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1A Identify role, processes and conditions of representation in consultation with individuals and key groups

Community service workers may represent individual service users, the community, a specific group within the community or a group of community services organisations regarding their needs, concerns or issues. Workers need to clearly identify their specific role when representing others, whether this is to influence decision-making, to advance the interests of those they represent or to represent clients or the industry. They need to identify the processes and conditions applicable to their representative role. Workers must also consult the people they are going to represent, and other key individuals and groups, to confirm their role and the processes to be used.



Representation and advocacy

Representation and advocacy are two similar social justice processes. The following information explores the role of representation and advocacy. Both processes are essential aspects of community services work, ensuring positive change for individuals, groups or the community. Some individuals or groups may not be able to represent themselves. This may be for a number of reasons; for example, because people do not have the skills or knowledge needed to represent themselves on a particular issue, or because they may have an illness or disability that prevents them from doing so.

Representation and advocacy

Representation services approach decision-makers, the media or the community on behalf of another person or group to promote their interests.

Advocacy allows clients the opportunity to voice their opinions and needs through an advocate who speaks, argues and stands up for their needs, rights and opinions in order to secure a benefit for them. Some people advocate for themselves, or people requiring advocacy may be a single person, a citizen or parent, an organisation or industry.

Identify decision-makers

It is critical to identify and understand the power structures and relationships in the community. This knowledge enables you to recognise who decision-makers are and who can facilitate meeting them or influencing them; for example, it may be beneficial to form a working relationship with the community services manager at the local council who can work with councillors to approve funding requests or requests for resources such as the use of council buildings.

Take action

You may take action to:

- ▶ provide feedback to decision-makers on changes to legislation that may impact those you represent
- ▶ initiate a social media campaign to gather responses from stakeholders
- ▶ create an electronic media campaign to raise community awareness and support of an issue
- ▶ lobby politicians and government department representatives
- ▶ develop or strengthen partnerships and alliances with other organisations to increase effectiveness.

Influence decisions

You may need to take action to influence decision-making processes when:

- ▶ there are identified gaps in provided services; for example, insufficient support for carers
- ▶ there are proposed changes to legislation or services; for example, changes to Centrelink benefits for sole parents
- ▶ individuals or groups are being treated unjustly; for example, tenants being evicted without due cause
- ▶ you need to draw attention to an issue/group; for example, young people with high-care needs in aged care facilities.

Skills in representation

To represent individuals and groups, strong leadership and management skills are required. This involves having clear goals, listening to what others have to say, being inclusive, showing respect, being honest and fair, examining a range of options and making informed decisions.

There are many models and theories regarding leadership and management styles. The following outlines four models that may help you define your role and think about your style of leadership.

Trait

The trait model explores the patterns and characteristics of effective leaders, based on the idea that effective leaders have something that other people do not. Critics of this model point out that no set of traits has been identified that can explain good leadership, and that a good leader in one situation may not be a good leader in another.

Consult with others

Consultation, or discussion with individuals and groups, is vital for any representation service, as described below.

Consultation provides:

- ▶ a clear picture of the needs, issues and concerns of the individuals or groups being represented
- ▶ an understanding of the requirements and expectations of government, politicians and decision-makers
- ▶ opportunities to form a delegation, which is an individual or group who has been given authority to represent another person or group.

Existing structures, systems, networks and processes

Identifying existing community structures and networks, and understanding processes and systems within the community can save you time and energy. Existing community structures may be governmental (for example, local councils or state governments), industry networks (for example, the Youth Participation Practice Network in Victoria), community networks or multicultural or religious groups (for example, the Islamic Council of Australia).

Processes and systems may include procedural processes such as meeting with ministerial staff prior to meeting with a government minister or representative, or accessing existing advocacy systems through advocacy organisations. Some representation groups will also take the role of advocate themselves.

Knowledge of existing structures, systems, networks and processes can be used to:

- ▶ identify key people, community leaders and alliances within the community to support the representation
- ▶ gain access to existing networks to streamline consultation processes
- ▶ ensure representations are appropriate
- ▶ gain an understanding of the community's needs, concerns and issues, and of who can assist in facilitating change in the community.

