tips for managing emotions (of both themselves and participants) and practical tips on facilitating when things are tough or uncertain both online and in person.

Key Concepts:

- Large group v. stakeholder engagement
- Managing emotion during meetings
- Consensus finding techniques
- Online/hybrid engagement
- Feedback & follow up

Topic: Engaging Marginalized Communities

Required Readings:

- [Engaging Marginalized Communities: Challenges and Best Practices.](#)
- [Engaging Historically Marginalized Communities During COVID-19](#)
- [Here's how digital infrastructure can make cities more inclusive for elderly people](#)

Facilitator: Coby Williams

This session invites participants to explore public engagement beyond the usual suspects or “STP”s (Same Twenty People) and develop strategies for engaging communities that are currently marginalized based on factors such as race, wealth, immigration status, orientation, etc. In addition to the role perspective plays in perception, Participants will explore how traditional processes tend to reinforce racial inequity factors, and will receive practical tips for both outreach and process design that can help to build equity and inclusion within their community. The session will also look at the challenges in facilitating constructive engagement on sensitive issues, including appropriate responses to disruption and emotion. Participants will leave with a foundation in how to think about the impact that differences in culture have on public engagement and how to look for ways to better understand demographics other than our own.

Key Concepts:

- Best Practices in effective outreach to marginalized communities
- Creating inclusive space for diversity and identifying reasons some groups are marginalized.
- Understand who is in your community, identify who you may not be hearing from and issues that matter to communities facing equity issues of access, service, treatment, voice, influence

- Having conversations about police and race
- Recognize the need for cultural competency across a variety of factors (race, country of origin, socio-economic, political, gender, age) and learn how to develop these.

Topic: Innovation and Leadership

Required Readings:

- *None*

Facilitator: Matt Bronson, City Manager of Grover Beach

Description: This session introduces innovative ways that governments across the country have engaged residents face-to-face as well as how they engage their residents when meeting in-person is no longer an option. From yard signs to takeout nights to social media campaigns, participants have an opportunity to consider what techniques and tools may be useful in their own work during and after the pandemic. Participants also learn tips and techniques for becoming public engagement champions in their communities whatever their job title. *Key*

Concepts:

- Creative/ leading edge practices
- Engagement examples from around the country
- Overcoming fear of change and championing incremental change
- Why leadership matters