



Connections for Community Leadership  
and  
Michigan Disability Rights Coalition (MDRC)  
with funding from the  
Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC)

## We Lead! <sup>3.0</sup>

An inclusive leadership development  
curriculum for participants with and  
without disabilities.

## Connections for Community Leadership

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## Feedback on the We Lead! Curriculum

*"We thought the program far exceeded our expectations. It seems like John matured months more than the one month at the program. John's fluency with speech grew. He learned how to converse with others; usually he is quiet and doesn't say much. He was able to express himself with more clarity including a better understanding of how and why things happen...I don't know of any programs that come close to the quality of your program."*

A parent of a son with down syndrome

*"An individual with Autism planned, on his own, a luncheon at his home for the entire group. His parents were, 'Floored!' saying, he had never expressed his choices so much. He is now talking about taking a painting class in the community."*

Facilitator

*"One parent stated that that her 23 year-old daughter had never stayed home alone before. Melissa stated to her mom if she wanted to be a leader she would have to do it sometime. Melissa stayed home by herself for one hour for the first time in her life."*

Facilitator

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## How the We Lead! Curriculum is Organized

The We Lead! curriculum is organized into six parts.

**Part One**, “Welcome to the We Lead! curriculum,” summarizes the history, philosophy, and goals of We Lead!

**Part Two**, “Program Overview,” is a weekly breakdown of what will be learned in We Lead!

**Part Three**, “Lets Begin!” gives guidance of what staff should organize and prepare for before participants arrive. This section will help you set up your We Lead! program.

**Part Four**, “We Lead! Curriculum,” this is the We Lead! program set up as a three week model. This section is broken down by week, then further broken down by day. Each day will list the purpose, suggested activities, materials and the handouts you will need for that day. The handouts needed are located at the end of that day. On page 9 example 1 shows you what a day would look like.

Throughout the curriculum you will see boxes that contain feedback and advice from previous facilitators of We Lead! Example two on page 9 shows you one of these boxes.

**Part Five**, “Forms,” in this appendix you will find examples of all the suggested forms you will need to run a We Lead! program.

**Part Six**, “Resources” offers an in-depth look at the leadership model the CCL used to create the We Lead! curriculum and a guide to holding an accessible meeting.

# Day One

## Participants and Parents become familiar with the program and with each other

### Today's Suggested Activities

- Parent and Participant Orientation
- Word of the Day
- Descriptor and Gesture Name Game
- Community Norms and Expectations
- Communication "Listening"

### Materials needed for day

- Markers
- Large Piece of Paper
- Plenty of Room to Move Around

### Handouts

- Words of the Day: **Discipline** and **Clarity**
- Blocks to Communication
- Trust Building
- Listening Exercise 1

## Example One



## FEEDBACK FROM FACILITATORS

Look for boxes like this one throughout the curriculum. They will include advice and feedback from previous facilitators of We Lead!







## **Welcome to the We Lead! Curriculum**

The We Lead! curriculum is designed to offer participants (with and without disabilities) practical experience in becoming a leader. We Lead! offers participants information about disability history, disability pride, awareness of personal talent and leadership skills. We Lead! also serves as a laboratory where participants work together in an inclusive atmosphere, participants use what they have learned to identify, design, and deliver a community service project.

### **We Lead! History**

The We Lead! curriculum was first developed and implemented in the summer of 2005 in Kent County, for youth with and without disabilities. Since then, many organizations have implemented the program to fit the needs of their own diverse communities. This new version of We Lead! has been written to broaden the curriculum to make it more applicable to the unique needs of different communities while keeping the fundamental values, aspects and leadership development techniques of the original curriculum.

### **We Lead! Philosophy**

Gaining any skill takes practice, and leadership development is no different. Any person in a position of leadership has gained skills from their life experience, usually while working with others. Whether it is in a family, at school, at work, or in the community, those of us who take on leadership have had practice.

We Lead! draws from evidence-based practice that tells us leadership skills emerge from application. The model of leadership development used by Connections to Community Leadership and this curriculum is the “Lejuste Three Dimensions of Leadership Development.” Based on this model of leadership this curriculum focuses on three components of leadership skill building – Self, Community, Visionary. (Figure One) This model is not a developmental model, each piece acts to improve the skills in the two other parts. For more information on the Lejuste Three Dimensions of Leadership Development please see Appendix 3.

Lejuste's  
Three Dimensions of Leadership

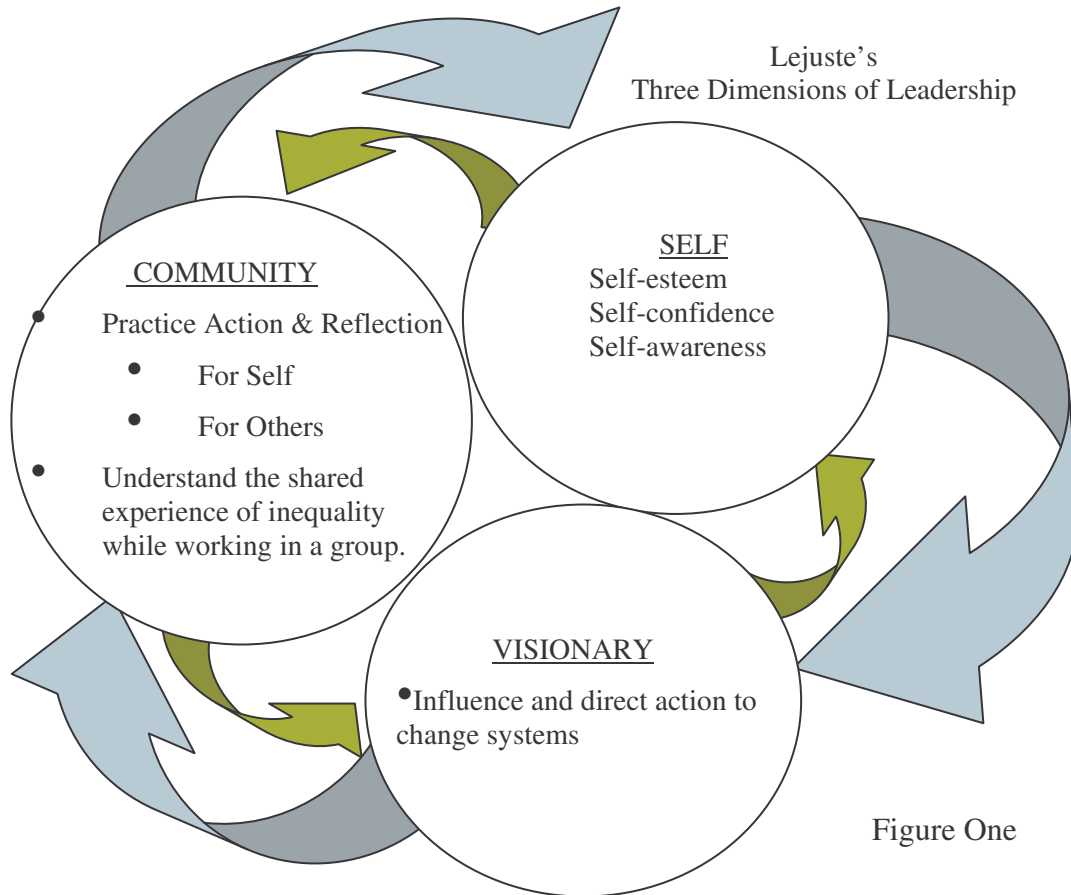


Figure One

This curriculum addresses the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary to provide people (with and without disabilities) with practical experience that they may use as they become leaders within the disability rights movement and/or within generic community environments.

The greatest challenge to those who staff this curriculum is to establish an environment in which the expectation is that participants assume leadership.

It takes a leap of faith and a great deal of self-discipline of the staff to understand the difference between a facilitator and a teacher. The curriculum will develop the skills. The facilitator will need to create the environment.

The flow of the We Lead! program is evidenced by the percent of leadership assumed by facilitator-staff and participants throughout the planning and implementation of We Lead! Program staff make all (100 %) of the program decisions before the participants arrive (locating an accessible site, recruitment, purchase of materials, etc.). As the program begins, facilitators set the agenda and the daily activities. Each week, participants are expected to assume more responsibility for planning activities and program decisions. During the final week, when the community service project is delivered and the celebration is

**Remember**

“A leader (*facilitator*) is best when people (*participants*) barely know he exists...when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say, ‘We did this ourselves.’” Lau-tzu

planned, participants actively drive the activities and make decisions while facilitators follow directions, track details and frame problems to be solved.

**The success of the curriculum is measured by the number of decisions made, relationships developed, and problems solved by the participants,** Rather than what the t-shirts look like, or whether the community project was pulled off with grace.

Facilitator Role		
■ Before participants arrive	■ Facilitators 100%	Participants 0%
■ First week	■ Facilitators 70%	Participants 30%
■ Second week	■ Facilitators 50%	Participants 50%
■ Third week	■ Facilitators 10%	Participants 90%

## **We Lead! Goals**

The goal of We Lead! is to develop new leaders. We Lead! creates a safe environment providing each participant with the opportunity to practice skills in which they see themselves as competent and active members of their community. Participants explore their natural leadership gifts, gain new insight into their own ability, identify new skills to improve their leadership and recognize and support different leadership styles in their peers.

Participants will actively use their leadership skills. They will know how to work with others toward a common goal as well as communicate with established leaders in their communities, the media and with the general public. They will identify and articulate their personal vision of a just society.



## We Lead! Program Overview

The We Lead! curriculum is designed to be adapted to fit the needs of its community. The curriculum is written to fit a three-week series, but you can change the length and time to fit the need of the community it serves. Regardless of how you structure the curriculum, we suggest you add an additional day for staff preparation. We suggest the program meets 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. but you may have to work around public transportation schedules. Read how other groups have adapted the curriculum on page 21.

<b>Week One</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Building an Inclusive Community</li> <li>★ Language and Communicating</li> <li>★ Disability Culture and Pride</li> <li>★ Leadership Traits and Styles</li> </ul>

### Theme for Week One Inclusion and Self Exploration

Participants engage in activities to build relationships and form a community. The activities for the week combine disability-specific information with leadership and interpersonal skill building. During this week the facilitators slowly step back and offer the participants opportunities to lead the curriculum.

Facilitator leadership 70%, participant leadership 30%

### Theme for Week Two Identify and Build Leadership Skills

Participants engage in activities to develop their leadership skills, build self-esteem, develop trust with one another, explore their community and learn how to put an idea into action. Participants also will begin planning their leadership project.

Facilitator leadership 50%, participant leadership 50%

<b>Week Two</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Leadership Development</li> <li>★ Building Trust</li> <li>★ Identifying Community Barriers</li> <li>★ Public Speaking</li> <li>★ Paper to Action</li> <li>★ Team Work</li> </ul>

### Theme for Week Three Leadership in Action and Reflection

### Week Three

- ★ Leadership in Action
- ★ Project Management
- ★ Recognition of Leaders
- ★ Reflection
- ★ Celebration

Participants finish the planning of their community service project and take the necessary steps to put their ideas to action. The participants execute their project and are active leaders in their communities. After the project is finished, participants will be involved in activities to reflect on their experiences.

Facilitator leadership 10%, participant leadership 90%



## Let's Begin!

As was shown in the facilitator role table on page nine the facilitators are in charge of 100% of the leadership when preparing for the program. These sections will help in the planning for the program and covers the details that should be arranged before participants arrive.

### Where Will It Take Place?

#### Accessibility

- ★ Check Appendix Three, page 120, for, "A Guide to Holding Accessible Meetings."

The most important factor in looking for a facility is to be sure it is accessible. Some questions to ask include: Is the building wheelchair accessible? Do the doors have automatic openers? Can the bathrooms be used independently? Is the location near a public transportation stop? Do we need to accommodate participants who are visually impaired or deaf?

The meeting room should be flexible. Can all participants meet around a table? Is there room to form small work groups? Is there space to spread out and play active games? Is there shady grass outside to relax on? Is there space to enjoy your lunch? Is there space available to hold a private conversation? Is there audio visual technology available?

The "Developing a Guide to Community Leadership" a guide by MSU Extension, 2005, suggests that you review the following when selecting an appropriate location:

- Is the facility in a location that is welcoming to all sectors of the community?
- Is the facility centrally located, accessible and barrier free?
- Is the setting suitable for the program theme?
- Are the room, chairs and workspaces comfortable?
- Will the space accommodate the types of learning activities that are planned?
- Is the room temperature and lighting suitable for extended periods of concentration?
- Does the facility provide audio/visual equipment?
- Will the room support your multi-media needs?
- Could the lighting \*(including windows) affect video viewing?

- Does the facility serve meals or allow catered food to be brought in?

## Who Will Staff The Program?

Your staff may include paid and volunteer staff. The number will depend on the size and composition of your participant group. You will need more staff when working with youth or people with more complex disabilities. Whether you work with youth or adults we suggest a minimum of two staff members. In a program like this you need partners to discuss the progression and outcome of the activities.

When looking for facilitators it would be helpful to find people who have disabilities themselves, or who know about the disability rights movement. **You want a facilitator who understands the goals of the program, is willing to hand over control of the activities to the participants and is committed to an inclusive and empowering environment for participants with and without disabilities.**

We recommend you schedule an orientation day for staff and volunteers during which you focus on creation of a shared understanding of expectations. During this day, solicit ideas from the facilitators. Discover their talents or experience that would be helpful to the program. We Lead! curriculum is designed to be flexible and to meet the specific composition of your group. We want to hear of your adjustments so we might learn from your experience and make the We Lead! curriculum better.

**Connections for Community Leadership will provide training for staff of We Lead! on request. If you would like facilitator training contact [leadership@prosynergy.org](mailto:leadership@prosynergy.org) or call toll free (866) 532-2669.**

## Staffing a Youth Program

If you will be running a program for youth you must be careful about the staff you hire. Because of the climate in which we find ourselves, we encourage you to talk with other youth programs in your community about background checks on all facilitators and volunteers. Protect the program and your reputation by never having one adult meet with a youth in private. If it is necessary to have private conversations with a participant make sure it occurs within sight of another staff person.



## Community Service Organizations/ Speakers

The We Lead! program uses the local community to bring information to the participants by inviting guests to speak to participants. Speakers are used during the first week to explore the history and culture of the disability rights movement. Throughout the first and second week speakers from local organizations who may anchor the community service project are invited to present information about their group.

Throughout the written curriculum we have indicated specific days that, in our experience, a speaker would have the most impact. Speakers may be found at your local Disability Network organization (Center for Independent Living), a college disability office, or a statewide disability advocacy organization. Speakers should be people with disabilities as often as possible.

When selecting a speaker for your program you may want to consider the following:

- Does this person understand the philosophy and goals of We Lead!?
- Have I explained how much time the speaker will have, and to what topic I want them to speak?
- Is this individual a member of the disability community? Do they have pride in their disability?
- Will this speaker be able to relate to the participants?
- Do they understand the concepts of disability history, culture and pride?
- Are my speakers culturally diverse?
- Do I need to rely on an “expert” or does one of the participants have experience and wisdom that would be beneficial to share with their peers?

Before We Lead! begins you will want to identify various community service organizations that work on volunteer projects in their community. Staff should set up dates with these organizations to have them come speak to the participants. You will want to let these organizations know that they will be “pitching” their organization to the participants. They may want to come prepared with various ways that the We Lead! participants could volunteer or plan a community service project for their service organization.

Make it clear that the participants may choose **NOT** to work with their organization for this project, but maybe participants will choose to work with them on their own time in the future. It is the expectation of this curriculum that the participants will identify the issue and program for their community service project, staff are only setting up a chance for participants to interview different agencies in their community.