Requirements of industry mechanisms

Each industry has a set of mechanisms, each with its own requirements. The following outlines some of these requirements.

Advisory, steering or reference committees

A group may be needed to provide expert advice and guide workers and services regarding cultural issues and values. For example, it is essential to have an Aboriginal advisory group if working with people who are of Aboriginal heritage.

Conferences and seminars

Attending industry- or issue-based meetings where current issues, the latest research and best practice are presented and discussed is essential for maintaining currency; for example, geriatric care conferences, a state youth conference or cultural awareness seminars.

Information

It is crucial to know:

- ▶ how much funding is available; for example, to print posters and brochures
- ▶ how many people are available; for example, to participate in a march
- ▶ the availability of key people to provide support.

Scope, scale and parameters

Representation services need to clarify the scope, scale and parameters of the services they will provide to ensure everyone works within the agreed measurements of service. Workers also need to be aware of the group's terms of references, as explained below.

Service scope, scale and parameters

- ▶ Scope refers to the extent of what is relevant.
- ▶ Scale refers to the size of the service provided.
- ▶ Parameters refer to a set of measurable factors.

Terms of reference

- ▶ Terms of reference are guidelines that describe a group's purpose and roles and how the group will work together. Existing terms of reference for the representation service should be followed. New alliances, partnerships or working groups may need to establish their own terms of reference that spell out the roles of participants, the purpose, outcomes and expectations.

Example

Identify role, processes and conditions of representation in consultation with individuals and key groups

Sally has just been successful in securing an advocacy role at a local service that provides emergency relief, referral, parenting, youth and legal services to the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Sally has no previous experience as an advocate and is unsure how to go about her role. She identifies the role, processes and conditions of representation by consulting with key people.

She begins by asking her manager to identify key community leaders for her to meet. She organises a morning tea and invites these elders to meet with her. She spends time listening to them and finding out what issues are most concerning for them. She also asks how they would like her to consult other community members and what they would like her to do to address the main issues identified.

Sally then meets with other local community services workers to learn from their experiences in the community and to develop alliances to begin the representation process. She also meets with staff at a university's Aboriginal centre to gain knowledge of successful services and available resources. Finally, Sally consults local council community services staff to identify any available resources and support they can provide.



Benefits and potential difficulties

The following presents the benefits of and challenges with strategic alliances.

Benefits of strategic alliances

- ▶ Pooling the human, financial and other resources of multiple parties
- ▶ Increasing understanding of the interests and concerns of those represented due to multiple perspectives
- ▶ Learning from others in the alliance and access to additional individuals or groups to consult
- ▶ Increased impact in strategies; for example, lobbying
- ▶ Potential to improve the profile within the community

Potential difficulties with strategic alliances

- ▶ Relationship development requires time
- ▶ Conflict relating to different objectives, priorities or values
- ▶ Communication channels increase requiring close management
- ▶ Not all stakeholders being happy with the alliance
- ▶ A drain on resources if all alliance partners do not participate or contribute equally
- ▶ The need to ensure each organisation does not become dependent on each other

Identify alliances

Consider the following regarding identifying alliances.

Benefits

You need to decide why an alliance may be useful. Is there a need for more people? Is there a lack of expertise within the organisation that an alliance would provide? Is there a particular resource that the organisation does not have access to?

Networks

Once the benefits have been identified, you need to explore possible alliances. Begin with you and your organisation's networks. Are there individuals, groups or organisations already known that can increase the effectiveness of the representation?

Key people

Look at the key people you consulted in the early stages of the representation (for example, community leaders, researchers, organisations, peak bodies and experts) and identify any possible alliances within this group.

Consultation

Consult these key people again to gain assistance in identifying alliances. It is also useful to explore whether significant community leaders or decision-makers may increase the impact of the representation through an alliance.

Key people for developing structures

The following sets out the key people and the support they provide for consultation, accountability and strategic alliances.

