INTRODUCTION

The LeadershipPlenty® Program believes that **everyone can be a leader.** We live in communities filled with plenty of people who could be leaders. Many people have unused leadership talents. **People can make their community a better place to live and work and raise families**.

This new leadership training asks both individuals and communities to think in new ways. We must think about who can be a leader, how diverse leaders can work together well, and what action they can take.

BALANCING REFLECTION AND ACTION

Leaders must balance the need to think with the need to act. **We cannot take action without thinking.** But we cannot simply think about problems without taking action. **Balancing thinking and doing is a challenge for every person and every group.** This module addresses the task of balancing reflection and action. Reflection is a key to effective group work and community action. Individuals and communities learn to reflect so that they can act in meaningful ways.

COMMUNITIES FIND LEADERS

Reflection or looking inward is also a useful skill for communities. Communities should look within to identify potential leaders they may have overlooked. **Leaders are in every neighborhood, in every age and ethnic group, in every income level and every job.** Communities must "look within" themselves to find the many people who can be leaders in their neighborhood, schools, workplaces, and civic groups.

REFLECTION MOVES LEADERS BEYOND THE SAME OLD WAYS OF THINKING

The LeadershipPlenty® Training Program helps individuals use their experience to reach out to others and work together more effectively. **Leaders look at what is and see what ought to be.**

When people reflect on their own experiences of community, they become more aware of why they choose to work to build a better community. They also discover what special gifts they have to offer. **The LeadershipPlenty® Program believes that working together in groups is the only way we can solve difficult problems.**

RECOGNIZING BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES OF COMMUNITY IS IMPORTANT

We have all been a member of some groups and excluded from others. Being a member of a group may feel good and give us a sense of belonging. Being excluded may feel bad and hurt. **Both positive and negative experiences can fuel a person's desire to work for change.** By thinking through both good and bad experiences, people can move ahead in their own growth. They can work better with others. Together they can build stronger communities.

People become involved because they want to make a difference. They want safe neighborhoods, good jobs, and success for all children. **Leaders come from all walks of life and have all kinds of skills.** Looking inward helps us all to identify what special gifts we can bring to groups and what others can bring as well.

INTRODUCTION

One way to look at a community is to look at its needs and problems, what is missing, what isn't working. **LeadershipPlenty® believes you should begin by seeing all the pluses-all the good- within the community**. This way of thinking helps neighbors and citizen groups to see their own gifts and the many assets in their community. Instead of relying on outsiders to lead, LeadershipPlenty® sees people living within the community as leaders.

The *plenty* in LeadershipPlenty® is the many talents, resources, and skills within people and communities. **This module will help you identify your own talents. It will also help you map the assets of the community**. When people get together to work on issues, they use these assets to build a better future for all.

THE ASSETS OF A COMMUNITY: INDIVIDUALS, ASSOCIATIONS, INSTITUTIONS

Individuals, associations, and institutions have much of the assets in every community. All three groups are important.

Communities overlook some people. They are too old or too young or too poor. These people are also future leaders. They must be part of the community building. **A community that wants to succeed will not label people victims or welfare clients. They will see them as people with gifts and skills to offer**. They will seek leaders in all groups and involve everyone in community building.

Other important groups to include are neighborhood and citizens' associations. They often have worked informally to solve problems. These may include religious, cultural, and recreational groups.

Finally, institutions must also be included. These are public, such as schools, libraries, police, and private, such as hospitals and community agencies. Counting and including these groups in community building is important. When you connect with institutions, you may create a sense of community responsibility within the institution.

For more information on asset building, read **Building Communities from Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and**

Mobilizing a Community's Assets, by John P. Kretzmann and
John L. McKnight (1993)
Website: www.northwestern.edu/IPR/abcd.html

INTRODUCTION

Why work in groups? Simply put, problems are too hard for one person to solve. **Groups are needed to solve complex community problems.** By getting to know people from different backgrounds, races, and life experiences, we begin to trust each other. **We see new ways to look at issues**. These new relationships help us to work together to find creative ways to solve tough problems.

