

Building Watershed Partnerships- a cheat sheet

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The natural result of utilizing different perspectives is that people are more engaged because they feel their opinions are important.

— Eunice Parisi-Carew, Collaboration Begins with You: Be a Silo Buster

Practice principled listening skills:

- ▶ Paraphrasing- *rewording to show I'm listening*
- ▶ Drawing people out- *tell me more about...*
- ▶ Mirroring- *what I'm hearing is...*
- ▶ Encouraging- *nodding, go on*
- ▶ Balancing- *we haven't heard from...*
- ▶ Making space- *going round robin to provide each person an opportunity to talk*
- ▶ Stacking- *count off and remember your number*

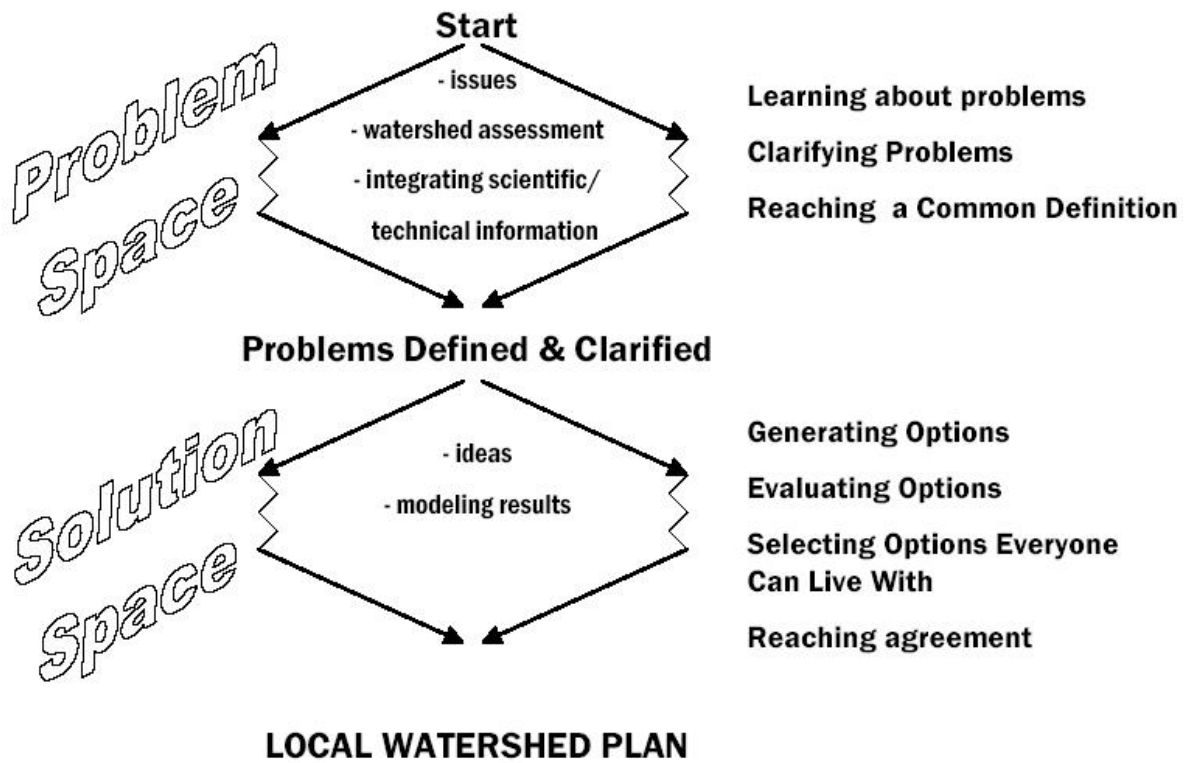
Position: a specific thing that you want | **Interest:** the reason behind why you want something

Asking yourself or somebody else “why” you want something is helpful for revealing the interest behind the position, and providing an opportunity to explore creative solutions.

Tool to assess consensus: 5- Finger scale

1. **Endorsement** – I like it
2. **Endorsement with Minor Point of Contention** – Basically, I like it.
3. **Agreement with Minor Reservations** – I can live with it.
4. **Stand aside with major reservations** – Formal disagreement, but will not block it
5. **Block** – Member will not support Proposed Plan and will try to stop implementation

Watershed planning decision model



Mini toolkit of techniques:

1) Stakeholder interest exercise:

Begin with a discussion of positions versus interests, perhaps by illustrating with a story. Provide participants with index cards and pens. Tell them their answers will be read out loud by others. Ask them to write on their index card:

1. "What do you hope will happen as a result of your participating in this watershed planning process?" (your position)
2. "Why do you hope this will happen?" (your interest)

Shuffle cards, give them out, allow them to read others aloud. Record answers on a flip chart.

Objectives:

- Learn what people are expecting to gain from participating, and can anticipate how & whether we can meet those expectations. If not, they should be told.
- Learn each other's concerns for the watershed, and why they are concerned.
- Learn about interests and position, and will learn a bit about how to effectively negotiate.
- Start developing a vision for the watershed.

2) Affinity Diagram

1. Write an open-ended question on easel paper or a white board, for example, "*What issues interest you in this watershed?*"
2. Each person records each idea on a sticky note, including at least a verb and a noun on each.
3. People silently post their sticky notes on the easel or board. Team members silently group notes into similar themes.
4. Working together, the group created headers for each grouping to express the essence, common thread of the notes.

Objectives:

- Participants organize large amounts of data (ideas, opinions, issues) based on their relationships
- Participants generate new and different thinking
- Use when analyzing the problem, when issues seem too large to grasp

3. Two Truths and a Lie

1. Each participant will share 3 things about themselves to the group. Two things will be factual and one thing will be a bald-faced lie (my mother won a gold medal in the Olympics).
2. Once the person has shared these, other participants can weigh in on which was a fact and which was a lie (which is confirmed by the participant).

Objectives: fun activity to help participants get to know each other. Can be used as an icebreaker or in the groan zone to continue to learn about each other.

Some additional resources to help:

- ▶ Getting in Step: Engaging and Involving Stakeholders in Your Watershed
<http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/npdes/stormwater/upload/stakeholderguide.pdf>
- International Association for Public Participation (training, publications)
www.IAP2.org and www.IAP2USA.org
- ▶ Natural Resources Leadership Institute (training)
www.ncsu.edu/NRLI
- ▶ Appreciative Inquiry Commons (training, references)
<http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/>
- ▶ Kaner, Sam. Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-making.