

APPROVAL STRATEGIES



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Success is not final,
failure is not fatal: it is
the courage to
continue that counts.

Winston Churchill

WHAT WAS OUR PLAN?

- Inform as many members as possible on what is an AIP
- Engage all membership on and off reserve
- Develop easy-to-understand materials to explain the content of the AIP
- Answer every question asked
- Hold a formal vote

HOW DID WE DO IT?

- ❑ We initiated a home visit program (based on advice from other nations)
- ❑ We created a summary booklet of what is in our AIP, map books, and informational pamphlets
- ❑ We visited members in the Comox/Courtenay areas, Vancouver Island, and lower mainland; other members we offered phone calls
- ❑ We held topic specific community meetings
- ❑ We brought our members home for a final meeting and formal vote, and provided mail-in ballots

OUR HOME VISIT PROGRAM

- ❑ 10 members interviewed, 8 hired, and trained
- ❑ All local teams; only treaty staff did out-of-town visits
- ❑ Small gifts were offered to members who accepted home visits
- ❑ Members were mailed AIP booklets/pamphlets, and home visitors also had extra copies
- ❑ Visits occurred at the convenience of members

OUR AIP MATERIALS

- ❑ Our AIP Summary Booklet; plain language (grade 9 literacy level), 20-30 pages, striking photography, to include informal portraits of the people, stock or new, fact-based information, message from the leadership
- ❑ Pamphlets; Taxation: The Other Side of the Coin, Economic Development: A Look at the Opportunities, and Capacity Building: Just the Facts. These topics were chosen based on the top concerns of the community
- ❑ Maps; An Atlas was created containing multiple maps of all our treaty settlement lands in the AIP

OUR COMMUNITY MEETINGS

- ❑ In November 2010 we held our Annual Treaty Meeting (ATM) and asked the membership if they are ready to start our AIP campaign, they said yes
- ❑ Between November and March we held 3 community meetings; meeting topics were based on the top 3 concerns of the community
- ❑ We held a final meeting that lasted over 2 days at the end of March 2011, and brought everyone home to participate. We had presentations, guest speakers, and land tours scheduled for the meeting, as well as a designated time for voting
- ❑ Incentives are given to members for full attendance and participation

OUR PROCESS

- ❑ An electoral officer was hired to conduct the vote
- ❑ A polling station was set up at the band office
- ❑ Mail-in ballots were sent by electoral officer 2 months prior to the vote
- ❑ Polling station was open for 8 hours
- ❑ Electoral officer counted ballots (mail-in and on-site) with scrutinisers present
- ❑ 136 valid ballots were counted; 101 yes and 35 no
- ❑ Needing only 50% plus 1, we achieved approval with 74%

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Go to your community for approval, this is an important one
- ❑ Depending on your population and engagement plan, campaigns should range from 3-5 months for 200-400 members, 5-12 months for 400-800 members, and 12+ months for populations over 800 members
- ❑ Percentage for approval should be a simple majority, considering an AIP is not legally binding
- ❑ Follow your plan, strategies look very nice on shelves, but look better in action

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Create key messages from your leadership to communicate important ideas to your membership; e.g. “We cannot do this without you” or “How can you contribute to the betterment of your community?”
- ❑ Hold small meetings or gatherings specifically for the youth, they need to be engaged differently, offer incentives
- ❑ Utilize the knowledge of your elders; ask them how the traditional governance systems work, where the protected areas should be, what lands still need to be negotiated, etc.
- ❑ Always be consistent with communications; day-to-day communications should happen regardless of a voting campaign; once you set the bar you can never go back

THANK YOU

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