

The one main purpose of worker involvement in a given location is to develop a community organization that will continue to work without any help from outside. From the beginning involve local people in all activities and in as many policy-making and organizational decisions as possible.

1. The church serves as a central social and inspirational purpose in the Mississippi Negro community. In virtually all cases you must and should make use of this church involvement. Contact the ministers even if they won't always lead; they are usually at least sympathetic enough to give names and to provide assistance in some way. The church building is a natural home of mass meetings and workshops.

2. In any community there are people who are looked up to and who are already recognized as leaders in some sense. Time spent with these people can be more profitable in the sense that the leaders in turn may have much greater leverage than you have; they can bring many of their people along with them.

3. On first contact in most areas there is a natural distrust and fear of any new person. It takes time to overcome this; the local people must know who you are and what you are before they will begin to open up. Just being seen day after day, making sure that local people are aware you are always around, may serve to relax some of the tension. Sometimes small talk helps. Use of any normal common bond is to be encouraged; by contrast, however, bizarre attention-getting stunts simply have no place in the movement.

4. Talking to children, small children particularly, may frighten parents. It is generally impossible to reach parents through children. Children, particularly teen-agers, are a valuable and workable part of the movement, but they are dealt with separately from their parents.

5. The community will be organized around a program such as voter registration. Keeping people involved with specific tasks and duties (e.g., providing transportation to the courthouse or teaching one workshop a week) will keep them with the movement and give them a sense of involvement.

6. Membership cards, buttons, T-shirts, stickers, decals, poster--any and all of these on a person or in a home or office serve to give people a sense of belonging, of taking part. These are not substitutes for participation in the program, but they are meaningful.