

The CARS process requires community members to be actively involved in all aspects of the community development process. For this to happen a community first must identify effective leaders – someone has to get the ball rolling and keep the process on track. There are really two types of leaders in the CARS process: Operational Leaders and Community Leaders.

Community Leaders

Community leaders are central to the active pursuit of the CARS process in the community. They are the people who encourage other community members to join the CARS effort by continually modeling active participation in the process. Community leaders play a key role in the development of the ideas, principles and beliefs that will result in community action, progress and change.

Community leadership helps define what vision the community will create and what action will be taken in moving towards the collective community vision. Community leadership will also ensure the development of common community values - values that will be recognized and upheld as the community moves forward together in working for change.

Role of Community Leaders

Community Leaders are critical to the CARS process. Some of the roles of Community Leaders include:

- Helping people see the importance of participating in the process
- Acting as spokesperson for the group
- Co-chairing meetings and co-creating meeting agendas
- Handling media and publicity activities
- Encouraging community partners to become involved in the CARS effort
- Mentoring other potential community leaders
- Maintaining the collective community vision, values, goals, objectives and action plan

Who are the Community Leaders?

In the past, community leadership traditionally meant the involvement of:

- High level managers of community services
- Representatives of government departments
- Representatives of volunteer organizations
- Area business representatives
- Local politicians

The CARS process however, recognizes consumers of services as natural leaders in the development of community services and supports. The focus of the CARS process is to harness and support the community energy created by community leadership. CARS creates opportunities to engage consumers of services with traditional community leadership allowing them to work for change together, side by side. It is this blend of new and traditional community leaders that creates the opportunity for innovative solutions and sustainable progress and change.

Operational Leaders

Operational leaders support and guide the community's journey towards their collective vision. In the CARS process we call operational leaders "CARS Facilitators". CARS Facilitators have the leadership qualities to develop the momentum and support necessary to make things happen in the community. Their role in CARS is to help community members determine what they want as a community and then help them organize themselves to achieve it. Operational Leaders are committed to empowering community members to achieve collective community goals by increasing the capacity and confidence of individual community members

Role of Operational Leaders

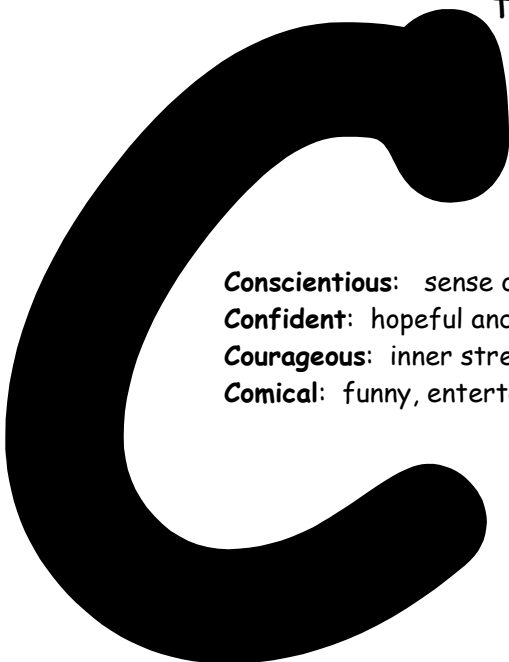
Sometimes operational leadership takes the form of a talented volunteer or a community member in need of service. Other times community groups will find the financial resources to hire an operational leader, sometimes called a facilitator, to support their collective participation in the CARS process. Regardless of who assumes the operational leadership role, operational leaders in the CARS process are first and foremost facilitators of a community process – a process that is owned and directed by its participants.

Some of the roles of Operational Leaders include:

- Encouraging participation of everyone involved
- Promoting mutual understanding between participants
- Cultivating shared responsibility
- Displaying great meeting skills (timekeeping, recordkeeping, following agendas, etc)
- Asking questions that stimulate creative thinking
- Summarizing discussions
- Mentoring other potential leaders
- Maintaining the collective community vision, values, goals, objectives and action plan

Who are the Operational Leaders?

They are people who have developed the "C's" of leadership



Co-operative: wanting or willing to work together with others

Considerate: thoughtful of others and their feelings, care for others well being

Conscientious: sense of moral right or wrong, honourable

Confident: hopeful and optimistic about things

Courageous: inner strength to do what is right in spite of fear

Comical: funny, entertaining

Constant: faithful, dependable

Can Celebrate: Express joy

They are people who:

Learn to **Communicate**

Build their **Character**

Develop **Conflict Resolution** skills

Promote **Community Ownership**



For more information contact:

Carol Gott

cgottfam@aol.com

1-866-424-0707

Jane Wilson

ruralvoices@xplornet.com

1-866-255-0687