Developing a proposal for a group

- What type of group are you forming? Will it be long or short term?
- For whom is the group intended? Identify the specific population. What do you know about the developmental needs of this population
- What is the cultural mix of the group, and what are the Implications of the cultural mix for forming the group?
- Is the group composed of voluntary or involuntary members? If it is a mandatory group, what special considerations would you address?
- What are the general goal and purposes of this group? That is, what will members gain from participating in it?
- Why is there a need for such a group?
- What are your basic assumptions underlying this project?
- What are your qualifications to lead this group?
- What screening and selection procedures will be used? What is your rationale for these particular procedures?

- How many members will be in the group? Where will the group meet? How often will it meet? How long will each meeting go for? Will new people be allowed to joun the group once it has statrted? Will the group be "open" or "closed"?
- How will the memner be prepoared for the grooup experience? What ground rules will you establish at the outset?
- What structure will your groupl have? What techniques will be used? Why are these techniques approoeriate? In what ways can you employ your techniques in a flexable manner to meet the needs of cultyrally diverse client ppolulations?
- How will you handle the fact that people may be taking some risks by participating in the group? What will you do to safegueard members from unnecessary risks? Will you take any special precaustions with participants who are minors?
- How will you handle situations such as a member arriving at a group while under the influence of alcohol
- What evaluation procedures do you plan? What follow-up procedures are planned?
- What topics will be explored in this group?

Five general areas form the basis of a sound and practical proposal...

1. Rationale
2. Objectives
3. Practical considerations
4. Procedures
5. Evaluation

Practical considerations in forming a group

- Group composition
- Group size
- Frequency and duration of meeting
- Length of a group
- Place for group
- meeting
- Open versus closed groups
  › Open groups are characterised by changing membership. Closed groups typically have some time limitations, with the group meeting for a predetermined number of sessions.

Points to remember....

- Member functions
  › Group members need to be active in the process of deciding if a group is right for them.

Who defines success?

- The group members
  › A principle focus of the members' evaluation is likely to be the personal impact of the group on their lives
- The group workers
  › A principle focus of the group workers is likely to be the group worker and issues of professional development.
- The agency
  › A principle focus of the agency is likely to be weighing cost against benefits
- Other 'Stakeholders'
  › A principle focus of the other stakeholders is the most difficult to predict.

What contributes to success?

- Indicators of progress
  - › 'Success' is a 100 percent word, and in reality, most groups are likely to achieve a measure of success
- Methods of evaluation
- Group Discussion
- Written evaluation
- Keeping a log
- Flipchart quick-think
- Group product
- Empirical measures
- Shape of the evaluation

Group processors and stages of development

- Forming
- Storming (and depression?)
- Performing
- Ending
- The 'monopoliser'
- The 'scapegoat'
- The 'silent member'
- Whole-group 'problems'
- Final comment on difficulties

What is conflict:

> it occures when members disagree over two or more options that a group can take in trying to make a dicision, resolve a problem, achienve a gaol. Conflict also occures when an individual goeal is incompaatible wioth the goeal of others

- Myths about conflict

Managing different types of conflict

- Managing Pseudo-conflict: when misunderstand occurs
- Managing simple conflict: disagreeing on Issues
- Managing Ego-conflict: unravelling personality clashes

What principles and strategies can help a group cooperatively manage conflict

- Separate the people from the problem
- Focus on shard interest
- Generate many options to solve problems
- Base decisions on objective criteria

