**Slide 1: Title: Leadership, Vision and Mission for Effective ABE Community Planning Coalitions**

ACLS Community Planning Webinar, March 30, 2015, from 2:00 to 3:30 PM

“The greatest danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it.” – Michelangelo

Facilitator: Patricia Pelletier

Welcome to the recorded webinar *on Leadership, Vision and Mission for Effective ABE Community Planning Coalitions*. The original live webinar was held on March 30, 2015.

My name is Patricia Pelletier and I am the community planning consultant for the Adult and Community Learning Services (ACLS) unit of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. I am also the designer of the Indicators of Effective Community Planning for Adult Basic Education (ABE) Coalitions in Massachusetts. Let’s begin the presentation.

**Slide 2: Webinar Objectives**

Here are the webinar objectives. As a result of the information presented in this webinar, we hope that you will be able to:

* Identify leadership capabilities and how they help to build effective ABE community planning coalition leader(s);
* Identify how leadership capabilities span across all aspects of ABE community planning coalitions ; and
* Assess your ABE community planning coalitions’ vision and mission for clarity and effectiveness.

**Slide 3: What is leadership?**

Let’s start with looking at what leadership is.

**Slide 4: Indicator 1 - Leadership**

In 2014, ACLS developed research-based Indicators of Effective Community Planning Coalitions for ABE Programs which are comprised of six Indicators. Indicator 1 is about leadership of the ABE community planning coalition. This slide reflects some of the key elements of Indicator 1.

Strong leadership has been identified in research and practice as the most important indicator of effective coalitions. There are many characteristics associated with strong leadership. Coalition leaders have connections to and visibility in the community through participation with other coalitions, committees or other groups, and advocate for ABE and its priorities. Strong leaders are well versed in ABE and the challenges that may face the coalition and are committed to an action-oriented focus. The coalition leadership is able to foster relationships with key partners, either coalition members or community members, such as businesses or employers, post- secondary education institutions, job training providers, policy makers, and health and social services providers. With the new WIOA legislation you may want to make a special effort to develop linkages with employers, the workforce development system, and in coordination with your One Stop Career Centers.

So the coalition leadership makes a conscious effort to develop new leaders and foster depth of leadership like leading sub committees, work groups, or other initiatives of the coalition. The coalition leadership should represent the diversity of the community -- culturally, economically, educationally, or through diverse experiences, perspectives, and skill sets.

Succession planning is also an important part of coalition leadership. Coalitions are so busy and focused on achieving their goals that they don’t necessarily realize how important it is to have a succession plan in place. All too often, a coalition will lose its leader or other key members and the coalition begins to fall apart. Succession planning is a process for identifying and grooming existing coalition members who have the potential or the capabilities to fill key leadership roles in the coalition when they lose critical members. Provide potential new leaders with ongoing support to develop their knowledge, skills, and abilities and assign them to fill leadership roles such as steering committee members, subcommittee chairs, and so on. As your coalition expands or loses key members, as it will, having experienced coalition members ensures that you have people on hand ready and waiting to fill new roles.

**Slide 5: What is leadership?**

For the purposes of this webinar, we’re talking about leadership in the context of community planning, however, all the concepts we are talking about apply to other positions or roles, if you’re a director or manager or have other leadership roles. Marshal Ganz of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government says that leadership is about...

* Accepting responsibility
* Enabling and engaging others
* Achieving a shared purpose

**Slide 6: What is leadership?**

Mary Schaefer, former Executive Director of the MIT Leadership Center and a co-presenter in last year’s community planning training, describes what leadership is and isn’t. Mary says that

* Leadership is personal.
* It is not management.
* Leadership is about change.
* Leadership is distributed.

An important thing to remember when thinking about leadership in your ABE community planning coalition is that leadership is not a solo sport – it is shared. Effective leaders work with and through others.  Leadership is distributed, not just at the top of a hierarchy. Most organizations or coalitions have formal and informal leaders who step up into this role as the project, focus, or goals change. So it’s important to recruit or determine in your coalition who has the skills to assist you in leading the coalition.

The article *In Praise of the Incomplete Leader* from the MIT Leadership Center says: “No leader is perfect. The best ones don’t try to be—they concentrate on honing their strengths and finding others who can make up for their limitations.”

Let’s take a look at a leadership model developed by MIT.

