

Session Notes from Group Activity on Change Process

Value of a Plan

1. Sets/clarifies expectation among members and for leaders
2. Builds consensus – provides for needs driven organization (as opposed to decisions made from personal perspective)
3. Defines resource needs
4. Sets key priorities – where to place emphasis in an already busy organization
5. Establishes credibility with other groups (members, prospective members, ARA volunteer and staff leadership, and external groups)
6. Enables the development of a work plan that can be used as a tool to motivate members and encourage their involvement

Value of Creating a Work Plan

1. Image: sends message to others that the organization is prepared, organized, clear of what want to accomplish
2. Defines small, medium and large tasks – helps in recruiting volunteers
3. Provides for accountability – to members and to APA
4. Enables us to measure pace of change

Some of the Common Problems

- limited interaction between Division Chairs
- need to compete with like organizations – building “alliances” is essential volunteer and staff leaders don’t face them common question “why should I be a member”
- Lack effective process to share and exchange information
- Current system we use and operate in is complex
- We represent specific groups and that representation may limit us from thinking about, being sensitive to, or connecting with other groups (as we might)
- APA lacks full understanding of divisions and their value
 - Possibly the dynamics of a large organization
 - Lack understanding of specific needs
 - Lack integration by various groups on issues
 - Operate sometimes in isolation – don’t tap other groups
 - No vetting process with APA
 - Competition and diversity with other internal groups – we don’t often think about how our information might be of value to another group; and no consideration from other groups of the same
 - Don’t effectively tap our own expertise

Why Change Process Fails:

Inherent Damage When Seeking to Affect Change Through Planning

- Poor or no research from key audiences
- Plans are created in isolation
- Poor communication for key groups once the plan has been prepared
- Limited effort in building alliances
- Disbelief that it can be achieved (the plan) poor attitude about members being willing to become active
- Lack persistence needed to be a change agent.

Seeking to Achieve Positive Change for Divisions: Group Discussion

To Affect Positive Change – Seek to Define “Time 2” (preferred future)

In response to question: “what problem or opportunity are Divisions facing collectively:”

1. conduct outreach effort to elected officials
2. mobilizing membership (increase participation and volunteerism)
3. improve linkage of Division to APA plan; and linkage of plans among Divisions

As result, group asked to consider what would the preferred future look like – describe “Time 2.” The following statements were generated from that discussion (not in priority order)

Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Create greater synergy within the membership within the divisions.	Increase the level of interactivity among division leaders and members.	Ensure division plans and activities are coordinated with APA National and other Division’s efforts to maximize value to our members and the planning profession as a whole.

In reviewing these options – appeared that three components could be examined:

Process	Tools	Relationships
Revise the current process by which Divisions interact with APA as well as fellow Divisions (communicate laterally and vertically); be sensitive to developing a process that builds a more effective feedback loop – communication shared in both directions; providing recognition when appropriate; and demonstrating sensitivity to contributions a Division has to offer.	Examine current templates and report formats; establish common templates and report formats to provide for greater alignment of information; helps conduct greater analysis between and among Divisions	Consider steps that build stronger and more positive working relationships among Division leaders and with APA leaders.

Strategies to Consider Designed to Support Desired Change

General

APA – Divisions: Division’s less effective in put relative to chapters (10,000 members vs 38,000 members)

Process	Tools	Relationships
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Require some linkage to APA’s development plan (e.g. communication plan) 2. Rethink how Division’s are organized and emphasize their value to the association (e.g. appropriate scheduling of division meetings at conference – this will also improve members’ involvement/sharing as discussed in the Division Leader’s Forum) 3. APA – Divisions: Incorporate into the process – have Division’s react to the National plan 4. APA – Divisions: Identify Division plan actions appropriate for inclusion in the National plan (“bubble up”); evaluations are part of this 5. Division to Division: Need for Joint Action Plans – mandated procedure for Division’s to lead policy guides 6. Division to Division: Link to performance criteria – to APA Development Plan 7. Division to Division: Encourage cross- membership (individuals in multiple Divisions) 8. Circulate information regularly 9. Fashion division goals, objectives and work plans with APA 10. Chair and vice chair both receive information from APA to support continuity from one leader to the next 11. APA – Divisions: Step up to the tasks asked of the Divisions by National (policy guide, implement work plan, etc.) 12. Increase communication between division chairs 13. Establish greater access to information for members 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Open information exchange of Division newsletters and websites (for Division members and leaders) 15. Improve navigation of APA website 16. Consider adapting template created by Division Council to use 17. Division to Division: do what GALA and BLACK does... 18. Divisions Council 19. Conference Sessions 20. Policy Guides 21. Special Projects (Air, food) 22. Improve ways we operate our listservs: sign up options for Division members and officers 23. Create/update/improve orientation manual for Division Chairs/Officers 24. Work toward developing a pertinent, relevant research connection 25. Establish way to capture awareness/samples of those Divisions that are operating at high performance; or that are achieving desired goals (e.g. inspired and active members) 26. Ask every Division to send short news flash, consolidate for DC leadership and send out in a short email 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 27. APA National enhances information sharing on APA staff activities and policy-making to enhance Division activities and for Division’s to provide assistance/direction input to National’s initiatives 28. Continue/enhance sharing of best practices 29. Answer communications 30. Create justification for additional staff support from APA 31. APA – Divisions: Pick up the phone 32. Division to Division: Pick up the phone! 33. APA – Divisions: Invite National staff to Division meetings; share Division communications with them 34. APA – Divisions: National should alert Divisions to comment on relevant tasks within the National work plan 35. Assess current ad-hoc alliances; determine those necessary to cultivate to achieve our goals 36. Create more ad-hoc alliances between divisions 37. Build relationships and expectations in such a way to avoid fear of presenting findings or expectations to APA leaders out of concern of facing retribution