LISTENING IS IMPORTANT

Hurt feelings and anger can bring group work to a standstill. The **Listening Dyad** is a tool to help individuals get to know and really listen to each other. In this module you will learn about and practice a Listening Dyad.

GROUPS AND CONFLICT

All groups have conflict. Sometimes it is very hard to get a group to agree on anything. This is a natural part of group work. **This module explores the typical stages of group development-forming, storming, norming, and performing.** Groups who understand that conflict is a normal part of problem solving will perform better.

GROUPS SUMMARY

Module Three is the first in a series designed to give individuals the tools to work together effectively as a group. Module Four gives specific ways to manage meetings and make group decisions. Module Five covers conflict management. Module Six applies these skills to developing partnerships in the larger community.

INTRODUCTION

"Let's have a meeting" is often the answer to any problem. **Meetings must be well planned, well managed, and have a clear purpose.** Otherwise, meetings can work against groups. This module points out the qualities of a good meeting and the pitfalls that can stall a meeting

WHY MEETINGS FAIL

Meetings fail because of two main factors - **misunderstanding and the lack of action.** People come to meetings with an idea of the purpose. They also come with a lifetime of different experiences, beliefs, and attitudes. It is no surprise that there is often a difference of opinion or ideas. There are ways to help groups get over these bumpy times so that meetings work better.

MISUNDERSTANDING

Misunderstandings in meetings can be caused by **different experiences, different views of the desired outcome, and personal agendas.**

The first area can be addressed by taking time for individuals to get to know one another in a safe way. This could be the sharing of a personal interest. You should also point out that individuals see the world differently and that these differences can benefit the group work.

Different views of a desired outcome can be corrected by a skilled meeting facilitator, well-planned agenda, and clear communication before the meeting. This helps the meeting to flow smoothly and the reach outcomes.

Personal agendas can be a bit more difficult to remedy. When a person comes to a meeting with an ax to grind- a personal agenda-it often derails the meeting. This person may be a poor listener and may try to take over the meeting. If not satisfied, this person may leave the meeting. Lessons from this module will help prevent this behavior and allow the meeting to move forward.

LACK OF ACTION

All meetings should have an action or decision-making component. Often groups divide between the talkers and doers. **An agenda needs to allow time for discussion**

(talkers) and action (doers). This will keep the meeting on course. It is important to think about decisions and to reach consensus-agreement among group members. In this way, meetings will work for you and not against you.

INTRODUCTION

Communities are groups of people who live near each other but may not know each other. They may have had different life experiences. **Many things, including our culture, our parents, and our age, influence our vision of the world.** One thing for certain is that **people do not always agree.** This module looks at conflict, its causes, and ways to deal with it.

TYPES OF CONFLICT

There are four common types of conflict.

Personal conflict is directed at individuals

Subject at Issue conflict is related to the group's work and goals

Procedural conflict comes out of work methods and strategies

Competitive conflict occurs between individuals or groups competing for the same money or resources.

There are different ways to manage conflict within a group. Will people take sides? Is it OK to let conflicting parties work it out alone?   Will group members step in? The group must decide how to react to conflict to keep it from derailing meetings and the group's mission.

ADDRESSING CONFLICT

Conflict often results in people giving up, disbanding the group, or having a winner-takes-all outcome. On important issues, it is better to resolve conflict in a way that benefits all parties. There are four ways conflicts can be resolved. Some offer better outcomes than others. They represent a range of actions that can be taken.

Avoidance - If we ignore it, it will go away

Surrendering - I give up and let others dominate

Verbal attacks - We fight it out with words

Negotiation - We listen to and offer differing points of view, positions, and suggestions. This is a "give and take" process for all parties. It can lead to a win-win outcome.

GROUP OPPORTUNITIES

Conflict is not easy to deal with on any level. We may wish all meetings and groups would be smooth and easy. But conflict, if handled well, can bring new ways of thinking and ideas. It may allow the group and its members to see more clearly their purpose and goals. **How groups learn to**

handle conflict sets the stage for everything they try to do together.

