

CHANGE TEAMS

What is a Change Team?

Many organizations have found that anti-racist organizational development is most successful when an organization has a Change Team. A Change Team is a working committee whose overarching goal is to provide leadership and momentum around anti-racist organizational development.

Who should be on the Change Team?

Each organization needs to decide how to build a Change Team that can support meaningful change in your organization. Many Change Teams are comprised of staff and board members working together. In most cases it is important to have participation on the Change Team from your membership or constituency as well.

Job Description for Change Team Members (*Adapted from James Williams: Grassroots Leadership's Barriers and Bridges Workbook.*)

Change team members are people who:

- really want to see positive change in their communities;
- bring enthusiasm and commitment to the process. They are role models and cheerleaders;
- have a certain degree of skill in helping make change happens;
- have some degree of leadership in their organization or community;
- are willing to see themselves as change agents;
- but understand that they can't do it alone. They must build a group or organization of people who will take over leadership of the process and in turn develop new leaders.

Their job is to develop a group of people who will work together to reach their goals. This involves working with others to:

- assess the present situation, define problems, and set goals for solving them;

- identify the values the group or organization brings to this work, i.e. making sure people are clear about how they want be with each other as they work toward these goals;
- develop a strategy to accomplish their goals.
- insure that the strategy is carried out.
- evaluate and make changes in the strategy as needed.
- make sure that all contributions are appreciated and that everyone has a chance to grow change throughout the process.

What is the Job of a Change Team? (Developed by changework, 1705 Wallace Street, Durham NC 27707 .919.490.4448)

1. To lead and organize the process towards becoming an anti-racist social change organization
 - Help move people into actively supporting (or at least avoid resisting) the changes necessary to move the organization towards that vision
 - Help to resolve conflict
 - Avoid becoming 'morality police' by including others in the work of the change team
2. To lead and organize a process to evaluate the organization as it is now
3. To lead a process to help the organization envision what it would look like as an anti-racist social change organization
4. Lead a process to establish specific, clear, and meaningful goals for reaching the vision
5. Build community and move the organization to collective action
 - Help the organization think about how to integrate and/or educate those in the organization who have not been through a DR training
 - Be in open communication with all members of the organization
6. Insure the integration of the work of the change team with program work
7. Think like an organizer in helping the organization move toward its goals
 - work with members of the organization to think strategically about how to reach the goals of the organization

How Can the Change Team Do Its Job? (Adapted by Grassroots Leadership's Barriers and Bridges program from Judy H. Katz, *White Awareness: Handbook for Anti-Racism Training*)

1. Identify the problem that you want to address.
 - Who else sees this as a problem?
 - Is it widely felt?
2. Identify who has the power in your organization to solve the problem.
 - What is their self-interest?
 - Do you expect them to support you or oppose you?
3. State the specific goal or goals that will move your organization toward solving the problem.
 - These goals need to be tangible. In other words, 'eliminate racism' is not a tangible goal while 'get the board to adopt by-laws specifying percentages based on race, gender, income, sexual identity, etc.' is.
 - Talk about how this goal (or goals) is (are) in line with your organization's values and mission.
4. Identify who needs to be involved in helping to shape these goals.
 - Avoid setting the goals by yourself; involve a larger group whose participation in setting the goals will raise their stake in achieving them.
5. Identify who in the organization shares a desire to reach these goals.
 - How much power do they have to influence decision-makers (answer to number 2) in the organization?
 - What is their self-interest?
6. Identify who in the organization is threatened by or opposed to these goals.
 - How much power do they have to influence decision-makers (answer to number 2) in the organization?
 - What is their self-interest?
7. Identify any additional risks or barriers you face.
8. Identify your strengths and resources.

9. Identify the specific strategy steps the change team will take to meet the goals.

- How will you involve allies and address challenges from those who are threatened or opposed?
- How will you include those who might otherwise oppose you?
- Who should be recruited onto the change team?
- Who will coordinate the efforts?
- When and how will people meet to work on these goals?
- Develop a timeline.

10. Build in evaluation and reflection.

- At what points will you revise your strategy?
- How will you build change team morale and relationships?

Change Team Check-Up *(Adapted from Andrea Ayvazian: Dismantling Racism: Workbook for Social Change Groups.)*

Use this checklist about once every two or three months to make sure your change team is staying on track:

1. When did the change team last meet? Do you have plans to meet in the future?
2. Who is leading the change team? Is there someone who takes responsibility for making sure the team is meeting and getting work done? Has this responsibility changed hands, or has one person pretty much been responsible? How is this leadership pattern good or bad for the change team?
3. How would you describe the morale of the change team?
4. What are some of the strengths of the change team?
5. Where is the change team getting stuck?
6. Is the change team meeting resistance from others in the organization or community? If so, why and what can you do about it? When you look at your reasons, are you stuck in blaming others, in other words are you requiring other

people to change before anything can get done? Or are you taking responsibility for addressing the problems that come up?

7. Is the change team finding the kind of support it needs in the organization or community? If not, why not and what can you do about it? Are you truly encouraging new people into the organization or community? Are you making them welcome and giving them a chance to grow?
8. Are you making time in your meetings for personal sharing and reflection? Or are your meetings all business and no fun?
9. Are you accomplishing your goals? If so, are you taking time to pat yourselves on the back and enjoy your success? If not, are you taking time to rethink your strategies?