

## Strategies for Using Input from Outside the Boardroom

Once input is acquired outside of your board meeting, through ad hoc groups, interviews, or focus groups, you will want to bring the information back to the board for discussion.

### **1. Analyze or summarize the input and bring it to the board for discussion.**

You may summarize major themes and areas of disagreement; what is working well and what needs to be improved. Analysis might also draw out areas of participant satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

### **2. Quote participant responses to illustrate a point or key perceptions of interviewees.**

This technique will prevent information dismissal by readers and listeners. You may also want to quote a response that was an exception to a trend in order to illustrate a minority opinion or highlight a noteworthy idea.

### **3. Invite a representative of the community group / forum to co-present the information gained during the focus group/survey/meeting/other.**

Using a co-facilitator from the focus group or target community can enhance relationship building. The co-facilitator can provide a history of the group, membership, answer specific questions about culture and context, as well as clarify any areas.

### **4. Discuss the input as a comparison to results from other communities to look for themes and commonalities, as well as diversity of opinion.**

Your board may conduct outreach to multiple cultural communities or engage in focus groups with consumers and youth from different advocacy organizations. Identifying themes and tracking differences will be valuable in recognizing a 'one size fits all' strategy may not be effective. This will raise the awareness of your board that tailored outreach and engagement strategies may be indicated.

### **5. Identify action items.**

Work with your board to create action items based on the focus group or other stakeholder input results. Establish a timeline and person responsible, and revisit the issue periodically to make sure the action items are being done.

### **6. Make policy decisions that reflect family and youth input.**

As your board makes policy decisions on issues related to the family and youth input you receive, make sure to ask the board: (1) does the decision reflect the input we received from families and youth, (2) does the decision reflect awareness and incorporation of cultural issues and appropriate responses; (3) do we need more specific input from families, youth, and culturally diverse stakeholders to finalize this decision?