Community leaders

Support to develop consultation structures:

- ▶ Can provide information regarding who, when and where to consult
- ▶ Can provide information about community expectations and concerns

Support to develop accountability structures:

- ▶ Can identify community expectations and goals
- ▶ Participation can increase accountability to community

Experts and researchers

Support to develop consultation structures:

- ▶ Can provide examples of successful consultation structures
- ▶ Can provide feedback regarding planned structures

Support to develop accountability structures:

- ▶ Can assist in developing appropriate accountability structures
- ▶ Can provide examples of best practice

Policy-makers or decision-makers

Support to develop consultation structures:

- ▶ Can explain expectations of funding bodies or government departments regarding structures to be implemented
- ▶ Can assist with clear time frames for submissions or meetings

Support to develop accountability structures:

- ▶ Can explain expectations of funding bodies or government departments regarding accountability and reporting
- ▶ Can provide clear deadlines for reports and outcomes

Peak bodies and groups

Support to develop consultation structures:

- ▶ Can provide examples of previous consultations with specific groups
- ▶ Can provide knowledge of the most appropriate structures for members

Support to develop accountability structures:

- ▶ Can provide examples of previously used accountability structures and best practice for an industry or group

Example**Identify and seek the support of key people, and develop strategic alliances**

Alannah works in an aged care facility in Western Australia that provides residential services for people with high-care needs. It is a non-government organisation that receives some government funding, but is required by government to have residents pay a bond to enter the facility. This system works well for single residents. However, if one partner of a couple needs care and the other person does not, the couple may be required to sell their home in order to fund care. This creates hardship for the non-residential partner.



Alannah develops an industry position by making contact and consulting with other aged care services across the state to develop an industry position on this policy. She first approaches Aged and Community Services WA (ACSWA), the largest peak body for aged care services in the state, to gain their support and assistance to access their partners and member organisations. She then organises a meeting with ACSWA and key representatives from the member organisations. She also invites the head of Edith Cowan University's Aged Services Management course and aged care consumer advocates. At this meeting, the group drafts an industry position on this issue.

Practice task 2

1. Explain why it is beneficial to seek the support of key people.

2. Why are accountability structures useful?

3. List some of the key people who can offer strategic alliances and support.

4. What is an industry position statement?

Requirements for reporting

The following reporting processes should be established during planning.

Content

In most cases, you need to report outcomes against agreed objectives. Reports may also include summaries of consultations, an explanation of actions taken or feedback from stakeholders. You may also be required to provide a financial report.

Time frames

Consider when and how often reports will be developed and distributed. Is there going to be a final report at the end of the representation alone? Will there be regular reports during the representation, such as quarterly or monthly?

Audience

Consider who the report is for and how this will impact the content. For example, are you reporting to funding bodies, or the individuals or groups you represent? Depending on the audience, you may need to include suggestions for improvements in future representations.

Format

You need to determine how the report will be given. That is, in writing, electronically or verbally. In many community services organisations, written reports are prepared and then presented verbally to interested parties or key people in a forum or meeting.

Accountability processes

While formal reporting is the most common form of accountability processes, accountability can also be achieved through other processes such as informal means. No matter what type of process is used, it needs to be agreed on and planned prior to any representation service taking place. Consider the following informal accountability means.

Other processes may include:

- ▶ posting photos or video on social media of actions or information; for example, a YouTube video of an expert speaking about family violence
- ▶ providing press releases to mainstream media on the issue, consultations or actions; for example, to explain report outcomes on aged care benefits
- ▶ presenting progress or outcomes to boards, committees or groups; for example, to parents of children with autism advocating for increased services.

