

PEOPLE FIRST  
CHAPTER HANDBOOK



SECTION IV  
PEOPLE FIRST ADVISOR

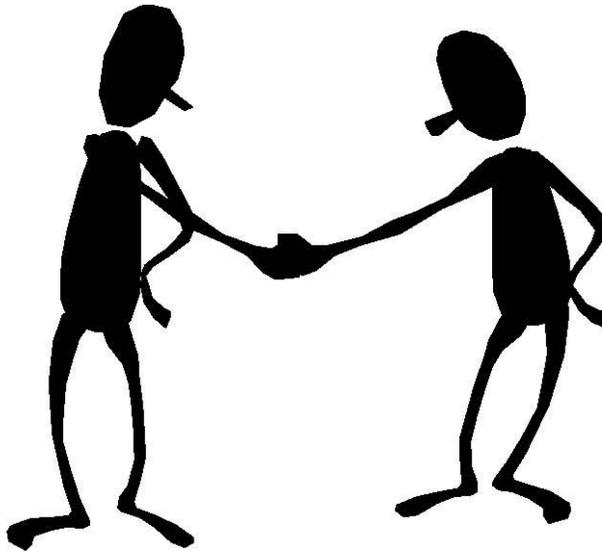
*“Our advisors were good because they let us learn and move ahead at our own speed, even if it wasn’t fast enough for them.”*

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The Role of People First Advisor

Hints For People First Advisors

Questions To Ask Yourself As A People First Advisor



Just as there is no one-size-fits-all model for organizing and running a People First chapter, there is no one-size-fits-all model for the People First advisor. What a chapter needs in a advisor will vary depending on the members involved, the community and the way the chapter is organized.

Advisors play an important role in People First even though the chapters are run by the members themselves. Advisors are known by some chapters as advisors, allies, support people, or resource people but whatever they are called they all work for the members to assist the self-advocacy group. Every chapter needs advisors but it is important that the members be the ones in control.

When people First started in Oregon in 1974 members got volunteers to be their "advisors" since the chapter didn't have the money to hire any staff.

“Our "advisors" didn't lead us. They just helped and coached us when we asked. They helped us learn to hold meetings so we could talk about things that were important to us and not just what was important to them. Our advisors were good because they let us learn and move ahead at our own speed, even if it wasn't fast enough for them”

## ROLE OF THE ADVISOR

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The People First advisor:

- Helps individual members or the group as a whole in learning about self-advocacy.
- Assists in organizing and supporting the self-advocacy group.
- Assists in carrying out the self-advocacy goals of the group.

Most People First members have strong feelings about the role of the advisors in their chapter. Basically they feel that good advisors know that People First belongs to the members and not to them. They feel good advisors help but don't try and tell the members what to do. They let them make our own mistakes and this let them grow and take responsibility for what they were doing.



Some of the comments by members include:

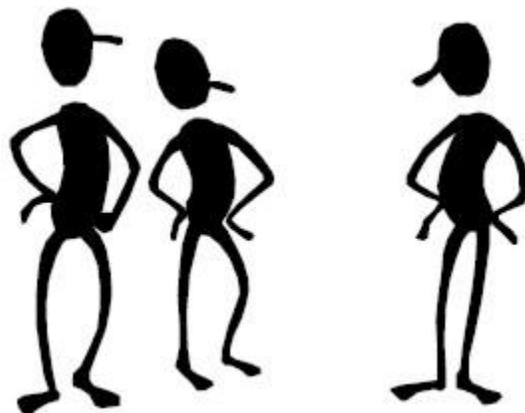
- Advisors should help us when we need it - but not too much.
- Advisors should let members run the meetings.
- Advisors should try to understand how members feel.
- Advisors should care about us as people at all times.
- Advisors should believe in People First.
- Advisors should work with us to get our rights.
- Advisors should not be bossy.
- Advisors should let us talk and run the meetings.
- Advisors should let us try things first and then, if we need help, help us.

It is important for every People First chapter to think about and answer these three questions about their advisor.

- What do you want from an advisor?
- How do you get what you want?
- What to do if you aren't getting what you want?

