

An emerging tool for NGOs

– EMPOWERMENT TRAINING

The purpose of GAP is
empowering *individuals*
to live increasingly
sustainable lifestyles.

GAP's programs
are community-based
programs...

...enabling large numbers of ordinary people to make a significant contribution to sustainable development by consciously modifying their way of life.

The emphasis is not on once-off technical change but on long-term processes of behaviour change.

We are happy to make our experience available to other NGOs in the form of a range of empowerment trainings.



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With the compliments of

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A DIFFERENT APPROACH

Empowerment programs are qualitatively different from public information and education campaigns – they

- lead to documented, sustained behaviour change
- diffuse behaviour change far beyond the initial participants
- are highly cost effective as a means of promoting behaviour change

When participants taste their own power to change, they become

- active in community development
- advocates for others to do the same

An empowering program helps participants to

- define their own goals
- explore what is possible
- identify and remove barriers to change, particularly self-imposed "limiting beliefs"
- consciously build new habits
- continue to direct attention to what is or might be possible

The trainings convey attitudes and skills which help participants empower themselves and other people.

A SCIENTIFICALLY BASED INSTRUMENT

Together with national and international agencies, we are exploring the potential of GAP programs as models for a new instrument of environment and other policy, both for national and local government.

GAP programs are validated and refined through independent action research. Results to date are described by researchers as unique:

- ★ Participants make significant changes
- ★ The changes have significant effects
- ★ The changes are maintained and even enhanced over time

BENEFITS FOR AN NGO

What benefit can an NGO derive from learning more about empowerment?

Creating empowering programs

You may want to engage members and/or the general public in action. This can be done in a (more) empowering way, so that those participating

- experience increased personal empowerment
- are inspired to continue and expand their commitment

Making the most of volunteers

A lot of quite basic, hard work is done by volunteers. They may easily become discouraged, for example by a disproportionate focus on problems and setbacks rather than solutions and successes. How to keep the flame burning without risking burn-out?

Increased effectiveness of staff

1. The staff are probably not "wage slaves" but genuine enthusiasts. They therefore run the same risk of frustration, de-motivation and burn-out as volunteers.
2. The staff need to demonstrate empowering leadership so as to get the best out of a volunteer work force.
3. Some staff members need to design empowering programs to engage members/the public.
4. Some staff members need to act as coaches, and possibly to train others to act as coaches, in order to build and maintain an empowering climate throughout operations.

THE PROGRAMS

Different levels of training

Personal empowerment

of two kinds:

- For people who are open to working in new ways
- For people who are on a path of conscious personal development and are ready for a significant leap

Empowering others

- Coach training, for people who would like to improve their skills in a consultative / coaching role
- Design of empowering programs, for people who want to understand more about how to keep others' flames burning (or how to light them)
- Working in an empowering way with subordinates and others
- Trainer training, for people who want to train coaches
- T3 (Teach The Teacher) training, for people who want to be able to give courses in design and/or to train new coach trainers

Possible strategies/levels

You might want to

- a. Test the programs, for example by having an internal workshop focussed on personal empowerment and empowering leadership
- b. Use an introductory workshop to explore with staff what use they could make of the other elements/levels of training
- c. Develop a strategy and plan for dissemination, for example
 - To establish new ways of working within the organisation within one year
 - To reach T3 level so as to be self-sufficient within, say, 2–3 years – possibly in collaboration with one or more other NGOs

AVAILABILITY

If you would like to discuss in-house training for staff or volunteers, please phone or send an email.

Our ambition is also to be able to offer open workshops to which you can send one or more delegates. Please also let us know if this is of interest to you, and we will put you on our mailing list.

Some references

GAP Sweden, the Swedish White-Collar Trades Union Congress (TCO), the Stockholm Epilepsy Association; Landvernd (Iceland), Miljøheimen-vernet (Norway), Libra Foundation (Russia).

WE ARE HERE

GAP programs are currently running or starting in Belgium (Flanders), Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Spain, Ukraine, UK and USA.

GAP is an international not-for-profit organization. The international coordinating body is registered as a charity in the United States and has its secretariat in Stockholm, Sweden. In each country where it is operational, it is registered as or works through a charity or equivalent.

GAP International has consultative status to the United Nations Social and Economic Council.

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