**Slide 7: Four Capabilities of Leadership**

At the core of leadership development and research at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology is a pragmatic, research-based model of how successful leaders at every level actually work. The Four Capabilities Leadership Framework was developed over a four-year period at MIT Sloan School of Management. Tested in diverse real world settings, the four capabilities framework is a powerful tool for understanding and integrating the four critical components of leadership which are…

* Visioning – Creating a compelling picture of the future
* Relating – Developing relationships within/across organizations
* Inventing – Designing new ways of working together
* Sensemaking – Making sense of the world around you

The four capabilities model provides a framework for teaching leadership and for leadership practice in general. These capabilities are not something one is necessarily born with; they can be developed. (Source: MIT Leadership Center)

**Slide 8: Sensemaking**

The leadership capability Sensemaking can be seen as the GPS to navigate the world around you. In order to develop the most informed goals for the coalition, Sensemaking needs to occur. So sensemaking makes sense of the world around you. Answers the question…

* What is going on here?
* Who’s with you? Who’s not with you?
* Who are you serving? What do they need?
* What resources are needed? Where do you get them?
* What are obstacles? What are opportunities?

Sensemaking relates to Indicator 6, Contextual Factors, and can be thought of as integrating context into the work of the coalition, through mechanisms such as asset and needs assessments, sometimes called environmental scans. Keeping abreast of current trends, issues, resources, community demographics, and other environmental factors that affect adult learners can be done through a review of secondary data collection such as census, school data, attendance and other program performance indicators, community data and by gathering primary data such as student and community surveys, stakeholder interviews, and focus groups.

**Slide 9: Relating**

The leadership capability of Relating is all about communicating and good communication is highly important to strong leadership. Communication has been identified as one of the most important characteristics for the success of any organization, including community planning coalitions. So the leadership capability of relating involves…

* Developing key relationships within and across organization(s)
* Inquiry: Seek first to understand others’ positions
* Advocacy: Advocate your views; explain your reasoning
* Connecting: Cultivate networks of individual and group support

For a coalition to operate effectively, messages must be accurately communicated within and outside of the coalition. Defined decision-making processes help coalitions to relate better.

**Slide 10: Inventing**

The leadership capability, Inventing, is about change, and embracing change is a characteristic of strong leadership. Inventing - or reinventing - means creating new ways of approaching tasks to overcome seemingly insurmountable problems. So inventing involves…

* Designing new ways of working together
* Creative execution: Transforming your vision into reality
* Inventing on a grand scale or small scale

Inventing is a good example of how the four leadership capabilities align closely with the six indicators of effective community planning coalitions. Inventing is about scanning the environment which is the sixth Indicator, Contextual Factors; creating a vision and mission which is Indicator 2; and setting goals/developing action plans which is Indicator 5, Operations and Processes. These are all inventing methods that will help the coalition to create new and better ways to support your ABE programs and learners.

Anthony Robbins, life coach and self-help author says it well: “If you do what you’ve always done, you’ll get what you’ve always gotten.” So invent or reinvent!

**Slide 11: Visioning**

The leadership capability of Visioning aligns with ACLS community planning Indicator 5, Mission and Vision, which we’ll be talking about more later in this webinar. Visioning…

* Creates a compelling picture of the future
* Is dynamic and collaborative: Articulates what you want to achieve together
* Gives meaning and provides focus

A vision is the overarching reference for the coalition’s goals and activities. Vision helps coalition members to envision the impact of the partnership on adult learners and the community over a certain period of time. A clear vision helps the coalition to raise awareness of its activities within the community, identify partners and resources, and form its mission.

**Slide 12: Leadership Spans All Indicators**

Now that we’ve reviewed the four leadership capability model, let’s look at how these key elements span across all of the Community Planning Indicators.

Leadership: As mentioned, strong leadership is vital to the success of a coalition and is Indicator 1 of the ACLS Indicators of Effective Community Planning.

The vision and mission indicators aligns with the Visioning leadership capability as in the MIT model.

Operations and Processes: This Indicator aligns most closely with the Relating leadership capability as it deals with communications, conflict resolutions, and processes to keep the coalition running smoothly.

Structure: This Indicator also aligns with the leadership capability, Relating, but also aligns with Sensemaking, as having a defined structure in your coalition supports the Sensemaking process.

Contextual Factors: This ACLS Indicator of Effective Community Planning Coalitions aligns with the leadership characteristic Sensemaking as it deals with making sense of the many factors that affect ABE programs, learners, and the community.

So in this graphic, you can see the relationship between the four leadership capabilities and the ACLS Indicators of Effective Community Planning Coalitions.

**Slide 13: Vision and Mission (Indicator 5)**

Indicator 5 talks about the Vision and Mission of your coalition. Here are some key points about the Vision and Mission Indicator.

* Vision is overarching reference for coalition’s goals.
* Vision helps to raise awareness of the coalition in the community, identify partners and resources, and form its mission.
* Mission operationalizes the vision and should include a statement of purpose (the what), it’s business (the how) and it’s values (your beliefs).
* Vision and mission should align with the ACLS strategic framework of access, quality, and next steps.

