

From Talk to Action: Community Input into the District Budget

Presentation/Conversation with the Upper
Darby School District Community

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November 27, 2012

Overview

- The project: Goals and Outcomes
- Basic perspectives
- Kinds of forums
- Leadership situations
- Information vs. Learning Models
- An example
- Project timeline
- Expected Outcomes
- Discussion

“Outwitted”



He drew a circle that shut
me out-

Heretic, rebel, a thing to
flout.

But Love and I had the wit
to win:

We drew a circle that took
him in!

- Edwin Markham

Where wisdom comes from ...



- “None of us is as smart as all of us.” – Japanese proverb
- “Together we can come to find a wisdom that we could not find alone” – Michael Sandel
- “Your audience is always smarter than you are” - Dan

Buy-in/Ownership/Cooperation



People work hardest to implement that which they had a hand in planning.

Kinds of Forums

- To Tell/Inform
- To Learn/Get Feedback
- To Build Common Ground

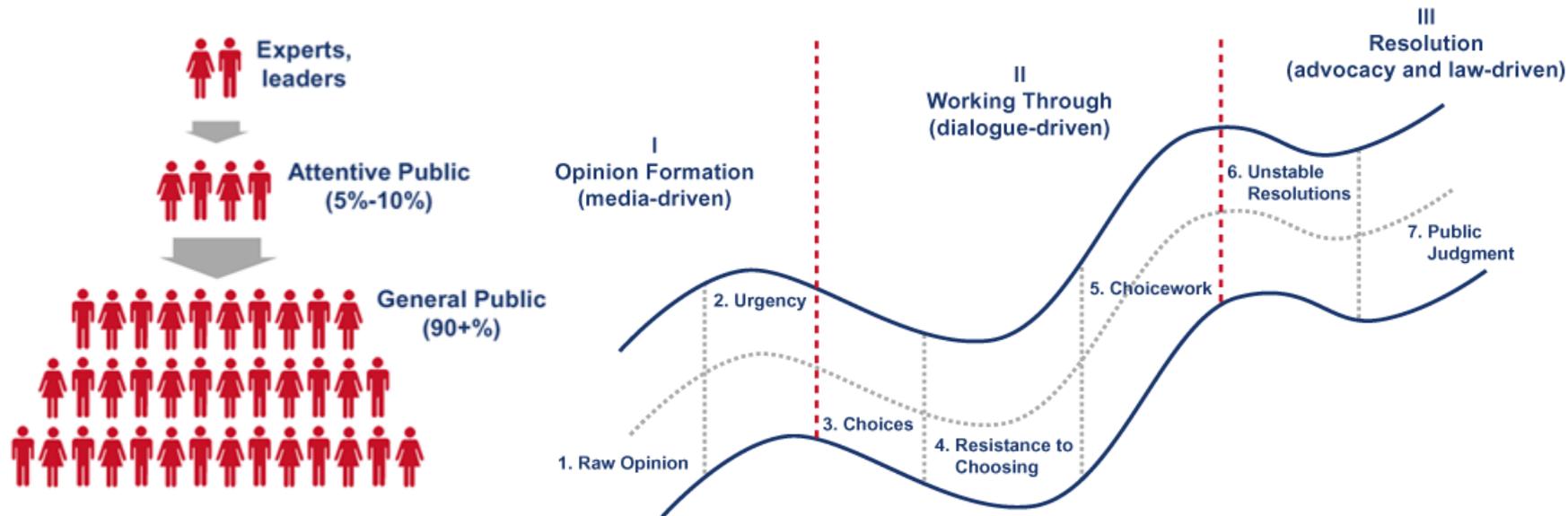
Types of Leadership Situations: Technical and Adaptive

Situation	Problem Definition	Solution & Implementation	Primary Responsibility for the Work	Kind of Work
Type I	Clear	Clear	Physician	Technical
Type II	Clear	Requires learning	Physician and patient	Technical and adaptive
Type III	Requires learning	Requires learning	Patient more than physician	Adaptive

