

ICMA Roundtable Discussion

Rules of Engagement: setting the stage for engaging unengaged residents

Monday, September 24th 11:15 am – 12:15 pm

Room #348

Purpose

During this session attendees will learn from each other strategies that have been successful in engaging hard to reach populations and how individual communities can increase their chances of success.

What is Cultural Humility?

There are many different applications of Cultural Humility, but in the context of this presentation we are referring to being conscientious of the different demographics that make up our jurisdictions and the various needs, beliefs and barriers we need to consider when developing engagement strategies.

Hard to reach populations

- Seniors
- Non-English speakers
- Minorities
- Undereducated
- Politically disinterested
- Content with the status quo

Barriers to engagement

- Public Engagement Spectrum
 - Inform – Consult – Involve – Collaborate - Empower
- Lack of Strategy
- Language & Jargon
- Perception & Authenticity
- Convenience & Changes in Media
- Commitment to the Process

Reasons for engaging

- Attend town hall/ city council meetings
- Raise awareness of available services
- Inform about community events
- Increase participation in decision making (budget, provision of services, levy approval, etc.).

Best practices for engaging residents

- Go where people are
 - Hold public meetings/information sessions at places such as community centers, churches, senior housing, apartment complexes or schools
 - Members of the community feel more comfortable and may help with transportation challenges
 - Engage door-to-door campaigns
- Make the process accessible
 - Implement phone and internet strategies that are designed with public access as its primary focus
 - Modifying business hours to allow more residents additional access to services
 - Allow videoconferencing of events, public meetings with questions allowed
- Use media and marketing strategically
 - Community and ethnic newspapers, local newspapers and television stations are most effective ways to reach residents
 - Setup a '311' or '211' type system to allow residents to engage officials from their place of comfort
 - Explore using other outlets such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter with policies in place
 - Have an effective website that is current with information