Networks for Integrating New Americans

Presents

An Orientation to Network Development

Madeleine Beaubien Taylor
Network Impact serves social change agents with a mix of strategies, tools, research, and consulting expertise to design and use networks for increased impact. www.networkimpact.org
The voice you are hearing:

Madeleine Beaubien Taylor
Network Impact
What we will do today

• Provide an introduction to social impact networks
  o Contribute to your understanding of basic network concepts and approaches
  o Help you to be more effective with your network strategies

• List some additional resources
Networks provide social change agents with a fundamentally distinct and remarkably promising “organizing principle” to achieve ambitious goals.

Net Gains 2006
Network Advantage

- ACCESS
- LEARNING/INNOVATION
- LEVERAGE
- RESILIENCE
Network Building is a Practice

• **Network Start Up**

• **Network Management**
  – Governance
  – Coordination
  – Communications
  – Financial Stewardship
  – Network Health

• **Network Monitoring and Evaluation**
What is a Network?

a) Fully Connected Topology
b) Bus Topology
c) Star Topology
d) Ring Topology
e) Tree Topology
f) Mesh Topology
g) Hybrid Topology (example: combination of Star topology and Bus topology)
h) Dual Ring Topology
i) Linear Topology

Nodes

Links
What is a Network?

What Flows Through It

» Connections
» Knowledge
» Competencies
» Resources

Links = Relationships
Some Common Network Structures

**Hub and Spoke.** Many nodes connect to a single central hub.

**Dense Cluster.** Most nodes are connected to each other.

**Multi-tiered Hub and Spoke**
Anatomy of a Network

Many specialized terms come from Social Network Analysis (SNA).

Illustration from Social Networks for Social Change, Monitor Institute 2010
Outliers (nodes on the periphery of a network) often have access to ideas and information that people at the core do not.

- **Strong ties** in closely knit networks are a source of valuable social capital.
- **Weak ties** - provide access to external assets.
What Networks Are Good At

Rapid growth and diffusion
Assembling and disassembling capacity
Small World “Reach” – building bridges to shorten the path length between nodes
Resilience: building capacity that isn’t reliant on a small number of nodes
What Social Impact Networks Do

- **Allocate** - Match assets with need
- **Coordinate** - Coordinate resources and services
- **Learn** - Spread knowledge, skills
- **Innovate** - Create new knowledge or products
- **Advocate** - Promote a particular policy or point of view
- **Mobilize** - Activate large numbers of people
Networks for Integrating New Americans

**WHO:** Place-based multi-stakeholder networks with an AEFLA-funded adult ESOL program in a central role

**WHAT:** Connect and engage around a common immigrant integration agenda

**WHY:** To promote the linguistic, economic and civic integration of immigrants and foster ties between newcomers and receiving communities

**HOW:** Through mutually reinforcing activities
3 Basic Network Functions

**CONNECTING Information**

Connects people to allow easy flow of and access to information and transactions.

**ALIGNING Identity**

Aligns people in ways that help them form more collective transactions than a connectivity network will do. Individuals come to share a set of ideas, language, or standards.

**PRODUCING Initiative**

Fosters joint action by people or organizations—has a specific purpose.

- Policy action
- Advocacy
- Learning
- Knowledge production and dissemination

Lower Commitment, Trust

Higher Commitment, Trust
Evolution of Network Functions

- **Producing**
  - Allow easy flow of information and relationships
- **Aligning**
  - Develop and spread shared goals and measures
- **Connecting**
  - Foster joint action to advance shared goals

*Base of Connections*
### 3 Basic Network Functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Connectivity</strong></th>
<th><strong>Alignment</strong></th>
<th><strong>Production</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key task of network</strong></td>
<td><strong>Weaving</strong> – help people meet each other, increase ease of sharing and searching for information</td>
<td><strong>Facilitating</strong> – helping people to explore potential shared identity and value propositions</td>
<td><strong>Coordinating</strong> – helping people plan and implement collaborative actions</td>
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<td><strong>“builder”</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Enabling Infrastructure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Web platform with networking tools for communications, documents</strong></td>
<td><strong>Capacity to analyze, compare, and synthesize frameworks, definitions, etc.</strong></td>
<td><strong>• Project management and project budgeting capacity</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td><strong>• Performance accountability mechanisms</strong></td>
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</table>
What makes a network thrive?
Enabling Conditions for Network Health and Collective Impact

• Common Agenda
• Value
• Trust
• Participation
• Mutually Reinforcing Activities
• Continuous Communication
• Backbone Support
• Learning and Adaptation
Common Agenda
Network members...

✓ share a common purpose or mission

✓ have jointly identified strategic goals and objectives for the network

✓ explicitly incorporate the network’s goals into their individual work plans
No network can survive without providing value to its members

Value Proposition = The tangible benefits that a network can deliver to its individual members, to its members as a collectivity, and to its constituents
Trust is a core network asset

Two ways to enhance trust in networks:

- **Build bandwidth**
  - the more types of information shared between members, the greater the bandwidth

- **Reciprocate**
  - Send signals about reciprocity values in a network; establish a record of give and take
# Walking the “Two-way Street”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connections</th>
<th>Can you <em>connect</em> others in the network to people that may be able and willing to help them?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Do you <em>know something</em> that may be valuable to others in the network?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Competencies</strong></td>
<td>Are you able to <em>do something</em> that may be value to others in the network?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Resources</strong></td>
<td>Do you <em>have access</em> to funds or other resources that may be useful to others in the network?</td>
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</table>
Whether codified or no in MOUs, it is important that expectations of members are clear.