Some tips for helping members get what they need from their advisors include:

- Chapter members must decide and control who the advisor is. Members should interview the advisor and decide. It helps if the advisor has some experience helping people organize into groups and knows and respects people with developmentally disabilities.
- Chapter members should be responsible for training the advisor on how to be a advisor.
- Chapter members should make up a contract on what the advisor is suppose to do. The advisor and the members should sign the contract.
- The advisor and the members should follow through on the contract. An “employee committee” can be started and meet regularly to talk about how the advisor is doing.
- If problems come up members should always communicate directly with the advisor and try and work it out. Advisors are people too and should be given a chance to learn, grow and change.



## HINTS FOR PEOPLE FIRST ADVISORS

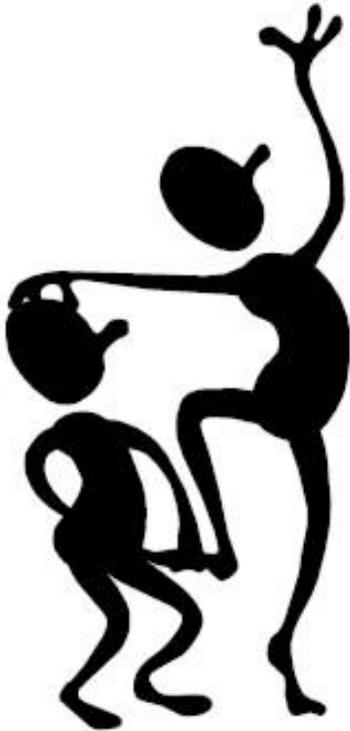
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### Patience.....

Patience for the self-advocacy process is critical. There is a tendency to rush people with developmental disabilities to move faster than they are ready and to put together a movement that is not really theirs. Patience allows the advisor to see the smallest changes. Patience says that the movement will take years, that we are at a given point in the development of the movement and that we have a long way to go.

### Generating Excitement .....

Generating excitement is a gut level characteristic and you can tell an excited advisor by looking. An excited advisor shows involvement, facial expression, and pizzazz. An advisor must be able to laugh and cry, to be compassionate, and to be angry. An excited advisor spreads the spirit of the movement to the group. It is not useful to the movement if advisors are neutral.



### Having A Vision .....

"People with developmental disabilities will become organized and will speak for themselves"

Advisors must realize that People First is a lengthy process and that growth and development happen slowly. Advisors with vision will persevere and overcome any obstacles and especially those traditional barriers between professionals. Some people just will not believe that people with disabilities can do what is actually happening with People First. Without advisors having belief and vision in the process, the movement would be a sham. There would be no movement started without the vision and support of the advisors.

### Finding Other Advisors .....

Advisors need other advisors. It is lonely without peers to share and reflect ideas with. It is the exceptional advisor who will actually show the energy and vision to be involved in a movement such as People First.

### Financial Concerns .....

Many People First chapters have no ongoing funding for the organization and for carrying on the day-to-day work that happens. Support for the movement is critical

but it doesn't have to be financial support. For many chapters the support is through in-kind services such as donated time of the advisors, donated use of agency phones, copying machines, and transportation.

Due to the limited income of people with developmental disabilities, membership fees are usually not a source of funding for people First chapters.

Advisors should explore potential financial resources for the movement, which could be through donations and grants. Special attention should be paid to any requirements that are tied to receiving money. Obviously a strong financial base is nice to have, but it is imperative that the self-advocacy motive behind People First does not get lost in the quest for money. Advisors must continually evaluate whether or not movement would fall apart if financial aid were withdrawn. If the movement would dissolve without financial support, then the chapter needs to realign the emphasis of the movement to avoid heavy dependence on funds.



### Seeing Growth .....

Advisors must be able to understand that there are two levels of growth taking place for people with developmental disabilities as they learn to organize and become their own advocates. One level of growth can be seen by looking at the process through which People First members learn to relate to one another, make decisions, and problem solve. A second level of growth can be seen by looking at the content which is being discussed at any one time. The advisor should learn to see growth on both levels and to be excited at even the smallest gains in growth that can be seen over time.



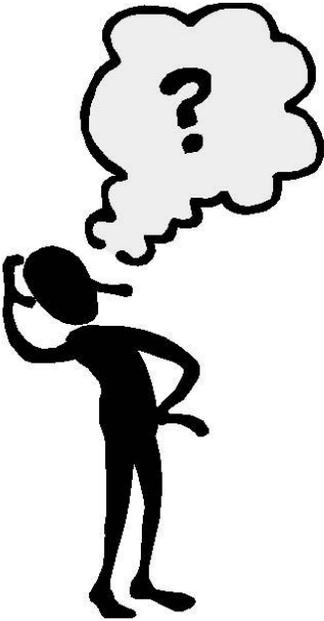
### Defining Roles .....

