

The Community Engagement Diagnostic Survey Conversation Guide

This guide is designed to help you get the most out of the Spectrum of Community Engagement Strategies and the Diagnostic Survey, as a way to gauge your station's connectivity as a public broadcaster. It guides you through what you need to think about and which steps to take. The following lists what the Conversation Guide includes:

How and When to Use the Survey

- Together as a station team
- Tying the survey to strategic planning

Step by Step Directions

- Make decisions
- Take the online survey
- Meet to talk about results

Next Steps

- Continue the conversation
- Tips for building momentum

How and When to Use the Survey

The Community Engagement Diagnostic Survey Conversation Guide

The Diagnostic Survey will help you get a better handle on how connected you are with your community, the people you want to reach and engage with on multiple platforms. As public broadcasters, it is easy for us to assume we are engaging people from all walks of life in every possible way. But we seldom have the conversation about how we do it, in every department and through every platform. We can easily miss opportunities for greater impact and station synergy.

Using this online survey, you will:

- See a broader picture of how your station engages citizens
- Find new possibilities for cross-departmental partnerships
- Identify ways to improve your practices
- Increase interest internally about having impact

Together as a station team

This survey is online and can be taken by anyone. By itself, a person would find his/her results interesting and would receive helpful advice. But without others at the station taking the survey and then discussing it, chances are the changes that might need to take place will be difficult to achieve.

We encourage you to think about this as a station tool that brings people together to talk, discuss and find opportunities.

Tying the survey to strategic planning

With your station, use this survey as a step to ongoing strategic planning. Rather than pulling out last year's goals and strategies, have a different kind of conversation, through the lens of community engagement. More than anything, it will help staff see their roles in new lights and for many, with renewed energy.

STEP 1.

Make Some Decisions

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Step by Step Directions

A. Who do you want to take the survey and be part of the discussion?

We encourage you to think broadly. Every station is different, but think about including the following:

- General Manager and/or Station Manager
- Department heads for Production, Programming, Marketing and Development
- The person most responsible for Outreach, Education and/or Community Engagement
- The person most responsible for Listener or Viewer Services
- A person who everyone in the station trusts, who has no hidden or personal agenda, but is mission driven to the core
- A person, who although doesn't have the title, has the reputation for getting things done and has the track record to prove it
- A person you think is very creative, on the cutting edge and observant

B. Set a timeframe

Once you have decided who to invite, decide when you want to extend the invitations. We recommend that you give everyone two to three days (at most) to take the online Diagnostic Survey (it takes less than 20 minutes). A meeting to discuss the results should immediately follow.

C. Privacy of information

Each person that takes the survey online will want to know that no one else can see his/her individual results. The survey will automatically aggregate individual results into a station summary that displays the collective median responses. We recommend that you ask each person to print out his/her results to have as a reference and that those individual results remain private.

STEP 2.

Take The Survey

Step by Step Directions

A. Email invitation with link to the survey:

<http://mediaengage.org/dtool/>

You may want to personally invite individuals during meetings but to make sure everyone knows where to go take the online survey, we recommend email. The message can be short and to the point and should include the timeframe; how long you're giving them to go online to take the survey (again, not a big time commitment) and inform them of the meeting when the results will be discussed. Make sure everyone understands this is about how the station as a whole engages community, not one particular department.

This is also the opportunity to encourage people to answer truthfully; not how they wish the station was, but really what they think right now. You too, may want to let them know their individual answers are confidential.

B. Set meeting time and place to discuss results

Think about having the meeting in a neutral place, perhaps not where every other meeting happens. It will help communicate a message that this isn't just same-old-same-old; you want to have a different conversation. The room should have flip charts or white boards to write on.

If you're going to have someone from the outside facilitate the conversation, let people know in your invitation. We think this is the best way to go and we have suggestions for finding facilitators on our Web site:

<http://mediaengage.org/engage/communityDialogue/tips.cfm>. We may also be available to facilitate for a small fee.

C. Go online to take the survey

D. Print out results

STEP 3.

Meet to Talk About Results

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Step by Step Directions

To ensure a healthy conversation where everyone participates, plan on 90 minutes for the meeting. For slightly larger groups, you may need a little more time.

Have the following documents ready to hand out - both found online:

- Diagnostic Survey station summary of results and recommended tools
- Community Engagement aggregate station Spectrum results

Prior to the meeting, the facilitator should go through the Diagnostic Survey and be familiar with the Spectrum of Community Engagement Strategies,

found at: <http://mediaengage.org/bigThinking/Spectrum.pdf>

We are also available to advise facilitators throughout the process and can be reached at 1-866-234-2016 or online at

http://mediaengage.org/connect/contact_us.cfm

The following is a possible agenda for when you are using an outside facilitator. Again, we recommend this route and provide instructions for the facilitator throughout the agenda.