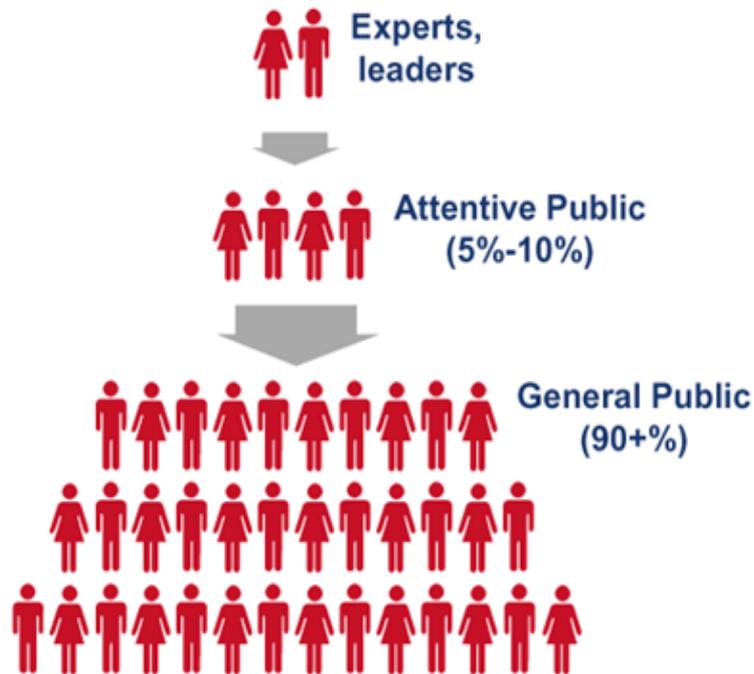
Information vs. Learning Models

○ The Traditional “Expert Information” Model

○ The New “Public Learning” Model



The Traditional “Expert Information” Model



- Favored by experts, the government and the press
- Top-down and one-way
- The public is expected to learn, not contribute
- Focuses on information rather than values
- Focuses on creating awareness
- Assumes awareness leads to resolution
- Assumes that a well-informed public is the “Holy Grail” of democracy



A Nest of Flawed Assumptions

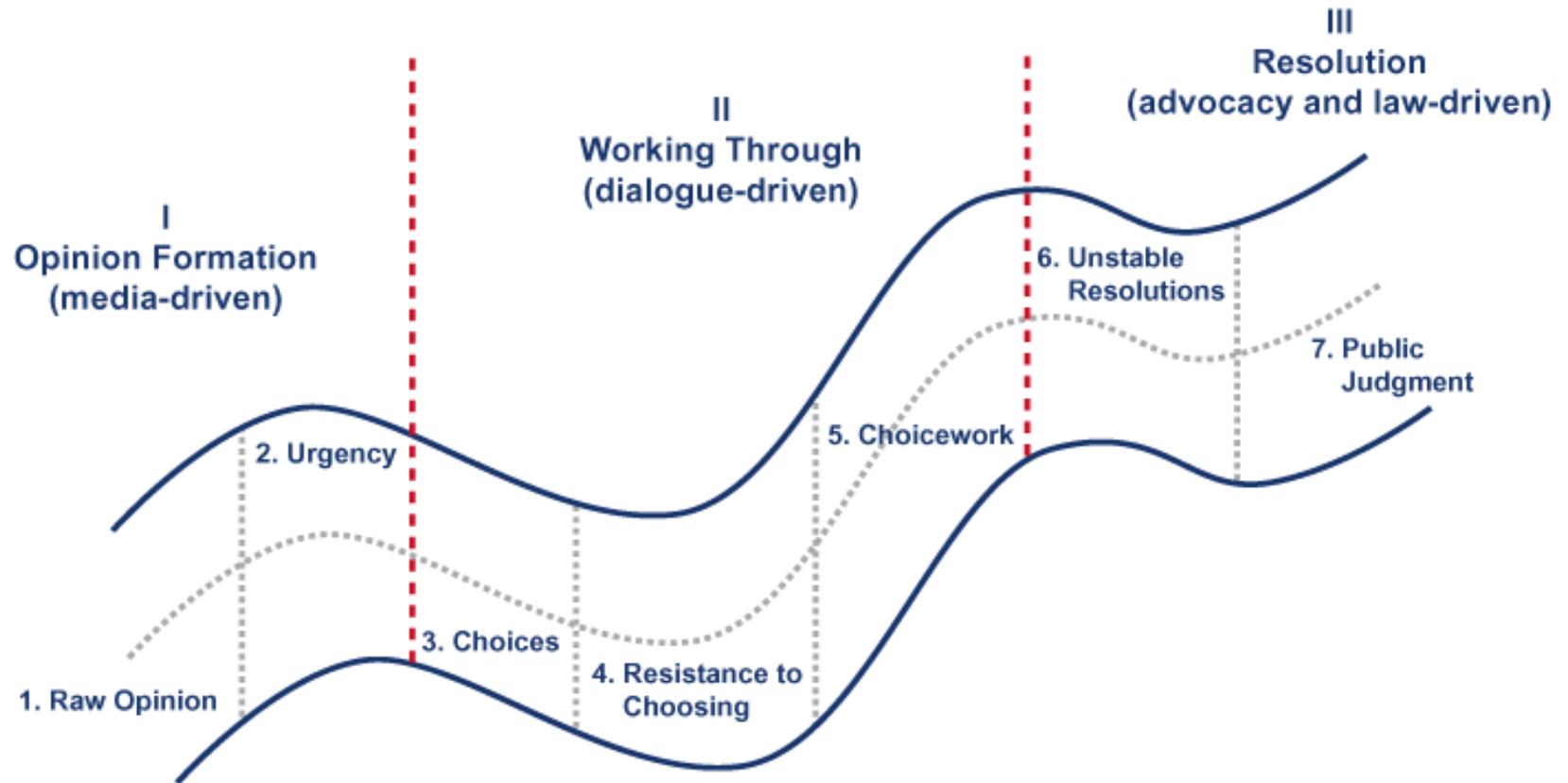
The traditional model falsely assumes that:

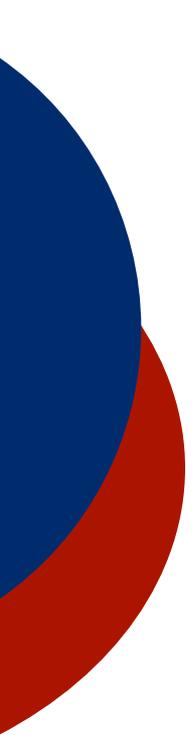
- Information is the key to public learning.
- People make up their minds once they receive relevant information.
- The public interprets information in the same way that experts do.
- Experts know what information the public needs and how to convey it.
- Experts who debate their opposing views help the public to learn.
- Technology can compensate for deficiencies in the model.
- There is no need to base the model on how people actually make hard choices.

Conclusion

The traditional model works only when there are no hard choices to make.

The New “Public Learning” Model





THOUGHTS

BELIEFS

opinions

ideas

POLLS

— feelings —

HOPES —

deliberation

"working through"



common ground

"values" based



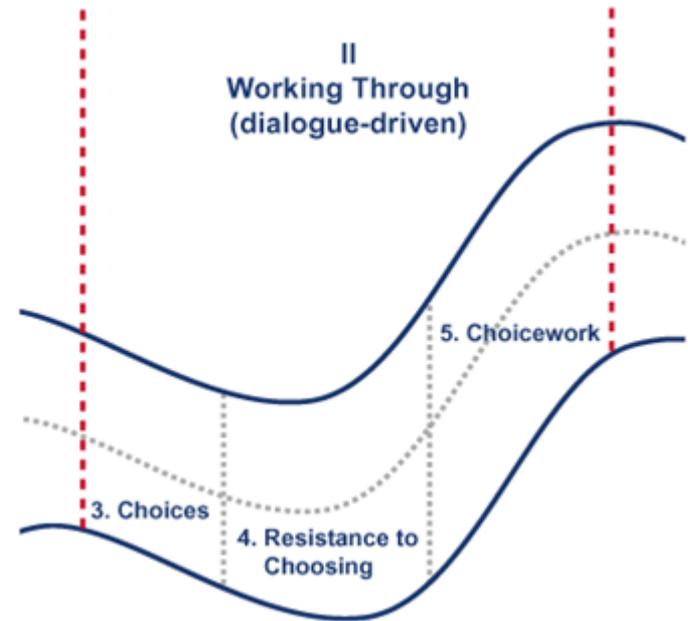
JUDGMENT

Major Features of the New “Public Learning” Model

- Requires three stages rather than two
- Accounts for how people actually resolve hard choices
- Interactive
- Takes time
- Requires people to struggle with conflicting values
- The public’s wisdom adds value to the experts’
- Different communication strategies apply to each stage

Choicework Dialogues

- What they do:
 - Help people work through the hard choices phase.
 - Help people confront painful tradeoffs and conflicting values.
 - Are the most efficient method for moving people through this stage.
 - Compress into a short period a process that might otherwise stretch over months and years.