Advisors should avoid spending time and energy defining roles. It is easy to get caught up in word games, role games, definition games, and power games. The game of defining roles takes the energy away from what the advisors should be concentrating on. The distinction between the members and the advisors is for discussion only. In practice the advisors and the members must put aside roles and work together. In People First the power belongs to the members. The advisor who is involved with People First must learn to be comfortable in accepting a secondary role. If there is glory to the movement, it belongs to the People.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF AS A ADVISOR

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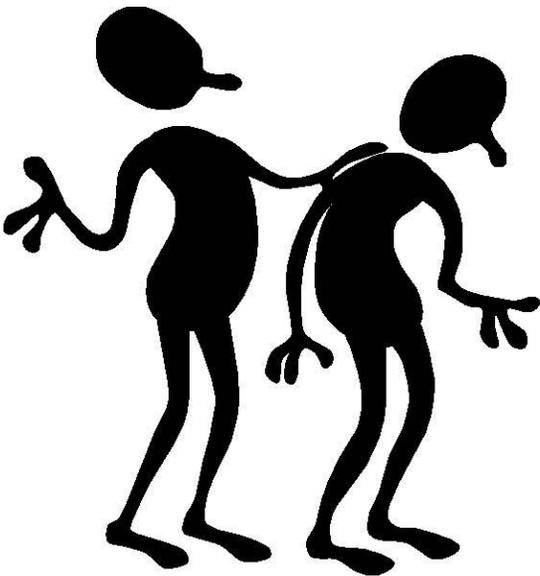
The following questions are a good way to gauge how you are doing as a People First advisor and provide some insight to help avoid burn out.



- Am I really listening to what People First members have to say or am I imposing my point of view?
- Do I see the real human growth and potential in People First members or do I see "disability" and "limitations?"
- Have I checked out my actions and feelings with the People First members?
- Are any of my actions based upon a potential conflict of interest or need to be controlling in any way?
- Do my actions increase the self-respect, self-confidence, self-reliance of People First members and encourage them to take risks?
- Do my actions decrease the self-advocates' dependence on me?
- Do my actions increase People First members opportunities to understand and participate in the decisions that affect their lives?
- Do my actions teach People First members a process for making decisions, solving problems, and doing things on their own vs. controlling things?
- Do my actions decrease the chances that I will be seen as a manipulator?
- Do my actions increase People First members opportunities to understand and participate in the decisions that affect their lives?
- Do my actions encourage a positive role for a diverse membership?
- Do my actions promote respect and recognize individual growth as well as group spirit? (Lasting growth takes time.)
- Do my actions encourage and assist People First members in obtaining and understanding a wide variety of information and different points of view so

that people can make informed decisions? Have my actions developed allies for the members point of view?

- Do my actions recognize that anger is okay and indeed justified in many instances and encourage people to use anger for positive personal growth and societal change?



- Is it okay for People First members to:
  - Question my point of view?
  - Work me out of a job?
  - Tell me that they don't need me and can decide on their own?
  - Give me negative feedback about what I am doing?
  - Not see me as an authority figure

- Do I realize that advisors as well as People First members and People First chapters are fallible human beings prone to making mistakes and have problems just like anyone else and any other organization?

It is not always easy being a People First advisor but it is important to remember is that there is no such thing as an ideal advisor.

***“You know what I have in mind, I have this picture of the ‘ideal’ advisor-what an advisor is really suppose to be. I measure myself and I always come up short. Then I meet other people and talk and I realize there isn’t and ‘ideal’ advisor. You can try to define the role but people carry out any role in their lives in different ways. There probably is such a thing as a bad advisor but there’s a whole range of ways of being a good advisor.”***

Bonnie Shoultz



# PEOPLE FIRST CHAPTER HANDBOOK



## SECTION V PEOPLE FIRST MEETINGS

*“Meetings are a very important part of People First because that’s where members learn how to become self advocates”*

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Tips For A Successful Meeting

Holding A Meeting Using Parliamentary Procedure

The Meeting Agenda

Solving Problems In Meetings

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Meetings are a very important part of People First. People First members learn how to become self advocates by going to local chapter meetings of People First in their community. At the meetings, the members practice and learn how to speak for themselves, solve problems and help each other.

