

# CONSUMER EMPOWERMENT

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# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

# RECRUITMENT IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS A CAB DOES



# RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CONSUMER LEADERS

- Maintain focus on whom you are representing and how to best represent their interests
- Help the Center recognize its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges in accomplishing its mission
- Attend meetings and actively participate

# REPRESENTING OTHER CONSUMERS

As a CAB member you are working on behalf of other consumers – therefore you must know what they are thinking or feeling

- Talk to consumers in the waiting room
- Hold focus groups
- Develop consumer surveys

# LEADERSHIP SKILLS

## Interpersonal Skills

- Communication + Empathy
- Motivation + Encouragement
- Self – Awareness

## Creativity + Analytical Skills

- Critical Thinking + Problem Solving
- Decision Making + Planning
- Project Management + Delegation

## Functional Knowledge

- Mission, Vision, Goals
- Resource Management
- Strengths + Needs Assessment

# KEY INGREDIENTS TO EFFECTIVENESS IN CONSUMER GOVERNANCE

- Open to learning leadership qualities
- Willing to represent others and advocate for them
- Ability to work as a part of a team
- Open-minded, tolerant of diverse opinions
- Collaborative, flexible, consistent

Willingness to use life-experiences to help others.

Understand your story + how the HCH project fits into that story

# COMMUNICATION SKILLS



# IMPORTANCE OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Communication is the process by which we exchange information, opinions and ideas.

Without effective communication, a message can be misunderstood, misinterpreted or poorly delivered. This can lead to frustration, lack of clarity or confusion.

Communication is successful only when both the sender and the receiver understand the same information.

# FUNDAMENTALS: PERSONAL EXPRESSION

- **Understand the purpose and intent of your message.**
  - Know who you are communicating with, or to.
  - Ask yourself what outcome you want to achieve and the impression you want to leave.
- **It's not always what you say, but how you say it.**
  - Watch your tone. Make eye contact. Be aware of your body language.
- **Aim for understanding, not agreement.**
  - Once you give your message, be open to feedback
  - Ensure your message has been received as intended and you resolve any questions or concerns

# FUNDAMENTALS: ACTIVE LISTENING

- Listen to understand – not to respond.
- Don't interrupt or cut the speaker off.
- Give them your full attention.
- Ask clarifying questions if you need.



# ATTENDING A MEETING

- Give everyone a chance to speak
  - One speaker at a time
  - Do not allow interruptions or cross-talking
- Be clear and concise.
- Be present. Focus on the topic at hand.

# FACILITATING A MEETING

- Be mindful of task and process
  - Balance agenda with where people are at
  - Ensure all voices are heard
- Recap discussions and decisions
- Guide the process – do not control it

# DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Disagreements will and should happen

- Don't react – respond
- Respect others opinions and feelings
- Remember the goals
- Work to find common ground and understanding

# WHERE DO WE USE THESE SKILLS?

- Meetings
- Outreach
- One-on-One Conversations
- Presentations
- **Advocacy!**

# ADVOCACY

Advocacy gives people experiencing homelessness a voice.

Advocacy represents the strategies devised, actions taken and solutions proposed to influence decision-making at the local & state level to create positive change for people and their environment.



# ADVOCACY OCCURS WHEN INDIVIDUALS ENGAGE IN DIALOGUE ABOUT AN ISSUE THEY CARE ABOUT.

Speaking Out

Voting

Coalition Building

Community Organizing

Legislative Briefings

Media Advocacy

Rebuttal Messaging

Policy Research

Citizen Story-Telling

Public Demonstrations

Advocacy simply means speaking up for your rights!

# WHY IS ADVOCACY IMPORTANT

- Changes community attitudes and misconceptions
- Hold service providers and systems accountable and ensure transparency in their actions
- Helps individuals and communities regain control
- Recognition of the rights of people
- Ensures people's voices will be heard
- Promotes positive change to structures and policy

# CONSUMERS ARE NATURAL ADVOCATES

- Real life experience
- Credibility
  
- Describe your story and its' relevance
- Raise awareness of the issue
- Educate policy makers + the public

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



# THANK YOU!

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