

Governance Game

The aim of the governance game is to explore the issues that accompany the setting up or running of a community or voluntary organisation. It uses the combined experience of participants to:

- set or clarify the aims of the organisation
- plan its future
- decide how it should cope with various situations
- allocate responsibilities

But first the design of an organisation has to have a context.

Overview

- * For use with large or relatively large group event or conference, where a number of smaller working groups can be established.
- * Split into groups of not more than eight
- * Each group invents an organisation facing tough challenges.
- * Exchange the scenario with another group - giving them the task of dealing with the challenges
- * Ask the groups to take on Board roles while they develop plans, and report back to everyone else
- * Then ask groups to reflect on the lessons learned to wider group

Step 1

Teams of about seven people elaborate a scenario based on a framework they have been given. This should cover the situation in which an organisation operates and its history. Aspects that might be covered are:

- a description of what the organisation does for whom: beneficiaries, projects, services
- what is its style and culture?
- what is its immediate history?
- what kind of problems is it encountering?

Don't worry about how difficult the organisations problems are - your group is not going to have to solve them! You will pass the scenario to another group and they will have to grapple with them.

Step 3

Pass your scenario sheets to another group as directed by the organisers. Do this by delegating one group member as a presenter. He / she then takes the sheets to the other group to present. The rest of the group hears the presentation given to it by another group. Presenters then return to their groups.

Step 4

Each group takes the scenario organisation and its problems and devises a plan for dealing with issues. First they should consider whether the problems presented are the real issues. Members of the group should take the roles of board members / staff as appropriate.

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Conference game report at http://partnerships.typepad.com/civic/2004/10/governance_is_o.html

Step 5

During discussion groups may be given additional problems to deal with by the organisers. The group should take account of :

- the responsibilities / roles of its members.
- the rules and procedures they have designed or been given
- the scenario they have been given

Step 6

Each group selects a presenter to feed back to the rest of the audience, citing:

- the original scenario
- their organisational design and procedures
- how they coped with situations

End

The session ends with a general discussion of the issues raised.