

CERTIFIED COMMUNITY ACTION PROFESSIONAL BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

A. The History of the Community Action Movement

1. The concepts, events, programs and political/social climate preceding the War on Poverty and why each was important to the origins of Community Action (pre-1964)
 - a. Settlement House Movement
 - b. The Depression and the Increasing Role of Government in Social Problem Solutions
 1. New Deal
 2. Failure of Impoverished Americans to Benefit from New Programs
 - c. Civil Rights Movement
 - d. President's Council on Juvenile Delinquency, Ford Foundation funding and "Grey Areas" projects and their relationship to the concept of "community action"
 - e. Revelation of a Subculture of Poverty in the U.S.
 1. *New York Times*: Appalachia series
 2. Michael Harrington: *The Other America*
 3. John Kenneth Galbraith: *The Affluent Society*
 4. Analyses of Poverty
 - f. The changing social climate of the 1960s
 1. Increasing interest of federal government in poverty solutions
 2. Citizen unrest/social action
2. The creation of Community Action, its formative years and the resulting implications for the future (1964-1974)
 - a. The Economic Opportunity Act (EOA) and the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO)
 1. Structure of the EOA: administration, major programs and themes/strategies
 2. Fundamental philosophy of the EOA
 - a. Self-empowerment of the poor/maximum feasible participation
 - b. Redistribution of opportunities
 - c. Intervention
 - d. Community leadership
 - e. Administration
 1. Location of OEO
 2. Community Services Act vs. Employment/Training Strategies
 - f. Volunteerism
 3. Creation of Community Action Agencies (CAAs)
 - a. Local control within an organized national effort/network
 - b. Influence and voice of the poor

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- c. Community capacity building
 - 4. Problems and opposition
 - a. Mayors
 - b. Mississippi (events/activities)
 - c. Waning interest of President Johnson
 - d. Vietnam War
 - e. Restructuring and consolidation
 - f. Urban Riots
 - b. Green and Quie amendments
 - 1. Tripartite Board Requirements
 - c. Changing political environment
 - 1. Role of Federal Government
 - 2. Spin-off of programs
 - 3. Attempted dismantling of OEO/CAAs
 - 4. Reaction of CAA network
- 3. The shift from Community Action to Community Services (1974-1981)
 - a. Community Services Administration (CSA)
 - 1. New “home” for CAAs
 - 2. Increased interest in, and development of, good management practices and standards of effectiveness
 - 3. Innovative program development
 - 4. Redesign of CAAs’ systems/Grantee Program Management System (GPMS)
- 4. The change to Block Grants (1981-present) and its impact on Community Action
 - a. Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)
 - 1. End of highly visible, activist role of federal government in poverty solutions or devolution of office location/permanence of State Administrative Programs
 - 2. Changes in funding and administrative mechanisms
 - 3. Eligible entities and activities
 - 4. Impact of CSBG on national poverty effort vs. local flexibility
 - 5. Key concepts and philosophies of Community Action within the CSBG
 - 6. State Administration of Programs

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B. Vision and Values of the Community Action Movement

1. The visionary concepts of Community Action that have been commonly held and are the basis of community involvement and agency management.

We pledge to rededicate ourselves “to eliminating poverty in the midst of plenty in this Nation by opening to everyone the opportunity for education and training, the opportunity to work, and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity.”

We hereby recommit to continue the battle to help the poor to overcome hunger, inadequate housing, illiteracy, unemployment, discrimination and the lack of adequate educational, health and social services

We accept the challenge to lead our agency, our community, and our country with renewed dedication, enthusiasm and effort, into a new era in which the dignity and decency of all people will be paramount.

- a. Poverty can be eliminated by creating an environment that encourages opportunities for everyone
- b. Community Action is development of these opportunities.
- c. Serving the best interests of the poor is in the best interest of all people.
- d. Systems and people have the potential for change.
- e. Community Action’s success is dependent upon the collective efforts of the entire community and its institutions

2. The values and beliefs of Community Action affirm the capability and spirit of humanism collectively; and recognize the differences of each individual.

