

Civics

Overview:

Sectors: Public,
Non Profit and Private

Types of Power: Economic Power,
Expert Power and People Power

Community Organizing 101

Objectives:

1. Develop an understanding of the way in which various sectors work in conjunction with each other and some of the difficulties when working together.
2. Develop an understanding of the various types of power available for creating change.
3. Learn the basics of community organizing.

Overview:

Sectors: Public, Non Profit and Private

Types of Power: Economic Power, Expert Power and People Power

Community Organizing 101

Objectives:

1. Develop an understanding of the way in which various sectors work in conjunction with each other and some of the difficulties when working together.
2. Develop an understanding of the various types of power available for creating change.
3. Learn the basics of community organizing.

Activities:

1. *Sector Simulation*

- A. Teach students the similarities and differences between the 3 sectors. Have the students brainstorm potential strengths and pitfalls of sectors working independently of each other and working together. In addition, allow them to complete the sector circle.
- B. Run the Sector Simulation, where students are in groups, each group representing a sector. Hand out the situation description and roles that the groups are responsible for playing. Each group must contribute to some part of the solution for the situation, working within the guidelines of their sector type. Use the questions below to guide students through the simulation. Students should keep track of what goes right and wrong throughout the event. After the simulation, reflect on how it went, and have students brainstorm a list of issues SVdP may run into as a nonprofit when trying to create programs and services for its clients.

Sector Simulation Game

Lead the sector groups through answering the following questions, and allow students time to share answers between the groups, and then return to their groups to brainstorm ways to respond to the other parties.

1. Provide strategic introductions, explaining why are each of you at the table.
2. Form an agenda for the meeting, essentially the process of how all three sectors will come to a solution.
3. Share information on interests, facts, standards of fairness, and alternatives with each sector.
4. Find common ground where all agree.
5. Brainstorm, suggesting creative solutions without judging.
6. Bargain, hopefully suggesting your Best First Offer with something to satisfy everyone's needs.
7. Finalize, getting it down on paper, finding agreement, using deadlines, a little last minute trading.

2. *Power Boost*

- A. Provide students with a background of the various types of power people can achieve (see *Examples of Underdeveloped Resources of Rational Power*).
- B. Present students with examples of historical community achievements and have them identify the type of power that they see.
- C. Based on the examples, have students determine the most effective types of power. Have them back up their ideas with examples from their own lives. Guide students to the understanding the type of power you use depends upon the goals you have for your event.

3. *Community Organizing*

Provide handout to students titled *Steps to Community Organizing*. Have them point out if they've done these and when and for what event/club. See the resources section for a list of resources that students can use to help them organize.

Evaluation Option:

1. Provide students with a list of programs and services SVdP provides. Lead a discussion where you determine what types of power and methodology SVdP utilizes for their programs.

SVdP Service Learning Connection:

What you can do before your visit:

1. Organize a large group of students to clean up the grounds around St. Vincent de Paul.
2. Prepare a workshop on community organizing to teach at the center.
3. Run a food drive, hygiene drive or coin drive.
4. Research community benefit districts and help assess whether the neighborhood might be open to that.

What you Can Do at SVdP:

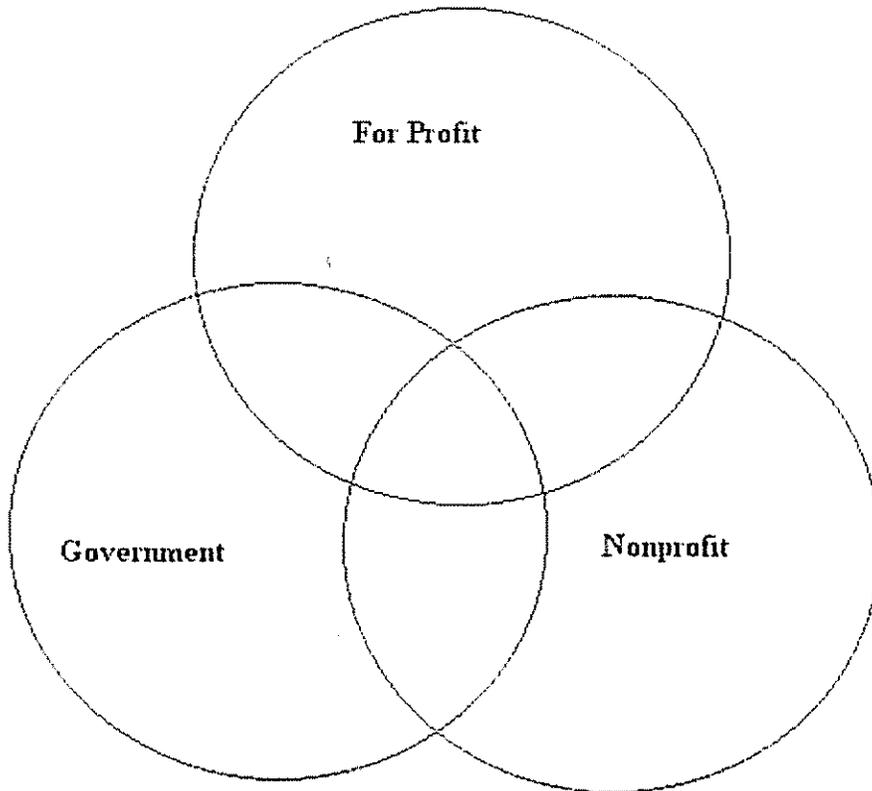
1. Clean the grounds around St. Vincent de Paul, wash windows or SVdP vehicles, or serve in the kitchen.
2. Build relationships with clients at the center, interviewing them about their needs and desires.
3. Put together furniture to sell at the thrift store.
4. Sort books and other merchandise for sale in the thrift store.
5. Run a workshop you developed in the classroom.