Many organizations and coalitions don’t have a written vision, and some combine the vision in their mission. There are different definitions of what a vision and a mission are, and sometimes it can overlap. The coalition’s vision helps members to envision the impact of the partnership on adult learners and the community over a certain period of time, say three to five years.

Having a clear vision and mission are important tools for communication, for recruiting members, for grant writing, for strategic planning, and in many other marketing and outreach situations. Even if your coalition is a multi-focus model, you still should have a specific vision and mission for Adult Basic Education within that model.

**Slide 14: What Capabilities are Involved in Indicator 5 – Vision and Mission?**

As I mentioned earlier, the MIT four capabilities of leadership model closely align with, and span across all the Indicators of Effective Community Planning Coalitions. The leadership capability that aligns with Indicator 5, Vision and Mission, is Visioning. You can see on this chart how Indicator 5 and the Visioning capability align.

**Slide 15: What is a vision statement?**

So what is a vision? A vision statement can ask the question: Where do we want the coalition to be in five years? Or, If the local newspaper had a headline about our coalition’s accomplishments three years from now, what would it say? (Source: Sharon Deich, *A Guide to Successful Public-Private Partnerships for Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives* (Washington D.C.: The Finance Project, January 2001)

**Slide 16:**

Here are some other thoughts about vision.

* + You will never be greater than the vision that guides you.
  + Your vision must stretch your expectations, aspirations and performance.
  + The vision statement will answer the question, What will success look like?
  + A vision statement should be realistic and credible, with articulated and easily understood, appropriate, ambitious and responsive to change. It should be consistent with the organization’s *values.*
  + You should develop your vision statement first, before your mission statement.
  + Many coalitions or committees get bogged down with wordsmithing the statement too soon, before the concepts are developed. So try starting with a discussion about what the vision of the coalition is and write down key words/concepts on a board or newsprint. Consider conducting a visioning session to develop the coalition’s vision statement with a sub group of the coalition such as executive or steering committee, or relevant sub-group. Then present the vision statement to the full coalition.

**Slide 17:**

Here are some vision statements from a few people you may have heard of…

“I have a dream.” – Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther King’s vision changed a nation. That famous speech is a dramatic example of the power that can be generated by a person who communicates a compelling vision of the future.

“By the end of the decade, we will put a man on the moon.” – John F. Kennedy

When the moon came out that night, we could all look out the window and imagine.

**Slide 18: Sample Vision Statements**

Here are some samples of vision statements for similar organizations or coalitions. These statements reflect the key points mentioned about a vision statement.

For example, the Council for Advancement and Support of Education’s statement describes the destination of where they want to be together. “As a premier professional association for educational advancement, CASE aspires to be the leading resource for professional development and information, the leading proponent of professional ethics and standards, and the leading advocate for diversity.”

The North Shore Adult Education Coalition developed a straight forward vision that could be a headline in a newspaper about them. They use this vision as their tag line on letterhead and other materials. “The North Shore Adult Education Partnership is a diverse and dynamic coalition committed to increasing access, improving quality, and promoting next steps in adult basic education.”

The Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation’s vision statement describes what success looks like. “To become the first place people with disabilities turn when seeking employment and a top resource for employers in need of qualified employees.”

In the words of James Allen, British philosophical writer known for his inspirational books and poetry and as a pioneer of the self-help movement: “Dream lofty dreams, and as you dream, so shall you become. Your Vision is the promise of what you shall one day be. Your Ideal is the prophecy of what you shall at last unveil.”

**Slide 19: Elements of a Mission Statement**

Now let’s talk about the coalition’s mission. The mission includes a statement of the coalition’s purpose (the what), it’s business (the how) and its values (your beliefs).

An effective strategy to developing the mission statement is for a sub-group of the coalition such as executive or steering committee, strategic planning committee or work group, to develop a draft mission statement. Like with developing the vision statement, some coalitions or committees get bogged down with wordsmithing the mission statement too soon, before the concepts are developed. Start with a discussion about what the mission of the coalition is, using these elements.

* What is the purpose of the coalition?
* How will we do it (business statement)?
* What are our beliefs around what we do (values)?

Record the ideas on a board or newsprint, and suggest that a few members refine the mission statement and then email to the larger group for feedback. Incorporate the feedback into the mission statement and bring back to the larger group to review, revise and approve. Even if you already have a mission statement for your coalition, you can review it for the presence of these elements. Let’s get into each of the elements of a mission statement a bit more.

**Slide 20: Purpose**

Clearly states what your organization seeks to accomplish – why does your organization exist? What is the ultimate result of your work? Purpose statements usually include two phrases:

* + An identification of the problem or condition to be changed.
  + An infinitive that indicates a change in status, such as to increase, to decrease, to prevent, to eliminate.

