**Activity #1: Stakeholders and messages**

Preparation: Your potential stakeholders will be a diverse group – think about how to best approach them.

Materials: Flip chart and pens.

Duration: 30 - 60 minutes

Objective: To practise different messages and recruitment pitches.

What to do: Some of your potential stakeholders will be keen allies, eager to participate. Others may be important to recruit, but may represent organisations that your TI or group has had little contact with and may even hold opposing views about economic development. This may be true, for example, of representatives of your local town or district council and yet it’s vital to get their participation. Role playing offers an opportunity to occupy points of view other than your own, and may provide some insight into how you might approach your prospective stakeholders.

Pair up with one person taking the role of ‘recruiter’ and the other the role of one of the prospective stakeholders you have identified. For five minutes, the ‘recruiter’ will try to convince the other to become a member of the stakeholder forum. After five minutes, switch roles and do it again for five minutes. Repeat as necessary until your group has covered each of the individuals you assume to be the most challenging stakeholders to recruit.

Next, share your experiences with the group, capturing key learnings and messages on the flip chart paper. Are key messages emerging? Can you associate key messages for specific prospects? Do these messages differ depending on the prospective stakeholder? What do you assume, rightly or wrongly, about their needs, values or worldviews? Does this experience indicate how best to approach your prospects? Will you need a formal or informal approach? Will you need several meetings or simply pop off an email? Will you need tools, such as a one-page summary or Powerpoint presentation?

If you are feeling ambitious, take it one step further. Draft a recruiting pitch and create a message matrix that matches key messages with prospective stakeholders.

Additional

Resources: Want to dive deeper? Read the Common Cause Handbook, a short report that offers valuable advice about the roles values and framing play in communications. Download it here: <http://valuesandframes.org/>

**Activity #2: Stakeholder recruitment plan**

Preparation: Think about how you are going to recruit your stakeholders and who will do it

Materials: n/a

Duration: 15 minutes

Objective: To explicitly agree who is going to approach prospective stakeholders, when, and how best to do so.

What to do: How best to recruit your stakeholders and who best to do it? If you have existing relationships, it may be as simple as making a phone call or meeting for coffee. On the other hand, it may require building familiarity and trust through several meetings. Will you need a briefing sheet? A Powerpoint presentation? If so, who will complete those tasks and when? If necessary, create a document that addresses these questions, including a timetable or schedule.

**Activity #3: Produce communication materials (if necessary)**

Preparation: Review learnings from previous activities, assemble other resources as required

Materials: as needed

Duration: 2-8 hours

Objective: To create the materials to support your recruiting efforts

What to do: You may have determined that some communication materials will be necessary in order for you to recruit some of your prospective stakeholder forum members – or perhaps all of them. It may be as simple as producing a one-page briefing sheet, or talking points, a script anyone can follow while on the phone, a powerpoint presentation or simply using summary reports as produced by other communities, such as Totnes, Hereford, or Brixton. Whatever you produce, please share this with us!