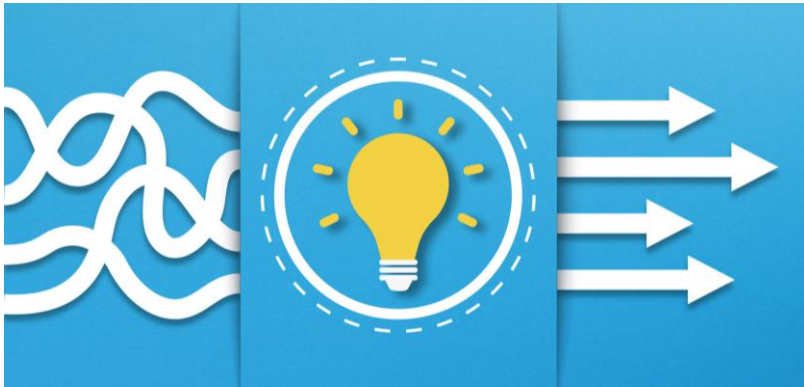




COLLECTIVE INSIGHT

Newsletter

Volume One, Issue Two
January 2022



January Newsletter Topics:

- Climbing Arnstein's Ladder
- Engagement Tip of the Month
- New Year's Resolution
- Language Matters
- 2023 Engagement Training Series

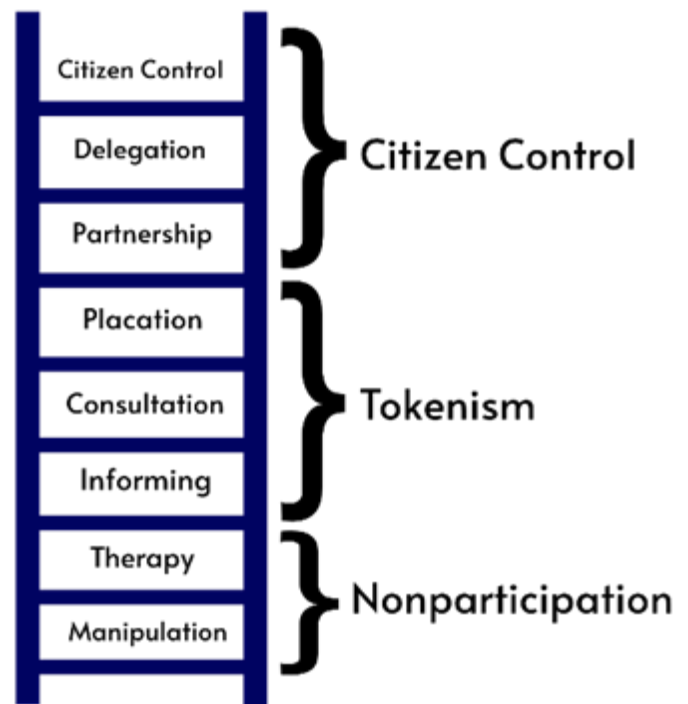
Making Engagement Work

Topic of the Month: Climbing Arnstein's Ladder

Arnstein's Ladder ([Arnstein 1969](#)) has informed Collective Insight's engagement work since 2011. We have seen this groundbreaking Ladder resurface time and time again as engagement spans new professions and academic disciplines.

Arnstein's Ladder recognizes engagement on a continuum. Projects at the lowest rung of engagement can lack productivity or even be harmful to communities. The middle rungs include more collaborative engagement processes where mutual risk-taking and co-learning occur before decisions are made. Even so, decisions in these middle rungs are still made by a few in hierarchical positions. Arnstein's highest rungs of engagement are citizen-controlled practices where those making decisions are those most impacted, personally, by the decision being made.

Arnstein's Ladder (1969)



Need assistance preparing for meetings?

Collective Insight's Training and Support Division can help. Visit Us at collectiveinsightllc.com

So, What Does Arnstein's Ladder Mean for Your Organization?

Many organizations start at the bottom of this Ladder. With time, hiccups, and lessons learned, they move slowly up the rungs to design and improve policy, programs, or research. Other organizations get stuck on the lower rungs of the Ladder and assume engagement simply does not work.

While it's true not every organization or project will be "citizen controlled," we have yet to see a project fail because citizen voices were invited to the decision-making table. That said, being "citizen controlled" is simply not enough. Even projects led by citizens can fall into traps of tokenistic or manipulative practices. We believe People, Approach, and Environmental factors influence your ability to move up and down Arnstein's Ladder. See Collective Insight's [PAE Attention Framework](#) to understand how these factors may be influencing your success.

New Year's Resolution: Pick a group, any group, to join as a "citizen."

In 2023, considering making a New Year's Resolution to join a group (virtual or in-person) as a "citizen." Make sure it is something you are passionate about and be sure to invest in this group by sharing your personal time and knowledge. Then, sit back and observe. How does it feel to be engaged? Was it worth your time? Did you go back?

