

The 3P Checklist

Purpose, Partners, Plan: A step-by-step guide for building effective coalitions to address complex issues.

WHAT IS THE 3P CHECKLIST?

The 3P Checklist - Purpose, Partners, and Plan - guides groups through a process for effectively assembling coalitions. Designed for organizations already in the early stages of coalition-building around a specific issue, the 3P Checklist translates collective impact principles into actionable steps, helping organizations create coalitions that are both equitable and impactful.

PURPOSE

Defining the Goals of Your Coalition

What change are you trying to create?

Articulate the specific change(s) you hope to enact, such as policy shifts, improved services, or community empowerment. This change should be tangible and measurable.

What is the impetus for this change?

Consider what drives the urgency of the issue: is it alarming data trends? Policy failures? Community demand? External pressures? (e.g., climate change, economic disparities).

How have past efforts to create similar change succeeded or failed?

Learn from previous initiatives by examining both positive impacts and shortcomings. What worked, and what were the obstacles?

PARTNERS

Establishing Who Will Be Involved in Your Coalition

BRINGING THE RIGHT VOICES TO THE TABLE

Who are the stakeholders affected by this issue?

Identify all groups impacted by the issue, including government entities, local communities, businesses, and advocacy groups.

Who is/are the target population(s) of your work?

Define the demographic, geographic, or socio-economic groups your work will directly affect. Consider both direct and indirect beneficiaries.

Who will benefit most from this work?

Understand the most vulnerable or marginalized communities that will gain the most as a result of these changes. Consider both short- and long-term beneficiaries.

What is/are the specific desired outcome(s) of this change?

Set clear, achievable outcomes that define what success looks like and help you see progress toward your stated goal. Consider both quantitative (e.g., metrics, data) and qualitative (e.g., community satisfaction) outcomes and how these outcomes may shift over time.

Who have you partnered with on similar projects?

Look at past partners that share your goals and values, or bring complementary skills and resources.

Public Works Partners

Who is not currently in the conversation that needs to be proactively engaged?

Consider missing voices, particularly those of underserved or marginalized populations. Make sure the coalition reflects the diversity of the communities affected. Consider who the coalition's core partners are as well as what stakeholders should be involved in other ways.

Who has an outsized role in the conversation that may need to take a step back?

Balance power dynamics by ensuring no single voice or organization dominates the conversation at the expense of others.

IDENTIFYING YOUR COALITION MEMBERS

What specific qualities are you looking for in a partner to complement your strengths and weaknesses?

Identify partners who offer skills, resources, and knowledge you lack, ensuring a well-rounded team. Consider technical, operational, and community-based expertise.

What are you asking of partners?

Clearly define expectations. What is each partner's role? What resources are they contributing? How is each partner's commitment measured? Ensure partners understand both their contributions to and the collective benefits of the coalition.

PLAN

Creating the Operational Framework for Your Coalition

ESTABLISHING A GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

How should the coalition be organized?

Define the coalition's decision-making process. Will you use consensus voting, majority voting, or a steering committee to determine next steps? Define the leadership and reporting structures.

What are the roles and responsibilities of each partner?

Develop a structure that clarifies each partner's role and ensures accountability. Define roles such as lead convener, communication lead, and data reporter(s).

CREATING COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS

What are the coalition's communication, coordination, and scheduling best practices?

Establish communication protocols (e.g., regular meetings, reports), a coordination platform (e.g., Slack, Google Workspace), and scheduling practices to keep everyone aligned.

What is the coalition's process for engaging with stakeholders as a collective?

Define how and when stakeholders will be consulted or informed, ensuring transparency and inclusion throughout the project lifecycle.

SETTING THE FOUNDATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

What is the coalition's funding structure?

Determine the coalition's funding needs. Outline how the coalition will be funded—whether by grants, in-kind contributions, or shared resources—and who is responsible for securing or managing funds.

What metrics will you use to measure success?

Develop quantitative and qualitative key performance indicators (KPIs) that reflect progress toward the desired outcomes. Create data collection and reporting structures to keep partners accountable to each other.