

Session 8

Total time 3 Hours

Objectives:

By the end of this session participants should have:-

- Explored theoretical concepts of power
- Be able to identify and describe different types of power and where the power to make change lies in different settings
- Developed a understanding of what concepts of power and powerlessness means for communities
- An awareness of the responsibilities held by different tiers of government and the scope for public involvement
- Identified some of the individual and collective methods they consider useful in influencing decision makers and motivating change

Outline:

Activity 1	Welcome and Introductions	10 minutes
Activity 2	Perceptions of Power	25 minutes
Activity 3	Feeling power and Powerlessness	30 minutes
Activity 4	Different Sources of Power	30 minutes
Activity 5	Who has the Power?	30 minutes
Activity 6	Community Empowerment Act	15 minutes
Activity 7	"Power to do what?" Case study	30 minutes
Activity 8	What would you do? Learning Log	10 - 15 minutes

Tutors Notes: Session 8

Activity 1

Welcome and Introductions: Use an ice breaker, energiser or short team building activity as an introduction to the theme of the session – Who holds the Power?

Activity 2 – Perceptions of Power

Group activity / energiser to get participants thinking about and discussing who in society holds power and how both perceptions and reality can shift expected power bases.

An alternative activity – Bag Exercise – is provided, although it involves more set up and will take longer to run.

Activity 3 - Feeling Power and Powerlessness

An opportunity for participants to reflect on their own experiences of feeling power and lack of power and begin to build an understanding of how power can be used to empower and dis-empower individuals and communities.

Activity 4 – Sources of Power

Exploring the sources of power and the impacts they can have on individuals, communities, nations etc.

BREAK (If possible a break here will allow session to continue with a new focus – moving onto formal ‘who has the authority for what’)

Activity 5 – Who has the Power?

An activity designed to look at government structures in Scotland and beyond, identifying which tier of government has what powers and responsibilities. The activity is designed to raise participants’ awareness of who holds the power.

Activity 6 – Community Empowerment Act

Brief input from the tutor to highlight the new powers for communities contained in this Act.

Activity 7 – Power to do What? - Case Study

As small groups the participants can consider power in a fictional community experiencing a common problem and then begin to identify how power held by various community members can be used to effect change.

Activity 8 - What would you do?

An opportunity to bring it back to the personal and ask people to reflect on what they would actually do as a community activist, as well as recognise the different skills and limits of those around them.

Activity 1 – Welcome and Introductions

Method – Tutor input and ice breaker



10 minutes

Tutor should welcome the group and cover any domestic, health and safety, general information necessary.

(If this is a follow-on session you may want to recap on previous topic/ask if there are any outstanding comment/queries from previous session).

Carry out a short activity –icebreaker/energiser/teambuilding activity – related to the theme of the session or just to help create a good learning environment.

Alternatively move straight into the next activity “Perceptions of power?” using it for this purpose.

Activity 2 – Perceptions of Power

Method – Full group activity followed by discussion



- 25 minutes

To allow participants to explore and discuss who within society holds power and why and how perceptions and reality can influence or shift power balance.

Equipment needed – Set of power cards A and B – the people represented can be changed to be more topical or localised as necessary. Enough space for maximum of 12 people to stand next to each other in a line across the room.

Hand out set of cards A with roles on and ask everyone to arrange themselves from least powerful on the left facing you to most powerful on the right, in a line across the room. When everyone is in place ask them to share with the group why they feel their role puts them in the position they have chosen. Once the discussion has finished hand out set of cards B – make sure you hand the matching cards to the right people e.g. Charity worker – matched with the card – Fundraising manager.

Ask group to move if they feel the information added by the second card has made them less or more powerful – once everyone is in position ask those who have moved to share the information on the new card and justify what it is about this person or role that gives them more/less power.

Themes for discussion to follow on and explore a bit further:

Making assumptions?

Stereotyping?

Gender Balance?

Income bracket?

Charisma?

Talent?

Skills/Knowledge?

Delegated/assumed power?

What you will need:

Set of Character cards – Set A and Set B

Space for the group to move around / line up

An alternative activity – Bag Exercise – is provided, although it involves more set up and will take longer to run.

