

## OL 241 Indigenous Assignment One Homework

Online Learning: OL 241 Writing Your Indigenous Climate Action Plan: <https://training.csd-i.org/indigenous-climate-action-plan/>

Center for Sustainable Development: <https://training.csd-i.org/>

### This week's resources:

Class Home Page 241 Indigenous

Download Class Documents:

Assignment One Discussion

Assignment One Special Discussion on Problem Definition

Assignment One Homework

Magee Example Project Assignment 1

Chapter One. Community Needs Assessments and Project Outline.

Field Guide 10.1: Participatory Community Needs Assessments, Workshop Lesson Plan & Illustrations

'A Field Guide to Community-Based Adaptation' by Tim Magee

### Assignment 1. What's the real problem?

This first week's assignment will take longer than any of the assignments over the next 8 weeks. This is why you have three weeks for it. This gives you time to explore the online course structure and resources, to read the discussion, and to engage with a small group of community members who are concerned about climate change and would be willing to participate in a community needs assessment.

This assignment also has two components: a field component and a written component. I would suggest printing this assignment out by downloading it from Download Class Documents.

The three weeks also give you time digest a lot of new concepts. Here are some of the things that you will need to digest:

#### OVERVIEW OF PROBLEMS, UNDERLYING CAUSES, AND NEGATIVE IMPACTS.

In this course you are going to jump right into a series of brand-new concepts. This course is about developing sustainable, fundable, impact-oriented projects – and you start right away in Assignment One. Here are some background ideas.

When you meet with your community to do the Ten-Seed needs assessment, they will present you with a mixture of needs, problems, underlying causes, grievances and negative impacts. Your job as a facilitator is to encourage them to say everything that is on their mind. Their Ten-Seed vote will prioritize the two or three things that are the most important to them – so this will simplify your job.

Your job is to be an interpreter. You will need to sort their array of challenges into three things:

1. One or two (**two maximum**) important problems (that they prioritized)
2. The underlying causes of those problems
3. The long-term negative impacts that the problems cause

**Problems** for the purposes of this course are the visible and compelling elements of the needs assessment. These are the things that human beings can relate to. For example, crops dying in the field or fields damaged by floodwaters are visible, compelling problems. You can see these, you can feel the pain and the farmers' suffering. You can relate to them. But if the community lists (for example) climate change induced drought – realize that this is not a problem – it is an underlying cause of a problem. Look for the visible, compelling problem that droughts cause.

**Underlying Causes.** Droughts (in our example) and a lack of knowledge of potential solutions are good examples of the underlying causes that lead to crops dying in the field. Underlying causes tend to be related to events (drought) or knowledge (lack of knowledge of solutions to climate challenges).

**Negative Impacts** are the long-term negative outcomes of the problem. Flood damaged fields can reduce a farmers income and take years to heal reducing a farmers ability to lead prosperous, meaningful, productive lives. Negative impacts are long-term outcomes – 3 to 5 years away. They are the ultimate reason why we are interested in working on climate action plans. It is terrible to see damaged fields – and you want to fix them right away – but the ultimate goal is to develop prosperous, well-educated community members that can work together to contribute to their families and communities. So your project is going to address the immediate problem (damaged fields) with the long-term goal of: (positive impact) healthy, productive, well-educated community members.

#### Therefore, your job in evaluating the Ten-Seed assessment has two main components:

1. Problem/cause/negative impact
  - a. Figure out what the visible, compelling problem is (if all that the community comes up with are causes, ask them about what the ultimate problem is or use your observational skills)
  - b. Figure out what the underlying cause is for that problem
  - c. Figure out what the long-term impacts are
  - d. Fit them into an outline exactly like the one in Magee Project Example Assignment 1.
2. Keep your problem/cause/impact outline short (one or two things maximum) and incredibly simple. The goal of the course is to learn how to develop projects – and you need to start off with a simple project to learn the steps. If your community raises several unrelated challenges to be addressed – you can return in the future and develop action plans for those challenges also—but after you have learned how to do it in this course. If you are going to benefit from this course, you need a very, very simple project.

## Getting Started on the Field Component.

### Part 1: The Needs Assessment

Download the Summary of the Chapter One. Community Needs Assessments and Project Outline, the Field Guide 10.1: Participatory Community Needs Assessments, Workshop Lesson Plan & Illustrations, and the Magee Project Example from the Download Course Documents.

I would recommend role-playing the Lesson Plan with a colleague for practice. Make adaptations to the lesson plan that would be appropriate for your community situation and context.

Find a group of community members that either you or one of your community contacts already has a trusting relationship established with. Set up a 2-3 hour meeting with eight or 10 community members. Please try and meet with community members that represent the ultimate beneficiaries (mothers, fathers, families, farmers, ranchers – whoever describe the community you are working with). Try to avoid basing your assessment on a meeting exclusively with people in higher positions—such as tribal council members for example.

Work through the lesson plan with the group. I like to have an easel with large sheets of newsprint where I can quickly jot down ideas as they are voiced in the discussion. After the group has come up with a good set of needs/problems, let them have a short coffee break. I will take that 15 minutes to organize the list so that similar things are grouped together. I then like to take another sheet of newsprint on a table and draw a large rectangle with perhaps 12 smaller rectangles inside of it and then a simple description in each one that represents one of the needs/problems.



Take your notes from the assessment and write down the challenges identified on newsprint. Put a voting square by each one.



Let participants vote individually with 10 grains of corn, or beans, or pebbles.



Tally the votes and arrange challenges by most votes at the top. Have an open discussion to see if the group is in agreement with the results.

Then, have everyone leave the workshop area. Give each one of the participants 10 seeds, or beans, or small stones. Only one person should go into the workshop area at a time to use their seeds to vote on the needs. They should select the needs which **THEY** feel are the most important. It is their decision if they want to put all 10 seeds in one square or if they want to distribute them around several different problems.

After each workshop participant has had a chance to cast their votes, you can count the total seeds in each square and quickly write up a prioritized list ordered by the number of votes each problem received. This is a good time for the participants to have an open discussion about the results of the vote.

**Important:**

You should take a minute alone with the prioritized list and make a determination whether the items on their list are problems or underlying causes.

You should also make the determination if the prioritized list represents two or three unrelated projects such as some health needs and some agricultural challenges. If that is the case, organize the list so that health needs are in one place and agricultural challenges in another.

For the purposes of the course, I want you to develop a very simple, easily defined project. It would be a good idea to let the participants come to an agreement on which project should be attempted first. In our example above, you could ask them if they would prefer to work on the health component or the agricultural project first.

**The complete Assignment One homework to turn in will be:**

1. The full list of needs/problems with the number of votes each received (Photos too please if possible! Attach a few separately or paste them onto page 2. Follow the Magee Project Example exactly – it is what we are looking for. Pull it up on your screen and type right over it.

**Go to Magee's Example Project Assignment 1 to see what this could look like.**

See you next week.