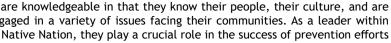
## **Connecting Prevention** Specialists to Native **Communities**

**Engaging Tribal Leaders and** Other Tribal Stakeholders for Prevention Efforts



Role of tribal leaders:

engaged in a variety of issues facing their communities. As a leader within their Native Nation, they play a crucial role in the success of prevention efforts and awareness. Tribal leaders have dual roles as a community leader and as a community member. Tribal leaders play a key role in: Advocacy Education and training

Tribal leaders work and care deeply for their communities. In return their roles have great influence and respect. Tribal leaders

Setting goals and targets

- Guidance

such as:

Stakeholder mapping/Identifying relevant stakeholders: Different leaders play various roles across several groups in the community. Before

### Who is the target audience of your program/initiative? (probe: about issues related to diversity and inclusion, such as gender, age group, interests etc.

Who else will be interested in this initiative? How can the leader have an impact on the success of your program or initiative? Is this leader directly or indirectly impacted by your program or initiative?

engaging any leader, identify who could be closely connected to your program and is empowered to work with you, this identification can be done by asking relevant questions

- Tribal leaders can include:
  - **Tribal Chiefs** Tribal Elders
  - Medicine people / healers Two - Spirit leaders

leaders are

Tribal council members Tribal college presidents Women's group leaders Tribes are unique and may have leaders specific to Youth Leader

- Pipe Carriers
- Spiritual leaders
- Where can you meet tribal leaders to engage them? Contact their office directly to schedule a face-to-face or phone
- At community events Elder talking circles

meeting

- Tribal government offices Community centers

them, find out who those

- Public tribal council meetings
- Tribal town hall forums

Tribal businesses

with the tribal leader and prepare 2-3 key points of information you want your audience to hear, understand. Remember, these key messages should be simple, concise, memorable, and relevant to the community and the tribal leader(s) you are engaging.

Have a clear objective for the meeting

Steps to prepare for engagement and

follow up Preparation

# It is important to plan ahead for who will speak if you have

to plan on being clear, brief, and to the point while saving the strongest points for the end of the conversation. Get to know the leader and tribal community before any meeting or proposals. Know the leader's role, their priorities in the community, any relevant existing programs. Create a packet of information that you can share and leave with the Tribal leader. This package could include information about your organization, programs and initiatives, local initiatives and

with them for guidance. They are often very knowledgeable of individual and

leader. During the Meeting Do not be late. Tribal leaders are involved in governance, economic development, healthcare etc. All of these take their time and energy. It is important to be respectful of their time. Even if a

When introducing yourself, simply say your name, where you are from, and something about your family. Do not give too much information about your credentials. Telling about

your family is more important than telling about your job and credentials.

### Early in the meeting, present a clear ask to the leader. Know what you would like this leader to do (e.g. attend an event, speak about the issue publicly, host a training), and clearly ask this of them early on. Then repeat this ask at the end.

versed on the issue.

Remember that engaging tribal leaders and other stakeholder involves building a long term and sustainable relationship. Avoid coming in once and leaving without follow up or maintaining a mutually beneficial relationship with the community. Remain in

touch during program implementation. Following up is where you work with the leaders to carry out what you have mutually agreed upon. It is important that you do not wait for the leader to follow up with you. Be

more closely with a member of the Tribal leader's staff, and make sure that those lines

If you are asking for the leader to speak in public, be prepared to help the leader

craft talking points on the issues.

during follow ups.

Request feedback on the program

of communication are clear.

prevention efforts or prevention needs.

you some special attention.

Emphasize respect. Respect and treat Tribal leaders the way you would other government leaders, CEOs etc. Tribal leaders are often also community elders and/or spiritual leaders. Your behavior should follow Tribal protocols for these kinds of interactions. A meeting of this nature is not the time to criticize a leader but to persuade them that the prevention effort deserves their attention and action. If a leader disagrees with you, remain respectful, present your reasoning and evidence, but do not become argumentative, negative, or defensive. Emphasize the positives of your standpoint, and always try to end the meeting on a positive note.

and method for following-up if an answer is unknown. Always end the meeting with a show of appreciation and ask how the leader can expect you to follow up on any items. Follow up

proactive and send a letter or email thanking the leader and their staff and reiterating the steps for following up. Be sure to send any additional information

more than one person meeting with the leader. Take some time in advance to prepare your key message that will work towards creating a connection and are easy to recall and relate with. Be sure program, statistics on the behavioral health challenge you want to address or any materials that may require the Tribal leader's further action and attention. Leave one packet with the Tribal leader and leave one behind for a staff member, as well. If the Tribal leader has staff or others they work with, get to know them and work community issues and will inform the leader of your views and requests. Treat a meeting with a staffer just as you would treat a meeting with the actual leader may be running a little bit late, showing up on time indicates how important this issue is to you. If you are on time and the leader is late, then leader may feel apologetic and grant If possible, invite somebody from the community with you to the meeting, preferably someone also involved in prevention effort to introduce you and share meaningful firsthand experiences with the current

Make the engagement simple, highlight key issues and any local statistics, long term effects of your project, and share information in a local, relatable context. Do not focus too much on the statistics, too many numbers can be lost on a person that is not well Ask questions to clarify and gain more understanding of the needs of tribal leader and the community. Listen after you ask a question, their input can reveal important details regarding potential pitfalls and will help you make informed decisions. Be patient with silent lapses, as they may be thoughtfully considering your words. Do not interrupt and allow time for others to have a chance to speak before continuing. Be prepared for questions and be sure to answer any questions clearly or set up a time frame

that the leader requested. Following up will probably include working

to work with you.

community.

Listening is very important, Tribes and their leaders have traditional and scientific knowledge about the areas of cultural, religious and other concerns for them. That knowledge should be respected and valued. Do not assume you know what their needs

Other things to

consider throughout

the process of

engaging tribes and

Every tribe is different with their own

tribal leaders

unique leaders, do not generalize. Take time to learn and understand who makes the decisions in the tribe(s) and who is empowered



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Prevention Technology Transfer Center



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