



Critical Input of Advisory Leaders

Objectives:

- ✓ Advisory leaders will identify reasons their input in programming is important.
- ✓ Advisory leaders will practice giving and finding input.

Advance Preparation:

- ✓ Invite new and current advisory leaders to meeting. Include the following in letter:
 - Agenda
 - "Newspaper Analysis Worksheet". Request that they follow the directions on the worksheet and come to the meeting prepared to discuss their findings.
 - Listing of county major programs by program areas
 - Secure an LCD projector or make transparencies of the power point visual

Materials Needed:

- ✓ [Handout: "Newspaper Analysis Worksheet"](#)
- ✓ [PowerPoint: "Input Critical..."](#) and notes pages
- ✓ Overhead projector or LCD projector
- ✓ Flip chart and markers

Time Needed: 40 minutes

BACKGROUND

Advisory leaders perform the critical role of linking Extension to its publics. It is this vital function that enables Extension to do programming with the assurance of addressing customer needs. The program development process is cyclical and involves advisory leaders in each phase of the three phase process. The advisory leader linkage role varies with each stage of the process. The process begins with planning phase which includes environmental scanning and needs assessment. Advisory leader input is especially critical at this stage

where advisory leaders represent needs from the learner perspective. Other phases of program development are the design and implementation phase followed by the evaluation phase. Advisory leader linkage with target audiences helps identify leaders who can be instrumental in planning and implementing programs. In the evaluation phase, advisory leader provide valuable feedback about program impact with customers.

INTEREST APPROACH (10 minutes)

- Organize the group into triads and ask them to share in their small groups something they have heard lots of discussion about among people in their network since the last meeting.
- Start the discussion by sharing an example. Some suggestions are: 1) "Everybody I have seen is talking about the drought and the impact on lawns, water supply, gardens, or whatever affects them." 2) "What I hear most is talk about job uncertainty and maintaining personal budgets." 3) "Keeping the children busy during the summer is the hot topic in my community."
- At the end, ask each group to report themes that emerged in their discussion.
 - How well defined are these themes?
 - Record the themes discussed on the flip chart.

LESSON (20 minutes)

- Use the PowerPoint presentation "Input Critical..." to outline the objectives, define the linkage role and how it works along with program development. Use the notes pages to guide you in the presentation.
- Explain that the exercise we just completed is one example of how advisory leaders provide linkage with grassroots communities.
- Organize the large group into groups of 3 to 5 people. Ask them to share what they found in their newspaper search. Ask one person to record the themes noted for the following:
 - Needs, trends, and evidence of emerging issues.
 - Potential partners
 - Scan for leaders in issues
 - Issues that were not reported in the newspapers they searched
- Share small group findings with the large group.
- Record trends, partners, leaders and issues not reported on the flip chart
- Ask question: "What value does your involvement in needs assessment and environmental scanning bring to Cooperative Extension?"

APPLICATION (10 minutes)

- Ask question: "Is Extension already addressing some of the needs identified?" Use the flip chart to record programs matched with needs and issues identified.
- Discuss "Should Extension be concerned with all these needs?"

REFERENCES

Anderson, Carol L. 1989. Scanning the Environment. Journal of Extension, vol. 27, n3.

<http://www.joe.org/joe/1989fall/iw1.html>

Seevers, Brenda, D. Graham, J. Gammon and N. Conklin. 1997. Education through cooperative extension. Delmar Publishers, Albany, NY . p. 97.
