

2024 NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



May 8, 2024
Minneapolis



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Capturing Participant Voice in Nonprofit Decision Making



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About Us: FFEN

Offering consultation, technical support and education to food shelves across Minnesota



Mission

Reshaping the Minnesota Hunger Relief System.



Vision

A hunger-relief system all shoppers trust to predictably offer healthy food options and a dignified experience.





About Us: Basic Needs

Cottage Grove, MN

Thrift Store, Daily Food Market & Satellite Food Pantries

Food Market opened in late 2023



Basic Needs



Participant Voice Definition

- Centering the **unique perspectives** and **lived experiences** of participants
- Honoring participant voice is a process that should be **ongoing, evolving, intentional, and transparent**
- Prioritizing participant voice **challenges historic power dynamics**, and empowers clients to participate in **shaping organizational culture**



Empathy & Transparency

- **What is empathy?**
- Why does it matter?
- How to practice empathy

- **What is transparency?**
- Why does it matter?
- How to practice transparency





Silent Reflection

- How are decisions currently being made at your organization?
 - Who makes these decisions?
 - When are organizational decisions usually made?
- How are you currently incorporating feedback from your clients in organizational decisions?
- What policies might prevent clients from receiving equitable service?
- What judgements/assumptions might your clients have about you?
- What judgements/assumptions might you have about people who utilize your services?



Tool Overview

- Community Meals
- Focus Groups
- 1:1 Conversations
- Moderated Town Hall
- Educational and Reflective Materials for Leaders





Focus Group Overview

- Decision Points
- Key Considerations
- Facilitation Tips

“You have to care about the feedback and you have to want to change for the better....if I could preach to other food shelves considering shopper focus groups, I would say, ‘just take the blinders off and listen and, you know, follow up.’”

- Chris Jungwirth, Basic Needs Food Market Manager





Focus Groups: Basic Needs

- Process: What we did
- Results: What we heard
- Follow Up: What we are doing



“You want to create a really healthy culture, and that really depends on your clients and their perception [of your organization]. And to me that’s just so important.”

-Vickie Snyder, Basic Needs
Executive Director



SMART Goals

- **S**pecific: Clear and concise.
- **M**easurable: Quantifiable to track progress.
- **A**chievable: Attainable to remain motivating.
- **R**elevant: Aligned with your larger wellness vision.
- **T**ime-bound: Encased within a timeframe.

Practice creating your own SMART Goals for gathering participant feedback!



Thank you!

We appreciate your time with us today!

Learn more about our organizations:

www.FFEN.org

www.BasicNeedsMN.org