The Purpose statement ordinarily starts with the word “to”, almost like a goal statement. For example, to prevent, to educate, to increase. Include the problem or condition you want to address. For example, To eliminate homelessness.

**Slide 21: Business**

Outlines the business(es) (i.e., activities or programs) your organization chooses in order to pursue the purpose. You must answer, What activity are we going to do to accomplish our purpose?

Often include the verb “to provide” or link a purpose statement with the words “by” or “through.” The business of your coalition can start with the preposition “by.” For example, by providing, by educating, by coordinating.

So you might say: To eliminate homelessness by providing job training to homeless individuals.

**Slide 22: Values**

The Values statement in a mission statement:

* Values are beliefs which your organization’s members hold in common and endeavor to put into practice.
* Guide your organizations members in performing their work. Specifically, you should ask, What are the basic beliefs we share as an organization?
* Examples of values include: a commitment to excellent services; innovation; diversity; creativity; honesty; integrity, and so on.

The values could begin with the word “with.” For example, with dignity and respect; with a focus on excellent customer satisfaction.

So, when reviewing or developing your mission statement, look for the three elements. It is important for the coalition to refer to its vision and mission statement regularly when developing goals and activities to ensure they align with one another.

There are many other uses for a clear vision and mission statement including for marketing and membership recruitment, community education and awareness, and for inclusion in grant applications.

**Slide 23: Three Elements of a Mission Statement**

Here is a mission statement from an actual ABE program’s coalition.. The different colors show the different elements.

The text in orange is the purpose: The ABC Education Center is a community of learning where low-income, undereducated adults are empowered to improve and enrich their lives and the lives of their families. The ABC Center assists and supports adult learners to reach their full potential as productive, contributing workers in the community and in society. This is the what.

The values shared by the coalition’s steering committee are in purple and they reflect their beliefs: “in an environment that is welcoming, respectful and dignified.”

The business element is in green. Through advocacy for positive change, direct services and collaboration, ABC Center provides education, skills training, language and literacy development, enrichment opportunities and support services. It tells how they do it.

There are no set order for the elements, we just want to be sure they are all present. The committee working on the statement wanted to be sure that all voices were heard, which is a good thing. While this is a very good mission statement, it is a bit long. So the steering committee developed a shorter version, and they decided to keep two versions, this longer one and a shorter version, and use them based on the purpose. So here’s the shorter one.

**Slide 24: ABE Adult Education Center (Mission Statement – Short Version)**

The ABC Center is a community of learning where low-income, undereducated adults are empowered through education, training, language and literacy development and support services, to improve and enrich their lives and the lives of their families, in an environment that is welcoming, respectful and dignified.

Franklin D. Roosevelt said it perfectly and simply what could describe the relationship between vision and mission: “Keep your eyes on the stars and your feet on the ground.”

**Slide 25: Summary**

Here is a quick summary of what we’ve covered in this webinar:

* Strong leadership is critical to the success of the ABE community planning coalition.
* Leadership is shared.
* One leadership framework is the MIT Four Capabilities of Leadership model.
* A vision is an overarching reference for the coalition's goals. You will never be greater than the vision that guides you.
* Mission operationalizes the vision.

**Slide 26: What’s Next?**

Here are some suggested next steps for you to consider with your coalition.

Coalitions can take the self-assessment or preliminary self-assessment, if you have a new or reformed coalition. These assessments can be found in the Indicators document. If your coalition already conducted the self-assessment you can revisit it to see where you’re at and to develop an action plan to address any gaps in your coalition.

The coalition’s chair person, leaders or selected coalition members can take the MIT leadership self-assessment to determine the strengths and gaps in the coalition’s leadership, and to identify or recruit people to your coalition to fill the gaps. The results would help to identify who has strengths in certain areas which would enable the leader to select these members for certain roles, committees and tasks of the coalition. Continue to regularly update your action plan to address gaps and identify priorities. Please remember that where multiple areas that require focus are identified, it is expected they will be prioritized, addressed over time and integrated as part of your continuous improvement process.

To develop or refine your vision statement, consider having a visioning session with a steering committee, advisory board or other sub group to develop your vision statement. Your coalition or a sub group can develop or refine your mission statement using the three elements of a mission statement described today. This is a great way to engage new members and reengage existing members and to get “buy in.”

Continue to regularly update your coalition’s action plan to address gaps and identify priorities.

Please note that the documents and materials we mentioned during this webinar can be found at the ACLS website.

**Slide 27: Thank you!**

For further information, please contact Kathy Rodriguez at krodriguez@doe.mass.edu.

This concludes our webinar for today. Thank you!