3. Explain the four basic requirements for reporting.

Summary

1. The role of representation may include taking action to influence decision-making by politicians or government departments; advancing the interests of those you represent through participating in forums where decisions are formed or made; and promoting and developing the interests of the community services industry you represent.
2. Community services workers may represent individual people, or groups such as community services organisations, specific programs and training or education services.
3. When providing representation services, consult key people to establish your role and understand their role to gain support for the representation service.
4. Key people, such as industry experts, researchers, peak bodies, educators, the media and community leaders, can help you identify appropriate processes and the impact of conditions.
5. Identifying or developing industry positions can strengthen your representation case.
6. Community services workers and representation services are accountable to the individuals or groups they represent, to their management or board, and to funding bodies.
7. Identify the people who can help you develop consultation and accountability structures.
8. Workers and services must work within relevant legislative and regulatory standards as well as organisational policy and ethical guidelines.
9. It is essential to report to agreed stakeholders in order to be accountable and improve representation services through evaluation.



Topic 2

In this topic you will learn how to:

- 2A Identify relevant interests and concerns to be pursued in accordance with organisation objectives and priorities**
- 2B Undertake work to provide a framework for pursuing promotion of relevant interests**
- 2C Create and respond to opportunities to reflect, promote and represent identified interests**
- 2D Determine the impact developments and decisions will have on objectives and priorities and how to measure success**
- 2E Provide progress and other reports and feedback to key people**

Represent the interests of the client or client group

Representation processes often require community services workers to participate in decision-making forums. These forums may be part of a formal political process, informal meetings with government department representatives, meetings with community leaders or groups, or consultations with key people or groups. Community services workers need to develop a framework to use to promote and respond to opportunities relating to the interests of those being represented.

A guardian's role

- ▶ Parents or guardians of people under the age of 18 are legally responsible for their care and protection. Parents and guardians have the right and responsibility to make decisions concerning daily care and control of the children in their care.

Respecting rights

- ▶ Working with young people raises complex issues relating to their rights, particularly when a young person becomes a parent themselves. You need to ensure the work you do is in line with industry ethical standards and respects the rights of those they represent.

Needs assessments

Needs assessment is the process of identifying the issues, interests and concerns of a person or group. This can be done through discussions with the person and with key people including experts and others who can provide advice.

A focus group setting is useful if people are able to get together in the one space. Alternatively, an interview can be conducted over the phone or electronic media, or a review of previous organisational cases can provide useful information. Through a focus group the objectives and goals of the representation process can be determined. Again, refer to the organisation's policies and procedures for information on how to approach specialists and arrange a focus group.



Research issues

Research skills are essential when providing representation services. Research can identify the social, economic and political factors that contribute to a concern, and identify industry and community positions or interests. For example, you may require knowledge about specific cultural groups or issues like ageing, disability, self-harm, mental health, alcohol and other drugs or chronic illness. There may be people in your organisation who can direct your research and having internet skills in this area is most useful.

You also need to work within the priorities and objectives of your organisation. An organisation may have a particular position they hold on certain issues that is a strong priority underpinning and directing the work of the organisation or service delivery. An organisational priority may require you to focus on a specific concern that is in line with the organisation's position. This may or may not align exactly with the specific concern of the group or person you are representing.

Research many involve:

- ▶ using your consultation with community leaders as a starting point for your research
- ▶ liaising with library staff who can assist you in researching specific subjects in your local area
- ▶ using databases, industry journals, online resources and organisational records.

Strategies for each of these models are described below.

Social planning

The social planning model emphasises that experts are required for change to occur. Strategies include the following:

- ▶ Participate in boards or committees of decision-making organisations.
- ▶ Meet with government department representatives and politicians who can influence the decision-making process.
- ▶ Share your research with other stakeholders to promote interest.
- ▶ Organise partnerships or alliances to increase lobbying power.
- ▶ Provide those you represent with opportunities to speak at parliamentary hearings or inquiries.
- ▶ Organise public meetings or debates to promote interests and develop resolutions for change.
- ▶ Write press releases and briefing documents to promote the interests of those you represent.
- ▶ Work with legal advocates to develop a test case to bring before a court or tribunal where appropriate.