Daniel Yankelovich, Viewpoint Learning, Inc

An Example:

The City Budget: Tight Times, Tough Choices

- *Context*
- *Goals*



The City Budget: Context



The City Budget: Tight Times, Tough Choices Goals

- *Inform participants*
- *Inform the city*
- *Build common ground for action*

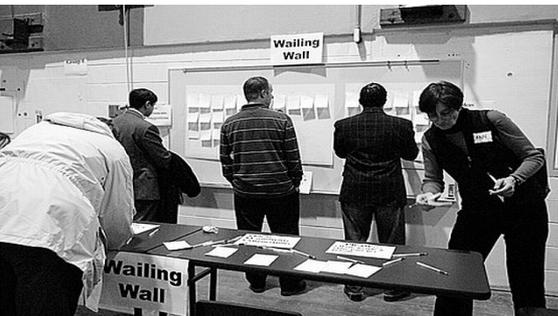


The City Budget: Tight Times, Tough Choices

The Workshop Structure

At each forum:

- Panel discussion with city officials
- Small group works – 20-25 people per group
 - Work through a list of more than 30 actions to close a \$200 million annual budget gap
 - Differentiate “low hanging fruit,” “no way, no how,” “shared pain” and “gut wrenchers”
- Individual input:
 - 2 Minute video testimonies – 160+
 - Short written statements on “Wailing Wall” – 440+



Sample from worksheet

		What it means	Points
POLICE	Reduce budget by 10%	Lay off or leave unfilled 929 sworn officer positions (14 percent of 6,624 total). Lay off 73 civilians (9 percent). Shut down 10 specialty units, reduce size of 9 units.	26
	Reduce budget by 20%	Lay off or leave unfilled 1,755 sworn officer positions (26 percent of 6,624) and 87 civilian positions (11 percent). Close four more specialty units, reduce 15 others. Patrols down 7.5 percent in each district.	52
	13. PUBLIC HEALTH ALTH		
PUBLIC HEALTH ALTH	Reduce budget by 20%	Close nursing home, one health center. No longer dispense OTC meds for free. Lose 58 positions.	5
	Reduce budget by 30%	Close nursing home, three health centers. Lose 157 positions.	7
	Revenue option		
	Charge co-pays for uninsured visits; fees for physicals	Some clients may not seek treatment because of cost. Clients would also have to begin paying for over-the-counter meds.	1