People First chapter meetings help members practice debating the sides of an issue, and then taking a vote. They offer a time for discussion where people can freely agree or disagree with each other.

During the actual meetings it is important for the advisors to relax, take a back seat, and let the process happen without becoming leaders themselves. Advisors should feel free to give opinions, suggestions, and direction to the group, as needed, without being subtly coercive.

Local chapter meetings usually happen once a month and the members elect officers to run the meetings. The members decide what they want to do in the meetings. A advisor works with the group to help them learn how to do things on their own. The meetings last about one and a half hours and the last half hour is a time for refreshments and a time to talk with old and new friends. The members take turns bringing the refreshments and collect dues to pay for the refreshments.

## TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL MEETING

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- ◆ Make sure that everyone knows when and where the meetings are.
- ◆ Make sure the advisor knows what their role is.
- ◆ Have an officers meeting to plan the meetings.
- ◆ Find ways to get everyone involved.
- ◆ Make sure that everyone understands what goes on in the meetings, and what is talked about.
- ◆ Make sure that the discussions are real and important to the members during the meeting.
- ◆ Make a 3 to 6 month plan with the group, so that people will be working toward something.



- ◆ Make sure the meetings are fun.
- ◆ Face any problems the group is having. They won't just go away, without work.

### PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

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People First meetings follow parliamentary procedure. This means that there are specific steps for the way meetings are carried out. People First meetings give people a chance to learn and practice using parliamentary procedures

#### 1. Call the meeting to order

Calling the meeting to order by the president. Some chapters use a gavel to call the meeting to order.

#### 2. Roll call or introduction

Roll call or introduction of people present. A signup sheet may be passed around.

#### 3. Minutes from the last meeting

Minutes from the last meeting are read by the secretary and approved by the

group. The president asks for additions or corrections to the minutes. The president asks for a motion to accept the minutes. The president leads the vote to approve the minutes.

#### 4. Treasurer's report

A report from the treasurer about chapter finances is given.

#### 5. Old Business

The president leads a discussion by the group about old business. Old business is the things that were talked about at the last meeting and need to be talked about again.

#### 6. New Business

The president leads a discussion by the group about new business. New business is the things that have not been talked about at the last meeting. Ideas which have never been discussed before can be discussed at this time. New business includes planning by the group for where and when the next meeting will happen.

#### 7. Announcements

Announcements is the time to remind the members of upcoming events. During announcements members can share things that are happening such as new jobs or moving to a new apartment.

#### 8. Program

The program is the part of the meeting for learning new things. The program should be fun and of interest to the members. The program can be things like a guest speaker or a group discussion.

#### 9. Adjourn the meeting

The meeting is adjourned (closed) by a yes or no vote by the entire group. The president asks for a motion to adjourn the meeting and leads the vote by the group to adjourn the meeting. The president then closes the meeting.



#### 10. Refreshments and socializing

## SAMPLE AGENDA

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President calls the meeting to order	Terry
Secretary takes roll call	Judy
Secretary reads the minutes from the last meeting	Judy
Members approve the minutes	Terry
Treasurer gives report on chapter money	David
Old Business, the Presidents leads the talk	Terry
Report on last month's Convention	
New Business, the President leads the talk	Terry
Do we want to write a letter to the convention hotel?	
Who will write the letter?	
What do we want at the next meeting?	
Announcements	
A dance on Friday, September 10th at 8:00 pm. at the center.	
Are there any other announcements?	
Program	
Today we have Mr. Smith from the Volunteer Bureau to discuss some opportunities for People first members to volunteer.	
President introduces Mr. Smith	Terry
Mr. Smith talks and answers questions	Mr. Smith
President thanks Mr. Smith	Terry
Adjourn the meeting	Terry

The next meeting is Tuesday, October 4th. at 7:00PM at the senior center.

Refreshments and time to talk to friends

## SOLVING PROBLEMS IN MEETINGS

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During the People First meetings problems may happen. During the officer's meetings talk about the problems that happen and what to do about them. Here is a list of some of the problems that happen during meetings. Practice and role-play how to solve these problems.