Review Box

Summary of Three Conflict Types

	Pseudo-Conflict	**Simple Conflict**	**Ego-Conflict**
Source of conflict	Misunderstanding individuals' perceptions of the problem.	Individual disagreement over which course of action to pursue.	Defense of ego: Individual believes he or she is being attacked personally.
Suggestions for managing conflict	1. Ask for clarification of perceptions. 2. Establish a supportive rather than a defensive climate. 3. Employ active listening: Stop Look Listen Question *Paraphrase content* *Paraphrase feelings*	1. Listen and clarify perceptions. 2. Make sure issues are clear to all group members. 3. Use a problem — solving approach to manage differences of opinion. 4. Keep discussion focused on the issues. 5. *Use facts rather than opinions for evidence.* 6. Look for alternatives or compromise positions. 7. Make the conflict a group concern, rather than an individual concern. 8. Determine which conflicts are the most important to resolve. 9. If possible, postpone the decision while additional research can be conducted. This delay also helps relieve tensions.	1. Let members express their concerns but do not permit personal attacks. 2. Employ active listening. 3. Call for a cooling-off period. 4. Try to keep discussion focused on issues (simple conflict). 5. *Encourage parties to be descriptive, rather than evaluative and judgmental.* 6. Use a problem-solving approach to manage differences of opinion. 7. Speak slowly and calmly. 8. Develop rules or procedures that create a relationship which allows for the personality difference.

Group issues and stages of development

- Beginning stage
  - At this stage members struggle to be included in the group. The predominatnat concern is one of being liked, an dissues or accemptence and univerality are formost in the process
- Member behaviour
  - Mininal self disclosures
  - Reliance on the leadership
  - Subtle testing of the relationship
  - Avoidance of negative feedback
  - Emphasis on consensus
  - Frequent advice or suggestoins
  - Active search for commonalities
  - Avoidance of conflict

- Leader stratagies
  › The best way to reslove the beginnnign work of the group is to focus on increasing the levels of interpersonal acceptance and universality. Stated differently, the leader attempts to develop cohesion in the group. Simple structured exercises that allow contact in smaller groups are often helpful. Process comments that highlight inclusion themes and actions may be useful. Leaders have to balance teaching the group how to work effectively with enerting too much control of the process.
- Awareness stage
  › Issues of inclusion are still important, but self-control and interpersonal control are more essential. Foremost is a concern about how much one has to give up to be included and gain from the group.

- Member behaviour
  - › Risky self disclosures increase
  - › Meaningful personal feedback begins
  - › Conflict is allowed
  - › Active support intensifies
  - › Ambivalence about the group is verbalised
  - › Testing of who has the influence in the group
  - › Trust issues arise
  - › Leadership is openly negotiated
  - › Alliances are formed
- Leader strategies
  - › The leader can begin to develop learning from interpersonal actions by modelling and teaching feedback models. Altruistic acts are encouraged, and the group will be encouraged to conduct their own work as much as possible. Conflicts are worled through as they arise, and the leader will have to ensure that substantial support is available. The most rigorous challenges to the leaders occur during the stage and it may be difficult at times to handle disputes non defensively

- Working stage
  - › Reciprocal sharing and support become established in the group. Members are concerned about being helped, and being helpful
- Member behaviour
  - › Mutual support
  - › Intimancy attempted
  - › Conflict is accepted rather than avoided
  - › Self responsibility is stressed
  - › Personal independence is established
  - › Altruism becomes evident
  - › Active work on insight and LIA take please
  - › Hopeful statement increase
- Leader strategies
  - › This stage is the most enjoyuable part of the group. Members hae learned about the priocess, how to conduct the group, and to take a lot more responsibility for themselve. Leaders can be activelty supportuve, make group theme and process comments and confront members if necessdary. One common obsticle during this stage is that members sometimes are reluctant to overly negotiate changes in norms and openling procedures as they occur. New ruules ior ways of operating may emerge withoutr any testing of consensus by the members, the leader may need to directly intervene in the process in order to avoid fragmentation within the group.

- Ending stage
  - › Concerns with separation, and sometimes grief, are common. The major theme revolves around issues of independence versus dependence.
- Member behaviour
  - › Intimate relationships emphasised
  - › Conflict minimised
  - › Abandonment themes surface in discussion
  - › Group termination is resisted
  - › Optimistic statements about the future are frequent
  - › Anxiety is expressed about coping alone
- Leader strategies
  - › Other than the usual process tasks which were employed earlier in the group, the leaders main efforts will be directed toward focusing the issue of termination and independence. The members may need to be reminded frequently that the group will end and participants will be left on their own. If appropriate for the group, relapse prevention may be part of the termination process