

Ladder of Citizenship Participation

Use this model on an organisation you are familiar with. Think of examples that illustrate the level of citizen participation. The model can also be useful for social change work when applied to power relations in a particular issue.

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| Degrees of citizen power | <p>8. Citizen control Citizens/workers have full autonomy over an area and have responsibility for policy and decision-making, eg workers' co-operative.</p> |
| | <p>7. Delegated power Citizens have primary decision-making authority over a particular plan or programme, usually as a result of negotiation.</p> |
| | <p>6. Partnership Power is redistributed through negotiation between citizens and powerholders. They agree to share planning and decision-making responsibilities. Ground rules are established and revised only with mutual consent.</p> |
| Degrees of tokenism | <p>5. Placation Hand-picked "worthy" citizen representatives are placed on committees etc, though the powerholders retain the right to decide.</p> |
| | <p>4. Consultation This should be genuinely 2-way so that citizen's opinions and suggestions are incorporated into the final processes. Often, this does not happen and the process looks more like Step 2 Therapy. This leads to distrust. Consultation should not be confused with Informing.</p> |
| | <p>3. Informing Information giving is the first step towards legitimate participation since citizens/ workers at least become aware of some of their rights, responsibilities and options.</p> |
| Non-participation | <p>2. Therapy The executive/ management allows citizens to let off steam under the pretence of participation. But the anger and frustration is not heeded.</p> |
| | <p>1. Manipulation Citizens or members of private organisations serve merely to rubber stamp the desires of the executive or advisory committees.</p> |

Adapted from work by Sherry Arnstein