

# **VOICES**

**Ohio State Residence Life Senior Staff Training 2018**

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**Dialoguing Where We Live: Learning from Many Voices**

**Dialogue Workshop Prep Work Packet**

**SECTION VI:**  
**Developing Action Ideas**  
**Prioritizing Ideas**



## Developing Action Ideas:

### *Helping Participants Prepare to Move from Dialogue to Action*

During the first several sessions, participants in circles use dialogue as a way to examine an issue from different points of view. Then, they explore what's at the root of the problem. By the last session each group is developing ideas for action.

The following questions will help people come up with effective action ideas.

**Issue**—Will the action address the key concerns the group has been discussing?

**Doable**—Is the action practical?

**Effectiveness**—Will the action create a desirable change?

**Assets**—Are resources available to help implement the action?

**Situation**—Does the action make sense in our community?

Here is an example:

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**Concern**

Our neighborhood is unsafe.

**Broad action idea**

We need to make our neighborhood safe.

**Specific Actions**

1. Meet with the police department.
2. Request regular neighborhood patrols.
3. Start a neighborhood watch program.

### Further Information

Ideally, action ideas should grow out of a discussion about approaches to change. However, sometimes people suggest large, abstract ideas for change, rather than

specific “doable” actions. The facilitator can help the group focus by using the questions above.

## How to Prioritize a List of Ideas



Following a brainstorm, here is a way to prioritize ideas:

- 1) Sort ideas by category. Group similar ideas together and remove duplicates.
- 2) Allow time for people to discuss the pros and cons of each idea. After this discussion invite people to narrow the list. Check with the group to see if there is general agreement.
- 3) Or, give participants colored dots or markers and ask them to vote for their top ideas. Use  $N/3$  (number of ideas divided by 3) to determine how many votes each person gets. People can apply their votes to one idea, or spread them around.
- 4) Identify top choices.



## Setting Priorities for Action: Helping a Group Decide Which Ideas to Work On

This exercise might be useful to a newly formed action group.

1. On a flip chart or blackboard, draw a horizontal line and a vertical line, resulting in a cross with 4 quadrants. See example, below.
2. On the left side, running vertically, from top to bottom, write the word “Workable.” Across the bottom, running left to right, write the word “Important.”
3. Label the top 2 quadrants above the horizontal line “Easy.” Label the bottom 2 quadrants below the horizontal line “Hard.”
4. At the base of the left-hand column, write “Low.” At the base of the right-hand column, write “High.”
5. Take the list of action ideas, and assign them to the appropriate quadrant. Put them on Post-it notes, in case they need to be moved around.
6. Ideas in the upper right quadrant (which are both “Easy” and “Important”) might be a good place to begin.

### Example:

The numbers in the graphic correspond to the numbered items at the bottom of the box.

