

ENGAGING SOCIOLOGY

Making a Difference

Because bringing about change requires cooperation, working in a group context is often essential. Flexibility, openness to new ideas, and willingness to entertain alternative suggestions are also key factors in successful change-making. The following steps provide a useful strategy for planning change.

1. *Be specific, and focus on what is to be changed.*
Without clear focus, your target for change can get muddled or lost in the attempt.
2. *Research the issue and use those findings.*
Learn as much as you can about the situation

or problem to be changed. Use informants, interviews, written materials, observation, existing data (such as U.S. Census Bureau statistics), or anything that helps you understand the issues. That will enable you to find the information you need to thoroughly understand the issue you wish to address.

3. *Find out what has already been done and by whom.* Other individuals or groups may be working on the same issue. Be sure you know what findings and interventions have already taken place. This can also help determine

(Continued)