- a. The misery of poverty must be addressed and alleviated
 - 1. Poverty is unacceptable, painful and far-reaching
 - 2. Easing the misery of poverty is good, right and essential in an affluent society
 - 3. Community Action identifies and addresses the causes of poverty
 - 4. Community Action removes obstacles, fills gaps and confronts the causes/conditions of poverty.
- b. Despair can be replaced by opportunity and hope through Community Action intervention
 - 1. Empowerment of the poor for economic and social self-sufficiency

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- through a variety of means
2. Local flexibility/control creating a program mix: responsive to customers and community's needs
 3. Anti-poverty initiatives must be related to assessed community needs
- c. The plight of the poor must be made known
1. Community Action is the voice for the poor
 2. Use of full range of public relations techniques
- d. The impoverished individuals, families and communities can be enabled and assisted to attain self-sufficiency and independence
1. Agencies move to shift forces from self-serving to selfless endeavors
 2. Agencies move from the abstract idea of the elimination of poverty to the achievement of self-sufficiency on an individual/family basis
 - a. Listen to the poor/interact one-on-one, in partnership
 - b. Encourage, assist, and strengthen the abilities of the poor to play major roles in programs, services and systems affecting them
 - c. Accept the presence of the positive in people, work from an individual, asset-based model.
- e. A coordinated response to poverty causes/conditions, facilitated by the CAA, can be an effective approach to moving people out of poverty
1. Effective use of the CAA Board structure
 2. Development of networks, coalitions, task forces
 3. Mobilization of resources; internally and externally
 4. Initiation of grassroots activities
 5. Community capacity building and development
- f. The vision and values of Community Action must be modeled internally and projected externally.

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C. Community Action Agency Traditional Management Skills

1. Strategic Planning

- a. Purposes of Planning
- b. Benefits of Planning
- c. Planning Concepts
- d. Community Action Plan

2. Organizational Process Management

- a. Board Structure
- b. Program/Service Delivery Processes
 - i. Anti-poverty visionary models
 - 1. Structures to revitalize communities
 - 2. Structures to empower families
 - ii. Strategy Delivery Models
 - 1. Direct
 - 2. Contractual
 - 3. Collaborative/partnership/consortia
- c. Administrative Support Processes
 - i. Human Relations
 - ii. Property
 - iii. Procurement
 - iv. Financial
 - v. Public Relations
 - vi. Information and Reporting

3. Directing/Controlling

- a. Management Role and Styles
- b. Empowerment of Constituencies
- c. Operations and Accountability
- d. Grant/Contract Administration

4. Evaluating: Measurement, Analysis and Performance Management

- a. Results Oriented Management and Accountability (ROMA)
- b. Evaluation Methods and Techniques
- c. Use of Evaluation Results

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D. Organizational Leadership

1. Overview

- a. Management vs. Leadership
- b. Leadership Styles, Characteristics and Qualities

2. Fundamental Practices of Exemplary Leadership

- a. Thinking Strategically
- b. Creating a Shared Vision
- c. Building Capacity
- d. Being Agents of Change

3. Forward Thinking Leadership Skill Sets

- a. Innovation
- b. Succession Planning
- c. Forecasting
- d. Communication
- e. Emotional Intelligence

4. Ethical Considerations for Community Action Leadership

- a. Service to mission above service to self
- b. Commitment to excellence of life long learning
- c. Professional competence
- d. Respect for board and community
- e. Honest communication
- f. Personal integrity that inspires trust and confidence
- g. Avoidance of conflict of interest and undue personal gain
- h. Respect for confidentiality
- i. Promotion of the professional development of colleagues

5. Community Action values become real through responsible leadership to:

- a. Empower individuals and families
- b. Facilitate the revitalization of communities
- c. Assure maximum, feasible participation of the poor
- d. Utilize appropriate, effective advocacy
- e. Inform the entire community

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E. Theories: Causes of Poverty and Strategies to Address the Causes

1. Overview

- a. Global Economics and Poverty
- b. United States Economics and Poverty
- c. Discrimination, Social Mobility and Moral Politics
- d. Economic Inequality

2. Innovative, Effective and Visionary Strategies

- a. Individual and Family Strategies
- b. Community Strategies
- c. Influencing Public Policy