Locality development

Locality development is a participatory model of change. For change to occur, broad community participation is necessary. The aim of locality development is to get a group to reach consensus on common concerns and collaborate to resolve issues. Here are some of strategies:

- ▶ Organise specific, targeted community education campaigns.
- ▶ Use brochures, the media, public meetings, interviews and social media.
- ▶ Arrange community meetings to promote understanding of the interests of those you represent.
- ▶ Organise partnerships with community groups/leaders and other community services organisations to gain support and promote interests.
- ▶ Publicly celebrate achievements by those you represent to ensure ongoing support.

Confrontational model

The confrontational model is also referred as the social or direct action model. In this model, action involves strategies to increase the power and resources of a group. Groups work towards changing systems, structures, policies and procedures to achieve social justice. Here are some social action strategies:

- ▶ Organise marches or demonstrations to promote the interests of those you represent.
- ▶ Develop advertising campaigns using graphic images of the issues faced by those you represent, as well as solutions.
- ▶ Organise street theatre to promote interests.

Policy development

You may have the opportunity as part of your work role, or may be able to create opportunities, to influence the development of policies that impact on the people you represent. Influencing policy development, or change, may be achieved through:

- ▶ meeting with or lobbying decision-makers
- ▶ presenting petitions or submissions to decision-makers
- ▶ having individual clients or groups participate in parliamentary hearings or inquiries
- ▶ developing or changing your own organisation's policies to reflect interests and concerns of a client group.

Special meetings/delegations

Your representation service may organise special meetings with, or delegations to, decision-makers. You can also take advantage of community meetings where decision-makers will be present. This needs to be done within organisational policies and, where appropriate, include the people being represented.

Lobbying is a specific strategy where you directly target those who can best change or address the client's situation or issue; for example, a local member of parliament to change a decision made by a government department, or to present a signed petition to a government department head or to parliament.

Example

Create and respond to opportunities to reflect, promote and represent identified interests

Susan is a worker in a large community services organisation that provides many programs in aged care, disabilities, youth work, financial counselling, emergency relief, housing and advocacy. As part of her role, Susan attends monthly regional networking meetings with other community services organisations. She also attends the annual industry conference.

Susan has recently started a representation service for a group of young mothers who cannot return to education or training due to a lack of affordable child care. Susan takes the opportunity at a networking meeting to discuss the issue with representatives from other organisations to gain support and develop an industry position statement. At the annual conference, Susan works with a group of young mothers to present a session. Industry and government department representatives attend the session. From this conference, a meeting is set up with an education department manager to develop educational options for the mothers.



Identify developments and their impacts

You need to be aware of developments and possible impacts so you can respond appropriately. For example, you may need to revisit the plan or consult with key people again. The measure of success also needs to be clarified by reviewing the objectives and goals of the interest group. This involves going over notes and meeting with key decision makers in the group again. By providing feedback on the developments and their impacts, the group/client can determine and measure the success of the progress.

The following contains a list of developments that may occur, with possible impacts on the representation.

External environmental

Social, political, economic or industrial changes

Examples:

- ▶ Changes to social policy
- ▶ Change in priorities of the individual, group or community represented
- ▶ Changes to the industry or in industry position

Assessment of potential impact:

- ▶ Increase or decrease in funding or public awareness
- ▶ Changes to the type of action required
- ▶ Changes in support for representation

Within and outside the organisation structures

Examples:

- ▶ Changes in management, staffing or services provided
- ▶ Changes to funding arrangements

Assessment of potential impact:

- ▶ Changes in priorities of the organisation
- ▶ Lack of available staff
- ▶ Changes in staff working on representation
- ▶ Lack of funding for the representation service

Government policy

Examples:

- ▶ Changes to legislation
- ▶ Changes to government department policies relating to an issue

Assessment of potential impact:

- ▶ Impact on organisational structure and reporting requirements
- ▶ Changes to staff requirements
- ▶ Changes to funding requirements

2E Provide progress and other reports and feedback to key people

Part of your role is to keep stakeholders and key people up to date regarding the representation process, either informally or through a formal reporting process. Representation services must also comply with all legal reporting requirements and regulations as well as the organisational requirements of a particular delivery service.

