

Matching Mentors with Activists (45minutes¹)

Note: This module is best conducted with each organization, individually. If done for large numbers of participants from multiple organizations, components may need to be adapted.

Objectives:

- Select appropriate mentors for each activist

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe who they will mentor and why

Preparations:

- Bring photocopies of list of CA's names and communities for each participant

Steps:

1. Ask: We are all responsible for *SASA!* activism spreading, and for the success of the community activists (CA's) and other activists, like journalists, religious leaders, and others—so why might we want to match a specific mentor with a specific activist?
2. Write answers on flip chart, e.g.:
 - A one-on-one relationship lets us know more in depth about a person's strengths, weaknesses, motivation, and dreams
 - It focuses responsibility for a person's relationship development on 1 mentor—so they can assure the activist's needs are being met, even if more than 1 person ultimately helps the activist
3. Explain:
 - In this session, we will begin to match a set of mentors (in this case, staff) with a set of activists (CA's)
 - Over the course of *SASA!* we will be sure we are getting to know each CA better—and we do not want to ignore anyone. At the same time, there are many people to begin with—so to start, we should choose a few CA's we will focus more attention on at first.
4. Ask: During the CA training, did anyone notice people who seemed particularly strong in their skills?
5. Invite participants to name a few names and explain briefly.

¹ Note: Time may vary, depending on length of CA list. Shorter lists and smaller staff groups may only take 30 minutes, while larger numbers of CAs and staff may take 60 minutes or more.

6. List these people on flip chart
7. Ask: Did anyone who seemed particularly weak or hard-to-reach? (Note that this is not a time to laugh at or belittle CAs, but to point out a few priority issues. Strong facilitation may be needed to keep the conversation focused.)
8. Invite participants to name a few names and explain briefly.
9. List these people on flip chart, in another column
10. Explain: Both of these lists of CA's can form our first group of CA's to mentor—we want to be sure the strong ones build leadership skills early-on, so they can help others. The weaker ones simply need our support to find their confidence and build their activism.
11. Explain: Now we can think about who is a good mentor for each CA.
12. Note, if geographic sites are widely distributed, it may be easier to consider geography first, distributing mentors by location. In this case, skip #13-16, and simply brainstorm any challenges to these mentoring relationships as needed.
13. We are going to find a mentor among us for each of these CA's, considering:
 - Who do they seem to feel more comfortable with? (Some people feel comfortable with anyone, but some would have preferences by age, gender, or common interests between themselves and the mentor.)
 - What skills do they need help building? Is any staff mentor strong in these areas?
14. Split participants into smaller groups of 2-4, giving each a few names of CA's.
15. Explain—they have only 5-10 minutes to consider these questions for each of the people on the list, and suggest 1-2 mentor possibilities. Be sure it is not always the same person.
16. After 5-10 minutes, call “stop!”
17. Invite participants to share the name of the possible mentor next to the name of the CA.
18. Discuss any potential challenges, e.g.
 - CAs who may initially feel resistant to having a mentor
 - having a realistic number of CA's per mentor
 - geographic distribution of CA's, etc
19. Ask: Remember some of the things we can do to help support these CA's, that we discussed in the other session on mentoring?
20. Summarize responses and recap for participants, as needed:

- Spend time with them—get to know them and their families.
 - Develop leadership ability in them
 - Be present at activities they conduct, help them reflect, and give feedback.
 - Conduct bi-monthly sessions for CAs, and continued training opportunities for others
 - Take the leaders around with you to show them how to do certain of your job functions, and let them practice
 - Link activists together with each other to foster team work
 - Encourage activists to mentor each other in areas where they are strong—emphasizing that everyone has something to teach and something to learn
 - Recognize and appreciate the good work of the activists
 - Etc.
21. Summarize: Thank participants for participating, and note that these mentoring pairs will change over time, and you will check in regularly to see how it is going and welcome regular feedback about when it might be time to switch up who we are mentoring.
22. Copy down the list of mentors and mentees, for follow up in staff meetings on progress.

Validation:

Competency: Describe who they will mentor and why

Measured by: Activity in training allows for group validation of skills, through group brainstorming. Individual validation possible through exit interview or certain game show format where each participant has to answer correctly for the team to earn points.