

## Aids to effective practice of lay employees steering groups

### Clear objectives and responsibilities

- Ensure the organisation's long, medium and short-term objectives are clear.
- Have clear, well defined terms of reference as individuals and as a team.
- Establish clear individual roles and responsibilities.

### Clear definitions of problems and co-operation

- Frame challenges and decisions positively so that people can put forward constructive ideas.
- Haphazard decision making can alienate a worker and the Management team.
- Create a culture where input by the employee and the Management team is welcomed and considered.
- Encourage positive co-operation.
- Notice and address attitudes that undermine a process.

### Appropriate information giving and consultative process

- Consider how the people responsible for particular areas of work can involve others in a time- appropriate way (ie not last minute).
- Address how information can be shared and prioritised, to enable all to be involved in decision-making.
- Check that the amount of information given is appropriate and up to date.
- Encourage the asking of questions.
- Give opportunities for people to ask for clarification and additional information, to ensure that people understand the information that has been presented.
- Value contributions (do people give the impression that the 'real decision' is already made?)

### Planning

- Allow adequate time to work with problems or decisions
- Consider possible consequences (good or bad) when a new activity, event or way of working is being planned.

### Appropriate decision-making processes

- Encourage awareness of how people handle differences
- Reflect on decision making processes. For example, is it about finding a consensus that all agree with, does the majority vote win?
- Provide space for minority opinions to be heard and included.

### Avoiding domination and oppressive behaviour

- Consider issues of dominance and set up practices to avoid dominance by those who have been involved longest, are highest paid, have the highest status job title or might dominate for any other reason.
- Identify how hidden or overt racism, sexism, classism, ableism or other oppressive behaviours could stop people from participating. Also consider unconscious bias.

### Confidence

- Equip people who work with problems and make decisions to have confidence in their own abilities, in the group, and in the organisation.
- Consider the culture and model a "growth mindset" - Are people afraid of coming to the 'wrong' decision and being seen to fail? Are people afraid of coming to the 'right' decision and being seen to succeed? Do people not want to come to a decision?

### Follow up

- Implement decisions once made.
- Put in place review procedures of decisions.

*Adapted from Spectrum youth worker training*