Possible Agenda

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1. Introductions & Ground Rules (5 minutes)

Talking Points:

This is a conversation, an opportunity to find out what everyone is thinking – not a debate. (See possible ground rules at <http://mediaengage.org/engage/communityDialogue/groundRules.cfm>) Acknowledge people are anxious to see and talk about results but make sure everyone is in a positive frame of mind. Ask people to set their individual results aside for the next 20 minutes.

Instructions: Go around the room getting names and one word to describe what they discovered in taking the survey. Record on flip chart.

2. Appreciative Inquiry Exercise (10 -15 minutes)

Talking Points:

Describe a time when you felt you had an impact. This should be a time that the process and the outcome were positive for you. It doesn't need to be related to the station. What was it and how did it make you feel?

Instructions: Go around the group, giving each person a chance to share. Have the facilitator write key words, "characteristics", down on a flip chart. Use this discussion to build a positive atmosphere and set up the aspiration-focused conversation that follows.

3. Station's Community Engagement Aspirations (5-10 minutes)

Talking Points:

Ask everyone to now think about the station and how the listed words & characteristics fit. Do the words resonate? Do other words come to mind? (This is a quick check-in about how people feel about their work at the station – are they passionate about what they do, about the possibilities of having impact?)

Instructions: Go around the room and ask each person for a quick assessment about their hopes and dreams for the station. Record on flip chart.

**Possible
Agenda**
cont'd

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4. Discuss Results of Diagnostic Survey (45 minutes)

Question to pose right before handing out results:

- As you were taking the survey, did you become aware of anything new or think of something you hadn't previously? Or did you learn anything about your organization?

Instructions: Hand out Diagnostic Survey and Spectrum results showing the position of where each individual landed and the position of where the group landed as a whole.

Questions to pose after handing out results:

- Looking at the results, did you land where you thought you would? Are there any surprises?
- Did any questions (about your organization) come up for you?
- How can you use this new awareness/realization/process?
- Given this, where do you want the station to be in two years, at the end of 2010?
- What would you like to see your station do first?

5. Conversation Close (10 minutes)

Questions to pose:

What is one thing from the discussion that excites you or is important to you? Tell us one thing you'll do to advance or realize it.

Instructions: Go around the room, giving each person a chance to answer. Capture the content on the flip chart and inform everyone that these notes will be provided to everyone in the room and as a group they should decide if the notes get distributed any further. Notes should be emailed to the group within several days of the meeting, thanking everyone for attending.

Set up another time to talk as a group. We recommend this take place no more than two weeks after the first conversation.

Next Steps

Continue the Conversation

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How far the first conversation went will influence the tone and appropriate starting place for the second group meeting. The important thing is to have another group conversation, no matter what the results were from the first meeting. If nothing else, you are giving everyone the opportunity to reflect and respond.

Because we anticipate great diversity in what is appropriate for each station, the following are ideas to think about in crafting the agenda. Again, we recommend the use of an outside facilitator, and if possible, to have continuity from the first to the second.

Meeting Starter/Icebreaker

Talking Points:

During the last gathering we collectively created a list of station aspirations. To start the conversation today, let's review those and then check in to see if anyone has had any "ahas", or reflections after being back in the trenches.

Instructions: Have the list of aspirations posted on a white board or flip chart to walk through. Record the "ahas" and reflections as you go around the room.

Group Discussion: Are we happy with where we are? Or do we want to move up the Spectrum of Community Engagement Strategies?

Instructions: Quickly walk through the results of taking the Diagnostic Survey; show them via an overhead from online if possible, or as a handout. Then pose the questions and allow time for everyone to express their opinions. If there is obvious agreement over one particular area, move on to a group brainstorm.

Group Brainstorm: Making the change

Talking Points:

What do you need to overcome obstacles?

Instructions: Have the group identify the obstacles and record on a flip chart. Next, create a list of resources and ideas that can address some of these challenges.

Next Steps

Tips for Building Momentum

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More than ever, we know everyone is busy. So, here are some ideas for keeping your desire to improve your community connections alive:

- Create a guiding coalition
From your group, who can and will commit to making it happen?
Outside of your group, who should you pull in?
- Articulate your vision and strategy
If done well, what will look like?
If done poorly, what does it look like?
What are your obstacles?
- Act – do something; take some steps and test the water
- Use the customized tools and resources identified in your station results to move your effort forward
- Stick to it and celebrate your small wins
- Be sure to let others know about your effort and pull people in along the way