

Engaging “Not the Usual Suspects” Who Are They?

1. A Culture of Poverty Framework by Ruby Payne

Less access to school involvement, more likely to work multiple jobs, to work evenings, to have jobs without paid leave, to be unable to afford child care and transportation

Generational Poverty:

Decisions are made based on needs of work and relationships

Middle Class:

Decisions are made related to work and achievement

Upper Class:

Decisions are financially, socially and politically based

Within each class, there exists a set of rules. People can and do move from one class to another without knowing. Understanding and abiding by the hidden rules is key to communication.

2. Other cultural aspects to keep in mind: Oral culture vs Print Culture and cultural brokering

3. Other cultural levels to explore:

- Cultural newcomers: newly arrived, need basics
- Cultural learners: want to learn more
- Cultural connectors: want to help others connect
- Cultural leaders: voice and the advocate

4. Language and communication style: What are the hidden rules for your places of work? For your home? For this meeting?

5. Strategies for working with the “not so usual suspects”

- It’s a 2-way street approach that takes time.
- Who does the invitation and the “working with” matters
- Support your supporters
- Network, relationship building
- Map your audience and meet them where they are at