The Situation
Teton County is the fastest growing county in Idaho. Rapid growth brings a lot of change to a small community. A group of concerned local leaders recognized the need for strong, effective leadership. They understood that the community’s leadership capacity would increase as the leadership capacity of individuals was enhanced. In an effort to motivate individuals to serve, build bonds between different groups of people and individuals, and strengthen the foundation of a healthy economy this thoughtful group of concerned citizens worked to create a leadership development program.

Our Response
Leadership Teton Valley (LTV) was established under the leadership of a local steering committee with representatives from University of Idaho Extension, University of Wyoming Extension, USDA - Forest Service, City and County Government, Sheriff Department, High Country RC&D, and the Teton Valley Chamber of Commerce.

Leadership Teton Valley is designed to foster the development of leadership skills and abilities and provide an understanding of community resources and issues. LTV is based on the belief that strong, healthy communities are built on a foundation of effective local leaders. The objectives of the program are to:

- Provide training in leadership concepts and techniques
- Enhance personal growth and self-efficiency
- Motivate individuals for greater community involvement
- Improve relationships between people, organizations and communities
- Increase understanding of issues, economics and resources

LTV consists of one full-day class per month for six months. Each class is conducted by qualified instructors at various locations throughout the community. Topics have included:

- Team Building & Leadership Attributes
- Cultural Diversity & Generational Differences
- Creative Thinking & Good Neighbor Issues
- Conflict Management
- Career & Leadership Development
- Strategic Planning & Analyzing Problems
- Communication & Conflict Resolution
- Individual Leadership Assessment
- Time Management & Effective Meetings
In addition to monthly classes, participants attend at least five Community Based Experience and two board meetings. The class also works together to complete a group project for the community.

**Program Outcomes**

Fifty-two individuals have participated in the LTV program since 2006. All of the graduates are active citizens in the community. Since the completion of the first Leadership Teton Valley class; one graduate has successfully run for political office, several serve on community boards and committees, and four have started their own businesses.

Group projects completed by LTV participants include a fundraiser for the Targhee Animal Shelter, a career fair for Teton High School students, a paintball event at the County Fair, and a mosquito control workshop.

Other program outcomes include bridges between Teton County, Idaho and Teton County, Wyoming communities; bonds among LTV participants; and increased understanding of community resources and issues.

Comments from graduating participants include:

“The Institute is a valuable experience for those interested in their community. I found that participating in skill building exercises was not only educational but also fun!”

“The principles I learned in class have helped me grow my business!”

“It’s an outstanding program that endeavors to cross cultural and length-of-residency lines. Each session has been an unexpectedly uplifting and educational experience.”

“I found the Institute to be a very valuable experience and I learned new leadership skills which help me with our city’s government and working with our employees.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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36-09beborn-teton.pub
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