Perceptions of Power

Set of Cards A and B - to be printed off and laminated

1 A

**LONE FEMALE
PARENT**

2 A

MALE ADULT

3 A

**UNEMPLOYED
COMMUNITY
MEMBER**

4 A

TEENAGER

5 A

**ICE CREAM
MAN**

6 A

**TUTOR OF
LITERACY GROUP**

7 A

**CHARITY
WORKER**

8 A

BLIND PERSON

9 A

EX-PRISONER

10 A

BABY

11 A

HOME HELP

12 A

**LOCAL SHOP
OWNER**

1 B

**CHAIR OF
BOARD
OF TRUSTEES**

2 B

**CHAIRPERSON OF THE
LOCAL COMMUNITY
COUNCIL**

3 B

COMPUTER EXPERT

4 B

**MEMBER OF THE
SCOTTISH YOUTH
PARLIAMENT**

5 B

**LOCAL
COUNCILLOR**

6 B

**EDITOR OF A
NATIONAL
NEWSPAPER**

7 B

**FUNDRAISING
MANAGER FOR
NATIONAL CHARITY**

8 B

**COMMUNITY
REPRESENTATIVE ON
COUNCIL DISABILITY
FORUM**

9 B

**TREASURER OF LOCAL
ORGANISATION**

10 B

**SCREAMING
BABY**

11 B

**UNION
REPRESENTATIVE**

12 B

**MEMBER OF LOCAL
LICENSING BOARD**

Activity 3 – Feeling Power and Powerlessness

Method – Individual drawing / reflective activity followed by group discussion



- 30 minutes

Purpose

To explore personal experiences with power and powerlessness and what they tell us about alternative sources of political power.

Process

1. Give each participant a large sheet of paper and markers.
2. Ask them to draw a line down the middle. On the one side they draw a situation which has made them feel powerful. On the other side they draw a situation that has made them feel powerless.

Note: *Many people don't feel confident about drawing. They may ask if they can just write the answer using words. Explain that drawing is often a more effective way of reflecting about and expressing emotions. Having to think creatively about how to express yourself often makes you think about experiences vividly with fresh eyes. Encourage the most resistant people to use symbols and stick figures. The quality of the artwork is not important.*

3. Ask each person to explain their drawing,
4. During feedback from participants, the facilitator should record key words on a flip chart sheet, which describe their experiences with power or powerlessness.

The facilitator should listen for the feelings and actions that embody the emotional, spiritual and psychological elements of power or powerlessness.

Here are some examples:

Common Responses for “Situations that make you feel Powerful”

- Overcoming fear or a feeling of ignorance by pushing myself to take action
- Recognition by others of what I did
- Finding a creative way to solve a problem that seemed unsolvable
- Being able to handle a difficult assignment
- Succeeding as a leader
- Caring for and helping others

- Joining a group with other people who have the same problem
- Capacity to inspire fear

Common Responses for “Situations that make you feel Powerless”

- Disrespect and putdowns
- Being ignored
- Being stereotyped and denied opportunities to prove oneself
- Lack of control
- Loss
- Ignorance
- Shame
- Isolation

Notes regarding time:

Allow 10-15 minutes for the drawing / reflective stage. In a larger group it may not be practical for all members to present their drawing to the group. This may need to be done in smaller groups who then feedback their own observations of the similarities between their experiences – leading to key phrases for noting.

What you will need:

Flipchart sheet (1 sheet per person)
Coloured markers

Activity 4 – Different Sources of Power

Method – Hand-out, individual worksheet and discussion



- 30 minutes

Brief input from Tutor regarding the different sources of power outlined in the **Different Sources of Power hand out**, highlighting that Formal Authority, by virtue of place in an official structure, is just one of many ways that people (even those not in traditional positions of authority) can use power to affect or prevent change in society.

The hand out contains 14 examples of types of power. It is important to refer to these before conducting the exercise, and to think about examples against each in the event of groups seeking clarification on their meaning.

Give out the Hand-out and Worksheet – Different Sources of Power. Split the full group into small groups and allocate each group 3 – 4 types of power and ask participants to identify 2 - 3 specific examples from their own experience of how these different sources of power have been used in their communities.

Seek **feedback** from the whole group – with discussion focusing on whether these examples are empowering or disempowering to the wider community.

A point to highlight:

- Power itself can be dis-empowering or empowering, depending on how it is used or abused, and who holds the power.

Returning to the **worksheet** ask participants individually to identify one type of power that they believe they have access to within their community and how this could be applied to empower communities to direct and take ownership of decisions within their community.

What you will need:

Hand-out – Different Sources of Power

Worksheet – Different Sources of Power

Activity 5 – Who has the Power?

Method – Interactive exercise, hand-outs.



