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• consensus • sustainability • managing scarcity to abundance •

Building Wealth in Local Communities: A Program for Change

Goebel & Associates specializes in facilitating solutions to community problems through consensus building, sustainability planning, and scarcity management using a number of proven diagnostic techniques and action processes. Our approach involves developing a holistic *community vision* and using a decision-making process that emphasizes financial planning for the triple bottom-line (people, profit, planet).

What's Building Wealth in Local Communities: A Program for Change (BWLC) and why should I care? BWLC is a community-based process for attaining short- and long-term sources of revenue and employment by identifying local resources, engaging local initiative and talent, and designing a locally endorsed and sponsored vision of community quality of life. The process is a response to the crisis experienced by communities and individuals throughout the United States who have lost vast amounts of wealth, and to the struggles of local governments to balance budgets while meeting local needs and obligations.

What can it do for me, my town, my company? This process can rebuild wealth for individuals, businesses, communities, and governments. In my experience, individuals and organizations have made tremendous change happen using this process. One owner's four ranches increased their net by \$2 million per year. A government at a large Indian reservation doubled land treatments while cutting costs by \$1 million annually. A national forest attained its goals by 126%. A local watershed council was able to restore its financial condition with an investment of a three-day workshop. A county in West Texas increased tax revenues through successful businesses by 27%. Another county in Eastern Oregon had a 93% "new business" success rate over 5 years. These are just some of the results.

What problem is it solving? The BWLC process removes the roadblocks to success by addressing the limiting beliefs that prevent movement toward building wealth and provides tools that allow people to learn new ways to solve complex issues. These issues involve the social, economic, and ecological needs and values of individuals and communities.

What does the process involve? The following six steps are a comprehensive process for building wealth throughout an entire community – from change for individuals, to business and organizations, and local governments. While all six steps are optimal, communities may choose to start with one or two processes, then add as needed.

Of course, these processes can best be mastered and implemented with the assistance of a trained community facilitator. This is because too many paradigm and belief shifts must occur in order for individuals and communities to replace current belief systems and methods of doing business with processes that yield sustainability and produce enduring success. It is extremely difficult –

if not impossible – for these kinds of “paradigm shifts” to originate from within a community seeking change.

The following steps are recommended for cultivating community wealth and fostering sustainability.

- 1) Develop three elements of *community vision* – quality of life; means to support that way of life; and means to sustain that way of life.
- 2) Introduce and adapt a process that evaluates whether actions are sustainable from a social, economic, and ecological perspective simultaneously.
- 3) Incorporate the principles of cultivating community wealth
 - a. Plug the leaks of community wealth
 - b. Shore up existing businesses
 - c. Create new local businesses
 - d. Recruit new outside businesses that are consistent with the *community vision*
- 4) Institute processes that allow community members with passions to successfully enter entrepreneurial opportunities, through a network of passionate people who fulfill the three legs of a successful business: product / service, financial management, and marketing. This process needs to tap into the diverse areas of expertise of the community; should not initiate potential businesses or motivate potential entrepreneurs; and be a free and confidential business service. This selective identification and mobilization of skill-and-passion sets is one of the processes used to accomplish principles 2 & 3 above.
- 5) Adopt a financial management process that ensures the triple bottom line; people, profit, and planet. This approach will lead to economically and ecologically sustaining means to achieve individual family, business, organizational, governmental, and community-wide visions.
- 6) Of critical importance, the recognition that unresolved community conflicts carry a very high price tag, AND the commitment to changing those limiting beliefs that prevent movement toward the *community vision*.

What happens if you only use 3 or 4 of the steps? It has been our experience over the course of over two decades and three continents that optimal results are attained by following all six steps. We recognize, however, that it is not always feasible or possible to do the entire program. We can assess which of the six steps are most crucial to the successful outcome of a particular set of problems and design a scenario that will bring about the desired changes. Follow-up assessment and review are always an option.