- If one member interrupts (speaks) when another member is speaking, politely ask that member not to interrupt and to give the person who is speaking a chance to finish.
- If one member talks too much and hogs the discussion, politely remind that person that we need to give everyone a chance to speak.
- If a member starts to talk about something other than the business of the meeting, (gets off task), politely lead the member back to the business of the meeting.
- If a member votes more than once, politely ask the member to vote only once and teach the member how to vote.
- If a advisor talks too much during the meetings, politely remind the advisor that the members are trying to learn how to do things on their own.
- If a member doesn't know how to make a motion, show and teach the member how to make a motion.
- If the members always seem to talk to the advisor in the meetings and not to the other members, the officers need to politely remind the members to talk to the members so the members can learn how to do things on their own.
- If the members are not talking during the meetings, the officers need to think of ways to get everyone involved.
- If a member asks a question during the meeting, the officers need to make the members question important and thank the member for asking the question. If the members question is off task, tell the member their question is important and you will discuss it under new business on the agenda.
- If the members seem bored in meetings, think of ways to get everyone involved and excited.



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SECTION VI  
VOTING AND ELECTIONS

*“Voting is a right for all People First members but it is  
also a responsibility”*

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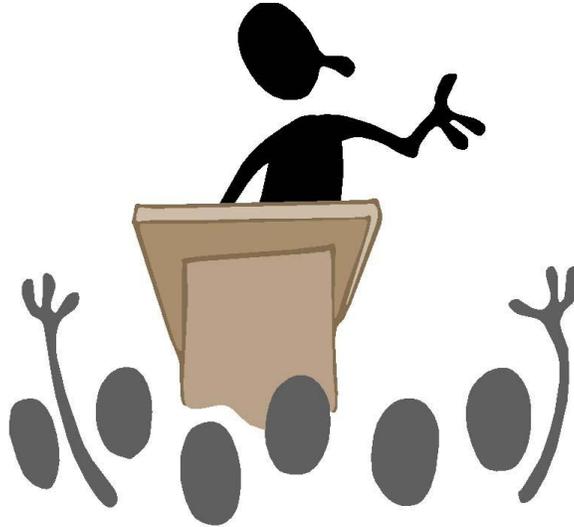
Voting On Chapter Business

Election Of Chapter Officers

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Voting is an important part of People First. People First members vote on business and issues that affect the chapter and they also vote in elections.

Voting is a right for all members but it is also a responsibility. Voting and elections help members learn how to debate between choices and make responsible choices and live with the choices they make. Only People First members can vote.

### VOTING ON CHAPTER BUSINESS

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The members of People First vote on business and issues in their chapter meetings using parliamentary procedures. This means that there are specific steps for the way voting is carried out.

- A member makes a motion.
- Another member seconds the motion.
- Members discuss the motion.
- A vote is taken of all members in favor of the motion and all members opposed to the motion. Usually voting on chapter business is done by a verbal vote or a show of hands.
- The results of the vote are announced.

## ELECTION OF CHAPTER OFFICERS

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The members of each People First chapter vote for their own leaders. These leaders are called officers. Elections are the process where the officers are selected. Members nominate candidates for officer and then vote on which candidate will be the officer.

Each chapter decides how they want to hold elections, and how they will decide on who the candidates are. In some chapters the advisor and the current officers discuss possible candidates who are then nominated to run for office. In other chapters, all members can nominate themselves to run for office. Most chapters have the candidates give speeches to tell the other members why they would make good officers. Then the members make up their minds and vote.

Elections are held using the following process:

- Candidates are nominated for each office.
- Each candidate nominated gives a speech.
- Members vote on the candidates for each office by secret ballot.
- The votes are counted.
- If there is a tie the members vote again on the candidates who tied.
- The President announces the winner for each office.
- The winner for each office gives a thank you speech.
- It is important the members know and understand the election process and who

is running for each office. Some hints on holding elections include:

- Chapters should elect officers every two years.
- The whole chapter decides who will be their officers by voting.



- Each person running for office should give a speech telling why they would make a good officer and why the members should vote for them.



- Put pictures of the people who are running for office on the ballot box. This makes it easier for people to decide who to vote for.
- Nominations should take place at one meeting and the elections take place at the next meeting.
- ◆ Voting for chapter officers should be done by secret ballot. The secret ballot can be done by writing the name of the person on a piece of paper or by placing a piece of paper in the box of the person you wish to vote for.