## Field Trips

The We Lead! curriculum encourages you to experiment with your own ideas and adjust the curriculum to meet the needs of the individuals in your program. Although we have filled the days with activities we also encourage you to arrange, before the participants arrive, one or two field trips during the program. Field Trips should relate to the goal of developing leadership rather than just a fun event. The scheduling of these events often will depend on the availability of the programs you are visiting and/or the unique make-up and needs of your participants.

Some programs have planned an outing to a rope course during the first week. It is an excellent way for participants to get to know one another and to begin developing community trust. Others have set up site visits to organizations that may be chosen for the community service project.

## T-Shirts

Before the program starts it is recommended that staff identify a printing company for the participants to use for their T-Shirts. By identifying this company ahead of time, the company can schedule your print job on their calendar for the number of shirts you will need. To learn more about We Lead! T-Shirts see page 35.



## Participant Contracts

We Lead! strongly encourages local sites to offer stipends to participants who fully participate in the program. People with disabilities are asked to 'donate' their time and volunteer at jobs. We believe people with disabilities should receive stipend to pay for their hard work and dedication to the program and to their community. At the end of the orientation ask participants to sign a contract (Appendix I p. 110) that spells out terms of completion.

## Permission Slips/Emergency Contact Card

If you are sponsoring We Lead! as a youth program or for people with disabilities that have guardians, all participants must have a permission slip signed by a parent or guardian that allows participation (Appendix I p.109). All participants, regardless of age, should fill out an emergency contact card.

The contact card should include:

- An emergency contact if the participants should need immediate care
- A copy of the participant's health care card.

- Medical information critical to participants care: medications, dietary needs, allergies, etc.

**Make this information available in a central location for staff and volunteers.**

## Recruiting Participants

### With and With Out!

Recruit participants with and without disabilities! We Lead! is a perfect opportunity to form relationships and build alliances between participants with and without disabilities.

Start recruitment for your program two to three months before the start of your program. To recruit people with disabilities target schools, your local Disability Network (Center for Independent Living) affiliate, ARC, or Regional Interagency Coordinating Committee. To recruit people without disabilities, look at groups interested in developing leadership skills such as local scout programs, neighborhood community centers, churches, Chambers of Commerce and the local MSU extension offices. There is a sample invitation letter in Appendix I, p. 109.

We Lead! strives to be all inclusive – participants should vary by disability, gender, race, sexual orientation and other types of community diversity. Contact local groups representing these diverse communities.

## ♿ Accessibility

We recognize that the activities in the We Lead! curriculum may have to be adjusted to meet the accessibility needs of your participants. Here are some examples of how facilitators have adapted their program to meet the needs of their community:

Several programs have changed the length of We Lead! Some groups held the program one day a week for several weeks; others held it once a month. In both of these programs the students were assigned homework between the sessions to work on their community service program.

Peer Choices – A program for adults with mental illness, had participants plan, develop, and implement micro-enterprises instead of a community service project. Participants broke into teams, and developed a proposal for their business which they presented to the facilitators and their peers before they were granted money for their business. Participants then developed their businesses and sold their merchandise at local conferences.





## **Week One: Inclusion and Self Exploration**

Goal for the Week: Identify the Community Service Project Issue

During this week participants will interview community service organizations with whom the staff has set up meetings with. Staff may need to alter activities to meet the needs of the organization's time.

Each day participants will participate in the "Words of the Day" activities. These words have been carefully chosen as key elements of leadership characteristics. You are encouraged to spend some part of the morning talking about why they were chosen and what they mean. In Week Two there is an exercise that uses these words.

# Week One: Day One

**Participants and Parents become familiar with the program and with each other**

## Today's Suggested Activities

- Parent and Participant Orientation
- Word of the Day
- Descriptor and Gesture Name Game
- Community Norms and Expectations
- Communication "Listening"

## Materials needed for day

- Markers
- Large Piece of Paper
- Plenty of Room to Move Around

## Handouts

- Word of the Day- Discipline and Clarity
- Blocks to Communication
- Trust Building
- Listening Exercise 1

# Week One: Day One

If you are working with youth or participants' with guardians we recommend you do a parent and participant orientation.

## Parent and Participant Orientation

- Welcome
- Introduction of staff
- Pass out a We Lead! program calendar to each parent and participant
- Review philosophy and goals of We Lead!
- Clarify expectations of participants
  - Behavior
  - Contract
  - Consequences
- Excuse participants for their orientation.

*(Lead staff person remains with adults while other staff and volunteers move with participants to another room to start the day's activities)*

## Continue with Parent Orientation

- Discussion on developing participants' leadership by encouraging participants to assume the responsibilities of young adults.
- Suggest ways parents can support the program goals in the home.
- Review Paperwork
  - Contact information
  - Insurance information
  - Media and Picture permission slips
  - Program / Staff contact info
- Describe what they could expect if an emergency arises.
- Invite parent's questions and concerns.

## Continue with Participant Orientation

### Descriptor and Gesture Name Game

**Time:** 30 Minutes

**Source:** Traditional

**Purpose:** To help participants and staff to learn each other's names in a fun and interactive way. This activity is to help participants to build relationships and become a community.

**Directions:** In a circle one person begins by stepping forward and stating their name with a descriptor word and a gesture. (example: "No, No, Norm shakes

#### Materials

- ✓ Plenty of room to move around



his head no). As Norm steps back all repeat, “No, No, Norm with the gesture of shaking their heads).

The next person steps forward and states their name with a descriptor and a gesture. (example: Ta Da Theresa, Theresa shakes her hands) As they step back all participants say the second person’s name with the gesture, followed by the first persons name and gesture.

So it continues around the circle adding each person’s name and gesture in turn until the entire group has repeated everyone’s name and gesture many times.

## Community Norms/Expectations

**Time:** 20 to 40 Minutes

**Source:**

**Purpose:** Community norms (often called guidelines or rules) are important to building a sense of community. In addition, they help build trust and a sense of safety in a larger group. It is suggested to avoid the word “rules” when developing community norms because “rules” often involve the decision/rule being made by someone with more power. We call them community norms, because these are the acceptable and encouraged behaviors that the community is deciding upon.

### Materials

- ✓ Markers
- ✓ Large piece of paper



**Directions:** Ask the participants to create their own community guidelines for the project. Have a participant write the guidelines on a blackboard, overhead, or a large piece of paper (somewhere where they can be visible at all times). This participant (or another participant) should facilitate the discussion. Facilitators should remain as removed as possible – only giving suggestions if needed or prompted. Once the guidelines are complete, explain they can add to this list throughout their time in the project.

*It is extremely important that the participants are the ones who set the community norms and hold each other accountable throughout the project. Facilitators can suggest additions to their norms, but ultimately it should be the participants’ choice whether or not to take the suggestion.*

Here are a few examples of guidelines:

- Step Up/Step Back – Those who talk a lot and tend to dominate the discussion should challenge themselves to step back and give time for other voices. Those who find it easy to remain quiet and blend in with the background should challenge themselves to step up and contribute to the conversation.
- Willingness to Challenge Others and Be Challenged Yourself – We are all human and will say and do something that hurts or offends someone throughout the project. This guideline asks participants to “call each other out” when something offensive is said or done. In

addition, the person being called out should challenge themselves to listen and consider what people are saying instead of the immediate defensive response and back peddling.

- **Make Your Needs Known** – If you need additional accommodations, more information, to have something repeated, to take a break, etc., let the group know. Needs cannot be met if they are not known.
- **Let Us Be the Timekeepers** – We will worry about breaks, if we are going over, how much time is left, etc. We want you to concentrate on the content and getting the most you can out of the sessions.

*An option is to type up the guidelines and give each participant two copies. Have participants sign one copy and turn it in – keeping the other copy for themselves. This can help participants feel like they should respect the guidelines and give tangible evidence that will help them hold each other accountable. For example, in week two Sally breaks the guidelines. Sam then says, “Remember our guidelines. You agreed to them when you signed your name on Day One.”*

### **Next have the group explore the Expectations of the group.**

This is what is expected of the participants regarding their time in the project and the project itself. These can come from facilitators and the community. Some expectations that should be included are:

- Attend every day.
- Be an active participant in the planning and implementation of the community service project.
- Challenge themselves, everyday to step out of their comfort zone.
- Be an active participant.
- Notify facilitators and community (We Lead! Participants) if they are unable to attend.
- Make a personal commitment to complete all three weeks of the leadership program.

*It is important to note that when working with people with disabilities, there are several barriers to attendance and other aspects of the program (health issues, lack of transportation, personal assistance, etc.). Some participants with disabilities may agree to the expectation of attending every week of the We Lead!, but then might develop a health issue relating to their disability that results in missing one day. As a facilitator, be prepared for participants to miss sessions on occasion.*

*In addition, the group should decide how many absences are allowed before the stipends begin to decrease in value. This decision can be made by the participants as they discuss expectations.*

- Group discusses guidelines of how they will behave during the three week term.
- “What will make We Lead! a safe place for all of us?(Guidelines become central to the contract participants sign on second day)



- Guidelines are posted on flip chart that all participants sign.
- Chart is prominently posted and can be referred to throughout the three-week term.

## Word of the Day

**Time:** 20 minutes

**Source:** Adapted from, “Leadership Characteristics Activity,” By Amy Selders

**Purpose:** Each day there are two “Words of the Day.” These words have been carefully chosen as key elements of leadership characteristics.



**Directions:** Hand out the word of the day words: **Clarity** and **Discipline**. Ask participants to read each word of the day, and the definition provided. Ask participants to describe in their own words what each word means. Have participants discuss how each word of the day relates to leadership and being a leader.

## Communication

### Introduction:

Describe effective communication as one person clearly conveying an intended message to another person.

- Ask participants what they think this means, and how they know this is effective in communicating a message to another person.
- As participants answer, list their response for all to see.

Explain there are two parts to communication: *Expressing and Receiving*.

Expressing involves sending a message to another. Some of the ways it is done are through talking, signing, writing and using a communication device (communication board, speech synthesizer). The purpose is for another person to receive and understand the message.

Receiving involves getting and understanding the message another person is sending. Some of the ways this is accomplished are by listening to spoken words, reading written communication, reading sign language and reading the message displayed on a communication device such as a Touch Talker. The goal is to receive and understand the message sent by another person.

Explain there are verbal and non-verbal aspects of both expressive and receptive communication. For example, most people use hand gestures and facial expressions as they speak. These provide additional information that helps listeners understand and interpret messages. Much of the time we do not effectively communicate with each other. This happens because the speaker is

not sending a clear message or the listener is not really listening, or both.

This is one of the major reasons people get into conflicts and have a hard time cooperating on activities. To effectively communicate requires learning and using listening skills, non-verbal communication skills and verbal communication skills.

**Discuss the fact that one of the most important aspects of the effective communications is listening.**

## Listening

**Time:** 2 hours

**Source:**

**Purpose:** Participants will explore how important listening is to effective communication. They will also explore how listening will be important part of being a leader and communication is key component to building a We Lead! community.

### Materials

- ✓ Room for small group work
- ✓ Blocks to Communication, handout
- ✓ Listening Exercise 1, handout



**Directions:** Have participants fill out Blocks to Communication and Trust Building (handout).

Discuss their responses. Possible discussion questions are:

- What are the three most often chosen blocks?
- Why do you feel they are the most important?
- How might you improve in those areas?

To illustrate what happens when someone is not listening, complete Listening Exercise #1, role played in pairs. Explain that the purpose of this exercise is not to listen to the other person and to concentrate on getting your point of view across as quickly as possible.

Break the group into pairs. From Listening Exercise #1 Role Play Descriptions (handout) give one participant in each pair a slip of paper describing the situation for the person who needs an air conditioner repaired; give the other participant a slip of paper describing the situation for the plumbing and heating employee.

Give the pairs about two minutes to study their roles and to decide what they are going to say.

Have all the participants begin at the same time, and allow them to interact for about four minutes before you stop them. Be sure participants in each pair are not listening to one another.

Following the role play, bring the group back together as a large group to identify

some of the characteristics of not listening (loud voices, no eye contact) and how the pairs felt when they were not listened to (angry, frustrated, helpless, desperate).

Discuss the importance of listening and how we tend to lose that skill as we get older. We tend to think of what we want to say next or what we are feeling rather than listening carefully to the speaker.

Using How to Be a Good Listener (handout), describe the following strategies to be a better listener:

- *Block out distractions.* Concentrate on what the other person is saying in spite of the background noise, uncomfortable seats, or preoccupation with your own thoughts.
- *Think while you listen.* Good listening requires much more than passively letting sound waves enter your ears. It requires active involvement such as identifying the speaker's most important points and relating them to your own ideas and experiences.
- *Avoid responding in a manner that closes communication.*  
Examples of such responses are the following:
  - \* Evaluation: "You're wrong."
  - \* Advice: "Why don't you..."
  - \* Direction: "You have to..."
  - \* Moralizing: "You should..."
  - \* Discounting: "You think your problem is bad, you should hear about mine."These responses make people feel defensive and put down.
- *Let the speaker know you are still "with" him/her.* You can do this by nodding, maintaining eye contact, not interrupting and making sounds such as "uh huh."
- *Ask questions that invite the speaker to say more.* An example is, "What did it feel like for you to walk into that room full of strangers?" or "How did you get interested in that subject?"
- *Restate the speaker's words and feelings in your own words.* An example is, "It sounds like you feel angry about missing the game," or "If I heard you right; you said you would rather not go to 'R' rated movies. Is that what you meant?"
- *Respect the speaker's right to feel the way he/she feels and to think the way he/she thinks.* This does not mean you can't disagree. But it does mean you should not put down, ridicule, berate or belittle a person for thinking or feeling a certain way. Examples of disrespectful responses are, "That's so stupid! How could you think that?" "You shouldn't feel that way," and, "Well, nobody else sees it that way so you must be wrong."

## Now have participants practice listening.

Pair participants and ask each member of the pair to take a turn being a listener and a speaker in the following scenarios.

- Scenario 1: The speaker describes something that he/she likes to do during free time at home. The listener will only use "passive" listening. This means the listener cannot ask questions, talk in any way or encourage the speaker nonverbally (head nods) or verbally.

- Scenario 2: The speaker will describe one of the most exciting things he/she has ever done. The listener will give verbal and nonverbal signs that he/she is listening (nodding, eye contact, not interrupting, encouraging utterances).

- Scenario 3: The speaker will make and finish the statement, "My least favorite subject in school is \_\_\_\_\_." The listener will ask questions that expand the conversation by inviting the speaker to say more.

- Scenario 4: The speaker will describe a situation about which he/she felt angry. The listener will mirror or restate the feelings and facts in what is being said ("It sounds like you felt..." and "If I heard you right, you said that...").

After allowing about four minutes for each scenario, with each person taking the listener and speaker roles for each scenario, ask participants to pause and share with their partners their answers to the following questions:

- When listening, what did it feel like to be listened to in the different ways you were instructed?
- When speaking, what did it feel like to be listened to in the different ways? When did you feel most that you had the listener's attention and were understood? Why?

After completion of the last of the scenarios, bring the group back together as a large group and use the following questions to initiate a discussion of the impact on both the listener and speaker of the different strategies for active listening that they practice:

- Did you notice any difference in how you felt about your interaction with your partner when active listening skills were being used? For example, was the conversation longer, more pleasant, more in depth?
- What types of active listening strategies made speakers feel most understood and listened to when they were talking?
- In what ways did the listeners encourage speakers to keep talking?
- How often are active listening skills used by your friends, family members, and teachers?
- Are there differences in how people from different cultural groups engage in active listening?
- Are there differences in how females and males engage in active listening?

Point out to participants the manner in which one listens is a learned skill and so is influenced by social environment.