How easy is it to implement? Again, some changes will occur just by attending a workshop. Others will require more and continuing investment of time and energy into learning and practicing the processes that are being taught. Another way of answering this question is to consider your attitude to the current situation. How satisfied are you with the present state of events? If the answer is “very satisfied,” then you can just go on doing what you’ve been doing, and this is easy. If, however, you are not satisfied or you are not attaining your desired outcomes, you will have to do something different that will bring the desired successful situation. Doing something different is usually not easy, as it requires forming new habits and patterns. However, the long-term results of this hard work are extremely rewarding.

How quick are the results? Results will materialize on several levels at various intervals, depending on the degree of commitment to learning and to adopting new beliefs and tools. Some results will be instantaneous and visible immediately after the workshop, due to changes in limiting beliefs. Other results will take disciplined work over time and will include learning and

practicing new methods that will create desirable outcomes in the long run. The methods have a proven track record of success in producing both short- and long-term outcomes.

Is it cost effective? If you are satisfied with your current results, keep doing what you have been doing. If you need to do something different, it will take an investment of effort, time, and money.

How do I get started? You can start by talking with Jeff Goebel, Goebel & Associates, about what your relationship is in your community (personal business enhancement; organizational or governmental enhancement; or overall community wellbeing), and what your desired outcomes are. We will develop a strategy what will begin in the most effective means to meet your desired outcomes.

MODELS USED AND ADAPTED

Holistic Management – Setting a holistic *community vision*, decision making process with an emphasis on financial planning for triple bottom-line (people, profit, planet)

Rocky Mountain Institute – 1) Plug the Leaks, 2) Shore up existing businesses, 3) Create new local businesses, 4) Recruit new business consistent w/ *community vision*

Enterprise Facilitation – Trinity of Management; doing what one is passionate about; tapping into range of community expertise; never initiate or motivate, but offer free, confidential business counseling

Consensus Building Process - Conflict resolution (cost of unresolved conflicts); transformational change

The Path of Least Resistance - Removing limiting beliefs

Selected List of Successful Interventions

A full list of our work can be found on our website www.aboutlistening.com.

Testimonials

”Jeff is an engaging trainer with solid skills. He has the ability to lead a group, without taking them over. As an attendee in one of Jeff’s recent trainings, I was pleased to see the evolution of the group. Group members moved from simply participating when asked to be involved, to being leaders, with minimal direction for sections of the training. As a result, the training connected with every member, and provided a positive learning opportunity.”

– **JoAnn Jackson, MBA - Consultant and Mediator, Portland, OR**

“Jeff Goebel’s wisdom enables people to expand their understanding and consideration of those with whom they work and play. Workshop participants will find new reserves of patience. They will learn new techniques for resolving tense situations, and how to build mutual respect among people with conflicting interests. Their new knowledge will be valuable in their careers and jobs as well as in their personal lives. Even relatively mature and experienced people will gain knowledge and insights.”

– **Beverly Isenson, Governor’s Council on Environmental Education, WA, USA**

“Jeff is a careful, sensitive, and thorough teacher in how to change beliefs and group dynamics. What I have learned from his sessions is that by setting up a different environment, listening is facilitated and people can move in directions that are different from our previous habits. The

consensus building techniques and attitudes I learned from Jeff, though imperfectly applied, I feel have been key in implementing an Enterprise Facilitation effort in Wallowa County, and in confronting and resolving some of the issues we have around the control of noxious weeds.”

– **Peter Donovan, Editor of ManagingWholes.com, Enterprise, OR, USA**

“*Consensus building* seems to be a skill and art you can’t do without nowadays. It is so uplifting and empowering to find common ground with those who seem to have so little in common with us and move forward from such a great place in our minds and heart. Jeff Goebel’s teachings have been of great value to me personally and professionally. They have shown me effective ways to become a better listener and observer and to direct the way I think and act to let go of fears and achieve the best possible outcomes of all situations.”