Here are the considerations to ensure stakeholders are kept up to date.

Monitoring

Keeping people up to date provides them with a feeling of involvement and gives them an opportunity to provide feedback on progress. It allows adjustments to be made to the process where required, and ensures that the representation service and worker are accountable for their actions. Always take notes of all communications and keep your reporting documents up to date with details of when monitoring occurred.

Accountability

Accountability – or being answerable to those you represent – is essential in providing representation services. In some cases you may be required to write reports for funding bodies to acquit grants or to ensure the continuation of funding. In these situations, you may be required to follow regulations and meet funding body standards. Reporting and documentation must follow the organisational processes for format and detail so they become an accurate record of what has occurred and when.

Celebrating success

There are also other reasons to report: celebrating successes with stakeholders, and the broader community, is a positive way of continuing to promote an interest and the services provided. The changes need to be publicised to ensure community members can make the most of them. Update records with information outlining successes and how this was promoted.

The information required

The following outlines the information that may be required by key people or groups.

Community leaders

Information required:

- ▶ Outcomes compared to the community's objectives
- ▶ Responses from other key people to their concerns
- ▶ Further support required from the community and its leaders

When and how to provide information

In most cases, time lines for reporting will be agreed to during the planning stages of a representation process, and accountability processes or reports may follow a number of formats. They may be written and presented either electronically or in a hard copy, or be provided verbally. These factors are explored further in the following information.

Progress and outcomes reporting

- ▶ Reporting may be at the end of the process, and reflect on the representation's outcomes in relation to the objectives identified during the planning process. Alternatively, there may have been an agreement for ongoing progress reports throughout the process.
- ▶ Providing ongoing progress reports allows stakeholders to be involved and provide additional input into the process. The end-of-process report presents information on the objectives achieved and future directions for the organisation and the individual or group.

Reporting formats

- ▶ While progress reports may be formal, feedback can also be informal. Opportunities to keep stakeholders informed during informal meetings, telephone conversations or emails are useful and can have positive impacts on the process.
- ▶ In general, reports need to follow the format required by funding bodies and organisational policies and procedures. In some cases the organisation will be sent a proforma or spreadsheet that must be completed. Reports may not be accepted if they do not follow the appropriate format.

Written reports

- ▶ Written report formats usually follow a logical structure with headings, and often use graphs and graphics to illustrate the content. This format makes it easy for readers to follow and keeps the information clear, specific and brief. Consider the language level, literacy and numeracy skills, and disabilities or abilities of those receiving the report.

Feedback formats

- ▶ Feedback can also be provided in other formats; for example:
 - presentations to key people using video, photos and information, or at meetings and public forums
 - publishing outcomes and future actions in organisational newsletters or on websites
 - sharing outcomes using social media.

Address issues

- ▶ There are often limited resources in community services, and this can lead to conflict as people try to access a share. In this situation, it is useful to address the limited resources early in the representation and agree how these will be distributed. If those participating in the representation have differences in culture, language, age or values, it is also useful to identify these differences to the group and develop an understanding between all individuals.

Positive versus negative conflict

- ▶ Keep in mind that discussions over issues are healthy, and disagreements are natural when groups of people work together. Conflict, however, can be damaging if it is not addressed promptly. In some cases managing conflict can be relatively easy as those involved are likely to bring any issues up as soon as they arise and resolve them collaboratively. At other times the worker may need to raise the issues and facilitate a resolution.

Use strategies to prevent or resolve conflict

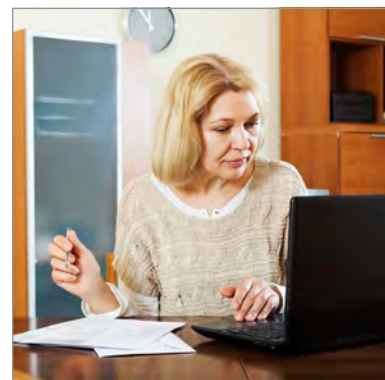
Once a source of conflict has been identified, it is important to resolve the conflict as soon as possible. A community services worker can use a range of strategies, including the following.

