

CREATING SHARED GOVERNANCE

ARE YOU A GOOD COLLABORATIVE LEADER?

PURPOSE

Leadership in a collaboration requires a unique set of skills and competencies that distinguish it from more traditional top-down leadership. It focuses on 'service to' the collaboration not 'control of' the collaboration.

While people may take leadership positions based on their role in the collaboration or their organization's position of authority (e.g. lead agency), you'll need to ensure those leaders demonstrate or adopt a collaborative leadership style. If it isn't present, consider training opportunities or bringing in the help of an external facilitator.

HOW TO USE THE TOOL

- Use the checklist as a personal reflection tool to explore your own strengths and weaknesses and identify areas for improvement.
- You can also use it to help in the identification or recruitment of collaboration leaders.
- The checklist can be a guide in informal discussions or a formal evaluation of how existing leadership can be strengthened (e.g. do a survey and ask partners to assess where leaders are on a 1 to 5 scale with 5 being a 'major strength' and 1 being a 'lack the quality').

GOOD COLLABORATIVE LEADERS DEMONSTRATE THE ABILITY TO:

- Keep focused on the mission and goals of the collaboration
- Be flexible while staying true to the agreed upon goals, processes and protocols
- Take deep and personal responsibility for achieving outcomes
- Learn from experiences and help others do the same
- Be strategic - seeing the big picture and integrating multiple issues and tasks
- Be a steward, not owner, of the collective resources
- Facilitate the accomplishment of outcomes, not just implement them
- Enrol others in the 'cause' - broker opportunities, connect people and create new relationships
- Facilitate multiple and diverse interests and concerns
- Solve problems creatively
- Mediate differences and disputes constructively
- Demonstrate a comfort level with complexity because so much of collaborative work is based on cooperation and persuasion, not controls
- Unleash and enable partners to mobilize their talents and competencies
- Help partners clearly see and nurture their interdependencies
- Weave together the collective interests of the collaboration with those of the individual partners

- Be diligent about naming and addressing issues of trust and power
- Create an environment that is transparent, honest, respectful and safe
- Treat others as peers of equal value even if they make a different contribution
- Be an open and honest communicator who values transparency and honesty and encourages it in others
- Step outside of self-interest and find common cause
- Constantly seek the balance between efficiency and inclusiveness and between results and process
- Know when to step aside so others have the opportunity to lead



Project Consultants

Heather Graham, H. Graham Consulting, heather@hgrahamconsulting.com

Cathy Lang, C. Lang Consulting, cathy@clangconsulting.com

Linda Mollenhauer, Mollenhauer Consulting, mollenhauerl@rogers.com

Copyright © 2013 by Capacity Builders, Heather Graham, Cathy Lang and Linda Mollenhauer.

This document is just one of the practical tools available through the Collaboration Coach, a free online resource offered by Capacity Builders and funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation. Not-for-profit organizations are granted permission to reproduce this document for their own purposes. Commercial use of this resource is strictly prohibited without express written permission. For more information about the Collaboration Coach, visit the Capacity Builders' web site at www.capacitybuilders.ca