

Different Way of Seeing & Leading- Asset Building in Complex Systems

Simple Rules

Simple Rules are the unspoken, foundational agreements about expectations and relationships that guide the behaviors in an organization or group.

They are not:

- Norms
- Values
- Meeting Agreements
- Instructions

Observe Simple Rules:

Look for patterns of behavior and the statements that would describe them related to your group.

Decide What Your Simple Rules Will Be:

Once you have identified some of the rules that govern behavior in your group, you have choices to make about which rules help the group function and should be kept, what rules need to be changed and what new rules you want to put into play.

Act – Building Simple Rules:

- Keep rules to a minimal number. Humans can only remember about 7 things, so try to stay under that.

- The rules should amplify and reward desired behavior.
- At least one should address identity-how people come together and who they are as a group.
- At least one should address differences within the group.
- At least one rule should address how members interact – exchanging information and resources.

Examples from Asset-Building Settings:

As leaders of St. Louis Park’s asset building initiative, Children First, thought about the rules that guide their work, they named the following:

- It’s an initiative, not a program.
- We work in partnership.
- People in the community have to decide what to do.
- Anyone can build assets.
- Kids are equal partners
- We hold assets at our core.

Karen Atkinson, Coordinator for Children First said in a recent interview, that when decisions about taking on new projects or getting involved in or sponsoring new activities arise, these rules help members think through whether the new item under discussion is a good fit for the initiative.