

Be the Change



What is *Be the Change*?

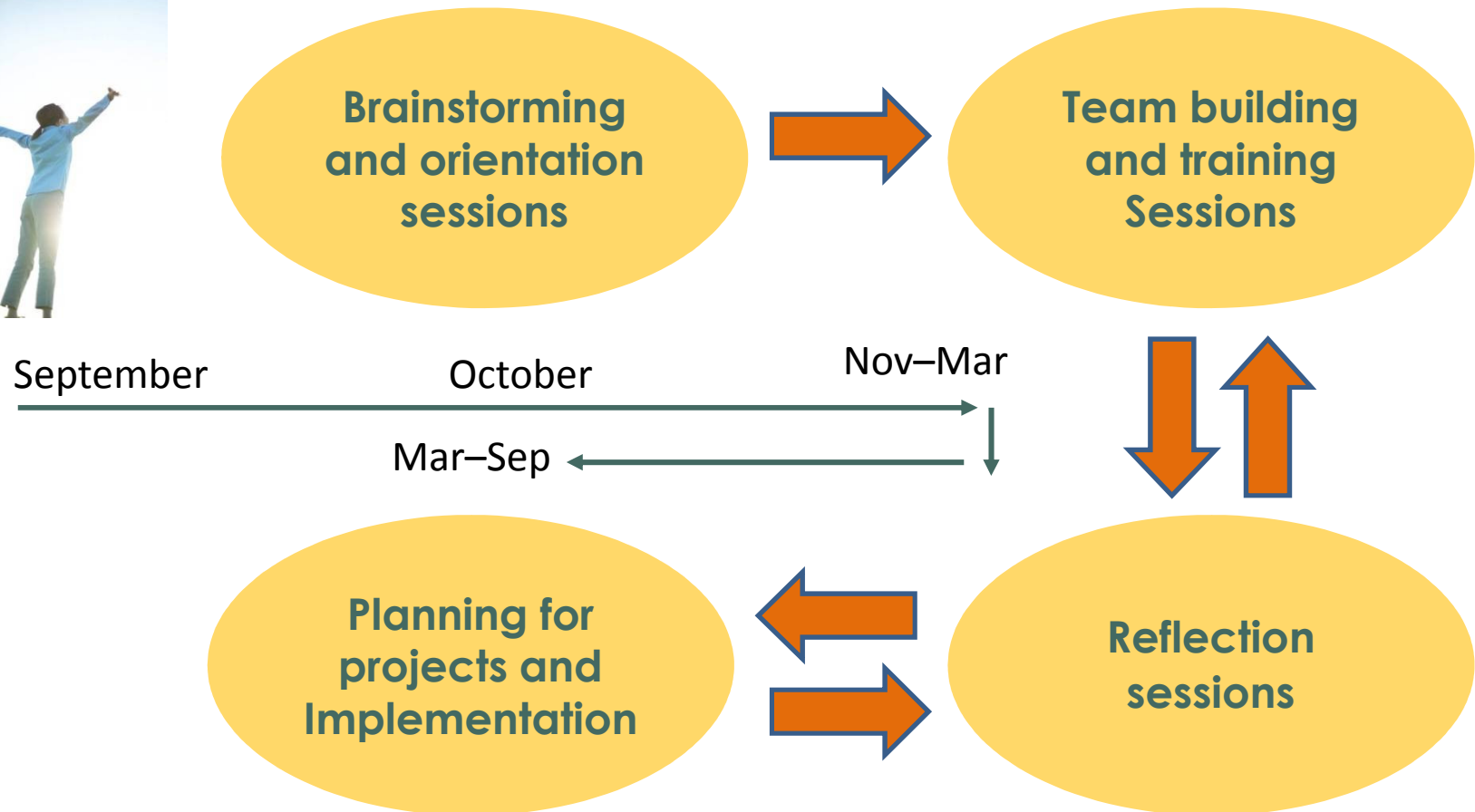
It is a program that:

- trains new Canadians in eight community development skills such as planning, fundraising, running meetings, community mobilization, and others;
- provides skills support and small funding for the development of grass-roots community projects;
- facilitates participation of new Canadians in a more meaningful way in volunteer work in Guelph;
- empowers participants to work with each other and with community members to tackle common issues.

How does it work?

- We recruit new Canadians who are interested in working with their communities.
- Bilingual volunteer tutors are recruited to accommodate potential language barriers.
- In the first few meetings, participants brainstorm about their intended projects or group work.
- Participants are teamed up based on their preference or on their language needs.
- Training sessions are offered bi-weekly.
- Between sessions, partners work together or individually.
- Projects start during the fifth month with our on-going support.

The process



What are the training workshops?

- Working with Others for a Common Goal
- Planning Community Events and Projects
- Community Mobilization Around Common Goals
- Running Effective Community Meetings
- Networking with Purpose
- Planning Small-Scale Fundraising
- Evaluating your Progress
- Forming and Running Community Groups

Frequently asked questions

- Q. What level of English do participants need? A. They need to be able to read and write in English. However, we will have tutors for those who might have difficulty.
- Q. Do participants receive any form of recognition? A. Yes, they will receive a certificate during a graduation ceremony in March.
- Q. Is it important to have a project in mind when we start? A. No, but you need to develop an idea of when and how you will use your learned skills.
- Q. Is there a charge? A. No, the trainings are offered free of charge.
- Q. What kind of support is there for participants' initiatives? A. Depending on their projects, they will receive professional guidance as well as assistance with space, refreshments, and printing.
- Q. What projects are entitled for this support? A. There are three guidelines: 1) Projects have to benefit the community; 2) The ideas should be developed during the training and reflection sessions; and 3) Projects should be delivered with and for the community which will benefit from them.

Tutoring

- We have recruited bilingual volunteers.
- These volunteers will partner up with participants who require translation to understand the materials.
- They will be supporting participants through language only.
- They are free to choose to team up with the participants to develop the projects.
- They will also receive the certificate.

Some sample projects

- Homework assistance, community garden, youth theatre, community theatre, support group for women who are newcomers, Somali girls' group, recreational and cultural activities for seniors who are newcomers, walking groups...
- **What change do YOU wish to see in your community?**

IMMIGRANT SERVICES

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