

## GETTING THE WORK DONE

# COLLABORATION COORDINATION: FUNCTIONS AND SKILLS CHECKLIST

---

## PURPOSE

Collaboration often requires the investment of considerable time, energy and resources on the part of partner organizations. A coordinator/manager can make sure partners are focusing their efforts and playing a value-added role. It's important that he/she doesn't make governance decisions or simply implement the work on behalf of the partners. The coordinator/manager takes direction from your collaboration leadership, with input from partners and other identified stakeholders. A clear understanding of the functions, characteristics and skills related to good coordination can help you in recruiting the right kind of person and engaging them effectively in the work of the collaboration.

## HOW TO USE THE TOOL

- Review the role and functions of a collaboration coordinator/manager and consider the required skills.
- With your collaboration partners discuss and seek agreement on who will take on these functions, making sure the person(s) chosen have the necessary skills.
- When recruiting for or assigning the role, develop a clear job description or terms of reference for the coordinator/manager position using the check list below.
- Include reference to the coordination functions and who will take them on in your collaboration agreement.

## WHAT IS THE COLLABORATION COORDINATOR/MANAGER'S ROLE?

Collaboration often requires the investment of considerable time, energy and resources on the part of partner organizations. A coordinator/manager can make sure partners are focusing their efforts and playing a value-added role. It's important that he/she doesn't make governance decisions or simply implement the work on behalf of the partners. The coordinator/manager takes direction from your collaboration leadership, with input from partners and other identified stakeholders. A clear understanding of the functions, characteristics and skills related to good coordination can help you in recruiting the right kind of person and engaging them effectively in the work of the collaboration.

### Collaboration Coordinator/Manager: Key Functions: <sup>1</sup>

- Managing the flow of information across the collaboration, by developing and maintaining an information management system
- Keeping participants engaged in the collaboration and its work, and assisting with the recruitment of new members
- Finding the appropriate balance between consultation and consensus, and achieving results
- Consulting with key stakeholder groups (funders; community; etc)
- Supporting fundraising efforts
- Helping partners to be accountable for delivering on their commitments
- Designing processes that create greater efficiency and effectiveness
- Monitoring the financial health of the collaboration and the collaboration's progress in achieving its goals

- Handling logistics of meetings and events
- Providing input into strategic and action plans
- Managing work plans
- Creating information, outreach and marketing products, such as a directory of services and participants

### Required skills and characteristics:

Collaboration coordinators/managers should have the following skills:

- Strong interpersonal skills (e.g. charismatic; able to talk to diverse people/groups; good connector)
- Excellent facilitation and mediation (e.g. able to listen carefully; find consensus; juggle different needs)
- Flexible (e.g. able to work effectively in a non-hierarchical environment and be adaptive to changing circumstances)
- Able to champion collaborative opportunities (e.g. compelling spokesperson; good at identifying new opportunities)
- Highly organized with attention to detail
- Strong communicator (e.g. clear, concise, good synthesizer of information and presenter)
- Capacity to think strategically
- Strong motivator (e.g. patience to support others and to energize their commitments)
- Appreciates the importance of process, while also demonstrating a commitment to results
- Good understanding and comfort with information and communications technology tools

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Building a Nonprofit Network: Linda Mollenhauer, Valerie Johnson, Janine Gates for Ontario Volunteer Centre Network (2011)



#### 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](http://www.capacitybuilders.ca)