- This means that persons from different cultures may engage in active listening (labeling feelings, paraphrasing, using body language etc.) in a somewhat different manner than individuals from other cultures.
- It also means that because girls and boys are taught to behave differently in many ways, it is also possible that persons of one gender may listen differently than persons of another gender.

Explain to the group that persons with disabilities may demonstrate active listening in a somewhat different manner than to persons without disabilities or persons with disabilities.

- An individual with cerebral palsy who is physically unable to maintain eye contact may signal a speaker that he/she is hearing them by slumping in the chair or tilting his/her head in a certain direction.
- A person who uses a communication board may encourage a speaker to continue talking by pointing at a specific symbol on the board rather than using traditional "uh-huh".
- An individual with autism who is uncomfortable with sustained eye contact may indicate interest in an interaction through focusing his/her gaze on another part of the face.

Ask participants to identify other ways that persons who might not be able to use more traditional active listening behaviors could demonstrate their interest and attention in a conversation.

As participants respond, list their responses for all to see and use these as a basis for a discussion of the need for all individuals to appreciate the subtle differences in listening styles used by different persons. Make sure the following points are covered in your discussion:

- The manner in which different persons with and without disabilities communicate they are paying attention to a speaker is quite individual and based not just on the nature and severity of their disability but also upon their personality, cultural background, and personal preferences.
- It is important for speakers to not make assumptions about the extent to which a person is engaged in active listening if they do not know the individual or the behaviors they engage in when actively listening.
- In some situations, communication can be greatly improved by educating the other person (teachers, fellow participant) about how an individual with a disability demonstrates interest and attention during a conversation, or encouraging the person with a disability to do these themselves.



## Week One: Day One Handouts

## Blocks to Communication and Trust-Building

Poor communication and a lack of trust are often the result of a combination of factors. The following lists some of those factors.

Please check the five (5) factors in the list below you believe are the most serious blocks to communication and trust building. If you think of something important that is not on the list, please add it.

1. Cultural differences between the speaker and listener.
2. The speaker and listener have different beliefs.
3. The listener does not agree with what is being said.
4. The speaker or listener is preoccupied.
5. The speaker or listener has very different vocabularies and jargon.
6. The speaker is *unintentionally* unable to say what he/she means.
7. The speaker has little knowledge of the subject.
8. There are economic and/or class differences between the speaker and listener.
9. The listener is not interested in what the speaker is saying.
10. There are status differences (teacher / participant, leader / member) between the speaker and listener.
11. There are negative feelings between the speaker and listener.
12. Either the speaker or listener tends to always agree with everyone.
13. The speaker is *unintentionally* miscommunicating.
14. Some sort of interference or distraction exists.
15. Time pressures exist.
16. The message being communicated is complex.
17. The same words have different meanings to the speaker and listener.
18. The speaker and listener belong to different ethnic groups.
19. The speaker and listener are different ages.
20. The speaker and listener have great differences in life experiences and educational backgrounds.
21. The speaker and listener have different goals, objectives, and agendas.
22. The speaker and listener are different genders.
23. \_\_\_\_\_ (Any others?)

## Listening Exercise # 1:

### **Person # 1 HOT AIR - The Person Who Needs the Air Conditioner Repaired**

You have just moved into your new home and you are trying to unpack your household goods when you discover your air conditioner does not work.

You have driven your car to the A-1 Plumbing and Heating Company to get some help. You do not know anyone else in town and you must have someone come and fix the air conditioner as the weather report states it will be 104 degrees this afternoon.

You do not know anything about air conditioners, but you are sure this is a simple problem any repair shop should be able to fix

**Remember, the object of this exercise is to NOT LISTEN to the other person.**



## Listening Exercise # 2:

### Person # 2 BLOWING STEAM – The Plumbing & Heating Employee

You work for the A-1 Plumbing & Heating Company. Your job is very specialized; in fact you only know about fixing water heaters. You have been left in charge of the store for the day. You already have had two calls from people who have problems with their air conditioners.

You have decided the next person who comes in with an air conditioning problem must be made to understand that you know nothing about air conditioners and you will absolutely refuse to give them any advice about their problem. They must understand you cannot help them in any way.

**Remember the object of this exercise is to NOT LISTEN to the other person.**

## How to Be a Good Listener

- **Block out distractions.** Concentrate on what the other person is saying in spite of background noise, uncomfortable seats, or preoccupation with your own thoughts.
- **Think while you listen.** Good listening requires much more than passively letting sound waves enter your ears. It requires active involvement such as identifying the speaker's most important points and relating them to your own ideas and experiences.
- **Avoid responding in a manner that closes communication.** Examples of such responses are: evaluation ("you're wrong"); advice ("why don't you"); direction ("you have to"); moralizing ("You should"), and discounting ("you think your problem is bad, you should hear about mine"). These responses make people feel defensive and put down.
- **Let the speaker know you are still "with" him/her.** You can do this by nodding, maintaining eye contact, not interrupting and making sounds such as "uh-huh."
- **Ask questions that invite the speaker to say more.** An example is, "What did it feel like for you to walk into that room full of strangers?" or "How did you get interested in that subject?"
- **Restate the speaker's words and feelings in your own words.** An example is, "It sounds like you feel angry about missing the game" or "If I heard you right, you said you would rather not go to "R" rated movies. Is that what you meant?"
- **Respect the speaker's right to feel the way they feel and to think the way they think.** This does not mean you can't disagree. But, it does mean that you should not put down, ridicule, berate, or belittle a person for thinking or feeling a certain way. Examples of disrespectful responses are, "That's so stupid! How could you think that?" "You shouldn't feel that way," and "Well, nobody else sees it that way so you must be wrong."

# Week One: Day Two

**Participants continue to build relationships and begin to explore disability pride and what it means to be an inclusive community.**

## Today's Suggested Activities

- Word of the Day
- The Circle Connection Game
- We Lead! T-Shirt
- The Label Game
- Invited Speaker/ Community Organization Speaker
- Accommodation and Skills Box
- Non-Verbal Communication

## Materials needed for day

- Copies of Labels
- Tape
- Plenty of Room to Move Around

## Staff Handouts

- Labels

## Handouts-

- Words of the Day **Approachability** and **Knowledge**

# Week One: Day Two

## Words of the Day

**Time:** 20 Minutes

**Source:**

**Purpose:** Each day there are two “Words of the Day.” These words have been carefully chosen as key elements of leadership characteristics.

### Materials

- ✓ Handout: Approachability and Knowledge



**Directions:** Hand out the words of the day words: **Approachability** and **Knowledge**. Ask participants to read each word of the day and the definition provided. Ask participants to describe in their own words what each word means. Have participants discuss how each word of the day relates to leadership and being a leader.

## The Circle Connection Game

**Time:** 30 Minutes

**Purpose:** To help participants bond as a team and learn more about each other. Participants should recognize what they have in common though they are all different. Recognition of similarities will help participants to build a community.

### Materials

- ✓ Plenty of room to move around



**Directions:** Participants sit in an informal circle with one person in the middle. The person in the middle starts by saying, “I like to \_\_\_\_\_.” Any person that likes to do that activity links onto the first person. That person then continues the game by saying, “I like to \_\_\_\_\_.” The group continues till everyone is linked, the last person must call out something that the first person likes to do until a circle is formed.

## We Lead! T-Shirt

**Purpose:** Making a We Lead! T-Shirt is a way to unify the participants and help to identify the group during your community service project.

**Directions:** It is recommended that We Lead! Participants have the opportunity to design their own 'team' T-shirt. By having a T-shirt the participants will be visible as they represent the We Lead! program in the community. Participants can decide as a group what their T-shirts will look like. An alternative is to ask participants which members would like to serve on a committee to design the We Lead! logo and order the T-shirts. Members of this committee can decide how they will choose the design as a team. One possibility is for members on this team to individually make logos which the whole group will vote on or members of team can design one logo together, or several the whole group could vote on. Members of this committee should then order the shirts for the group with proper size and name, if applicable.



## FEEDBACK FROM FACILITATORS

We Lead Kent! facilitator said T-shirts were a great hook for media coverage. She also mentioned participants were proud to wear their team T-shirts and when they wore them they were eager to explain to members of their community what We Lead! was and talk about being a leader.



## The Label Game

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Purpose:** “Label Jars, Not People” – This slogan is often used by advocacy groups. This activity explores the power a label has on how people interact with one another. This activity also will explore the stereotypes people have towards people with disabilities.

### Materials

- ✓ Copy of labels, cut
- ✓ Double-sided tape



**Directions:** To prepare for this activity, the facilitator will need to make labels. Prepare the labels, making sure there is one label for each person in the group. Apply double-sided tape to the back of each label. If there is a large group, they should break into groups of eight or less.

Before beginning the activity, the facilitator will explain the purpose of the activity is to write an advertisement or jingle for Burger King. Right before the groups start the facilitator will explain they forgot something. Then, apply the labels randomly on the foreheads of all of the participants. It is very important that the participants do not know what their labels say.

After everyone has a label, then give the group 10 minutes to attempt to come up with a jingle, interacting with each other according to their labels. They will be so busy ignoring each other, treating each other poorly and fearful of one another that they will accomplish nothing.

When time is up allow each participant a chance to guess their label before they remove it. Allow time for reflection, have participants discuss their experiences afterward.

As a large group, discuss the following questions (notes to the facilitator are in *italic*):

- How many of you could identify what your label was without looking at it?
- Were you focusing on the label or your task (writing the jingle)? How useful are the jingles you created?
  - *Ask this question to illustrate how labels, racism, ableism, and stereotyping of any kind can get in the way of all daily functions at school, on the job, at home, etc.*
- If the label was your focus, why was it? Was your job unimportant?
  - *This will get the participants to examine why they thought the label would be the most important part of the exercise. They were instructed to come up with a jingle, yet they focused on the labels. This question will help them to examine their own biases.*
- Was it frustrating or upsetting when you had something to say and people treated you badly for no apparent reason?

- *Revealing how this activity made them feel personally will open the door for a conversation about understanding what other people go through on a daily basis (i.e. you are afraid of me = someone with epilepsy, I have a bad temper = someone with a mental health disability, treat me like I am stupid = someone with a learning disability, yell at me = someone who is deaf, etc.).*
- Have you ever experienced any of the negative labels that some of us wore tonight? If you did, why do you think other people made you feel that way?
  - *There are two big reasons why people make us feel this way. The first is they do not know any better or they are ignorant. They know nothing or very little about people with disabilities and do not accept anyone who is not just like them.*
  - *The second is because we let them make us feel bad! Respect yourself and have pride in yourself, DISABILITY PRIDE!*
- A lot of non-disabled people treat us like we are stupid, ignore us, treat us like dirt, hurt our feelings, stare at us, etc. for a number of reasons. What are some of them?
  - *Stereotypes, fear of what is unfamiliar, etc. They should be able to give good answers to this question since this activity will be during the session on stereotypes and the movies.*
- One of us wore the label, “I have a mean temper.” Why do you think we had that one?
  - *Many people with mental health disabilities are feared because their disability is not understood. Many people are afraid anyone with a mental health disability can and will become violent at anytime. This is obviously not true.*
- What about the labels, “I always get my way,” and, “Listen to every word I say”? Do any of you ever think that you get to do things or get away with things that your non-disabled brothers and sisters don’t?
  - *If you do get away with things that a non-disabled brother or sister don’t, think about why that might be. Do you use your disability to get what you want? Do not answer that now- just think about it. But remember this: for decades, disability activists have been fighting for EQUAL treatment, not SPECIAL treatment. Use your POWER wisely.*

## Accommodations and Skills Box

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Source:**

### Materials

- ✓ Plenty of room to move around



**Purpose:** A good leader can recognize both their own talent and their team member's talent. A good leader also knows when they need help.

**Directions:** Staff talk directly to participants and/or guardians (if applicable) to discover unique talents or each participant. (Example: plays soccer, has given an oral presentation, knows how to wash a car, etc.)

Staff member creates a “bingo” matrix with each talent or skill in a box and makes enough copies for the group.

Participants each get a copy of the matrix and are given the directions to find out who in the room could help them with each square on the board. Participants find the person with the skill or talent listed and gets that person to initial their name in the box. The person who gets the most correct signatures wins.

After participants are finished, lead the group in a discussion about what it means to ask for help. Debrief using the following questions:

- *Did you learn anything new about the members of the group?*
- *Can anyone in this group do something that you might have difficulty doing by yourself?*
- *Does every member in our group have to have every talent to be a leader?*
- *Does a good leader ask for help?*
- *What is an accommodation? How do you ask for an accommodation?*

### Invited Speaker

The first leader with a disability will speak, to the group about their own story and relate it to disability pride.

### Community Service Project

**Directions:** Begin a discussion of planning a community service project. The questions listed below are suggestions.

- *Define community & ask what they know of community service projects?*
- *How do participants receive from the community?*
- *How might they want to give back to the community?*
- *Break in to groups of 3-4*
  - *Each person identifies the issues of interest to them. The small group chooses one to bring back to the group.*
- *In the large group have each group present their issue. The large group chooses 2-3 issues.*
- *Who in the community is working on these concerns?*
- *What kind of service project might We Lead! do with them?*



## Non Verbal Communication

**Time:** 40 minutes

**Source:**

Materials

- ✓ Room for small group work



**Purpose:** Participants will explore how important listening is to effective communication.

### Directions:

Introduce participants to the concept of non-verbal communication through playing a game of charades. Pair participants together with their partner and inform the group that they are going to play a game of charades.

Inquire as to whether participants have ever played the game and, if the majority have not, provide them with an overview of the game.

- The categories to be used are: name of a TV show, name of a movie, name of a musical group and name of a song.
- It may be beneficial to demonstrate how one might play the game. Demonstrate for a sufficient length of time so all group members who will be playing the game understand the basic concept.

Explain to the group that in playing this game of charades, with partners, go through the following steps:

- Spend a short period of time selecting which category-TV show, movie, musical group, or song they want to use.
- Choose a title or name from within that category (the title of a specific movie, TV show, etc) to non-verbally present to the rest of the group.
- Decide how, as a team, the two of them will non-verbally act out the title for the group. They will have three minutes to act out their title.

Provide partners with approximately 5-10 minutes to make their decision and decide upon a strategy. Move around the group as necessary and provide support to participants who are having a difficult time developing plans that will involve both participants in the pair.

Bring the group back together as a large group. Remind them that each set of partners will have three minutes to present their non-verbal communication to the group, and that the group will “read” the non-verbal communication of the presenting partners and guess what it is they are trying to communicate to them.

After the last pair of partners has finished, have the participants discuss their experiences from the perspectives of both “speakers” and “listeners.”

Suggested questions to use in facilitating the discussion include:

- How easy or difficult did you find it to communicate non-verbally with other?
- What did you learn about your ability to use non-verbal communication

- skills through playing charades?
- How easy or difficult did listeners find it to accurately read the non-verbal communication of others?

Discuss the importance of non-verbal communication.

Point out to the participants that when we are trying to convey a message to another person and when we are listening to a message someone else is trying to send us, non-verbal communication, or the messages that we convey to others without using words, is often as important as the content of what is said.

Define non-verbal communication as the messages we sent to others that do not involve words. Often these messages communicate something about the feelings of the person.

- Note that while there are formal systems of non-verbal communication, such as American Sign Language, here we are talking about the informal systems, such as gestures and facial expressions, which express feelings and attitudes and expand upon a verbal message.

Ask participants to develop a list of ways people send messages with their bodies without using words. As the group responds, write their answers for all to see. Make sure that, at a minimum, the following types of non-verbal communication are included on the list:

- eye contact (or a lack thereof)
- facial expressions
- gestures
- touch
- physical closeness
- tone of voice

As each form of non-verbal communication is discussed, ask participants to identify what type of information is typically conveyed by that form (facial expressions are typically used to convey feelings, hand gestures are used to reinforce a point the speaker is trying to make, etc)

Reinforce the idea that non-verbal communication is an important aspect of communication that must be paid attention to not only by the listener but by the speaker as well.