– **Daniela Howell, Educator and Rancher, Montrose, CO, USA**

“I found Jeff Goebel’s help teaching to be invaluable. Combining a thorough understanding of Holistic Management and of a successful collaborative decision making process, Jeff helped our people in the field to create positive change in their home communities. As a mentor, coach and teacher, Jeff is an insightful thinker, and a patient and dedicated leader (he walks the talk.)”

– **Bill Thompson, former Manager of Challenges and Choices project, and Educator, Denver, CO, USA**

“Nespelem is a testimony to survival. It is also a testimony to genocide. The Colville people are survivors. Most Indigenous cultures suffer from a historical unresolved grief. I have spoke of this many times. That is a grief that is accumulated over generations of trauma. I think there has been a spiritual and ethnic death here. Step for step my people have been denied the basis for a collective identity formation. Until Jeff came to work for the Colville Tribe, there was no basin to capture and store my people’s integrity, a place to dip into and quench the parched ache of not being acknowledged. The lesson is, one must get to the heart of the whole. Our own people must talk about change, the path ahead, the options, and how we will make a better future for our children. Jeff worked diligently and patiently here and the holistic goal that still hangs in our Council Chambers as well as myself and others that worked along side him are the evidence. Jeff listened to this community’s many voices. He met the challenge of transformation, and we brought out Sinklipt-Coyote (our teacher) in him. You see in our teachings, there exists a great optimism for the potential to make positive change, change will come. As always it is just a matter of who determines what that change will be.

This is the example I learned from Jeff that I carry with me each day to help me be successful.”

– **Lois Trevino, past Chairperson of the Board of Directors, Center for Holistic Management and Colville Tribal member, Nespelem, WA**

“Jeff Goebel has made a tremendous impact on our quality of life and the success of our family run business. We have both taken the Consensus Building Workshops, the Planning for Profit workshops and Planning for Abundance in Scarce Times. In Jeff’s workshops we have learned to ‘think outside the box,’ diversify our enterprises and increase the profitability of our ranch.”

– **Rick and Kris Finch, Finch Ranch, Pullman, WA, USA**

“During a consensus building meeting held in March 1999 in Schoharie County, New York, over 50 farmers and non-farmers discussed the problems facing agriculture in our community. With Jeff Goebel’s leadership and Shannon Hayes’ assistance, by the end of the meeting, participants were motivated by the realization that they themselves have the power to create change and achieve the best possible outcomes for local agriculture. As a result of this meeting, many of the participants continued to meet on a monthly basis and MADE (Marketing Agricultural Diversity and Excellence) in Schoharie County was formed.

The mission of MADE in Schoharie County is to strengthen the environmental, economic and social vitality of our local farms so that our children will want to stay in our community. We aim to make agriculture an accepted and acceptable way of life, build stronger relationships among the diversity of area agriculturists; strengthen and expand local and regional markets and business opportunities, and to engage ourselves in community issues as advocates for local family-scale agricultural enterprises.

We just celebrated our first year anniversary, and had a number of successful projects to toast: in addition to initiating changes in the county’s ag and farmland protection plan, we regularly assist each other with developing and expanding our product markets, we organized a letter writing campaign to explain our concerns to local politicians, hosted an educational exhibit out our county fair, compiled a brochure to collectively market regional agricultural products, began designing our website, and instituted a community-university partnership with the State University of New York at Cobleskill to oversee appropriate college-community development efforts.

We have no presidents, no officers, no treasury, no letterhead. We have instead a renewed understanding of what it means to be a part of a community that honors independent voices and caring relationships. Many thanks are owed to Jeff Goebel for bringing us to a point where we could begin working together in innovative and creative ways.”

– **Judy Pangman, Proprietor, Sweetree Farm, Howes Cave, NY and Shannon Hayes, PhD, Cornell University, & partner, Sap Bush Hollow Farm, Warnerville, NY, USA**