

Collaborative Leadership

Fundamental Concepts

Participant's Guide



Collaborative Leadership Skills – A Critical Component

Because collaborative interaction is challenging, it takes special skills to shepherd a group through this developmental continuum. Collaborative leadership is apparent in those who inspire commitment and action, lead as a peer problem solver, build broad-based involvement, and sustain hope and participation. Based on research with noted leadership experts and the public health practice community, the Turning Point Leadership Development National Excellence Collaborative identified a number of core collaborative leadership capacities in 2001. This National Excellence Collaborative, funded by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and made up of public health practitioners from around the country, has worked to better define, describe, and build the skills of collaborative leadership among those who participate in public health work.

Collaborative Leadership Practices

Clearly there are a number of critical skills and capacities collaborative leaders should possess. Many of the skills are not necessarily unique to a collaborative form of leadership and have already been described in the literature and developed into training curricula. The work of the Turning Point Leadership Development National Excellence Collaborative, however, has illustrated six key practices that are unique to the practice of leading a collaborative process. They are:

- **Developing Clarity – Visioning & Mobilizing:** Defining shared values and engaging people in positive action.
- **Developing Trust & Creating Safety:** Creating safe places for developing shared purpose and action.
- **Sharing Power and Influence:** Developing the synergy of people, organizations, and communities to accomplish goals.
- **Assessing the Environment for Collaboration:** Understanding the context for change before you act.
- **Self Reflection – Personal CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement):** Being aware of and understanding your values, attitudes, and behaviors as they relate to your own leadership style and its impact on others.
- **Developing People – Mentoring and Coaching:** Committing to bringing out the best in others and realizing people are your key asset.

Each of these elements is key to the collaborative process. They are not mutually exclusive but support each other and provide a comprehensive picture of the essential skills of a collaborative leader.

Having clarity of values is a quality that characterizes collaborative leaders. Commitment to a cause which transcends the self, the recognition of a spiritual reality or imperative, ethical, and moral standards that provide guidance--whatever the source of the inner gyroscope, collaborative leaders seem to exhibit clarity of purpose, often about creating and sustaining a process. “Visioning and mobilizing,” in relation to clarity of values, has to do with a commitment to a process or a way of doing things. Often “mobilizing” refers specifically to helping people develop the confidence to take action and sustain their energies through difficult times. Clarity leads to focus which leads to increased group energy (power). Often too little time is spent in the process of “informal

exploring” to understand problem, thereby developing clarity. A shared vision can be inspiring.

The capacity to promote and sustain trust is often overlooked in the collaborative process. Leaders sometimes believe that once individuals or groups are gathered together, then a plan can naturally be made and commitment obtained. If a collaborative leader fails to engender trust among participants, however, their involvement will wane and the best ideas and innovative approaches will not be shared. In this context, the collaboration will have lost its capacity to draw the best ideas from those involved.

A clearly uncommon trait among leaders, involved the capacity to share power and influence. American society traditionally rewards individual achievement, but collaboration cannot be achieved through a single effort. Participants in the decision-making process need to feel empowered in order to contribute fully. In a successful, visible response to a public health problem it is sometimes just the head of an organization who receives the public accolades. Invariably, however, it is the shared effort and wide range of experience of a large team of people that actually has shared in the decision-making and brought their influence and expertise to bear. Increased energy leads to increased power. Power is not finite resource; energy of people focused on a goal creates power.

Another important quality of collaborative leadership is assessing the environment. The capacity to recognize common interests, especially the capacity to recognize and understand other perspectives, is a fundamental quality of collaborative leadership. Collaboration seeks goal attainment around shared visions, purposes, and values. When you bring different points of views to an issue or problem, a collaborative leader attempts to facilitate connections and encourage group thinking that identifies clear, beneficial change for all participants. Assessing also involves setting priorities and identifying barriers and obstacles.

Collaborative leaders are personally mature. To be successful leading a collaborative process, individuals use self-reflection to examine and understand their values and think about whether their behaviors are congruent with their values. At critical junctures in the collaborative process, through reflection, successful leaders make time to consider their verbal and nonverbal communication within the group. They think critically about the impact their actions and words have on the group's progress toward achieving its goals. Great collaborative leaders have the ability to recognize the impact of their behavior and adjust accordingly.