- Speakers must intend what they are communicating non-verbally as well as with words. In addition, monitoring the non-verbal behavior of listeners provide speakers with information as to whether they are being adequately understood and how people are reacting to what they are saying.
- Through paying attention to the non-verbal behavior of speakers, listeners can gain information about the speaker's emotion, attitudes, and intentions.



## Week One: Day Two Handouts

# Approachability

To have *approachability* means you have integrity, are truthful and honorable and easily adapt to the styles of others. Most people feel comfortable with you!

# Knowledge

To have *knowledge* means you effectively use the power that comes from understanding!

## The Label Game

<b>Ignore me completely</b>	<b>Treat me like I am stupid</b>
<b>Laugh at all of my ideas</b>	<b>Help me out</b>
<b>You are afraid of me</b>	<b>Act like you can't hear me</b>
<b>Treat me like I'm dirt</b>	<b>Like all of my ideas</b>
<b>I have a mean temper</b>	<b>Follow my lead</b>
<b>Hurt my feelings</b>	<b>Listen to every word I say</b>
<b>Tell me how great I am</b>	<b>Stare at me</b>
<b>Ask me how great I am</b>	<b>Ask me to repeat myself</b>
<b>Ask me what I think</b>	<b>I always get my way</b>
<b>Speak loud to me</b>	<b>Speak slowly to me</b>
<b>Treat me like I am sick</b>	

# Week One: Day Three

**Participants continue getting acquainted and they are introduced to leadership traits. Participants will begin to explore their self leadership.**

## Today's Suggested Activities

- Word of the Day
- Self-Reflection
- Compass Activity
- Community Service Speaker
- Proud and Powerful- Activity One
- Decorating Your Bag of Individuality
- Proud and Powerful- Activity Two

## Materials needed for day

- Plenty of room space
- Tape
- Pens/Pencils
- Blank pieces of paper
- Paper bag
- Magazines
- Glue
- Markers
- Disability Culture Rap DVD

## Staff Handouts

- Four Directions for Compass Activity

## Handouts

- Word of the Day- Humility, Competence
- Compass Activity
- Proud and Powerful

# Week One: Day Three:

## Words of the Day

**Time:** 20 Minutes

**Source:**

**Purpose:** Each day there are two “Words of the Day.” These words have been carefully chosen as key elements of leadership characteristics.

### Materials

- ✓ Handout: Humility and Competence



**Directions:** Hand out the word of the day words: **Humility** and **Competence**. Ask participants to read each Word of the Day, and the definition provided. Ask participants to describe in their own words what each word means. Have participants discuss how each word of the day relates to leadership and being a leader.

## Self- Reflection: Who are You?

**Time:** 30 Minutes

**Source:**

**Purpose:** Participants will begin to explore their self. Identifying what leadership characteristics they possess and what skills they aspire to gain.

### Materials

- ✓ Blank paper
- ✓ Writing utensil



**Directions:** Ask participants to fold a paper in half. On one side, ask them to make a list of the words describing themselves (examples: *honest, shy, loud, etc.*) After each participant has finished, ask them to now list the words they think they would hear if they had a cloak of invisibility and were listening to what other people would say about them in the second column.

Ask participants

- Do your words match on both sides? Why or why not?
- What have you done that shows you are those words?
- What do you still need to do to be the words you want to be?

## Pride and Self-Empowerment

**Time:** 20 Minutes

**Source:**

**Purpose:** People with disabilities often lack the feeling of being proud and powerful. Participants will learn about their own disability pride, and self-empowerment.

### Materials

- ✓ Disability Pride Handout



**Directions:** As a large group, discuss the concept of disability pride with the participants. Handout the Connections for Community Leadership’s definition, it reads, “Accepting and honoring our uniqueness and seeing it as a natural and beautiful part of human diversity. Pride comes from celebrating our own heritage, culture, unique experiences and contributions” and includes the following bullet points:

- Disability pride recognizes the power we have to make change.
- Disability pride results when we challenge and ultimately undo the negative beliefs, attitudes, feelings and systematic oppression that come from the dominate groups thinking there is something wrong with our identity or our disabilities.
- Disability pride rejects shame and the need to “blend in.”
- Disability pride is self acceptance and validation of our uniqueness.
- Disability pride results in making choices based on the respect for interdependence, accommodations, and creativity.
- Disability pride is the feeling of strong connection with a community of other people.
- Disability pride recognizes that it is our uniqueness that will transform all people and institutions (society).

The word “power” is usually expressed in negative terms; it’s seen as having control over someone else. There’s the idea that “good” people stay away from power. However, the word “power” actually comes from the Latin word “posse” which means “to be able.” The focus here is on our own power to make positive choices and changes in our lives AND our power as a community by influencing others and creating significant change for more than ourselves.

The word “empower” means to give power to someone else. This infers that there is a power dynamic – that one has more than the other and will give up some power for the “lesser” person. Connections for Community Leadership decided to use the word “self-empowerment” to describe what it means to be powerful. This eliminates the hierarchy that someone else is giving us power.

As a large group, identify some examples of the use of power to accomplish something in the community such as a group that managed to get wheelchair lifts installed on the buses of their local transportation system.



## Leadership Compass Activity

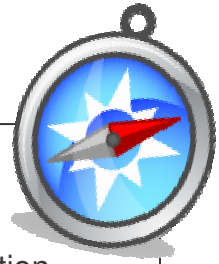
**Time:** Sixty Minutes

**Source:** The Guide to Building Effective Participant Councils

**Purpose:** To help participants identify their leadership style and see what style of leadership their fellow community members lean towards.

### Materials

- ✓ Copy of each direction
- ✓ Copy of handouts for each participant
- ✓ Plenty of room space



**Directions:** On four areas of your room, post the four directions – North, East, South and West. Provide each participant with the handouts that describe the work and the leadership traits of the four directions. Give them 5-10 minutes to reflect on the directions and then rank them, Number One being most like them and Number Four being least like them. Once they have completed that step, have them go to whichever direction they think their number one is. In those groups, give them 5-10 minutes to discuss why they felt they were a good match for this direction. Have them identify common strengths and weaknesses of their direction. Staying in their group, ask for volunteers to share some of what was discussed or insights people gained. Now ask the participants to go to the direction they ranked as their number four, the least like them. Again, give them 5-10 minutes to discuss why they felt they were NOT a good match for this direction and identify common strengths and weaknesses of this direction. Then ask for volunteers to share some of what was discussed or insights they gained.

Come back as a large group and provide participants with the handouts “Pitfalls When Styles Are Taken to Excess” and “Suggestions on Working with a...”

As a large group, discuss the following questions for 5-10 minutes:

- Is it better to have a group of the same leadership styles or with different leadership styles? Why?
- How does your leadership style help or hinder the group’s goals?



## FEEDBACK FROM FACILITATORS

We Lead Washtenaw County! facilitators put each person’s leadership style on the top of their nametags. These served as a reminder throughout the training on the best ways to approach and gain consensus among members. They felt that the students used them, as well as the facilitators.



## Decorating Your Bag of Individuality

**Time:** Thirty Minutes to Two Hours, depending on group

**Source:**

**Purpose:** To help participants identify their own leadership style, talents and skills and to help participants form a community.

**Directions:** Provide each participant with a paper bag, two pieces of blank paper and various arts and crafts materials. Instruct each participant to decorate their bag to express their unique leadership style, talents and skills. Upon completion of decorating the bag, have each participant write on their blank paper their goal for We Lead! and on their other piece of paper their goal for five years from now.

### Materials

- ✓ Pens/Pencils
- ✓ Blank pieces of paper
- ✓ Paper bag
- ✓ Magazines
- ✓ Markers
- ✓ Glue
- ✓ Random objects to decorate bags



When everyone is done with their bags and goals, have participants form two circles. Each person is instructed to share their bags and their goals without staff facilitation. When the groups are finished sharing ask them to discuss the question: How will learning leadership skills help you accomplish these goals?

Bring all into the large group and share what they learned (about each other, how leadership will help them or anything else they discussed).

Compile the list of goals on a flip chart and post. Instruct the participants to place their written goals into their bags and hang bags on the wall.



## FEEDBACK FROM FACILITATORS

We Lead Oakland/Macomb! facilitator used canvas bags instead of paper bags so that participants could keep the bag and use it if they wanted to.

We Lead Huron County! said this activity sparked lots of conversations. They said this was a VERY good getting-to-know-everyone activity and many friends were made.

## Proud and Powerful

**Time:** 75 Minutes

**Source:** Advocating Change Together in 1999. To purchase a copy: [www.disabilitytraining.com](http://www.disabilitytraining.com) or 1-800-543-2119.

**Purpose:** Disability Culture Rap is a 22-minute experimental documentary exploring disability identity and culture.

### Materials

- ✓ Media Equipment
- ✓ Television/Projection screen
- ✓ Disability Culture Rap



**Directions:** Begin this session by discussing the following questions as a large group:

- What does the word “culture” means to you?
- What do we mean by “disability culture?”

After discussion, show the video to participants. When participants are done watching the video, discuss the following as a large group:

- What stood out to you?
- What surprised you?
- What are some of the things you learned?



## Week One: Day Three Handouts

# Humility

To have *humility* means your ego is under control. This is not to be confused with being timid. In other words, you believe in yourself, but you don't have a big head and you appreciate the accomplishments of others!

# Competence

To have *competence* means you demonstrate both knowledge and skill in your area of expertise.

# Proud and Powerful

*What is Pride?*

## Self-Empowerment

Knowing and feeling one's pride and applying our unique voice, skills and actions with energy and confidence to achieve a vision (of full citizenship in all places: personal relationships, home, school, work, community, institutions, etc.).

- Includes the commitment to provide personal and institutional support for people with disabilities who are seeking to claim their full and rightful place, power, and pride.
- Knowing, practicing, and using the skills to make changes.
- Is expressed when disability communities protest discrimination and celebrate disability culture, heritage, and history.

## Disability Pride

Accepting and honoring our uniqueness and seeing it as a natural and beautiful part of human diversity. Pride comes from celebrating our own heritage, culture, unique experiences and contributions.

- Disability Pride recognizes the power we have to make change.
- Disability Pride results when we challenge and ultimately undo the negative beliefs, attitudes, and feelings and systematic oppression that come from the dominate groups' thinking that there is something wrong with our identity or our disabilities.
- Disability Pride rejects shame and the need to "blend in"
- Disability Pride is self acceptance and validation of our uniqueness.
- Disability Pride results in making choices based on the respect for interdependence, accommodations, and creativity.
- Disability Pride is the feeling of strong connection with a community of other people.
- Disability Pride recognizes that it is our uniqueness that will transform all people and institutions (society).



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# East Eagle

- Visionary who sees the big picture
- Very idea oriented, focus on future thought
- Insight into – mission and purpose
- Develops solutions creatively
- Looks for overarching themes, ideas
- Likes to experiment, explore
- Strong spiritual awareness – attribute to “higher level”
- Appreciate a lot of information
- Divergent thinker

Value Words: “option, possibility”

Roles: Big Picture Thinker and Visionary



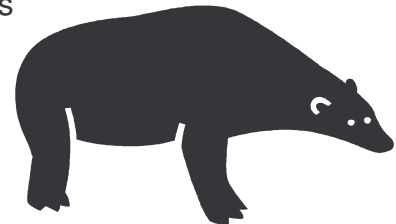
# West Bear

Seen as practical, dependable, and thorough in task situation

- Helpful to others by providing planning and resources
- Moves carefully and follows procedures and guidelines
- Uses data analysis and logic to make decisions
- Weighs all sides of an issue, balanced
- Introspective, self-analytical
- Carefully and thoroughly examines people’s needs in situation
- Works well with existing resources
- Keeper of traditions
- Skilled at finding fatal flaws in an idea or project

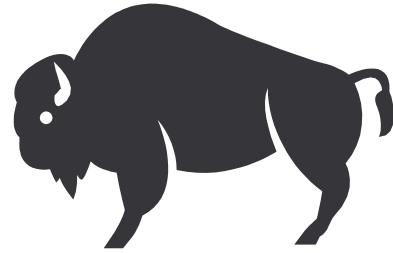
Value Word: “objective”

Roles: Evaluator and Follow-up



# North Buffalo

- Assertive, active, decisive
- Likes to be in control of relationship and determine events
- Quick to act, expresses sense of urgency for others to act
- Enjoys challenges and challenges others
- Thinks in terms of bottom line
- Likes quick pace and fast track
- Courageous
- Perseveres, not stopped by hearing “no,” risk taker
- Likes variety, novelty, new projects
- Comfortable with being in front
- Good motivator of others

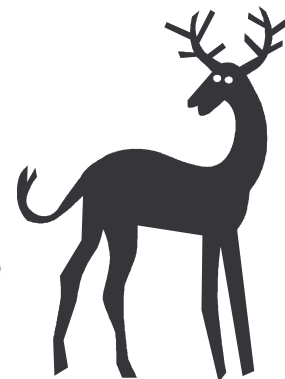


Value Words: action oriented phrases such as: “Do it now,” “I’ll do it,” “What’s the bottom line?”

Roles: Leader and Driver

# South Deer

- Allows others to feel important
- Value driven regarding aspects of professional life
- Establishes relationship to accomplish tasks
- Interaction is primary
- Concerned with process
- Supportive, nurturing to colleagues and peers
- Willingness to trust others’ statements at face value
- Feeling-based, trusts own emotions and intuition
- Team player, receptive to other’s ideas, builds on ideas of others, noncompetitive
- Able to focus on present moment
- Concerned with creating a positive environment

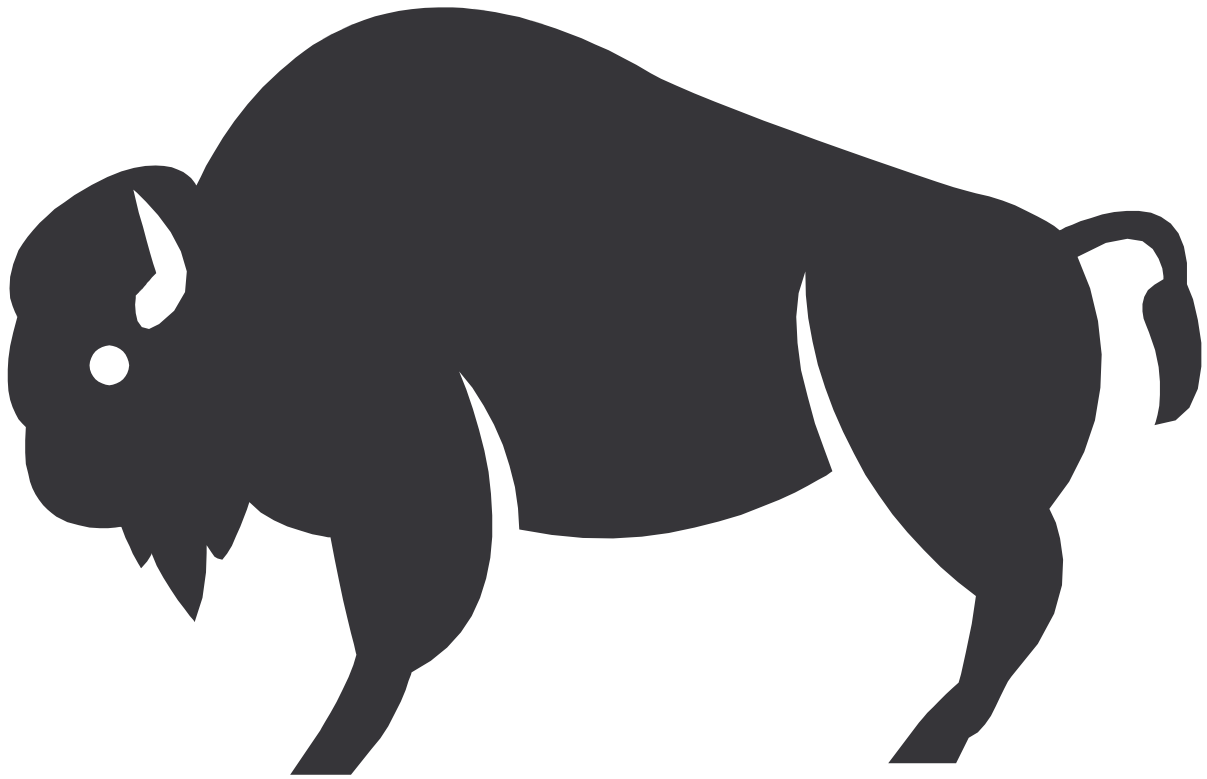


Value words: “right, fair”