PEOPLE FIRST

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SECTION VIII

## STATEWIDE ORGANIZATION

*“There is strength in numbers”*

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Benefits Of A Statewide Organization

Five Steps In Starting A Statewide Organization



People First is a self-advocacy organization. People First members learn to speak up and speak out for themselves and for others. But People First members also learn it is hard to be a self-advocate by yourself. They join together in local chapters and find there is strength in numbers and strength in sharing ideas and information. At this point the local chapters often start discussing the possibility of forming a statewide People First organization.



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### BENEFITS OF A STATEWIDE ORGANIZATION

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- There is strength in numbers.
- A statewide organization can help members share ideas and information.
- A statewide organization can help members work together to become stronger self-advocates.
- A statewide organization can help start new chapters and provide ongoing assistance to existing chapters.
- A statewide organization improves communication between the chapters.
- A statewide organization can plan and organize state conventions, leadership retreats and training seminars and conferences.
- A statewide organization can develop People First training materials.
- A statewide organization can speak on behalf or with local chapter members in front of the legislature or governor.

## FIVE STEPS IN STARTING A STATEWIDE ORGANIZATION

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### 1. The Beginning

The beginning is when two or more people get together to start a group and work together. People First started in West Virginia in 1991. Now there are self-advocacy groups all over the world.

### 2. Sharing The Idea With Others

The idea for People First is shared by friends, letters and word of mouth. This is an “informal organizational step.” Different groups get started and often don’t know about each other.

### 3. Leadership Steps Forward

Leaders step forward and begin to work together to spread the word about People First and self-advocacy. Often these leaders help to start new groups and plan an organizing conference to share ideas and information.

### 4. Working Together

At this step, the different groups start to talk seriously about working together to form a state-wide organization. This leads to a state-wide steering committee or board of directors with officers. They work together to incorporate, raise funds, become non-profit, write grants, etc. for the organization.

### 5. Formal Operations

The state-wide organization opens an office and hires staff. You must be careful to hire staff who will support the members and not take over the work of the organization. Not all statewide organizations reach this point. Some have an unpaid volunteer network.

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SECTION IX  
WORKING ON ISSUES

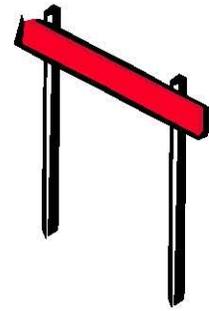
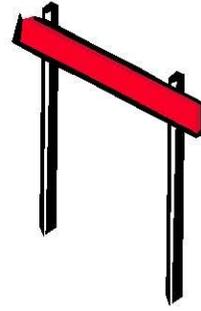
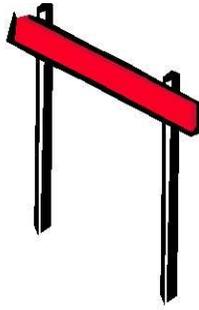
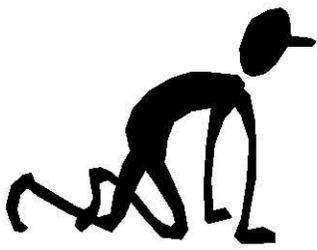
*“Chapters are stronger and function best when members work together on issues.”*

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Understanding Issues

Developing A Plan For Working On Issues





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## WORKING ON ISSUES

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People First members face many issues in their lives. As individuals members face issues each day in areas such as housing, employment, transportation, medical care, personal Isolation and lack of social activities. Learning how to be a self-advocate and working on these issues is an important part of People First.

Issues are also an important for People First chapters. Chapters are stronger and function best when members work together on issues.

- Working on issues teaches members about self advocacy.
- Working on issues keeps members involved and informed about things that affect their lives.
- Working on issues gives members hope that change can happen and that they can help make it happen.
- Working on issues together keeps members from getting bored with meetings.

People First works on issues at many levels

- Individual Issues such as access to services, self determination and personal Isolation.
- Chapter Issues such as increasing membership, raising money or planning a workshop or convention.
- Community Issues such as transportation, housing and employment.
- Statewide Issues such as closing of institutions and educational opportunities.
- National Issues such as aging and discrimination.

These issues are all related. They involve the rights of people with developmental

disabilities to be treated like everyone else. People First helps members learn to be effective self-advocates and work individually and as a group on these issues and the others that effect their lives.

## DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR WORKING ON ISSUES

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People First members and chapters face many issues and it is sometimes difficult to know which ones to choose to work on. The following steps have helped others through the process of identifying an issue to work on and coming up with an action plan. The steps are part of a process called organizing for change which was developed by the Massachusetts Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities.