ACTION - POINTS	LOW HANGING FRUIT (# of Groups PLUS Groups voting for different point levels)	NO WAY NO HOW # of Groups	SHARED PAIN (# of Groups PLUS Groups voting for different point levels)	GUTWRENCHER (# of Groups OR # of Groups voting for different point levels)	NO DECISION # of Groups
1) ADMINISTRATIVE - 5	17 PLUS 3 @ 2.5 PTS	0	14 PLUS 1 @ 4 AND 1 @ 2 PTS	0	17
A) RECORDS FEE - 1	7	0	6	0	40
2) COURTS - 10	1 PLUS 2 @ 5 PTS	4	2 PLUS 2 @ 5 PTS	1	41
3) DROP - 4	27 PLUS 1 @ 3 PTS	0	4 PLUS 1 @ 2 PTS	0	20
4) PARKS - 1 OR 2	0	19	0	0	34
5) FIRE - 10 OR 20	0	28	2 @ 10 PTS 2 @ 5 PTS	2 @ 0 PTS	19
6) LIBRARY - 1 OR 3	0	25	0	0	28
7) HOUSING - 7	0	37	1 @ 5 pts	0	15
8) HUMAN SERVICES - 9 OR 19	0	28	0	0	25
9) LAW - 2	7 PLUS 2 @ 1 PT	0	5 PLUS 1 @ 1 PTS	0	40
10) L & I - 4	2 @ 2 PTS	3	3 PLS 4 @ 2 PTS	0	41
11) POLICE - 26 OR 52	2 @ 13 PTS	25	5 @ 13 PTS, 3 @ 26, 1 @ 2.5	3 @ 26 PTS	16
12) PRISONS - 10 or 21	5 @ 10 PTS, 1 @ 21	5	12 @ 10 pts, 3 @ 21, 1 @ 5	1 @ 10 PTS	30
13) PUBLIC HEALTH - 5 OR 7	0	37	0	1 @ 5 PTS	15
A) CO-PAYS, FEES 1	1	6	5	0	41
14) RECREATION - 2, 3, 5	1 @ 2 PTS	30	1 @ 1 PT, 1 @ 2 PTS	1 @ 3 PTS	19
15) STREETS - 10	0	1	9 PLUS 2 @ 5 PTS	1	41
A) BUSINESS FEE - 2	13	0	6	0	34
B) \$5 TRASH FEE - 13	1	2	5 PLUS 1 @ 6.5 PTS	0	44
16) VEHICLE FLEET - 6	36 PLUS 3 @ 3 PTS, 1 @ 5	0	5		8
17) AMUSEMENT TAX - 2	31 PLUS 3 @ 4 PTS, 1 @ 3, 1 @ 16	0	7	1	9
18) BPT GROSS - 2	3, 1 WITH SMALL BIZ EXEMPTION	1	3	0	46
19) BPT NET - 2	2, 1 WITH SMALL BIZ EXEMPTION	1	4	0	46
20) EAGLES - 4	53	0	0	0	0
21) PARKING - 2	30 PLUS 1 @ 4 PTS, 1 @ 16 PTS	0	8	0	13
22) REAL ESTATE - 5	6	1	8 PLUS 3 @ 2 PTS, 3 @ 10, 1 @ 15	0	31
23) R.E. TRANSFER - 2	6	0	6 PLUS 2 @ 4 PTS	1	38
24) SALES - 6	7 PLUS 1 @ 12 PTS		16	0	29
25) WAGE/ RESIDENT - 1, 12	3 @ 1 PT, 3 @ 6, 5 @ 12, 1 @ 24	0	19 @ 12 PTS, 1 @ 1 PT, 2 @ 6, 1 @ 40	1 @ 12 PTS	18
26) WAGE/COMMUTER - 1, 5	10 @ 5 PTS, 1 @ 1 PT, 1 @ 10, 1 @ 25	0	16 @ 5 PTS, 1 @ 1 PT, 1 @ 2.5	1	21
ACTION - POINTS	LOW HANGING FRUIT	NO WAY NO HOW	SHARED PAIN	GUTWRENCHER	NO DECISION

Thematic Analysis

- Focus on Increasing Revenue
- Distrust
- Vision
- Minimize Impact on the Most Vulnerable Taxpayers
- Balance Prevention with Safety
- Minimize Impact on the Most Vulnerable Workers
- Overcome Inefficiencies Before Cutting Services
- Tackle Long-Range Issues Now, So They Don't Become Issues without End

Time Line

December 2012	Initial advisory group meeting
January 2013	Start community outreach Second advisory gorup meeting
February 15 – March 15, 2013	Hold community budget forums/workshops Third advisory gorup meetig
March 15-25, 2013	Final advisory group meeting
March 30, 2013	Final report to community and School Board

Advisory Group

○ Role

- Identifying potential participants for each of the forums
- Communicating with your peers in support of the project
- Helping us anticipate particular challenges, hurdles, etc.

Advisory Group

- Make up
 - 12-15 people, broadly representative of stakeholder interests
 - Parent
 - Student
 - Non-parent resident and senior citizen
 - Community leader and business person
 - Upper Darby "resident" staff
- How to indicate your interest:
 - On-line: <http://tinyurl.com/UD-BudgetAdvisoryBoard>
 - Call Linda Breitstein: 215-898-1112

What outcomes to expect

- Products
 - Priorities from the forums
 - Values-based principles to explain decisions
- District response
 - Tell you how they used the above products

Discussion

- Your questions, thoughts, ideas

Contact

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