Take a moment to reflect on what made the group work well, or as is often the case, not so well. What were the characteristics of the People in the room? What Approaches to meeting preparation, facilitation, and decision making were applied, either intentionally or unintentionally? Was it clear in the follow-up activities that you and others made a difference? What other Environmental factors, such as cultural reflection, leadership buy-in, or budgets, influenced your experience or success of the group?

You can learn a lot about engagement by being engaged, including what works and what to avoid. Please share your New Year's Resolution experience [here!](#)

Engagement Tip of the Month

Document. Document. Document.

Meetings can be fast paced and feel chaotic in the moment, but when you sit down in a quiet place and organize your notes into themes, you will be amazed and what you learn!

Just to be clear: we are not talking about point-by-point meeting "minutes." Instead, we mean organizing your meeting notes into topical themes, which allows you to "listen" to your data from multiple angles.

What originally felt like chaos, including conflicting viewpoints, becomes a wealth of knowledge with multiple opportunities for application. Even better, these notes can be shared with individuals who missed your meeting to keep your process moving!

It's always good to assign a notetaker (preferably a good listener and fast writer) who is not facilitating your meeting. If that isn't possible, ask if you can record your meeting and finalize your notes later.

Don't forget to use these notes during your next meeting to summarize what you learned and how you applied it. These important steps go a long way in building others' trust in you, the process, and your products!

Ready to Make Engagement Work for you? Let's Talk.

Collective Insight, a certified Women-Owned Business, is an engagement company you can count on to take you from concept to outcome.

Learn more [here](#) or email us at info@collectinsight.com

Language Matters

Moving Away from "Stakeholder"

Our Collective Insight team is always striving to learn more about how to center justice and equity in our practices. This requires our continued dedication to self-reflection, humility, and enthusiasm for change. On this journey and with sharing from our brilliant engagement partners, we have learned that terminology we long took for granted is outdated and even harmful to some communities.

In much of the engagement literature and practice, "stakeholder" is a common term used to describe those with a "stake" in the work one is conducting or hopes to conduct. For instance, an older adult, caregiver, or senior center director all have a stake in aging policy and research, and therefore may be considered "stakeholders" in the design, implementation, and dissemination of that policy and research. **However, the history of "stakeholder" is not rooted in engagement practices, but rather in colonial violence.** Learn more about the implications of this term [here](#).

Language is powerful—it can connect us and change us. It also can reinforce oppressions and exacerbate harm. At Collective Insight, we are committed to removing this harmful term from our practice. Currently, we are in the process of removing it from our website, tools, and materials. We are replacing this term with "community engagement" and "community partner." That said, we look forward to continued reflection and adoption of community-chosen terms with each community we serve.

We also will continue to learn from leaders in Language Justice on how language (both its use and restriction) can function as a tool of oppression or liberation. We found this [Language Justice Toolkit](#) from [Communities Creating Healthy Environments](#) to be a helpful guide for continued discussion and learning.

Kick off 2023 Right: Join Collective Insight's Engagement Training Series

Interested in conducting meaningful engagement, but don't know where to start?

This January, Collective Insight is launching an Engagement Training Series. Join us to learn about the benefits of engagement and effective strategies to make it work for you. Learn more about what to expect and how to sign up below!





ENGAGEMENT TRAINING SERIES

2023

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Please Join Us!

Please join Collective Insight for one or more trainings on effective and meaningful community engagement to improve policies, programs, and research. Our training series is for individuals interested in learning the benefits of community engagement and effective strategies to influence engagement success.

[Register Here](#)

[2023 Virtual Engagement Training](#)

**Introductory Individual
Course Rate: \$189.00**

Interested in tailored individual or
team training sessions?

Contact us at info@collectinsight.com or visit
our [Engagement Training and Support
Division to learn more.](#)

The Collective Way Forward

Organizations often want to implement community engagement activities, but those charged with these responsibilities face a range of obstacles leaving them (and the communities they engage) frustrated.

Our trainings move beyond the theoretical assumptions of why engagement is good to provide concrete information on what makes engagement work.

You learn how to be efficient with the resources you have, build trust with the communities you serve, and improve the outcomes of your policies, programs, or research.



VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT TRAINING SERIES

COURSE ONE: ENGAGEMENT 101

Engagement 101 is an introductory engagement training where participants learn the key concepts associated with engagement of individuals and communities and common ways engagement occurs to improve policies, programs, and research. By the completion of this 90-minute training, participants will recognize the benefits and obstacles of meaningful engagement as well as common practices that lead to engagement success.



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TUESDAY
JANUARY 31, 2023
1:00pm-2:00pm EST
Introductory Course Rate: \$189.00

REGISTER NOW

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