Who is accountable for network performance?

- All Members
- All Groups
- Group Chairs
- Steering Committee
- Coordinator
Common Expectations of Network members

• Attend regularly scheduled network meetings and conference calls
• Participate in network decision making
• Participate actively in the work of the network
• Promote the work of the network through own connections
• Support the monitoring and assessment of the network on a regular basis
• Commit funds or other resources to the network
• Seek to bring resources to the network to support its sustainability
Different Categories of Members

- Accommodate different levels of participation
- Pipeline for core network members
- Acknowledge different types of contribution
Mutually Reinforcing Activities

Each network member undertakes the specific set of activities at which it excels in a way that supports and is coordinated with the actions of others.
## Continuous Communication

### Software for Network Collaboration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Software Examples</th>
<th>Mobile App</th>
<th>Social Share</th>
<th>Transfer</th>
<th>Setup</th>
<th>Easy Use</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Documents</th>
<th>Checkouts</th>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Structure Controls</th>
<th>Storage</th>
<th>Parental Authentication</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Informal Conversations and Presentations</strong></td>
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<td>Conference Call</td>
<td>Multiple callers on one phone line</td>
<td>Freecallconference.com</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<td>Video Conferencing</td>
<td>Conference call with a video display component</td>
<td>WebEx, Hardware solutions</td>
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<td>Online Conferencing</td>
<td>Conference call with an online component (slides, documents, videos and/or demos)</td>
<td>GoToMeeting, WebEx</td>
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<td><strong>Information Sharing</strong></td>
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<td>Email Discussion List</td>
<td>Email group that lets participants easily email everyone in the group</td>
<td>Yahoo Groups, Electric Embers</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<td>Existing Social Networking Sites</td>
<td>Online networking sites where users can create profiles and connect with others</td>
<td>Facebook, MySpace</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<td>Collaborative Documents</td>
<td>Users share and edit documents online, either in real-time or over time</td>
<td>Google Docs</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<td>Message Board</td>
<td>Online forums focused around questions and answers</td>
<td>vBulletin, phpBB</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<td><strong>Long Term Structured Collaborations</strong></td>
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<td>Online Project Management Tool</td>
<td>Users share documents, calendars, tasks, and structured conversations</td>
<td>Basecamp, Central Desktop</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Community</td>
<td>Users share profiles, documents, calendars, message boards, and more.</td>
<td>Ning, KickApps</td>
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<td>Wiki</td>
<td>Collaborative website, where all who can view can also edit</td>
<td>Confluence, MediaWiki</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<td>Blog Network</td>
<td>Community of linked blogs where users interact with posts and feedback</td>
<td>WordPress, TypePad</td>
<td>Free</td>
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**KEY:** • Excellent • Reasonable • With Difficulty • Not Available • $ = Less than $20 a month
Backbone Support

Creating and managing collective efforts requires dedicated attention to coordination:

Capacity to plan, manage, and support the work of the network through ongoing facilitation, technology and communications support, data collection and reporting
Among the coordination tasks:

- Handling meeting logistics
- Keeping and maintaining network records
- Managing and updating databases or websites
- Distributing reports and materials
- Coordinating periodic convenings

**Note:** A coordinator is *not* a supervisor or director of activities. A coordinator is an enabler, who helps the collaborators in a network do what they need to do.
Learning and Adaptation

Collect and analyze data and use it to inform decisions

Build in the assessment design early
## Exhibit A: Strive Community-Level Progress Indicators

**Goal 1: Every child is prepared for school**
- Indicator 1: % of children assessed to be ready for school

**Goal 2: Every child is supported in and out of school**
- Indicator 2: % of students with more than twenty developmental assets

**Goal 3: Every student succeeds academically**
- Indicator 3: % of students at or above proficiency in Reading and Math
- Indicator 4: % of students that graduate from high school

**Goal 4: Every student enrolls in college or career training**
- Indicator 5: Average score on ACT
- Indicator 6: % of graduates that enroll in college

**Goal 5: Every child graduates and enters a career**
- Indicator 7: % of college students prepared for college level coursework
- Indicator 8: % of students retained in college
- Indicator 9: % of students graduating from college
- Indicator 10: # of college degrees conferred

*Source: Kramer, Parkhurst & Vaidyanathan (2009)*
Additional Resources

• **Catalyzing Networks for Social Change (2011)**
• **Leadership and Networks (2012)**
• **Network Weaver Handbook (2013)**
• **Connecting to Change the World: Harnessing the Power of Networks for Social Impact, forthcoming from Island Press (2014)**
Thank you!

For more information about the Networks for Integrating New Americans initiative, please visit the US project page at worlded.org.