INTRODUCTION
We cannot solve complex community problems alone. We need to find partners to address community issues. This module looks at the nuts and bolts of partnerships.

HOW PARTNERSHIPS WORK
Partnership is **the cooperative relationship between two or more parties for the benefit of both or the greater good.** Partners can bring resources. They can leverage or put up time, money, and personnel for a larger impact by joining with others. Ideally all partners and the larger community benefit from partnerships.

DESIGNING A PARTNERSHIP
Partnering is a good idea but few know how to make it work. There are two general types of partnerships-usual and unusual. Both are hard to find and both have enormous benefits to the participants.

Usual partnerships are what we think about first. For example, area hospitals might partner on emergency room service. Perhaps a welfare-to-work program partners with an adult education provider and the employment office to provide education and job placement for participants.

Unusual partnerships are those that at first glance don't seem to go together. For example, what do a conservation group and a youth program have in common? Where's the match? These groups might form a win-win partnership. Youth need jobs and experience. They could provide manpower for needed conservation projects. The conservation group gets a steady workforce and an opportunity to educate youth.

JUST COMMON SENSE
Both approaches make good sense. Why shouldn't we work together to solve problems? Take the best of what everybody has to offer? It's not easy to do. **Partnership**

building means giving up some control, rethinking competition, and being willing to share the limelight for both success and failure.

FORMING A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP
The first step in partnering is to tell our story. **We need others to know who we are and what we hope to do.** We need to listen to others tell their stories. Next, partnerships need trust. Take time to get to know and work with people and organizations. Third, confront the tough issues early. Do not assume that "things will just work out." They won't. Address major concerns such as money and authority in the early stages. Finally, think about your work in the broadest sense. Are you a running a school-to-work program or are you developing the future workforce? You are most likely doing both. By thinking this way, you can form strategic partnerships.

INTRODUCTION
Community problems are complex. Long-term solutions need many people working together. It can be hard to decide what to do first. People get tired of all talk and no action. This module shows us how to move forward and "do something".

HOW TO "DO SOMETHING"
Figuring out what to do and where to start are key leadership skills. Leaders need to understand the three phases of moving from planning to action.
Finding a Starting Point
Mapping the Journey
Revising the Course En route

FINDING A STARTING POINT
The most important things to pack on a trip are the things that point you in the right direction and help you find your way back home. In the journey of community change, these are the values and the vision of what ought to be.
The skills you have learned in LeadershipPlenty® training- understanding group dynamics, making decisions, and creating partnerships will serve you well in this stage.

Shared values are the basic assumptions the guide a group's work. For example, a group trying to support working families identifies these shared values:
All children need a safe place to learn and grow.
Parents of all income levels should have access to quality day care.
Children are a good investment for a community. They are a community's future.

Knowing your shared values helps focus on what matter most.
Next, the group must agree on where to start. For example, the group may decide to make after-school programs available to all families.

MAPPING THE JOURNEY
Starting affordable after-school programs in every school cannot be done in a day. **In this stage, the group identifies mile markers to chart progress.** For example, this group may set the goal of two after-school programs in neighborhoods with the most need within the first year.
Group members will gather information about designing after-school programs. They will seek the support of key

stakeholders, such as parents, school administrators, youth providers, law enforcement, and students.

REVISING THE COURSE EN ROUTE
Most plans need some revision once they get underway. **Moving from planning to action takes flexibility.** For example, the after-school group had initially planned to focus on art and recreation instead of schoolwork. However, in the first year, schools had to increase students' test scores to meet state laws. School officials became very interested in the after-school programs as a way to help students study. The group had to rethink its plan based upon this information. They needed to review their shared values and common purpose in order to revise their plan.

