

Putting People First! Advocacy Training

Role Play to Practice Negotiation Skills

DIRECTIONS

For this role play exercise, you will need to divide into teams. (If the group is large, we'll divide into 4 or 6 teams.)

Team A will represent community leaders, patients, and neighbors who want to negotiate with their local hospital on one of the following issues (pick one and share the topic with Team B):

- Issue #1 – Improving hospital billing policies for people without good insurance, and making sure interpreters are available to answer billing questions
- Issue #2 – Increasing employment opportunities for local residents without college degrees
- Issue #3 – Investing in a program and offering political support to help patients and families with asthma evaluate, investigate, and address issues with mold or pests in the buildings where they live

Team B will represent a group of hospital community benefit staff and executives who are worried about the issues the community raises—especially since the hospital is seeing higher numbers of uninsured patients in the ER this year—but who don't want to spend a lot of money addressing the problem. Besides, the hospital has already decided how it is spending its community benefit dollars this year. This wasn't part of the plan.

Instructions

Meet with your team members for 10 minutes to strategize and prepare. After 10 minutes, start “negotiations” with the other team based on the improvements Team A proposes. You will have 10 minutes to try to negotiate a solution. **Take notes about your experience to share with the large group.**

FOR TEAM A (Community Leaders/Advocates)

Some questions Team A should consider when meeting to strategize and plan include:

- What are **2-3 specific changes** it wants Team B (the hospital) to adopt?
- What are some of the **strongest arguments in favor** of these changes?

Putting People First! Advocacy Training

- What **challenges** does Team A think Team B (the hospital) will use to argue against the changes?
- How can Team A **frame its desired changes in ways that will show a benefit** to Team B (the hospital)? In other words, are there ways Team A can appeal to Team B's self-interest? Values? Bottom line/need to make profit?
- What are some ways Team A can suggest the changes in a way that is **most appealing** to Team B (the hospital)?

FOR TEAM B (Hospital Community Benefit Staff and Leadership)

Some questions Team B should consider when meeting to strategize and plan include:

- What **changes** can you anticipate that Team A (community leaders) will ask you to make?
- What are some of the **strongest arguments in favor** of these changes? Against them?
- What **challenges** will you (as hospital staff) face if you agree to these changes? (Some examples: the change is expensive and money is limited, staff will need to be hired or retrained, you will first need to convince hospital board and others in the hospital, you don't think the change they are suggesting will solve the problem)
- If you are leaning towards working with the community leaders, what are some **next steps** that make sense to you?
- If you do not plan to make the changes they suggest, will you still try to **preserve or build the relationship with the community**? How?