



Working in the “gap” between community and institutions January 2017

Following is a definition including skills and behaviors to effectively work in the “gap” between community and institution. The context for this is nicely articulated in [The Four Legged Stool](#), an article authored by John McKnight in 2013.

Gappers understand that the only people who can build and sustain a community are those who live and work there. Gappers have a world view of abundance and possibility and practice power with community building. Gappers connect community members to one another and to other partners in ways that fully engage citizens to create their desired future.

Gappers span boundaries between communities and institutions by:

- listening
- facilitating conversation
- building trust
- storytelling
- hosting
- celebrating
- balancing inquiry and advocacy
- building mutual understanding and mutually-beneficial outcomes
- challenging assumptions about readily available local capacity
- acting with humility

in order to build communities citizens are proud to call home.

This definition was co-produced by a group of asset-based community development (ABCD) practitioners at a meeting hosted by the Kettering Foundation in 2015.

For more information, contact Jeff Yost, President and CEO, Nebraska Community Foundation jeffyost@nebcommfound.org or 402/323-7332