

LOCAL CHARACTER COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

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THE CONCEPT ~ ESTABLISHING CHARACTER CITY COMMITTEES

What is the purpose of committees?

- Because our goal is to find ways that character can benefit every part of our community, it is important to have a specific strategy for reaching every part. The establishment of committees within the larger steering committee to focus on specific sectors of the community will effectively accomplish this. It is important to have a committee for at least the following sectors: Business, Education, Faith, Government, and Media. These committees may need to be broken down into more than one work group depending on the needs and the interests that arise in your community.

Who is responsible for the committees?

- Your local steering committee is made up of community leaders, individuals that have influence and expertise in each sector of your community. Ask them to chair a committee focusing on that sector.

Who should be on a committee?

- Individuals that have expertise and influence in the sector being targeted. This may include individuals on the steering committee, possibly even another committee chairperson. However it is wise to include others from the community to maintain the goal of a community-driven effort. A committee may be anywhere from 3 to 7 people (or more if needed).

For what is a chairperson responsible?

- Once you have designated a chairperson, that individual is responsible to build his or her committee, ascertain the needs of the sector and how character will meet those needs, develop a mission statement and local strategies, set up meetings, and take the committee members to see character initiatives implemented in their sector. Specific responsibilities are outlined on the following pages.

In addition, each committee needs to begin building a list of contacts and periodically forwarding that list to the CCI state office. The office can then add these individuals to its/our mailing list to ensure that they receive the statewide newsletter, event announcements, and other items. Our primary form of distribution is through e-mail. Fax is our second preference. We will mail items if necessary; however you will help us keep our cost down by getting e-mail addresses and fax numbers.

We would also ask that each chairperson assist us in filling out their “job description.” As Character City efforts spring up around out state, we want to provide the best information possible to the local leaders (such as you) that will facilitate this effort. Please provide us with feedback as your committees grow.

How will the steering committee chairperson interact with the sub-committees?

- The steering committee chairperson is responsible to see that each committee chairperson is taking advantage of every opportunity available to advance and promote character. Progress reports should be given at the monthly steering committee meeting, and the steering committee chairperson will set goals based on those reports. He or she should also find ways that each committee’s efforts can be best utilized.

Everyone is new to this concept. Who answers our questions?

- The ***CHARACTER FIRST!***[®] definition of *initiative* is “Recognizing and doing what needs to be done before I am asked to do it.” For your local chapter of the Character Council to be a success, it will require a great deal of *initiative*, as well *creativity*, *boldness*, and a multitude of other qualities, especially from the committee chairpersons.

You will shortly be able to access our website at www.charactercouncil.org. This will provide you with some good information. However, when questions do arise that require more information than is readily available, the CCI office in Indianapolis is available to provide ideas and assistance. Our toll free number is (877) 543-4870.

GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE ~ CHAIRPERSON RESPONSIBILITIES

Although the support of local businesses is vital, the city government must implement a character initiative of some sort if the citywide initiative is going to succeed. As the efforts continue to grow, it may be necessary to form offshoot committees to deal specifically with Law Enforcement and Correction Institutions.

- Build a sub-committee to explore the specifics of implementing character initiatives on a departmental basis through government organizations.
- Be on call to assist the mayor in specific projects and provide him or her with the information necessary to provide moral leadership and support for the community-wide character initiative.
- Facilitate training for government employees and encourage the attendance of key leaders and department heads. This training is available from CCI for cost of materials and expenses only.
 - Specific training for Law Enforcement is available through CCI.
- Assist government agencies in strategizing for their department's implementation of character. Use creativity to fit a character initiative into the time and budget that they already have available. Although small at first, it may very well increase as they see the benefits and necessity of specific character emphasis.
- Attend periodic meetings of the statewide government committee in Indianapolis to communicate with the state office and brainstorm with other communities (this committee is not currently active).

BUSINESS COMMITTEE ~ CHAIRPERSON RESPONSIBILITIES

It has been our experience that, as the character emphasis in local businesses goes, so goes the City of Character initiative. Therefore, your business sub-committee chairperson has a big load to carry. Some of his or her primary responsibilities are:

Because this is the most obvious “lead-by-example” position, it is important that the chairperson implement a character initiative in his or her own company. It is also recommended that individuals participating on the sub-committee attend character training and implement it in their organization.