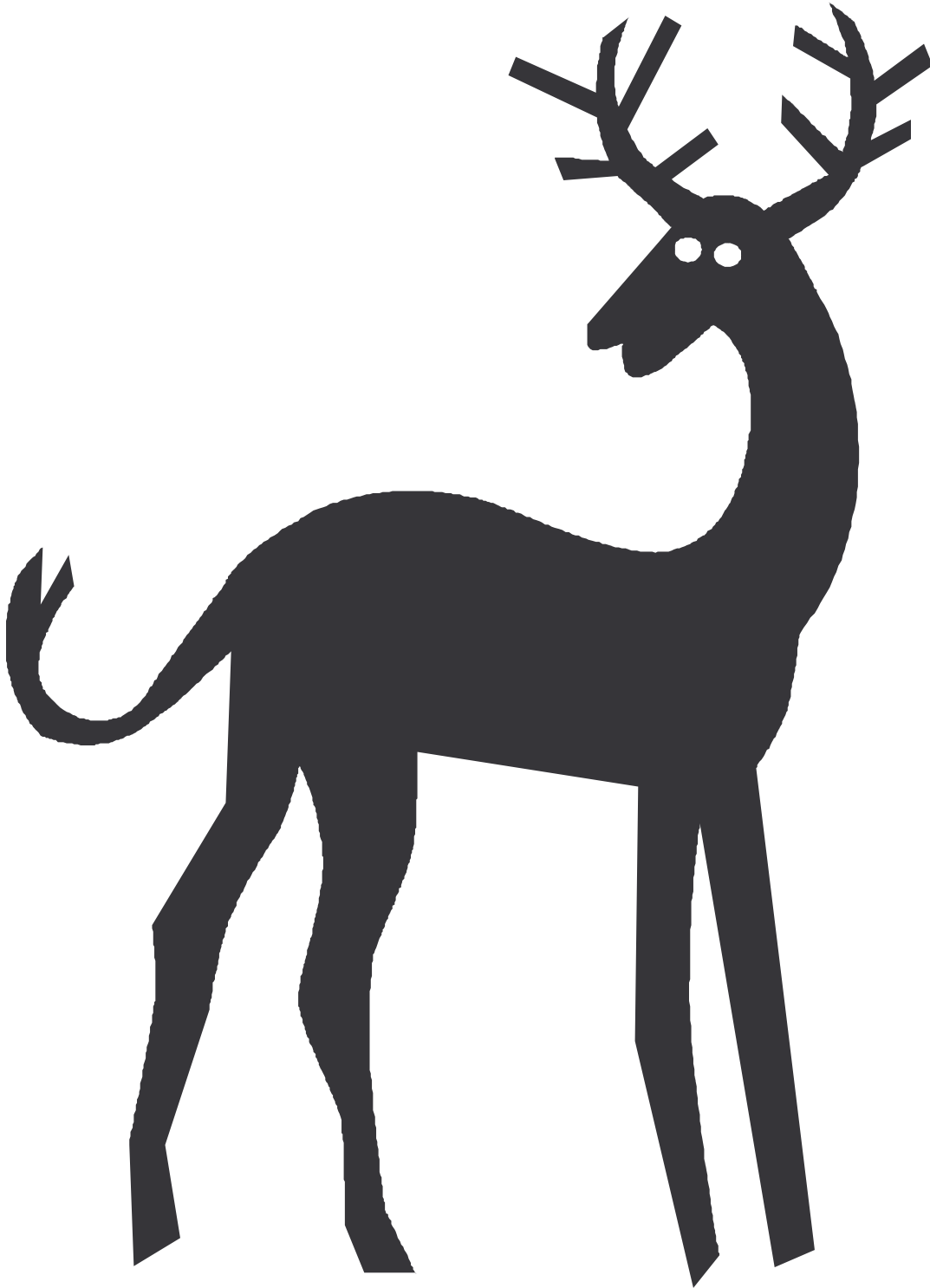
Roles: Relationships and Process



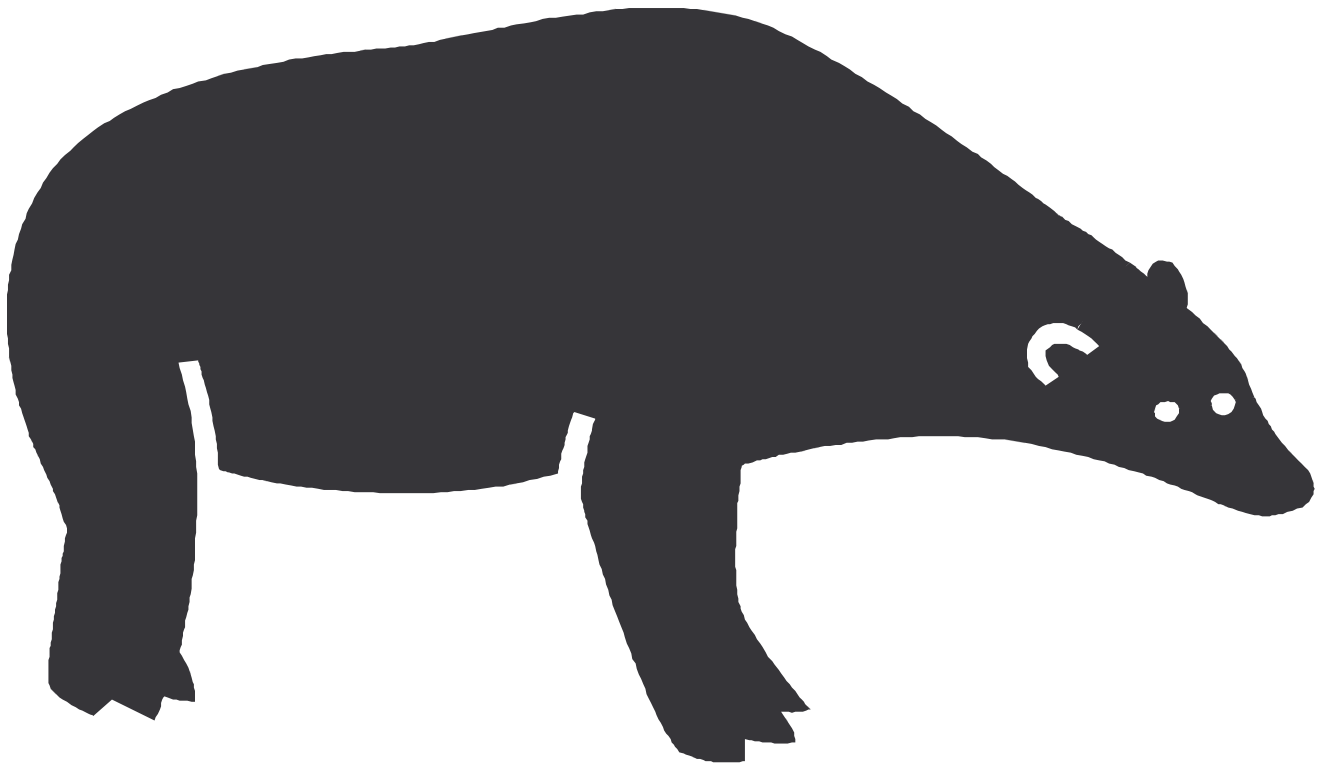
# North Buffalo



# South/Deer







# West/Bear







# East/Eagle



## Leadership Compass: Pitfalls When Styles are Taken to Excess

<p>West/Bear </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be bogged down by information</li> <li>• Can become stubborn and entrenched in position</li> <li>• Can be indecisive, collect unnecessary data, mired in detail</li> <li>• May appear cold and withdrawn, with respect to others' working styles</li> <li>• Tendency towards watchfulness, observation</li> <li>• Can remain withdrawn, distant</li> <li>• Resists emotional pleas and change</li> </ul>	<p>North/Buffalo </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be bogged down by need to press ahead and decide</li> <li>• Seem to not care about process</li> <li>• Can get defensive quickly, argue, try to out expert you</li> <li>• Can lose patience, pushes for decisions before its time</li> <li>• May get autocratic, want things their way, plow over people in decision making process</li> <li>• May go beyond limits, gets impulsive and disregard practical issues</li> <li>• Sees in terms of black and white, little tolerance for ambiguity</li> <li>• Not heedful of others' feeling, may be perceived as cold</li> </ul>
<p>South/Deer </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be bogged down when believes relationship and needs of people are being compromised</li> <li>• Has trouble saying "no" to requests</li> <li>• Internalizes difficulty and assume blame</li> <li>• Prone to disappointment when relationship is seen as secondary task</li> <li>• Difficulty confronting and dealing with anger, may be manipulated by anger</li> <li>• Easily taken advantage of</li> <li>• Immersed in present, loses tract of time</li> <li>• Immersed in NOW, may not see long-range view</li> </ul>	<p>East/Eagle </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be bogged down by lack of vision or too much emphasis on vision</li> <li>• Can lose focus on tasks</li> <li>• Poor follow through on projects</li> <li>• May become easily overwhelmed</li> <li>• Not time-bound, may lose track of time</li> <li>• Tends to be highly enthusiastic early on, then burnout over the long haul</li> <li>• Can develop a reputation of lack of dependability</li> </ul>

## Leadership Compass: Suggestions on Working with A...

<p>West/Bear </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow plenty of time for decision making</li> <li>• Provide objective facts and figures a person can trust</li> <li>• Don't be put off by critical "no" statements</li> <li>• Minimize expression of emotion, use logic when possible</li> <li>• Appeal to tradition, sense of history, correct procedure</li> </ul>	<p>North/Buffalo </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present your case quickly, clearly and with enthusiastic confidence</li> <li>• Let them know how they will be involved – their pay off and their role</li> <li>• Focus on the "challenge" of the task</li> <li>• Provide plenty of autonomy</li> <li>• When establishing timelines, stick with them</li> <li>• Give positive public recognition</li> <li>• Use them in tasks requiring motivation, persuasion, and initiative</li> </ul>
<p>South/Deer </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remember process, attention to what is happening in the relationship, feelings between you right now, is of primary importance</li> <li>• Needs to feel decisions are ethically right- justify decision around values, ethics, the right things to do</li> <li>• Appeal to relationships between you and this person, this person and others</li> <li>• Listen hard and allow the expression of feeling and intuition in logical arguments</li> <li>• Easily steamrolled, beware this person may have a hard time saying "no" to you</li> <li>• Provide plenty of positive reassurance</li> <li>• Let this person know you like them personally and appreciate them</li> </ul>	<p>East/Eagle </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show appreciation and enthusiasm for ideas</li> <li>• Listen and be patient during idea generation</li> <li>• Avoid critical, judging statements of ideas</li> <li>• Allow and support divergent thinking</li> <li>• Provide a variety of tasks</li> <li>• Provide help and supervision checkpoints on detail and project follow-through</li> </ul>

# Week One: Day Four

**Participants grow trust in each other and recognize how individual gifts and talents strengthen their community.**

## Today's Suggested Activities

- Words of the Day
- Speaker on Disability Pride and/or History
- Community Service Speaker
- Non/Verbal and Feelings/Emotion
- Death in the Desert Game
- Roots Activity
- Mine Field

## Materials needed for day

- Room to Move Around
- Writing Utensils
- Index Cards
- Tree Drawn on Large Paper
- Large Wall Space
- Clothes Line
- "Mines" Balls, Bowling Pins, Cones, Foam Noodles, Etc.

## Handouts

- Words of the Day- **Charisma** and **Direction**

# Week One: Day Four

## Words of the Day

**Time:** 20 Minutes

**Source:**

**Purpose:** Each day there are two “Words of the Day.” These words have been carefully chosen as key elements of leadership characteristics.

### Materials

- ✓ Handout: Charisma and Direction



**Directions:** Hand out the word of the day words: **Charisma** and **Direction**. Ask participants to read each word of the day, and the definition provided. Ask participants to describe in their own words what each word means. Have participants discuss how each word of the day relates to leadership and being a leader.

## Non-Verbal Behavior and Feelings

**Time:** 60 Minutes

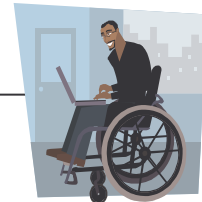
**Purpose:** Explore the connection between non-verbal behavior and feelings/emotion.

**Directions:** Have participants review what they learned yesterday about non-verbal communication. Inform participants that non-verbal communication is one of the primary ways people convey the feeling or emotion behind a message. Provide the following examples participants might experience in their personal lives:

- A mother increasing the volume of her voice when her child talks back to her.
- A teacher raising the tone of his voice the fourth time he asks a participant to stop engaging in a disruptive behavior.
- A friend displaying a slight frown while at the same time telling you he/she would be thrilled to go with you to the movie you just suggested.

### Materials

- ✓ Handout: Expressions of Emotion
- ✓ Handout: Practice in Non-verbal Communication



Point out to participants that the easiest way to enhance their ability to accurately read the non-verbal communication of others is to practice.

Have participants divide into pairs or groups of three. Distribute Expressions of Emotion (handout).

- Ask each small group to identify five or six feelings/emotions. Then ask them to select three of those feelings to use in completing Expressions of Emotions (handout).
- Using those three feelings, have them brainstorm to come up with as



many cues as possible that would indicate a person is experiencing each of those emotions. The cues should include verbal (words, tone of voice, volume of voice) and nonverbal (facial expression and posture).

After they complete the worksheet, ask the small groups to discuss the following:

- Which feelings or emotions do you think are easiest to recognize in others? Which are most difficult?

Have participants practice identifying feelings through observing non-verbal behavior.

Have participants remain in small groups. Distribute Practice in Non-verbal Communication (handout).

Direct participants to take turns selecting a feeling/emotion listed on the handout and then non-verbally communicate it to others in the group. Have those participants who are not communicating the emotion “read” the non-verbal cues presented to them and identify the feeling.

Allow approximately one minute for each participant to communicate a feeling non-verbally. If group members have not been able to guess the feeling within this period of time, have them verbally communicate the feeling they are attempting to express and move on to the next participant. Provide sufficient time so that each participant is given the opportunity to communicate a minimum of two different types of feelings.

Bring the group back together as a large group and discuss the exercise. Possible discussion questions include:

- How accurately and completely were people able to communicate their feelings/emotions?
- Which feelings were easiest to communicate? Why?
- Which forms of non-verbal behavior (facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice, etc) appear to be the most accurate communicators of feelings/emotions?

Point out to the participants that just as persons without disabilities use non-verbal communication, so do individuals with disabilities. In fact, for some persons with disabilities, this may be the primary way in which they communicate.