Reflection/What you can do after your visit:

1. Run a food drive, hygiene drive or coin drive.
2. Create a video lesson that teaches a skill that would be valuable to the clients of SVdP.
3. Design a brochure about poverty or SVdP's services that you can pass out in your community.
4. Contact a local business about donating items to SVdP.
5. Organize a voter registration drive.

Identify the Three Economic Sectors Sector Circles

Directions: Place the organizations from the list into the correct circle.



State Department of Education
Michigan Education Association
Sylvan Learning Center
Churches
Doctors
Interfaith Shelter
Hospital
Lawyers
Courthouse
Police
City Park
County Museum

Municipal Golf Course
Food Stamps/WIC
Olive Garden Restaurant
Consumers Energy
Jackson Prison
Shelters
Red Cross
High School
Library
ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union)
Michigan Department of Transportation
Michigan State University

Sector Simulation Game
Private Sector

Situation:

The city has identified abandoned residential housing that needs to be developed. Housing in the city is limited, especially for those who are currently homeless and for those who are working poor. This shared problem needs to be addressed by all three sectors: nonprofit, private and public/government. The players are the mayor and the city's redevelopment authority; a for-profit developer who wants to turn the housing into condo units; a non-profit organization that assists homeless people with the transition to jobs and housing, and a non-profit developer who wants to develop the property into affordable housing.

Private Sector Description:

- They make and sell private goods and services.
- Their ultimate goal is to make a profit in selling or making goods and services.
- The "market" (supply, demand, buyers, sellers) influences their decisions.
- They work towards customer satisfaction.
- Customers voluntarily pay to purchase their goods or services.
- They are able to give the buyer what he or she wants at the lowest cost possible (while still making a profit).
- They will not take on unprofitable activities.

Role: Developer who wants to turn the housing into condo units.

Goals: Based on the Sector Description above, list some goals you have for the situation:

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

Sector Simulation Game Public Sector

Situation:

The city has identified abandoned residential housing that needs to be developed. Housing in the city is limited, especially for those who are currently homeless and for those who are working poor. This shared problem needs to be addressed by all three sectors: nonprofit, private and public/government. The players are the mayor and the city's redevelopment authority; a for-profit developer who wants to turn the housing into condo units; a non-profit organization that assists homeless people with the transition to jobs and housing, and a non-profit developer who wants to develop the property into affordable housing.

Public Sector Description:

- It provides public goods*, or services that are needed by the public (national defense, parks, etc.).
- It can regulate the for profit firms (e.g., trust-busting, environmental requirements, etc.).
- It can control areas of society through taxes/fees (e.g., public schools receive funding through taxes).
- Its focus should be on serving the needs of the nation and the people.

Role: Mayor's Office and City Redevelopment Authority

Goals: Based on the Sector Description above, list some goals you have for the situation:

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

Sector Simulation Game Non Profit Sector

Situation:

The city has identified abandoned residential housing that needs to be developed. Housing in the city is limited, especially for those who are currently homeless and for those who are working poor. This shared problem needs to be addressed by all three sectors: nonprofit, private and public/government. The players are the mayor and the city's redevelopment authority; a for-profit developer who wants to turn the housing into condo units; a non-profit organization that assists homeless people with the transition to jobs and housing, and a non-profit developer who wants to develop the property into affordable housing.

Nonprofit Sector Description:

- They can provide public goods or services needed by the public.
- They can provide private goods.
- These organizations receive trust from those receiving the service and those supporting the service.
- Funding comes from voluntary giving of their supporters or grant funding.
- Their main focus is to accomplish organizational goals and break even with money coming in but no profit.

Public goods

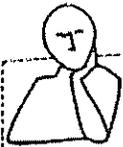
There are two characteristics of public goods:

- **Nonexcludability:** consumers cannot be prevented from using or benefiting from it.
- **Nonrivalry:** one person's use does not reduce the amount available for use by others.

Role: Non-profit that assists the working poor and homeless transition into homes, and a non-profit developer who wants to develop affordable housing.