- Build a sub-committee and begin to explore ways to promote the local character efforts, especially financially.
- Start a monthly business leaders meeting (breakfast, luncheon, etc.) to focus on the character quality of the month and keep the business community informed about efforts in the city that could be sponsored.
- Market the ***CHARACTER FIRST!***[®] training to businessmen and women with the goal of having local trainings on a consistent basis (i.e. every other month, every three months, or whatever works best). CCI trainers would come to your community and do these trainings.
- Partner businesses with schools and government organization to provide sponsorships for character training.
- Become knowledgeable enough to provide periodic character workshops to companies as they begin to implement character company-wide.
- Attend periodic meetings of the statewide business committee in Indianapolis in order to communicate with the state office and brainstorm with other communities.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE ~ CHAIRPERSON RESPONSIBILITIES

We are well aware that there are many character programs available for public education. To remain a community-driven effort, we cannot, in good conscience, promote only the ***CHARACTER FIRST!***[®] material. For example, many school systems were already using other programs before the character initiative started. Therefore, we recommend that the education sub-committee use the following strategy:

- Build a sub-committee and begin to explore ways to effectively promote character education.
- Meet with local education administrators to provide them with more detailed information about the citywide character initiative and of the possibility of local businesses sponsoring their schools' character education efforts.
- Encourage them to get on board in promoting the monthly character quality, the same quality that is being studied in local businesses and in city government.
- If the school has no specific character program, offer the ***CHARACTER FIRST!***[®] as an option for implementation. There is teacher training available both on video and live if the school decides to do a comprehensive implementation. Staff training similar to the business training is also available. A school that is implementing character for their students would be wise to provide training for their staff as well.
- Look for ways to provide character education materials to other likeminded youth organizations.
- When appropriate, coordinate volunteers to assist in character training in the classroom, for assemblies, in meetings for the youth organizations, etc. (See Feb 2001 Newsletter for a good example of volunteer effort).
- Attend periodic meetings of the statewide education committee in Indianapolis to communicate with the state office and brainstorm with other communities (this committee is not currently active).

FAITH COMMITTEE ~ CHAIRPERSON RESPONSIBILITIES

The faith community, by its very nature, should exemplify good character. However, specific implementation of character training is wise from the standpoint of community participation as well as the benefits to the faith organization itself.

- Build a sub-committee to facilitate specific character efforts in faith-based organizations.
- Meet with leaders of local faith organizations and enlist their support of the character initiative. Outline the resources that are available designed with the faith community in mind. This list can be obtained from the CCI offices.
- When appropriate, contact the state office and add interested individuals to our distribution list for the monthly “Faith Fax,” a Biblically-based study of the monthly character focus.
- Utilize exemplary members of faith congregations, both young people and adults, as volunteers for character programs in schools and (when appropriate) in businesses. CCI is available to provide training to these volunteers when it is deemed necessary.
- Attend periodic meetings of the statewide faith committee in Indianapolis to communicate with the state office and brainstorm with other communities.

MEDIA COMMITTEE ~ CHAIRPERSON RESPONSIBILITIES

The community that effectively utilizes their local media to promote the Character City concept is much more likely to succeed and maintain the initiative.

- Build a sub-committee of representatives from local media outlets. Do your best to have someone from each type of media outlet (i.e. TV, radio, newspapers, billboard companies, advertising agencies, etc.). These individuals are already skilled at promotion and in the best ways to disseminate information. The committee chairperson needs to simply organize the meetings and allow the creativity to flow.
- Put together a coordinated effort to promote the character quality of the month in as many creative ways that you can come up with. While you brainstorm, please keep in mind that there are a number of developed media resources available at the state office.
- Ask local media outlets to donate airtime, production, and actual product to the promotion effort.
- Attend periodic meetings of the statewide media committee in Indianapolis to communicate with the state office and brainstorm with other communities (this committee is not currently active).