The content in Module Seven is based on the work of MDC, a private, nonprofit economic and workforce research organization based in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

INTRODUCTION
What is evaluation? Evaluation is something we do daily when we make choices. For instance, when we buy a car, we look at our needs and available budget. We may test drive a few cars. We may look in *Consumer Reports*. Evaluating a program or project involves many of the same activities. **Evaluation is a carefully planned process of collecting information, measuring progress, and coming to a new and deeper understanding of our work.**

A BROADER VISION OF EVALUATION
Evaluation may have a bad reputation in some circles. Some see evaluation as a "gotcha" and judgmental exercise. However, **evaluation has changed over the years to emphasize learning and using what we learn**. We can now view evaluation as:

- A process of asking good questions, gathering information to answer them, and making decisions based on the answers. *What do we need to know*?
- A conduit for learning-a way for an organization to measure progress and change that may lead to greater success. *How can we use this information for better results*?
- An essential component of effective decision-making. When evaluation is part of an organization's ongoing efforts, learning is valued because it leads to continuous improvement. *How are we doing?*
- The responsibility of everyone involved. Everyone has a role in gathering information. *What can we be doing to improve*?

Evaluation is not a one-time event. It is a process. Evaluation works best in a setting that is risk-free. People can honestly examine why something succeeded or failed without fear of negative consequences.

Evaluation takes time and effort. It saves time and effort in the long run by making better use of limited resources and keeping the program on the right track.

Source: Sandra Trice Gray (Ed.), *A Vision of Evaluation: A Report of the Independent Sector's Work on Evaluation*, Washington, DC: The Independent Sector, 1993.

INTRODUCTION
A powerful message will help your cause. The more people you reach to share your message, the better. It will increase visibility, build credibility, and attract resources. There are many ways to share your message. You can use bumper stickers, potlucks, newspapers, etc.

MORE PEOPLE ALWAYS NEED TO KNOW
For change to last, a lot of people in a community need to know about the issue, be involved, and most important, be motivated to act. This doesn't just happen. **It takes planning and effort to bring issues to the larger community.**

This module introduces the key skills of communicating for change, including developing a message for specific audiences and identifying effective ways to deliver your message to the folks you need "on board" to accomplish results.

WHAT AND SO WHAT? DEVELOPING A MESSAGE
The first step of communicating is developing your message. **What do you do and why does it matter?** This may sound easy; but it isn't. You need to be able to tell people the central idea of your community work in a brief sentence or two. Think about some familiar slogans that people easily remember:
Just do it. Nike
Take a Bite Out of Crime: National Crime Prevention Council
-McGruff, the Crime Fighting dog

A message can be longer than these slogans. **A good rule of thumb is "less is more."** You want to spark people's interest in your work rather than telling them everything about what you do.

WHO NEEDS TO KNOW?
You may want every person to know about your work. However, it's hard to find one way to reach everyone. A high school student, retired artist, a minister, and a homemaker probably watch different television shows, listen to different radio stations, and read different publications. **The challenge is to prioritize whom to reach and how to reach them with limited resources and time.**

Making a message travel demands a lot of creativity and some specific skills.

WHEN AND WHY USE THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA?
There is no one-size-fits-all way to reach a wide range of people. Mainstream media, such as the daily paper and television news programs, may or may not be the best way to go. For example, if you want to organize your neighborhood to start a Crime Watch program, pot luck dinners may serve your needs better than a series of articles in the local newspaper. The dinners would give neighbors a better chance to meet and discuss ways to improve neighborhood safety.

However, your plan may be to persuade local officials to support the Crime Watch program throughout the region. In this case, you probably would want to use the newspapers. You can use the media to educate people throughout the region about the importance of this issue. Media coverage can help you take your message to audiences that need to know about what you are doing.

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY
The main reason for spreading a message is to engage the larger community in solutions to civic problems. You are educating the community about the issues, the challenges you face, and the results you are achieving. **It is also important to let people know how they can help. For example, you may ask for volunteers, donations, or support for public policy.**

You and your group are the real experts when it comes to communicating about civic solutions. You have important information to share and an intriguing story of change to tell.