### Step 1: Make a List of Things that Make You Angry

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Anger can be used in helpful ways to bring about change. The first step in organizing for change is to make a list of things that make you angry. Ask the members of your chapter questions to get people thinking about the things that make them angry and what they do to deal with their anger. These questions can include:

- How many of you remember when you were last angry?
- How many of you were angry about something that happened to you because you were disabled?
- How many of you kept your anger inside of you? How many of you did something about being angry?
- What did you do?

These kinds of questions are very helpful to ask yourself as you learn to focus your anger. Focusing your anger means that you understand where it is coming from and how and why you feel it.

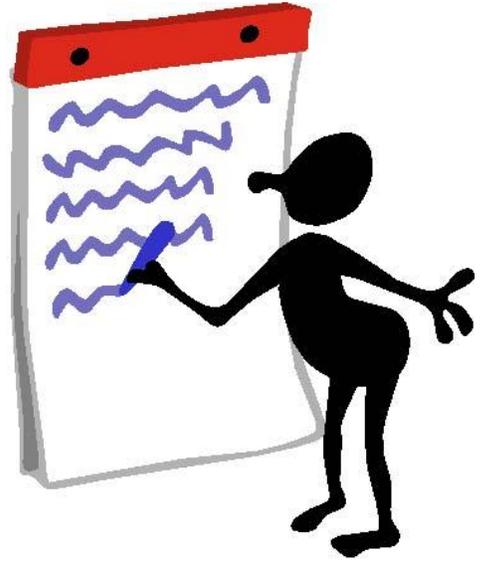
## Step 2: Turn Your Anger Into Issues

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The next step is to turn your list of things that make you angry into a list of issues. An issue is a problem that can be solved by working together. For example, many people are angry because they feel like they are treated like children. The issue, or problem, is that many people don't think that people with disabilities are adults and treat them like children. Once you have identified the issues, you are ready to prioritize them.

### Step 3: Identify the Issues to work on

There is no way to change all problems at once even if you could identify them all. It is therefore necessary to list the issues and choose one or two issues to work on. Here are several things to think about as you make the list:



#### \*Realistic

Is the issue one that you can realistically work on and have a chance to win? Members will not be able to relate to working on an issue that is not realistic to their lives.

#### \*Understandable

Is the issue understandable by you, other members and the public? If people don't understand the issue, it will be impossible to work on it effectively.

#### \*Small

It is better to start with a small issue and build to bigger issues. It is important to have some early successes.

#### \*Winnable

Is the issue winnable or would you have to try to change the whole world? If the issue is not winnable, members will get very frustrated and give up easily.

#### \*Important

Is the issue something that is really important to the members? The issue must be important or people won't want to put time and energy into working on the issue.

### \*Empowering

Will solving the issue give the members a sense of power? Power is the ability to get things done successfully.

### \*Involving

Involving means giving everyone a chance to participate in working on the issue. An issue must be involving or members will lose interest.

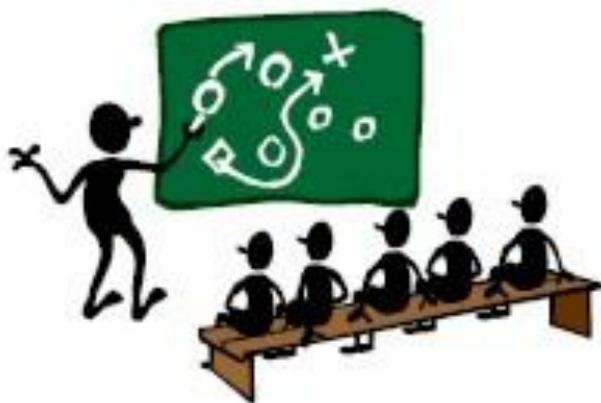
In choosing an issue, it is important to bring power to the people. Power is the ability to get things done and therefore the issue that you choose to work on must be something that can be done by the people. People First members know the issues and needs that they have better than anyone else.

It is also important to remember that it takes time to clearly and understandably identify the issues. The process of identifying issues is very important because it can be used to involve all of the members and can make the difference between choosing an issue that brings power to people or choosing an issue that defeats people.

Once the issues have been identified and prioritized, you can decide on a plan of action to reach your goal.