Discuss with participants the societal barriers that persons with disabilities who communicate solely in a non-verbal manner are likely to face. Make sure to include the following points in your discussion:

- Many individuals do not even pay attention to or notice the attempts of others to communicate non-verbally. It is much easier to get someone’s attention verbally.
- Many persons are not able to accurately read non-verbal communication even when they are aware it’s being used to convey a message. Others

- may misinterpret the message a person is attempting to send.
- Non-verbal communication may convey some parts of a message (feelings) well, but it much more difficult to use to convey the content of a message unless it is part of a formal system of communication (American Sign Language).

Point out that because of all the reasons discussed, it is extremely important to double check with the speaker as to the intent of his/her non-verbal communication as well as verbal communication.

### Death in the Desert Game<sup>1</sup>

**Time:** 45 Minutes

**Source:** Games Teams Play

**Purpose:** This is a team building activity that will enhance the participants' ability to work together and problem solve. It will encourage them to think "outside the box."



**Directions:**

Divide the participants into groups of four or five. Tell the groups you are going to give them a riddle to solve. The answer to the riddle will be given to one member of each group. The rest of the group members must discover the answer by asking questions that can only be answered with "yes" or "no."

Take the designated group members aside and give them the answer. Explain that they do not have to remember the riddle since you will be telling the entire group. Also, remind them that it is very important they do not share the answer with the rest of their team and only respond with a "yes" or "no" to their questions.

Read this riddle to everyone in the room:

"A man was found dead in the dessert. Near him was a package. If he had opened the package, he would not have died. What was in the package?"

Give the groups 5-10 minutes to ask questions. After time is up, see if any group guessed the answer. If not, share it with them: A parachute!

As a large group, discuss the following questions (notes to the facilitator are in *italic*)

- Was this difficult? If it was, what made it difficult?
  1. *This will only give you an idea of their self-assessment. You will be able to tell for yourself if they are having difficulty. They will focus on the riddle itself, but you can pose the following questions about the process of problem solving. Keep in mind that problem*

<sup>1</sup> Bendaly, L. Games Teams Play: *Dynamic Activities for Tapping Work Team Potential*. July 1, 1996: McGraw- Hill Trade. Adapted by Amy Selders

*solving is very important to organizing and any activity such as this will help them to develop their problem solving skills.*

- Were your ideas heard? At any point, did you lose track of a really good idea, an idea that had you on the right track?
  1. *Talk about the importance of always recognizing the valuable contributions everyone makes and making note of all correct answers. This teaches the participants skills related to researching their issue. All good organizers need to be inquisitive and resourceful.*
- Do you think your group made too many assumptions (e.g. the desert caused his death) or were you successful at clarifying information?
  1. *Discuss how you could have prevented such assumptions. For example, the group could have asked more questions and not given up so easily or the group could have examined every word of the riddle (i.e. the word “opened” is the key) for clues, etc.*
- How can we take what we’ve learned about problem solving from this riddle and use it in our organizing efforts?
  1. *We learned the importance of asking a lot of questions when researching an issue and asking our friends for help. We also learned that when reading something (i.e. a piece of legislation), it can be important to examine every word and we may need to ask someone else if, when reading it, we see something we do not understand. In other words, we might need someone to clarify things for us and “yes” or “no” answers might not work.*
- How can we prevent our group from slipping into these same problems again (i.e. making assumptions, not listening, jumping from one idea to another without building, etc)?
  1. *We can keep track of our ideas, make note of what we have learned from the questions we have asked and listen to what other members of our group are saying instead of planning what we are going to say next, etc.*

## Roots Activity

**Time:** 60 Minutes

**Source:** Adapted from [Play for Performance](#).

**Purpose:** To examine how disability culture and pride can be used to support and sustain our leadership.

**Directions:** Give each participant an index card and pen or pencil. Tell them they are to draw a tree that can be realistic or abstract. The only critical requirement is that they only have 45 seconds to draw the tree. Pause while participants complete the task. After 45 seconds, have them stop and ask them to look at their pictures and debrief using the following questions:

- How many of the participants drew roots on their tree?
- What is holding the trees up without the roots?
- How do these trees get water and nutrition?
- Why did you not draw the roots?
- Was it because you usually don't see the roots?
- How many other things do we habitually ignore because they are not visible?

Once the debriefing is done, shift to the large picture of a tree on the wall. Ask participants what their roots are (i.e. family, spirituality, culture, history, small successes, etc.) and write/draw them as roots on the large tree.

Some questions to get them thinking include:

- What holds you up in your leadership?
- When things get rough, what keeps you going?
- What supports your leadership?
- Where do you draw strength from in your leadership?



Finally, as a large group, discuss how it felt doing that activity. What were some of the reactions? How did it make you feel?

### Materials

- ✓ Writing Utensils
- ✓ Index Cards
- ✓ Tree Drawn on Paper with Room on Bottom for Roots
- ✓ Large Wall Space



## Mine Field

**Time:** 60 minutes  
(Add 20 minutes for set up)

**Source:** Wilderdom Store

**Purpose:** Participants will learn to trust and work on communication skills as they guide each other through an area full of obstacles.

### Materials

- ✓ Clothes line
- ✓ “Mines” e.g., balls, bowling pins, cones, foam noodles, etc.
- ✓ Blindfolds
- ✓ Plenty of room space



**Directions:** Before starting the activity, one facilitator must set up the “Mine Field.” Facilitator will lay a clothes line rope on the floor in a circle and distribute “mines” (your balls, bowling pins, chairs, hats, etc) in the circle. If there is space and the weather is nice this activity can be done outside.

Facilitator will establish a concentrating and caring tone with introducing this activity. Since this activity is one that deals with trust, the facilitator needs to set a serious atmosphere to develop a genuine sense of trust and safety.

First, have participants attempt to carefully cross the field by themselves. Ask participants to break into pairs. Tell them one person will be blindfolded (or keeps eyes closed) and cannot talk (optional), while their partner can see and talk but cannot enter the field or touch their partner. The challenge is for each blindfolded person to walk from one side of the field to the other, avoiding the mines, by listening to the verbal instructions of their partners. Decide on the penalty for hitting a mine. It could be a restart (serious consequence) or time penalty or simply a count of hits but without penalty.

Allow participants a short period (e.g., 3 minutes) of planning time to decide on their communication commands. It can help participants if you suggest they each develop a unique communication system. When participants swap roles, give participants some review and planning time to refine their communication method.

Allow participants to swap over and even have several attempts until they have a real, satisfied sense of skill and competence in being able to guide a partner through a minefield

This activity can be conducted one pair at a time or with all pairs at once. This creates a more demanding exercise due to the extra noise/confusion. Be wary of blindfolded people bumping into each other. The facilitator(s) can float around the playing area to help prevent collisions.

As a large group, discuss the following questions:

- On a scale from 1 – 10, how much did you trust your partner at the start?

- On a scale from 1 – 10, how much did you trust your partner at the end?
- What is the difference between going alone and being guided by another?
- What ingredients are needed when trusting and working with someone else?
- What did your partner do to help you feel safe and secure?
- What could your partner have done to help make you feel more safe/secure?
- What communication strategies worked best?



## FEEDBACK FROM FACILITATORS

A We Lead Huron County! facilitator said it was a great pleasure to do this activity and hear all the participants navigate others. She said she heard “Trust me,” “I won’t let you get hurt,” and “I will lead you right, I am a leader.”



## Week One: Day Four Handouts

# Charisma

To have *charisma* means you are likeable; you have personality, appeal and magnetism

# Direction

To have *direction* means you have and express clear goals and vision!





## **Week Two: Leadership in Action**

Goal for the Week: Planning the community service project

# Week Two: Day One

**Participants recognize the power of leadership in action. Start brainstorming issues in their own communities.**

## Today's Suggested Activities

- Word of the Day
- The Star Thrower
- Is the Jar Full?
- Organization Speaker
- Community Strength
- "I" Statements
- Community Service Project

## Materials needed for day

- Room to move around
- Jar or clear bottle
- Rocks
- Gravel
- Sand
- Water
- Ball of yarn
- Small stuffed animal

## Handouts

- Word of the Day- Conviction, Decisiveness
- Star Thrower Story
- "I" Messages

# Week Two: Day One

## Words of the Day

**Time:** 20 Minutes

**Source:**

**Purpose:** Each day there are two “Words of the Day.” These words have been carefully chosen as key elements of leadership characteristics.

**Directions:** Hand out the word of the day words: **Conviction** and **Decisiveness**. Ask participants to read each word of the day and the definition provided. Ask participants to describe in their own words what each word means. Have participants discuss how each word of the day relates to leadership and being a leader.

### Materials

- ✓ Handout: Conviction, Decisiveness



## The Star Thrower

**Time:** 20 Minutes

**Source:**

**Purpose:** For participants to evaluate what is a leader and to realize the power of people working together.

**Directions:** Provide each participant with a copy of “The Star Thrower.” Ask a participant to read the story out loud.

### Materials

- ✓ The Star Thrower, handout



Discuss the following questions

- What would have happened if it had been not one but many people picking up the starfish?
- What do you imagine would be the impact of many people working together?
- Is this girl a leader? Why or why not?
- How does this story relate to our community service project?

## Is the Jar Full?

**Time:** 45 Minutes

**Source:**

**Directions:** Have materials on hand but out of sight. Set a wide-mouthed jar or clear glass container on a table in front of the group. Display a platter with rocks next to the jar.

### Materials

- ✓ Jar or clear glass bottle
- ✓ Rocks
- ✓ Gravel
- ✓ Sand
- ✓ Water



Ask the group, “How many of the rocks do you think will fit into the jar?” Have a few participants come up to help put rocks in the jar until no more will fit.

Ask the group, “Is the jar full?” Everyone will most likely say yes.

Take out the gravel and pour it into the container, shaking it up to fill in the cracks. Again ask, “Is the jar full?” “Probably not or maybe” will be the reply.

Take out the sand and pour it into the container, shaking it up to fill in the cracks. Again ask, “Is the jar full?” By this time, the group should be yelling “NO!”

Take out a bottle of water and pour into the jar. Ask, “Is the jar full?” Tell the group, “YES, now the jar is full!”

Ask the group what the point of the activity was.

- i.e., you can always fit more, you have to think positively.

Acknowledge all answers, but be sure they understand that the **order the materials went into the jar was CRITICAL.**

Ask participants the following questions:

- How does this activity relate to our community service project?
- What would happen if we do not plan in the right order?

## “I” Statements

**Time:** 60 Minutes

**Source:**

**Directions:** Introduce the topic of verbal communication by reminding participants that effective communication consists of three components: listening, non-verbal communication and verbal communication.

### Materials

How to Develop “I” Messages



Point out that participants can improve their ability to verbally communicate with others through the use of “I” statements.

- Four examples of “I” statements are “I want to go home now,” “I feel hungry,” “I think that was a stupid movie,” and “I need to go more slowly.”

Define the concept of “I” statements for participants, focusing on the following points:

- “I” statements are honest descriptions of what one wants, feels, thinks or needs.
- The use of “I” statements ensures individuals take personal responsibility for their own feelings, thoughts, actions, and reactions to what others have said or done.
- “I” messages (“I feel hurt because...”) as opposed to “you” messages (You made me feel hurt...) help avoid conflict because they are non-blaming.
- The use of “I” messages helps increase the understanding and trust that can develop through communication between individuals.

Inform participants that “I” messages come in many forms. What all “I” statements have in common is that they:

- Start with the word “I” or the individual in some other way taking ownership of what is going to follow.
- Clearly describe what the speaker is thinking, feeling, needing or wanting.
- Provide the listener with information as to “why” the speaker is reacting in the manner they are.

Distribute How to Develop “I” Messages (handout) and discuss how participants can use the phrases provided to construct “I” statements of their own. Provide the following examples of each type of “I” message to ensure participants understand:

- **I feel** hurt when you don’t return my telephone calls because I really value you as a friend.
- **I feel** fortunate to have you as a friend when you listen to how I feel because you really seem to understand me.
- **I think** something horrible might have happened to you when you don’t come home on time because you know that 12 a.m. is a curfew everyone in our family agreed to honor.
- **I think** it’s terrible when you make fun of others because they are different than you.
- **I want** you to consider changing what you’re planning to serve for lunch because I am a vegetarian.
- **I want** you to take out the garbage because you agreed to take care of that chore.
- **I need** you to explain that to me again because the first time you explained it you did it in a way that I did not understand.
- **I need** to know whether or not you’re going to come with me to the movies because if you are not, I’ll call someone else.

Ask participants to work in pairs with each participant completing the “I” statements on How to Develop “I” messages (handout)

- Suggest that in completing the statements, they think about real life situations they will be in this week and the “I” statements they would like to make in those situations.
- Ask participants to share their statements within their pairs. If necessary, assist each other in formulating “I” statements that follow the model given (stating one’s own wants feelings, thoughts, and needs).

When all have had a chance to complete their statements, invite participants to share some of their statements with the group. Discuss how to re-word any statements that are not true “I” statements.

**Have participants practice changing “you” messages into “I” messages.**

Explain to participants that in many situations in which a conflict occurs, people tend to use “you” messages rather than “I” messages in describing the conflict.

- The use of “you” messages makes most listeners feel blamed. This often results in the listener feeling defensive, angry, ashamed or hurt. These feelings can interfere with resolving the conflict.
- Being able to develop “I” messages is, therefore, an extremely important communication skill for respectful, open communication and for dealing with conflicts.

Form small groups of 3 or 4 participants and distribute “You” and “I” messages (handout) to each participant. Ask one participant in each group to serve as the group’s recorder.

Explain to participants that their task is to read each of the situations on the worksheet and brainstorm to develop “I” messages that would be appropriate to the situation.

- Demonstrate by using the example provided on the worksheet, turning it into an “I” message.
- Allow groups 10-15 minutes to complete the assigned task.

Bring the group back together as a large group. Use the following questions to initiate a discussion about the everyday use of these types of messages:

- How hard or easy was it to change “you” messages into “I” messages?
- What types of messages are likely to result in a conversation being cut short because one person gets angry or upset?
- Why do you think it’s important to include information about one’s feelings in “I” messages and how might this help people to resolve an issue?
- Why might the use of “I” messages help people to resolve conflicts?
- Who do you know personally who is good at using “I” statements? What types of feelings do you experience after interacting with this person as opposed to individuals who do not use these types of statements?

## Community Strength

**Time:** 60 Minutes

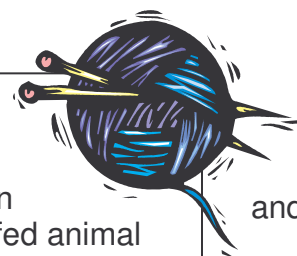
**Source:**

**Purpose:** To help participants realize the strength they have as a community why we all must do our part.

*We are all connected in some way and communities are made up of all these connections. Prior to this activity, discuss some ways the participants in the group may be connected.*

### Materials

- ✓ Ball of yarn
- ✓ Small stuffed animal
- ✓ Plenty of room space



**Directions:** Have the participants stand/sit in a large circle, shoulder to shoulder. Hand a large ball of yarn to one participant. Have this person hold the ball in one hand and the end of the yarn in the other. This participant should state why or how he or she is “connected” to another participant (or the facilitators) in the group and then toss the yarn to that person.

Examples of “connected”: (Get silly—have fun!)

- a. Same color hair/eyes/shirt/shoes
- b. Short/long hair
- c. Male/female
- d. Same age
- e. Go to the same school/club/work
- f. Ride the same public transportation
- g. Like the same things/same animal

Every time someone gets the yarn/rope, the person holds on to that section (i.e., clasps the yard next to the ball) before tossing it to someone else. This process continues until everyone in the circle has been tossed the ball and is holding a piece of yarn. (People may receive the yarn more than once.) A web will form in the middle of the circle. It is important to keep the activity going until enough yarn/rope is distributed to hold up a stuffed animal!