A genuine concern for developing people, bringing out the best in others, maximizing the use of other people's talents and resources, building power through sharing power, and giving up ownership or control are themes which relate to realizing and promoting the potential in other people. Coaching and mentoring creates power which increases leadership capacities. Build confidence by experimenting, setting goals, and receiving performance feedback.

Traditional/ Collaborative Continuum

More Traditional ←————→ **More Collaborative**

Collaborative Leadership Assessing the Environment Self-Assessment Exercise

For each item, circle one rating under the "Behavior Frequency" column indicating your view of how often you exhibit that behavior. Your responses to this questionnaire are for your own use. You will not be asked to share your scores after you have answered. You will be asked to use your score and your responses to help you develop a personal learning plan.

Behaviors		BEHAVIOR FREQUENCY						
		Seldom		Sometimes		Often		Almost Always
1	I use assessment tools in order to systematically learn the needs of the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	I ensure that an assessment tool is a good fit for the information that needs to be collected.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I undertake an appropriate analysis of the data.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	I ensure responsible interpretation of the data.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	I gather information before taking action.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	I encourage people to act on information rather than assumptions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	I clarify the problem before planning solutions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	I seek culturally different views of the problem.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	I use a systems perspective to understand the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I look at the perceived problem from different angles before proceeding.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Your Score: Add all the circled behavior frequencies. Write the number in the box.

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70 – 61 Excellent Score 40 - 21 Opportunities for Growth
60 – 41 Stronger Score 20 - 1 Important to Change Behavior

Written Comments:

What do you think are your strengths in assessing the environment as a collaborative leader?

What do you think are your most important areas for improvement in assessing the environment?

Collaborative Leadership Creating Clarity: Visioning and Mobilizing Self-Assessment Exercise

For each item, circle one rating under the "Behavior Frequency" column indicating your view of how often you exhibit that behavior. Your responses to this questionnaire are for your own use. You will not be asked to share your scores after you have answered. You will be asked to use your score and your responses to help you develop a personal learning plan.

Behaviors		BEHAVIOR FREQUENCY						
		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Frequently	Almost Always	Always
1	I can describe a personal vision for my community that offers a future achievable with the assets available.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	I facilitate an effective process for exploring the diverse aspirations among community stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I facilitate the development of a shared community vision that is influenced by the views of diverse stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	I communicate the shared vision broadly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	I create a framework for action using systems thinking.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	I facilitate stakeholder teaming to develop strategic action plans.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	I create the conditions for brainstorming the strategic issues and actions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	I build an action plan with time lines and assigned responsibilities to enable the community vision to be achieved.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	I facilitate achieving buy-in to the action plans and next steps.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I follow up on action plans to ensure completion.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	I seek innovative solutions for persistent problems encountered while mobilizing to achieve the vision.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Your Score: Add all the circled behavior frequencies. Write the number in the box.

70 – 61 Excellent Score
60 – 41 Stronger Score

40 - 21 Opportunities for Growth
20 - 1 Important to Change Behavior

Written Comments:

What do you think are your strengths in creating clarity as a collaborative leader?

What do you think are your most important areas for improvement in creating clarity?

Collaborative Leadership Building Trust Self-Assessment Exercise

For each item, circle one rating under the “Behavior Frequency” column indicating your view of how often you exhibit that behavior. Your responses to this questionnaire are for your own use. You will not be asked to share your scores after you have answered. You will be asked to use your score and your responses to help you develop a personal learning plan.

Behaviors		BEHAVIOR FREQUENCY						
		Seldom		Sometimes		Often		Almost Always
1	I build communication processes that make it safe for people to say what is on their minds.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	I refuse to engage in “rigged” processes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I protect the group from those who would wield personal power over the collaborative process.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	I create credible processes for collaborating.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	I ensure that processes for exercising collaborative leadership are open to all stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	I ensure that the processes for collaborative leadership are transparent to all stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	During the first stage of creating collaborative relationships, I establish the common ground among the stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	I approach collaboration by relying heavily on building trust among stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	I “walk the talk”, i.e., I do what I say I will do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I demonstrate to my peers that I believe that trust is the foundation for successful collaboration.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Your Score: Add all the circled behavior frequencies. Write the number in the box.

