

This Blueprint was informed by and for the leadership within the many sectors of Boulder County between February and June 2008 by modeling culturally relevant practices through intentional activities, authentic dialogues and strategies.

Purpose: This project seeks to provide a set of promising practices and recommendations to existing and emerging multicultural, transformational leaders across Boulder County. Developing emerging multicultural leadership is imperative to improve sustainability at all levels of leadership: programmatic, participatory and financial.

Methodology

A 'Cultural Mediator' facilitated an environmental scan to take stock of emerging multicultural and transformational leadership across community sectors by:

- Ethnographic interviewing & dialogues with individuals
- Formal interviews
- Network mapping
- Focus Groups (County-wide)
- Community Advisory Group (open forums)
- Leadership Development Survey

Promising Practices and Challenging Obstacles

The environmental scan revealed 7 *promising practices* and 9 *challenging obstacles* for the development of emerging, multicultural and transformational leaders.

Promising Practices

- 1) *Commitment to emerging, multicultural and transformational leadership must begin within the existing leadership development programs and civic leaders across sectors by modeling the expectations for the broader community.*
- 2) *Recruiting and mentoring emerging and multicultural leaders, including youth leaders, will inform and support networks.*
- 3) *Improved listening skills are key to leadership; listening with the intent to learn.*
- 4) *"Invisible" leaders exist throughout Boulder County. Their invisible status may be purposeful and strategic to obtain greater gains for their community or cause.*
Ways to nurture their inclusion include:
 - Invitation without tokenism
 - Listening to experiences, shared learnings
 - Understanding communication within a cultural context
- 5) *Organizations must commit to creating institutional and systemic change. They can do this by:*
 - Using the Leadership Development Project blueprint to develop their own organizational blueprint
 - Using the checklist to evaluate the quality of their current programs
 - Including a mentorship component for existing and emerging leaders
 - Promoting Inclusive and Transformational Leadership
- 6) *Dialogues in leadership - also called 'talking circles' - promote the ongoing conversation for a whole community commitment to emerging, multicultural, transformational leadership.*
- 7) *Monolingual leaders must be included in community leadership forums.*

Challenging Obstacles

1) *The demographics of Boulder County are growing and changing. However, recruitment challenges remain. The community must be intentional and strategic in planning for the next generation of leaders.*

2) *The commitment to inclusiveness is a high priority for most leaders in Boulder County. However, it has to move beyond mission statements and “diversity training” to a commitment to inclusive practices.*

- Focus on the strengths and value of informal networks
- Stress that relationship-building is critical to non-traditional leadership and the identification of emerging leaders

3) *It has been difficult to recruit and retain diverse participants at many levels and in all arenas.*

When the leadership reflects of diverse groups at the board, commissions and upper levels, recruitment and retention becomes more evident.

4) *Mentorship is needed at all levels of leadership, beginning with the internal and moving to the external.*

5) *There is a lack of focused multicultural curricula in leadership development programs. Most programs skim the surface without delving to the levels necessary for advanced leadership in a changing and diverse community.*

Weave multicultural curriculum through each of the sections in an ongoing method.

- Provide support so leaders can learn to be effective in going back and forth between various cultural worlds

6) *Diverse leadership is not always acknowledged and supported. It must be.*

7) *The cost of most existing Leadership Development Programs is prohibitive. Matching funding should be made available across community sectors to include scholarship opportunities.*

8) *There are language barriers to monolingual leaders.*

9) *Employers don't always support the time commitment necessary to participate in leadership development programs. They must.*

Common elements of a quality Leadership Development Program include:

Accessibility- Pricing, cultural relevancy, welcoming atmosphere

Recruitment/Retention- Intentional, ongoing and reflective of the changing community demographics

Curriculum content- Meaningful and reflects the expressed needs of the participants it is serving

Cost/price point- Affordable, scholarships available, match funding, etc.

Cultural competency- Process and content competent and relevant at all levels of program

Culturally relevant practices- Practices woven throughout the curriculum

Community involvement- Hearing from the existing diversity within the community (age, gender, race, orientation, ethnicity, faith-based, etc.)

Leadership tools - Self assessments to inform skills; evaluation processes in place

Networking- Maintaining both internal and external relationships, informal and formal.

Overall sustainability & Follow-up - Opportunities for ongoing involvement at both programmatic (networking) and financial (development, fundraising) levels.

Engagement- Ongoing reciprocal communication within and for the Leadership Development Program

The Community Foundation is committed to the ongoing work that has come from this research. For a full report please contact Morgan Rogers directly at morgan@commfound.org or 303-442-0436.