

## Town Hall Meeting Guidelines

Plan for an Orientation Time for Group Facilitators and be sure they understand the nature of facilitation is not to dominate or control their groups but to move the group through the process outlined in the meeting.

Use numbered tickets or cards to evenly divide the large group into smaller units. This can be accomplished by having numbered cards in a stack in numeric order (i.e. ten sets of 1-10 for 100 people so that groups are more easily organized, family groups are more likely to be separated) that are distributed to folks as they enter. Small groups could become table groups or they could be moved to a classroom.

While in the large group explain the time frame and nature of the work. Define brainstorming and set limits as needed to control/frame the discussions to meet the needs of the day.

If attendance is lower than was planned you may need to consolidate some of the groups to have working groups of about 7-10. One can never predict how many people will attend so plan according to best guess and be prepared to adapt.

Develop a time frame based on the number and nature of questions you wish the small groups to address. Be sure to allow adequate time without too much time. It is much better to feel rushed than bored.

Plan to give distinctive questions to specialized groups. If everybody cannot cover everything then give everybody the essential questions and then give unique questions to each group or let 2-3 groups share the same set of questions.

Develop a worksheet for each individual/group with the assigned questions and room for responses. Use a different color sheet for the facilitator so that the summarized comments from the group can be easily identified. Explain up front that all the notes and responses will be collected for careful review because everyone's input is important.

### Reporting and cataloging

Use the group facilitators to report results

Display summary statements with power point

- a. Use an operator who can succinctly summarize the points into a few words for use on the screen.
- b. Plan to move between show and edit modes to advance slides and conserve the results

- c. When all reports are received from the small groups change the color or highlight those ideas that seem to be gaining consensus. This lets the large group see some immediate feedback.

Collect all the worksheets so that the discussion details and notes from the group will not be lost.

Develop a summary report for broad distribution.

Develop a detailed report for leadership distribution

Add copies of the notes pages to the detailed report for executive/leadership/staff use.