- 30 minutes

Ask participants to think of occasions when they have felt strongly about something and wanted to influence people and create a change - they need not have taken action, just wished that things were different. They should think about personal, community, societal, national, and global issues or scenarios.

They should write down as many examples as they think of on separate post-it notes. Some people might need a prompt to get started so examples could be:

- Graffiti, litter, dog fouling in their area
- Homelessness, environmental issues, poverty, youth unemployment
- The closure of a local post office, hospital, train station
- Services or attitudes that discriminate against particular groups or do not meet their needs e.g. disabled access, racism
- Poor local services e.g. buses or bin collections, or the state of community facilities, e.g. footpaths or a children's play park

In preparation for the activity the tutor should replicate the **"POWER TREE"** on a large flipchart page or white/blackboard.

Using the hand out **'Who holds the Power?'** for reference participants should work in small groups initially, then as a full group to decide which 'branch' of the tree has responsibility for the issue/change they have identified.

NB some will be grass-roots change e.g. community attitudes

Additional branches can be added to reflect local services / context

A cloud can also be added for the 'not sure/who knows?' items

Once all post-its have been placed as a group review the placement of the post-its and correct if necessary.

What you will need:

Post-it notes

Large version of the Power Tree

Who hold the Power? Hand-out

Activity 6 – Community Empowerment Act

Method – Input and hand out



- 15 minutes

The tutor should deliver a short input around the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act which came into force in July 2015, the full bill can be found on

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk>

This Act has implications for everyone who practices community development, community organisations who want to effect change and public agencies.

The act has three major elements that communities should know about:

- The strengthening of community planning to give communities more say in how public services are planned and delivered
- New rights for communities in relation to identifying local needs and issues and on then requesting action to be taken on these
- The extension of the community “right to buy” or otherwise have greater control over assets

Following each of the points give a brief example of what this would mean to local communities.

Activity

Split into small groups/pairs and give each group one of the Activity cards and a sheet of flipchart paper. At the top you should have pre prepared an overall heading to match each of the cards and with two sub headings “Benefits” and “Challenges”.

After reading their card and thinking about what this would mean in their community they should note down a minimum of 3 points under each sub heading. Display the flipchart sheets around the room and draw out any key points. Assure participants that support will be available to communities to overcome the challenges identified and in relation to taking the bill forward and that the notes will be typed up and circulated following the session.

Remind the participants that communities empower themselves by taking action.

What you will need:

One set of Community Empowerment Act Activity cards

Pre - prepared headed flipchart sheets and pens

Community Empowerment Hand-out –useful summary, for self- study

Activity 7 – Power to do what?

Method – Case Study



- 30 minutes

The next activity will involve a case study and can be facilitated in a number of ways depending on the number of participants. No matter which option is used the key question is still the same:

Everyone who is involved in the situation has power – but what can they use it for – what might the consequences be for each group if they use their power in a positive fashion, how does it play out for them.

Option 1

Distribute the case study to the participants and a copy of the case study worksheet.

Allow time for the participants to work on this individually for about 10 to 15 minutes, jotting down their responses from all points of view.

Following this the tutor should facilitate a full group discussion allowing points to be put forward and clarified and discuss as necessary. Key points should be recorded on flipchart and following the session typed and distributed to participants.

Option 2

Split participants into pairs or groups of three. Then run the activity as above, only this time each group working together to complete the worksheet then feedback as above.

Option 3

Split participants into 3/4 groups, distribute case study and worksheet. Explain that each group will consider the case study looking at it from a different perspective e.g. young people, local residents, community police, local councillors etc.

The feedback from each group could be recorded on flipchart paper and a discussion can take place on the points raised. The facilitator may want to pose the question of the role of a community activist in a situation like this- what could be a way forward for the community in this scenario?

What will need:

“Power to do what” case study

Case Study Worksheet

Activity 8 – What would you do?

Method – Individual worksheet and discussion



– 10-15 minutes

Tutor to distribute the **Worksheet – What would you do?**

- In introducing the exercise the Tutor should remind the group that we are focussed on change in their communities and actions in that context (i.e. probably not life or death situations)

Participants should complete the worksheet individually.

- After completing the worksheet participants should discuss in groups of 2 or 3 what forms of action they think would be most effective in persuading different groups / or stakeholders.
- Sum up the exercise by allowing opportunities to feedback and comment / add to the suggestions already made.

Note: remind participants to complete their Learning Log for this session as homework

What you will need:

“What would you do” Worksheet
Learning Log