## Step 4: Decide on a Plan of Action to Reach Your Goal

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To reach your goals, you need a plan of action. A plan of action is a list of the specific things you can do to address the issue and reach your goal. A plan of action is a list of the specific things you will do to bring about change for the better.

A plan of action has two parts:

### ① Strategy

A strategy is the chapter's overall plan of action. In a sense, your strategy is a list of what you will do to reach your goal.

### ② Tactics

Tactics are smaller pieces of exactly how you will put your strategies into action. Below is an example of a plan of action using strategies and tactics.

Here is an example of a plan of action for an issue.

Let's say your issue is transportation, and your goal is to get accessible buses for your community.

## Strategy

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### Get the facts

Learn all you can about the buses, how many people could use the buses, what times of day they would use the buses, who makes the decisions about the buses, who controls the money for buses, etc.

### Get support from others

Get support from others, such as other self-advocacy groups, churches, businesses, agencies that work with people with disabilities, public citizen support, and, if necessary, support from the city or county council, state legislators and other elected officials, unions, and groups outside your city or state.

## Tactics

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Tactics are also very important. Some tactics are safe and easy to do, and some tactics are risky and harder to do. For example, writing someone a letter is usually easier than a face to face meeting. It is usually best to start with a safe and easier tactic and build to a riskier and harder tactic. This is called the Escalator Principle.

Some tactics in our example might include:

- Writing a letter to your local transit authority.
- Meeting with the head of the transit authority.
- Meeting with local and state officials.
- Getting the media involved.

It is important to make sure everyone understands and agrees on your strategies and tactics before you put your plan into action. You can always change your tactics as you go along.

## Step 5: Put Your Plan Into Action

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It is important to go through all of the steps before you put your plan into action. When you go through all of these steps, you will have a better chance at resolving the issue. Remember to start with small and winnable issues and build to bigger issues.

It is also important to remember that sometimes the issues you are working on won't get resolved the way you want them too. This is because it is hard to change systems. But working on issues is just as important as resolving them. When you put your plan of action to work, you feel good about yourself because you are organizing for change and working together to get things done. A good issue and a good plan of action can make a stronger chapter.



PEOPLE FIRST  
CHAPTER HANDBOOK



SECTION X

RESOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

RESOURCES



In addition to this handbook there are many resources available for People First and other self-advocacy groups. Because resource contact information changes so often we are not providing a list here. Instead you can find resource information on our web site at [www.peoplefirstwv.org](http://www.peoplefirstwv.org).

Our web site also has a listing of other People First chapters and some of these also provide resource information including:

- People First of Washington
- People First of Missouri
- People First of Illinois
- People First of Tennessee
- People First of Central England
- Speaking For Ourselves

There are many other sources for self-advocacy resources on the web including the following sites :

- The Arc bibliography section at [www.thearc.org](http://www.thearc.org)
- Advocating Change Together at [www.selfadvocacy.com](http://www.selfadvocacy.com)
- Clearing House on Aging and Developmental Disabilities at [www.uic.edu/orgs/rrtcamr/advocacy.html](http://www.uic.edu/orgs/rrtcamr/advocacy.html)
- Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE) at [www.sabeusa.org](http://www.sabeusa.org)
- Roeher Institute at <http://indie.ca/roehher>
- Syracuse University Center on Human Policy at <http://soeweb.syr.edu/thechp/selfadvo.htm>
- Quality Mall at [www.qualitymall.org](http://www.qualitymall.org)
- University of Minnesota Institute on Community Integration at [www.ici.coled.umn.edu/ici](http://www.ici.coled.umn.edu/ici)

You can also contact us directly if you have questions or need more information.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At the beginning of this handbook we told you how this handbook is an outgrowth of the original People First Blueprint and the Officer Handbook written by People First of Oregon members. We obtained permission to use the content of the original, and although some changes and updates were made, basically the information is still the same as they wrote it. Our debt to the vision and hard work of these first People First members is immeasurable.

As we updated and revised material we also included thoughts and ideas from other chapters just as they have shared our thoughts and ideas in their material. People First is about people with developmental disabilities learning to speak for themselves and share ideas, friendship and information. In that spirit we give permission to freely copy and share this handbook. For the same reason we do not give permission for this handbook to be reproduced or included in any material that will be used commercially or sold.

We hope this handbook has been helpful to you as you begin the exciting People First process. If you need additional information or have any questions please let us know. And once again, welcome to People First.

People First of West Virginia