Conflict resolution strategies:

- ▶ Listening: encourage those in conflict to listen to each other's points of view
- ▶ Respect: ask that participants respect each other's perspectives, even when it is difficult; encourage respectful communication
- ▶ Assertiveness; discourage insults or put-downs; and demonstrate the use of 'I' statements
- ▶ Compromise: explore areas of compromise with participants by asking them to think about what is most important to them and what is least important
- ▶ Time outs; take breaks, if the situation becomes heated, to give everyone the chance to calm down and think
- ▶ Agreement: agree on how potential conflict will be addressed at the beginning of the representation process

The consultation process

One way to prevent or decrease the likelihood of conflict is to make sure consultation is broad and everyone has an opportunity to have their say. High-level communication skills are needed to make sure everyone is heard and feels as though they have contributed. Many of the members of the group or the individual being represented may feel strongly about the issues and concerns affecting them and may be impatient for results. Making sure that reviews and communications are timely ensure that the process runs smoothly.



Models of negotiation

Negotiation is a valuable skill that can be used to prevent or resolve conflict. Negotiation done well means that the person or people feel supported and that the outcomes are fair and clear.

The following is a summary of four models of negotiation.

Win-Win

Everyone in the negotiation wins (gets what they want).

This is the ideal model as everyone benefits and no-one loses in this model.

Win-Lose

You win, the other party loses.

After negotiation, one party wins, while the other party loses; that is, one party benefits while the other is dissatisfied.

Lose-Win

You lose, the other person wins.

After negotiation, one party wins, while the other party loses; that is, one party benefits while the other is dissatisfied.

Lose-Lose

The outcome of this negotiation is that everyone leaves dissatisfied.

Neither party accepts the other's perspective or is prepared to compromise.

Aim for a win-win outcome

You should be working towards a win-win negotiation outcome. For example, in a situation where regional and metropolitan services disagree about the allocation of funding, a win-win would be both parties leaving the negotiation with a share of the funding they feel is fair. They would also leave feeling they have been heard and have had their position and concerns validated.



The RADPAC model

The RADPAC model (Rapport, Analysis, Debate, Purpose, Agreement, Close) is another commonly used negotiation model. You can use this process to work through a conflict or potential conflict, as described below using example of regional and metropolitan services disagreeing about the allocation of funding.

Rapport

A comfortable working relationship between the parties is developed.

The services know each other from networks and conferences, but have not worked closely together. You need to provide opportunities for relationships to be developed. This may be by having a relaxed networking session at the beginning of the process with food and drinks provided.

Consultation

You also need to evaluate the effectiveness of the consultation process used through the representation:

- ▶ Were important key people consulted?
- ▶ Should additional people have been consulted?
- ▶ Was too broad a selection of people consulted?
- ▶ Was the consultation process effective?
- ▶ How could it have been more effective?
- ▶ What methods worked best?
- ▶ Should you have had clearer objectives for the consultation?

Example

Analyse actual work outcomes and document and report against agreed objectives and priorities

A carers' organisation represents young carers with two objectives:

- ▶ to raise community awareness of the issues facing young carers
- ▶ to attract funding to provide respite services to young carers.

Here is how they evaluated the representation.

Representation objectives

Janice, a community services worker, organises a media campaign that involves young carers' stories being told on television, radio and in newspapers. This includes young carers appearing on talk shows and making videos to post on Facebook sharing experiences. Janice also sets up meetings with decision-makers to lobby for funding following the media campaign.

After the agreed representation service is completed, Janice evaluates it by analysing the outcomes.

Outcomes and evidence

Janice records the outcomes, which include:

- ▶ four stories in the media and three radio/television interviews
- ▶ an increase of 300 people 'liking' the organisation's Facebook page
- ▶ much discussion on local talkback radio.

The decision-makers agree to put young carers' needs on the agenda. However, there has been no commitment to funding. This will be the focus of future representation processes.