

## Reading: Encouraging Involvement

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### Involvement Techniques

Effective ways to get people involved include:

- One-on-one interviews
- Working groups or taskforces
- Surveys (print or on-line)
- Focus groups
- Structured-group interviews
- Special committees
- Documents distributed for review and reaction

Face-to-face, personal interaction generally results in higher-quality information. However, you may not have the time or funds to involve large numbers of people in those face-to-face methods.

It is most important to gather information in person early in the process, to be sure there are no misunderstandings that cause rework later on. When creating your information-gathering strategy, it is advisable to involve communication specialists. Survey design experts are especially helpful in formulating appropriate questions for written or on-line surveys.

### Barriers To Involvement

Following are some of the reasons people resist becoming involved in the change effort:

- They do not understand the vision.
- They understand the vision but do not believe it is possible to achieve.
- They support a different vision.
- Their managers or executives don't support the change, and they fear recriminations.
- There is not enough budget money for expenses like travel to design team meetings.
- A crisis consumes their attention and energy.
- They are absorbed in making their own changes.
- They are too busy doing today's work to think about the future.
- They do not see how they can fit into the process.

### Anticipating Barriers

It is important to anticipate barriers to participation and be ready for them:

- Have your reasons ready to persuade those who are doubtful.
- Consult executives or managers of those you wish to involve about the most efficient way to arrange involvement.
- Prepare contingency plans for occasions when participants cancel, and be flexible about timing.
- Ask for advice or help from the steering committee or sponsor when you get bogged down.