Stress how this web illustrates their community and that participants are resources and supports for each other. Toss a stuffed animal onto the center of the web. Tell the participants how the web (the community) supports the animal and keeps it from falling.

Remove the animal and ask a few group members to let go of their yarn and stand back. Toss the animal again. Explain that the animal fell because a part of the “community” did not have strong connections and was not providing support.

**Stress the importance of all of us doing our part to keep a community strong.**

Have participants reflect on the activity by discussing the importance of community to each of its members. Ask participants how this activity relates to the community service project.

### **Community Service Planning**

**Directions:** Continue the discussion of planning a community service project. The questions listed below are suggestions.

- *Break in to groups of 3-4*
  - *Of the groups we heard from who are we most interested in working with?*
  - *What would we want our community service project to be?*
- *In the large group have each group present their ideas.*





## Week Two: Day One Handouts

# Conviction

To have *conviction* means you demonstrate perseverance, and display confidence in what you do and say! When you put your mind to something, it happens!

# Decisiveness

To be *decisive* means you take responsibility for actions and decisions required!

## How to Develop “I” Messages

Think about situations you will be in during the next couple of weeks, find a way that you could use “I” statements in those situations. Finish each of the statements below using “I” messages you may want to use.

1. I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when you \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.
2. I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when you \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.
3. I think \_\_\_\_\_ when you \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.
4. I think \_\_\_\_\_ when you \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.
5. I want \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.
6. I want \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.
7. I need \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.
8. I need \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

## “You” and “I” Messages

Develop one or more “I” statements that are appropriate for each of the situations described below.

1. Your best friend makes fun of some clothes you have just purchased and really like.
2. You lend your Discman (personal CD player) to a friend and later find she has given it to someone else to use.
3. Your parents tell you that you cannot hang out with one of your friends from school because, “He’ll only get you into trouble.”
4. You go to your closet to get the tennis racket you just bought with your own money before you meet your friend for a game and find that your mother has allowed your sister to use it for the day.
5. Your best friend just drove 15 miles to pick you up and help you after your parent’s car broke down.
6. You are at a party and several people keep trying to get you to drink even though you do not want to.
7. You are sitting on the bus and the person seated next to you makes an inappropriate comment about a person of color who has just gotten on board.
8. You meet your best friend after school and he / she looks extremely depressed.
9. You are meeting with your parents to discuss why you need to ask them to loan you \$300 to repair you car.
10. You just heard some of your classmates are telling your friends that the “real” reason you can’t see them over the weekend is that you don’t like them anymore.

# Week Two: Day Two

**Participants are working as a community and will begin to work on their vision.**

## Today's Suggested Activities

- Leadership Characteristics' Activity
- Three Styles of Communication
- Community Service Project
- Person First Language
- Fear in the Hat

## Materials needed for day

- Room to Move Around
- Word of the Day Definitions
- Pens/Pencils
- Small Pieces of Paper
- Hat
- Large Sheets of Paper

## Handouts

- Word of the Day Definitions
- Passive, Assertive, and Aggressive
- Person First Language

# Week Two: Day Two

## Leadership Characteristics' Activity

**Time:** 90 minutes

**Source:**

**Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is to boost the participants' confidence in their own ability as advocates and organizers. We can give them praise and compliments regularly but it can be just as, if not more meaningful, coming from a peer.

### Materials

- ✓ Plenty of room to move around
- ✓ Word of the Day definitions

### Charisma

To have *charisma* means you are likeable; you have personality, appeal and magnetism

**Directions:** Have all of the participants choose a partner. Once everyone is paired up, read through all of the leadership characteristics and the definitions together. By now, the participants should be familiar with the terms since you will have used them throughout the sessions.

After reading through the characteristics, ask the participants to go over them once more on their own and choose one characteristic that stands out in their minds when they think of their partner. Give them about 10 minutes to choose their characteristic.

Ask the participants to form two lines. Each partner should be facing each other. This part of the activity is an exercise in following directions. Going down the line, each participant should share with everyone the characteristic that they feel their partner possesses. They also should explain how that characteristic will contribute to the community service project.

As a large group, discuss the following questions (notes to the facilitator are in *italic*)

- Did you ever think of yourself as having this characteristic?
  - *This question might prompt them to look at themselves in a different light.*
- Now that your partner said he/she sees this in you, do you think you can see it in yourself, too?
  - *Sometimes it takes other people seeing or saying positive things to validate us. Participants with disabilities who have low self-esteem are no different.*
- Did this activity require you to really examine your partner's good qualities in a way you had not done before? If so, do you now have more respect for this person?

- *Sometimes we really do not pay attention to what people have to offer. We overlook people's good qualities for various reasons. This question will help the participants to acknowledge the importance of recognizing what everyone has to offer.*
- Do you feel differently about yourself and your abilities as a future leader?
  - *Again, this is another question designed to encourage them to consider their endless potential to lead within our movement.*
- Are there any characteristics we talked about today that you think you would like to work on to become a better leader?
  - *We all have leadership characteristics we can improve upon. If anyone says, "no," then remind him/her they can work on "Humility."*

### **Three Styles of Communication**

**Time:** 60 Minutes

**Source:**

**Purpose:** Explore different styles of communication and how leaders use these styles.

**Directions:** Define and discuss three styles of communication: passive, assertive and aggressive.

Write definitions of the terms passive, assertive and aggressive communication for all to see. Base your definitions on the following:

- Passive communication occurs when a person expressed his or her thoughts in an indirect and honest manner. Assertive individuals stand up for their rights and beliefs while being respectful of the rights and beliefs of others.
- Aggressive communication occurs when a person is not respectful of others' feelings and opinions. Aggressive individuals stand up for what they want in a pushy or angry way.

Have participants practice identifying the differences between the three types of communication.

Distribute to each participant a slip of paper from Passive, Assertive and Aggressive Scenario Descriptions (handout) containing a short phrase representing one of the three types of communication. Ask participants to write their names on their paper.

Write the headings Passive, Assertive and Aggressive for all to see. Have each participant determine whether their phrase represents a passive, assertive or aggressive communication style and tape their phrase under the appropriate heading.

Review the headings under which participants have placed their phrases.

- As each statement is discussed, ask the participant who places it there explains why that heading was selected.
- Ask other members of the group if they agree or disagree with the placement. When appropriate, inquire as to alternative headings under which the phrase could be placed.
- If necessary, clarify the style of communication illustrated by each phrase.

### **Role-play situations demonstrating passive, assertive and aggressive communication.**

Ask two participants to volunteer to role play a passive communication scenario between a teacher and a participant.

Assign one participant the role of “participant” and the other the role of “teacher.”

Explain the scenario: The teacher gives the participant an “F” on an assignment because, according to the teacher, the participant never turned it in. The participant did complete the assignment and turned it in on time. The participant has scheduled a meeting with the teacher to talk about the situation.

Request the individual playing the role of “participant” assume a passive communication style during the meeting. Request that the person playing the teacher behave in a manner typical of most teachers.

### **Person First Language**

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Source:**

**Materials:** Person First Language table

**Purpose:** Participants will explore how effective communication can help portray a story to the media. Before you begin review what it means to have disability pride.

**Directions:** As participants prepare for their community service project they may want to acquire media coverage. This activity is to learn how to talk and write to reporters when talking about disability. People might be confused since we talked about disability pride. Have a discussion about difference when talking to people that portrays people with disabilities to greater community.

People First Language puts the person before the disability. People First Language describes what a person *has*, NOT who a person *is*!

Examples:



- Are you “myopic” or do you wear glasses?
- Are you “cancerous” or do you have cancer?
- Are you “freckled” or do you have freckles?
- Is a person “handicapped/disabled” or does she have a disability?

We want people with disability diagnoses to take part of our community in every way—doing all the kinds of everyday things most people take for granted. We want them to be respected and valued. This will not happen unless everyone uses the same kind of language used about people who do not yet have a disability diagnosis.

People First Language isn’t about being “politically correct.” It is, instead, about good manners and respect (and it was begun by individuals who said, “We are not our disabilities!”).

We have the power to create a new way of looking at disability. In doing so, we’ll change the lives of children and adults who have disability diagnoses—and we’ll also change ourselves and our world.

Have participants role play talking to media representatives using person first language.

### **Community Service Project**

- In the large group review the three possible issues for the service project.
  - Have the champions of each idea plan and produce a commercial skit for their issue.
  - Make a group decision.
  - Determine if you want to arrange a site visit
- (At end of the day, ask for a pair of volunteers to lead tomorrow’s morning game.)*



## Week Two: Day Two Handouts

# Discipline

To have *discipline* means you consistently follow through as promised. If you commit to doing something you do it; you keep true to your word!

# Clarity

To have *clarity* means you are able to communicate simply, clearly and memorably!

# Humility

To have *humility* means your ego is under control. This is not to be confused with being timid. In other words, you believe in yourself, but you don't have a big head and you appreciate the accomplishments of others!

# Competence

To have *competence* means you demonstrate both knowledge and skill in your area of expertise.

# Charisma

To have *charisma* means you are likeable; you have personality, appeal and magnetism

# Direction

To have *direction* means you have and express clear goals and vision!

# Conviction

To have *conviction* means you demonstrate perseverance, and display confidence in what you do and say! When you put your mind to something, it happens!

# Decisiveness

To be *decisive* means you take responsibility for actions and decisions required!

# Approachability

To have *approachability* means you have integrity, are truthful and honorable, and easily adapt to the styles of others. Most people feel comfortable with you!

# Person First Language

Say:	Instead of:
People with disabilities.	The handicapped or disabled.
He has a cognitive disability (diagnosis).	He's mentally retarded.
She has autism (or an autism diagnosis).	She's autistic.
He has a diagnosis of Down syndrome.	He's Down's.
She has a learning disability (diagnosis).	She's learning disabled.
He has a physical disability (diagnosis).	He's a quadriplegic/crippled.
She's of short stature/she's a little person.	She's a dwarf/midget.
He has a mental health diagnosis.	He's emotionally disturbed/mentally ill.
She uses a wheelchair/mobility chair.	She's confined/wheelchair bound.
He receives special ed services.	He's in special ed.
She has a developmental delay.	She's developmentally delayed.
Kids without disabilities.	Normal or healthy kids.
Communicates with her eyes/device/etc.	Is non-verbal.
Customer	Client, consumer, recipient, etc.
Congenital disability	Birth defect
Brain injury	Brain damaged
Accessible parking, hotel room, etc.	Handicapped parking, hotel room, etc.
She needs . . . or she uses . . .	She has problems/special needs



## Passive, Assertive, and Aggressive Scenarios

You shout and curse at someone who accidentally bumps you in the lunch line, causing you to drop your cup of soda.

---

You forgot to meet a friend at a movie last week and now you're avoiding that person because you know he / she is angry.

---

A teacher gives you an "F" on an assignment because, according to the teacher, you never turned it in. You did turn it in, and on time. You feel embarrassed when you complain about anything to anyone, so you just accept the "F" without talking to the teacher.

---

You made the mistake of telling someone a secret that a friend told you. You go to your friend, tell him / her what you did and apologize.

---

A group of kids whom you recognize drives by as you walk home, and they shout insulting things at you. This has happened several times with the same kids. You're afraid and angry and hurt but you tell not one about the incidents.

---

When friends ask you what you'd like to do during your time together, you always say, "I don't know. What do you want to do?" and then go along with whatever they suggest.

The clerk in a fast food restaurant hands you a bag with the wrong food. You discover it as you're about to leave and you return to the counter with the food and say, "Excuse me. This isn't what I ordered."

---

You're biking and you ride by a girl who is fixing a flat tire on her bike. You stop and ask if she needs help. She says, "No, thanks. I can handle it." You hang around and keep insisting she let you help her.

---

You walk out of a building behind a person in a wheelchair. You notice the person is working very hard to maneuver the chair across a gravel parking lot. You walk up to the person, say "Here, let me help you" and start pushing the chair.

---

You're sitting with a group of participants who are making jokes that you find offensive. You tell them you think those jokes are insulting, and then you shift the conversation.

## Week Two: Day Three and Four

**Participants begin to turn a vision into action as a community.**

Today's Suggested Activities

- Community Service Project
- Paper Plate Awards

Materials needed for day

- Room to Move Around
- Paper Plates
- Art Supplies
- Materials Needed Should be Decided by Participants

# Week Two: Day Three and Four

## Community Service Project

Participants spend the day planning community service project.

**Directions:** Follow the service activity planning process:

- In large group, go through service planning process.
- Identify sub-committees to work on various aspects of the plan.
- Sub-committees gather to work on their tasks. Make a work plan.
  - Identify individual responsibilities.
  - Establish due dates.
  - Work in minute detail.
- Finish each planning day with a group meeting reporting on the progress of each sub-committee.
- Identify decisions that should be made by the entire group and those that should be made by the sub-committee.
- Site Visit (if one is to be made)
  - Group prepares by making a list of information needed and assignments are made.

### Service Project Planning

1. Identify the project to be planned.
2. Identify the community partner.
3. Identify the date of the project.
4. Project Tasks:

Logistics:

Identify Community Partner and describe project in detail: task, site, date, contact information, any special instructions of how to complete task. Are there other people the participants should meet besides the contact agency?  
*(example: the task is to paint a deck for a senior citizen, where is the site, when, who, how)*

Materials:

What is needed and who will provide?  
*(host site may provide or participants will have to seek contributions - example: paint, brushes, clean up solution, drop cloths, etc.)*

Transportation:

How will participants get to the site?  
How will the materials get to the site?

Budget:

What is the cost?

Is there enough in the We Lead! budget?  
Is it necessary to get other partners to help?  
Will there be money left for a neighborhood party?

Food: How will the participants get lunch, drinking water?

Bathrooms: Where can the participants use a bathroom?

Media: Work to get media attention for your project and the We Lead! Program.

Participant Instructions:

Are there things the participants must learn before the service project might be successful?

Other: Every project is unique and may have additional tasks to add to the list.

## Service Project Work Plan

Tasks	Responsible Person or sub-committee	Completion Date

This chart should be used for both the overall project and for sub-committee work plans.

## Paper Plate Awards

**Time:**

**Source:**

**Purpose:** Each member will give a custom, personal award from their group.

**Directions:**

Participants break into two groups and go into separate rooms. Have the participants in each group make awards for the other group so each member will have one award made for them on a paper plate. After every member has been made an award participants can make more awards if they wish for other members. Examples of awards have been a paper plate decorated as a turtle with the award being, “Came out of their Shell” award. Other awards have been, ‘Most Improved Leader,’ and ‘The “I’ll Do IT!!!” award for a student who always said, “I’ll do it, I’ll do it!!!”

### Materials

- ✓ Paper Plates
- ✓ Art supplies





## **Week Three: Being a Leader**

Goal for the Week: Delivering the Community Service Project

## **Week Three: Day One: Details**

### **Final Planning of Project**

The large group meets to hear the progress of the subcommittees. Those who are finished should offer to help others who are not. The banquet and award committees are formed from those who have time to contribute. The large group should decide the scope of the banquet (who to invite – participants only, family members, invited speakers, representatives from the service organization, media, etc.) and charge the committee to move forward with the details. The committee may request assistance at specific points in the activity.

### **Banquet Committee**

Formed to plan a celebration for the final day.

### **T-Shirts**

Representatives from the T-shirt Committee pick up and distribute the shirts.

## **Week Three: Day Two: Details**

Plan or deliver project

## **Week Three: Day Three: Details**

Deliver project or plan banquet.

## **Week Three: Day Four: Details**

Banquet, Reflection & Celebration





## Appendix 1: Forms

Invitation Letter

Permission Form

Participant Emergency Information Form

Participant Contract

Parent Evaluation of We Lead!

