

Council Speed Dating: A Strategic Planning Exercise

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Summary: This activity is designed as an ice breaker or warm-up exercise to help council leaders begin to think strategically about council issues and planning. It can be used in board orientation, leadership training, and strategic planning meetings. All of the questions can be used in one session or in a series of meetings, as time and interest allow.

Questions 2 through 5 can also be re-worded to concentrate on specific areas of council activity such as membership or governance. For example, question 2 can become, "What did our council do last year *to increase membership* that was really successful?" Question 5 could become, "What one thing *in council governance* could we do that would REALLY make a difference?"

Instructions: Have participants stand in two circles, one inside the other so that they are standing opposite another participant. The session leader should ask the first question and allow participants 3 to 5 minutes to discuss with their partners. Then, ask the inner circle to move one person to their left, so that each participant has a different partner. Ask the second question. Repeat this process until the group has discussed all the questions. If time allows, bring everyone back together and ask for feedback on key items from the discussions. These key conclusions can be used as the basis for further strategic discussion by the group.

Questions:

1. Do you find me attractive?

Why do you give of your volunteer time and resources to serve our council?

2. What is your dream date?

What did our council do last year that was really successful?

3. What really turns you off?

What didn't go well for our council last year?

4. Oh, do I need a breath mint?

How does our council need to change?

5. Any possibility I can see you again?

What one thing could our council do that would REALLY make a difference?