

C is for Cathy

With more than 25 years experience in the electoral, government, and non-profit sectors, Cathy Allen has been part of hundreds of work teams – some productive, some not so productive. With a keen interest in using time and tax dollars wisely, Cathy began a comprehensive study of those processes and systems that produced results quickly and were implemented with minimal delays and expense. What she found was that effective groups and project teams have certain identifiable things in common: a commitment to developing and maintaining a common vision among an inclusive group of participants, processes that foster creative thinking and provide safety for group members to explore innovative ideas, and a determination to work out agreements in detail at the beginning of projects, rather than papering over differences along the way.

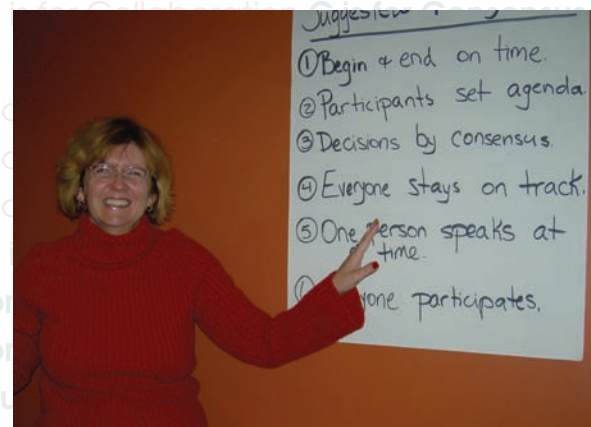
Since 2003 when Creative Option C was launched, Cathy has been helping groups and organizations with their community needs assessments, asset mapping, and planning processes. Working with an organization's unique needs, and building upon their unique strengths, Cathy guides her clients to their own solutions and conclusions about the steps they take.

Cathy is not a doctor, and won't promise to diagnose or cure your group's issues – but by conducting a thorough assessment and achieving a commitment to consensus-building, she will help point you to a proven process for identifying action steps and moving forward on your own.

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Service List

- Asset mapping
- Campaign planning
- Collaborative processes
- Community needs assessment/
Stakeholder analysis
- Effective meetings
- Employee & customer surveys
- Facilitation
- Focus groups
- Keys to effective advocacy
- Personal productivity
- Program development
- Public relations/Message development
- Strategic planning



Clients

- Benton Carroll Salem Schools
- Catawba Referendum Committee
- Dover City Schools
- HOPE Services: Henry County Board of Developmental Disabilities
- Mental Health and Recovery Board of Erie and Ottawa Counties
- Ohio House Democratic Caucus
- Ohio Democratic Party
- Ohio Library Council
- Ohio SIBS: Special Initiatives for Brothers & Sisters, The Singsong Center, The Ohio State University
- Ottawa County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
- Ottawa County Senior Resources Levy Committee
- Ottawa County Transportation Agency
- Ottawa County Visitors Bureau
- Port Clinton City Schools
- Portraits of Ottawa County
- Richland Newhope: Richland County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
- Riverview Industries, Inc.

For more information on how Creative Option C can help your group or organization **invent solutions together** and to see project samples, please visit

www.creativeoptionc.com

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“The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them.”
-Albert Einstein



Creative Option C helps your group or organization **invent solutions together.**

Cathy Allen INVENTING • SOLUTIONS • TOGETHER

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C is for Collaboration

Collaboration is one of those words that is too commonly used – and too commonly misunderstood. At Creative Option C we take the word very seriously to mean people taking the time to communicate with each other effectively, share ideas in an environment of appreciation and mutual respect, and honor each other's views—even when someone is absent from the group.

Collaborative processes generally involve several phases, including assessment, facilitation, consensus-building, mediation (where needed), and skill building among group members. After studying an array of tried-and-true collaborative techniques, Creative Option C can help put your group or organization on the path to breakthrough results.

C is for Community

Nearly every group or organization receiving any kind of governmental funding is required to conduct some sort of annual community needs assessment, or demonstrate community involvement in their planning processes. But who is the community? Is it just our direct customers, or is the general public included? If we are to survey our stakeholders, how do we define who they are? And how do we go about complying with the regulations? Let Creative Option C design a process for gathering that information in a cost-effective manner that meets legal requirements.

C is for Consensus

Most people believe that consensus is simply not possible. But think about it. The criminal justice system requires juries to come to consensus before they convict or acquit. So – consensus among strangers happens a thousand times a day in courthouses all across our country. How? Because jurors know when they enter deliberations that consensus is the expected outcome. By making consensus the goal of discussions, by focusing on common interests, and by utilizing proven processes for building agreement, most decision-making teams can develop consensus both inside and outside their immediate circles.

Having safe and comfortable means for every member of a team to make a contribution is the cornerstone of consensus building, as is a base of solid information about various interests. That's why the assessment phase and those stakeholder surveys can be so invaluable.

Before going into a planning retreat or facilitated meeting, let Creative Option C put your group on the path to consensus by surveying members for their views. We can then create the processes that will lead to decisions that are visionary, can be implemented, and have maximum buy-in from all participants.

C is for Customer Service

Customer relations isn't just for corporations and businesses anymore, but for non-profit and governmental organizations as well. The customer base includes direct consumers for your product or service, but also your taxpayers or donors, your government regulators, state and local elected officials, and colleague agencies within your jurisdiction. Non-profits can't just hand each customer a response postcard and ask for feedback. If you want to know if you are meeting your strategic goals and pleasing your target audiences, you have to ask them. With a specialization in community assessment and stakeholder surveys, Creative Option C is here to help your group or organization identify its strengths and target areas for improvement from the perspective of the ones who matter most – your customers.

C is for Campaigns

Some people are really good at organizing electoral campaigns. Other people are really good at running a program, providing direct services, or administering a budget. These are completely different skill sets. And let's face it, there isn't enough money to be made helping small school systems and county programs with their levy efforts to entice political professionals into being available. Let Creative Option C help prepare your group or organization for its next levy effort by assisting with your community assessment, goal setting, and campaign planning. With years of experience in message development, voter file analysis and targeting, voter contact methods, visibility efforts, fundraising, budgeting, and volunteer recruitment, Creative Option C can put your group or organization on the path to a very happy election night.

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