Participant Evaluation of We Lead!

Example Logo

## Invitation Letter

*Your Logo*

*(date)*

Dear parents and participants,

With summer sunshine comes summer activities and busy days for young people. The *(name of your organization)* knows summer can be the perfect time for participants to learn grow and explore. This is why we are pleased to provide a summer leadership development project for participants called WE LEAD! *(name of your geographic area)!*

WE LEAD! *(name of your geographic area)!* is an inclusive leadership development project including different participants from across *(name of your geographic area)* in a challenging and informative three-week project. The leadership project is designed to help participants understand each other, each other's disabilities, civil rights, their personal leadership potential and the community in which they live.

Activities of WE LEAD! *(name of your geographic area)!* include:

- Goal Setting
- Leadership style assessment
- Civil rights and disability history
- Games
- Self-esteem building
- Lunch and snacks provided
- Meeting new teens
- A leadership service project in *(name of your geographic area)*
- And \$150.00 for participating!!

WE LEAD! *(name of your geographic area)!* Runs from *(dates)*. Sessions are from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday through Friday at *(name of site)*. Lunch is included. Those who complete the project will receive a \$150.00 stipend.

If you have any further questions or comments please do not hesitate to contact me at \_\_\_\_\_ or via email at \_\_\_\_\_ *(lead staff contact number and email)*.

Thanks!

*Signature lead staff*

## Permission Form

*(Insert your organization's letterhead here)*

The signed form below gives my son/daughter permission to participate in the scheduled We Lead! *(name of your organization)!* activities. The named participant/parent below understands *(name of your organization)* are not liable. (Please attach a copy of your participants medical insurance card to this permission form.)

~~~~~

Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

~~~~~

Date of activity: *(your dates)*

Time of activity: 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday

Description of activity: Participants' Leadership Development Program

Please call with any questions.

*(lead staff name & contact information)*

## Participant Emergency Information Form

*Insert your logo*

### Participant Information for We Lead! Program

Participant Name

Home Phone

Address

Name of Parent/Guardian:

Work Phone(s)

Cell Phone(s)

Address (if different from participant)

Home Phone (if different from yours)

Someone to contact in case of emergency, if unable to reach parent/guardian:

Name

Phone

Physician's Name

Physician's Phone

Medical Concerns (seizure disorders, diabetes, physical limitations, etc.):

*Note: Attach copy of medical insurance card to this form*

## Participant Contract

*Insert your logo*

### We Lead! Participant Contract

As a participant in the We Lead! Program, I agree that...

- I will attend the program for four days over a three-week period.
- I will fully participate in all games and activities including discussions and project planning.
- I will work cooperatively with others.
- I will treat myself and everyone else in the We Lead! program with the respect due every leader.
- I will follow decisions made by the group.
- I will be responsible for the tasks I agree to do for the We Lead! program and the agreed upon community project.
- I will try out new things knowing I will have the support of other participants and staff persons.

I understand when I complete the program and have successfully followed the terms of this contract, I will receive a stipend of \$\_\_\_\_ and a We Lead! T-shirt.

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name, We Lead! participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name, participant's Parent or Guardian (if applicable)

## Parent Evaluation of We Lead!

*Insert your logo*

### Parent Evaluation of *WE LEAD!* (NAME OF YOUR GEOGRAPHIC AREA)!

What difference did participation in We Lead! make for your participants?

What impact was seen in other aspects of the lives of your participants?

What improvements would you suggest to the organizers of We Lead! for next year?

Other Comments

## Participant Evaluation of We Lead!

*Insert your logo*

### Participant Evaluation of *WE LEAD!* (NAME OF YOUR GEOGRAPHIC AREA)!

1. On scale of 1 to 5, how much new information did you learn about disability rights, awareness and history?

  1          2          3          4          5    
Nothing    A Little    Some      Lots      Tons!

2. On a scale of 1 to 5, how much new information did you learn about leadership?

  1          2          3          4          5    
Nothing    A Little    Some      Lots      Tons!

3. During the first week, what was your favorite part of the program?
4. During the second week, what was your favorite part of the program?
5. During the third week, what was your favorite part of the program?
6. What was your favorite part of the program overall and why?
7. Would you like to participate in WE LEAD! (NAME OF YOUR GEOGRAPHIC AREA)! next year?
8. What would you change about WE LEAD! (NAME OF YOUR GEOGRAPHIC AREA)!?
9. What advice would you give to next year's WE LEAD! (NAME OF YOUR GEOGRAPHIC AREA)! participants?

**Example of the logo of the first “We Lead!” project.**

Your participants are encouraged to create their own logo to be printed on T-shirts.







## Appendix 2: Resources

Lejuste Three Dimensions of Leadership Development Model

Guide to Accessible Meetings

# Lejuste Three Dimensions of Leadership Development

The model of leadership development used by Connections to Community Leadership is based on the idea that leaders develop skills with practice. There are three components of leadership skill building – Self, Community, Visionary. (*figure 1*) This model is not a developmental model, each piece acts to improve the skills in the two other parts.

## Leadership as Self

The focus of leadership within the self is to grow and deepen a sense of self-esteem, self-confidence and self-awareness. These characteristics live inside a person and are necessary to the development of a strong leader. As an individual comes to trust their ability to make choices, to understand their current situation and to know their impact on other people and the world, they will be more likely to step up to leadership responsibilities.

## Leadership and Community

Working together as equals on a specific project offers a kind of laboratory for individuals to practice a variety of leadership skills without having to assume a formal role as “leader.”

Within the group the peer members build relationships with each other based on cooperation rather than a chain of command. They participate together in conversations about their experiences as members of a shared social/cultural group, or perhaps as people who share similar values.

As peers work on a shared project they talk to each other about various issues, may identify barriers, analyze information, develop and take action, and consider the outcome of the action. During these activities, members of the group become accountable to the task and to each other. They may experience conflict and the necessary conflict resolution. Some will learn basic organizing skills of making cold calls, building partnerships, speaking with the media. Others may find an outlet for already existing skills – writing, art design, hospitality, book keeping. Many will move from telling their personal story to articulating a social justice/social change issue, all skills of a good leader.

This shared experience can increase self-esteem, self-confidence and self-awareness. It also can assist some individuals to articulate the voice of the people, a necessary skill for a visionary leader.

## Leadership as Visionary Practice

With connection to community and developing an understanding of how the larger social and political system impacts a group, a leader occasionally emerges who has a sense of a larger picture. A successful visionary leader often has a natural charisma or an ability to speak in a way that is easily understood and

encourages people to follow. This person knows how to capture an idea and capture an audience.

Some skills of a visionary leader can be learned. A visionary leader is able to listen to others and indicate that he/she understands what they hear. A visionary leader can learn to articulate the hopes and dreams of the group he or she is leading.

This person inspires movements and helps to develop strategies for significant societal change. A visionary leader continuously deepens the interior skills of self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-awareness. The visionary leader understands they cannot lead without a community of followers who are willing to put the dream into action. Therefore, the visionary leader seeks relationships with others, is not afraid to promote the leadership of others and always listens to the experiences of his/her group.

### Reflection

Reflection, both individual and in the group is central to learning leadership skills. After an action, a difficult task or meeting, or an emotionally charged interchange, as an individual or a member of the group, we encourage developing leaders to review the following four questions that guide reflection. 1) What just happened? 2) How do you feel? 3) What does it mean? 4) What would you do differently?

### Qualities of Leadership

We use six qualities of leadership that function in all three components of this model to identify growth in leadership capacity. (*figure 2*) The six qualities are: Worth, Self-Knowledge, Desire, Voice, Action and Reflection. They can be used as a pre-and post-measurement for movement of an internal sense of self. They also can be used as a means to measure the effectiveness of various components or specific circumstances of a program. For example, after a participant delivers a successful statement at a public hearing, or a group works through a particularly difficult conflict, answering the questions could provide information about the effectiveness of an activity or intervention.

The Lejuste Three Components of Leadership Development is a model of practice. Leadership skills cannot be learned only from a book or in isolation, but at some point the skills must be practiced. The emerging leader must reflect and learn from that practice. No component comes before another component. Rather, each part recognizes and strengthens the skills identified in the other two components.

Figure 1

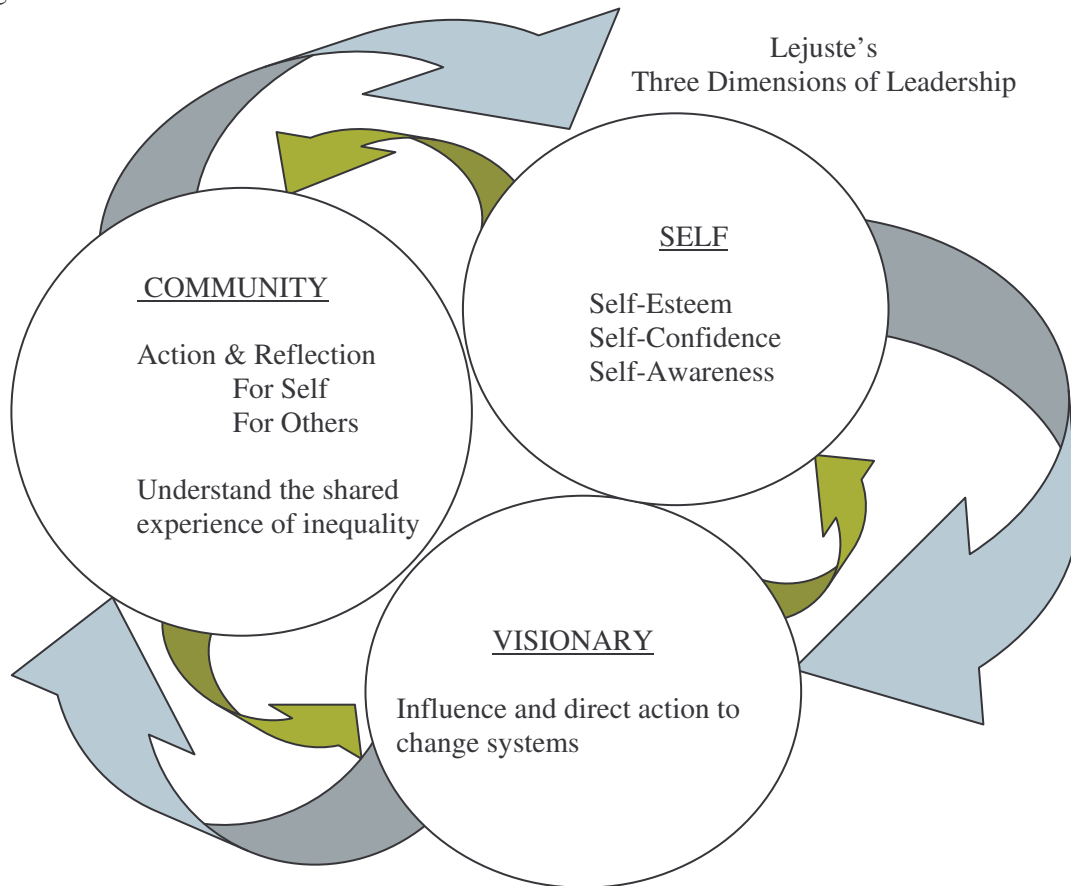


Figure 2

	<b>Self-Determination</b>	<b>Community Membership</b>	<b>Visionary Leadership</b>
<b>Worth</b>	I am worthy of respect	I am worthy of joining others	I am worth listening to
<b>Self-Knowledge</b>	I know my strengths and limitations	I know what I have to offer others	I know what my group can do
<b>Desire</b>	I know what I want	I know what my group wants	I know what needs to be done by my group
<b>Voice</b>	I speak up for myself	I am part of a shared voice	I can voice my group's issues
<b>Action</b>	I take action	I take action with others	I lead my group's actions
<b>Reflection</b>	I reflect and learn about myself	I reflect and learn about my group	I reflect and learn about my leadership

# Guide to Accessible Meetings<sup>2</sup>

Does your group hold regular meetings? Or events open to the general community? If so, make sure everyone in your community can benefit from them. These guidelines give some basic points to think about when planning meetings so that they can be welcoming to all people: including older adults, people with temporary injuries, and others with physical, sensory and mental disabilities.

## Location of Meeting

1. Is there a barrier free pathway to the meeting space? A barrier-free pathway means that a person with a mobility impairment can make it from the street into the meeting room without encountering: 1) stairs; 2) any sudden change in floor height over 1 inch; 3) slippery or unstable ground; 4) doorways less than 32" wide; or 5) any objects obstructing walkways. Any elevators in this pathway should be large enough to comfortably fit a wheelchair.
2. Is there an accessible restroom nearby? An accessible restroom is one that has a stall with 1) a doorway at least 32" wide; 2) grab bars installed by the toilet; and 3) enough space for a wheelchair to maneuver (at least 36" x 69"). Also, at least one sink should have adequate space open beneath it so that a person using a wheelchair can sit with their legs underneath the basin as they wash their hands.
3. Is there adequate parking nearby? Are accessible (blue) parking places available and clearly marked? Are these places close to the building entrance? Does at least one accessible parking space have an 8 feet access aisle for van wheelchair lift access?
4. Is it easy to reach the meeting space from public transportation? Many people with disabilities rely on public transportation to get around. When possible, meeting rooms should be a short and simple route (without too many turns or complicated directions) from major transportation routes. A complicated pathway makes it difficult for anyone to find their way, especially people with visual or cognitive disabilities.
5. Have someone stand by the main entrance to direct people to the meeting room and help those needing assistance. This is a courtesy that everyone will appreciate.

## In the Meeting Room

1. Are printed materials available in large print? At all meetings a few copies of written materials should be available in at least 18 point font. This helps anyone with difficulty reading small print. Also, all important material that is written should be announced during the meeting. For important or lengthy printed materials, create audiotape versions or have copies on disk in a generic word

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from: Mobility International USA. (2002). *Guide to Accessible Meetings*. Retrieved on March, 10 2008 from <http://www.miusa.org/publications/freeresources/hrtoolbox/ToolboxMtgs.pdf>.

processing format for people who are blind. It is also good to have a Braille copy of materials available. *Need help getting something in Braille? Contact Michigan Disability Rights Coalition – 1-800-760-4600.*

2. Is the meeting site free of background noise? This can greatly help people who are hard of hearing and people using hearing aids.
3. Is there a good quality sound system? Make sure to check any audio equipment for loudness and clarity.
4. Is the presenter/speaker well positioned? Have the speaker located in a position where they are easy to see by everyone in the room. Do not have them located in front of windows as a background (this can be particularly problematic for people with Attention Deficit Disorder and related conditions). If people who use wheelchairs are speaking, avoid using podiums. Have all speakers sit at a table instead.
5. Are assistive listening devices available? Rooms with assistive listening devices will make a big difference for those with hearing loss.
6. For any public meetings, put "Sign-language interpreters available upon request" in advertisements. Upon request, provide one. Ask deaf or hard of hearing participants and interpreters what positions within the room would be best to facilitate communication. For more information on sign language interpreters go to the Association of Science-Technology Centers' web site or call the National Association of the Deaf at 301-587-1788.

### **Other Points**

1. When advertising community meetings, give contact information that anyone can use to request accommodations. If your meeting is going to be in an accessible location, note that in the ad, or insert a disability symbol somewhere near the text.
2. Although it is not measurable, a welcoming attitude is an equally important component of preparing an accessible meeting. Remain open to requests for accommodations and remember that people with disabilities - like all people - should be treated with dignity and respect. Avoid treating people with disabilities as though they are childlike, tragic, sick or pitiable. Be kind, but never patronizing. People with disabilities are first of all people with abilities and have much to offer. Expect them to contribute like anyone else.