Goals: Based on the Sector Description above, list some goals you have for the situation:

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.



Examples of Underdeveloped Sources of Relational Power

<i>Power Source</i>	<i>Example</i>
Relationship building	One-on-one organizing strategies, allowing ordinary people to discover their own capacities because someone—finally—is listening.
Ability to analyze power and self-interest	Communities Organized for Public Service (COPS) in San Antonio analyzes corporate interests in job training reform before bringing corporations into dialogue on reform.
Knowledge	National People's Action's documentation of redlining contributes to passing the federal Community Reinvestment Act. Workers at Weirton Steel buy the company and apply knowledge from their direct experience to make the company profitable.
Numbers	Ten thousand Texans with the IAF gather on state capitol steps, commanding attention of lawmakers.
Discipline	Young people in the Youth Action Program handle themselves with such decorum that New York's city council is moved to act.
Vision	In the Merrimack Valley Project in Massachusetts, some businesses "catch" the citizens' vision of industry responsive to community values.
Diversity	Memphis's Shelby County Interfaith links distinct black and white interests on school reform.
Creativity	Citizens in St. Paul devise their own neighborhood network to help the elderly stay out of nursing homes.
Persistence	ACORN members stay in line all night to squeeze out paid banking lobbyists for seats in the congressional hearing room.
Humor	Kentuckians for the Commonwealth stage a skit at the state capitol. In bed are KFTC members portraying legislators and their farmer chairperson as a coal company lobbyist. They pass big wads of fake cash under the covers.
Chutzpah/ nerve	Sixth graders in Amesville, Ohio, don't trust the EPA after a toxic spill in the local creek, so they make themselves into the town's water quality control team.
Mastering the arts of democracy	Groups regularly evaluate and reflect after each public action or event, asking, What did we learn? How did we grow? How can we do better?
Organization	Several citizen organizations, now with two or more decades of experience, are successfully institutionalizing the development in their members of all these many sources of power.

Steps to Community Organizing:

The following information is taken from *The Mobilizers Guidebook*. For in-depth descriptions of these steps, visit <http://www.mobilize.org> and/or purchase *The Mobilizers Guidebook*.

1. *Find an Issue You Care About*

Whether it is health care, curfews, access to education, debt consolidation or unkept sidewalks, find an issue that affects you and your community and get ready to take action. Is there a specific policy or issues in your community that you want to see changed? If you're not sure of an issue at this point, conduct a needs assessment to determine what your community's needs are.

2. *Educate Yourself*

You cannot fight to change laws if you do not understand them. Before you begin your advocacy, take time to research legislation, build a base for an argument, and develop an idea for change. Often the issues that interest us are complicated. It is important to understand the varying sides and angles of an issue in order to create a cohesive and effective argument. Once you have educated yourself, synthesize an argument, compile facts, arguments and counter arguments, and think about people in the community who would support your cause.

3. *Start a Group or Join Up with Others*

Once you know the issue you care about it is time to either start your own group or join with others. If there is a group or individual tackling the same issue in your community, join up with them by sending an email or making a phone call.

4. *Describe Your Mission and Set a Goal*

Once you and your friends or team rally around an issue, it is time to define your mission, describe your vision, and establish your goals. Do you want 100 signatures on a petition for school reform? Do you want to throw an event for people to learn about health care? Come away with a solid action plan, divide the work among your team members and get started.

5. *Find a Venue and Hold a Meeting*

When building your team it is a necessity to reward people for their hard work. One way to say thank you to your friends and colleagues is to solicit the support of a local restaurant, bowling alley or local hangout. Introduce yourself to the management and get them to offer a discount to you and members of your team. This place can become your local hangout and meeting place.

6. *Build a Coalition*

Now that you organized a core team and are interested in advocacy work, it is time to reconnect with supporting organizations and individuals to build a coalition. Talk to local high schools, colleges, nonprofits and local businesses in order to share the work, target different groups, share your mission, share your resources and share your contacts.

7. *Plan an Event*

Choose an appropriate event that will help you accomplish your goals. Develop a purpose for the event, organize a strong team to organize and run the event. Work with your coalition to budget appropriately and combine resources for the most successful event possible. Ensure you only promise something you can deliver, choose a venue that is not too large for your group, and manage the timing of your event so that it is not too long.

8. *Advocate*

Now that you have a goal, a team and allies you can create an advocacy plan. Advocate with phone calls, emails, letters and/or info sheets.

9. *Spread the Word*

Press can help your cause gain visibility and support. Concentrate on local press outlets and make some noise in your community. Media likes to cover stories about local people working hard to make a difference. Also, elected officials read local papers to keep their thumb on the pulse of their district. Generate a media contact list, build relationships and try to go for free advertising.

10. *Sustainability*

Make your group sustainable by acquiring the support of funds necessary to maintain your programming. Follow up with individuals and members of your coalition in order to maintain relationships and keep your issue at the forefront of your community.