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70 – 61 Excellent Score 40 - 21 Opportunities for Growth
60 – 41 Stronger Score 20 - 1 Important to Change Behavior

Written Comments:

What do you think are your strengths in building trust as a collaborative leader?

What do you think are your most important areas for improvement in building trust?

Collaborative Leadership Sharing Power and Influence Self-Assessment Exercise

For each item, circle one rating under the "Behavior Frequency" column indicating your view of how often you exhibit that behavior. Your responses to this questionnaire are for your own use. You will not be asked to share your scores after you have answered. You will be asked to use your score and your responses to help you develop a personal learning plan.

Behaviors		BEHAVIOR FREQUENCY						
		Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Frequently	Very Often	Almost Always
1	I use my personal power responsibly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	I share power as a means for increasing power.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I share power with others whenever possible.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	I offer people an active role in decision making about matters that affect them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	When exercising leadership, I rely significantly on peer problem-solving.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	I promote self-confidence in others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	I create processes that ensure stakeholders an equal say in decision making.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	I encourage others to act together to change circumstances that affect them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	I express confidence in the capabilities of others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I use influence to produce results whenever possible.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	I am open to being influenced by others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Your Score: Add all the circled behavior frequencies. Write the number in the box.

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70 – 61 Excellent Score 40 - 21 Opportunities for Growth
60 – 41 Stronger Score 20 - 1 Important to Change Behavior

Written Comments:

What do you think are your strengths in Sharing Power and Influence as a collaborative leader?

What do you think are your most important areas for improvement in Sharing Power and Influence?

Collaborative Leadership Developing People Self-Assessment Exercise

For each item, circle one rating under the "Behavior Frequency" column indicating your view of how often you exhibit that behavior. Your responses to this questionnaire are for your own use. You will not be asked to share your scores after you have answered. You will be asked to use your score and your responses to help you develop a personal learning plan.

Behaviors		BEHAVIOR FREQUENCY						
		Seldom		Sometimes		Often		Almost Always
1	I take seriously my responsibility for coaching and mentoring others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	I invest adequate amounts of time doing people development.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I define my role when serving as coach.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	I am committed to developing people from diverse segments of the population.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	I create opportunities for people to assess their leadership skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	I help people take advantage of opportunities to learn new skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	I look for ways to help others become more successful at their jobs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	I help people to take advantage of opportunities for new experiences.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	I establish my expectations for the people I mentor.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I ask the people I mentor to define their expectations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	I create a mutually agreed-upon coaching plan, including criteria for success.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Your Score: Add all the circled behavior frequencies. Write the number in the box.

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70 – 61 Excellent Score 40 - 21 Opportunities for Growth
60 – 41 Stronger Score 20 - 1 Important to Change Behavior

Written Comments:

What do you think are your strengths in developing people as a collaborative leader?

What do you think are your most important areas for improvement in developing people?

Collaborative Leadership Self Reflection Self-Assessment Exercise

For each item, circle one rating under the "Behavior Frequency" column indicating your view of how often you exhibit that behavior. Your responses to this questionnaire are for your own use. You will not be asked to share your scores after you have answered. You will be asked to use your score and your responses to help you develop a personal learning plan.

Behaviors		BEHAVIOR FREQUENCY						
		1 Seldom	2	3 Sometimes	4	5 Often	6	7 Almost Always
1	I recognize the effect of my emotions on work performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	I recognize the effect of my emotions on relationships.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I recognize my personal impact on group dynamics.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	I can describe my strengths realistically.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	I can describe my weaknesses realistically.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	I work to understand others' perspectives.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	I read the dynamics of groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	I listen to others actively, checking to ensure my understanding.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	I read non-verbal communication accurately.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I use self-assessment tools such as personality inventories to inform my self reflections.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	I seek feedback from all relevant constituencies about my behavioral impact.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Your Score: Add all the circled behavior frequencies. Write the number in the box.

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60 – 41 Stronger Score 20 - 1 Important to Change Behavior

Written Comments:

What do you think are your strengths in self-reflection as a collaborative leader?

What do you think are your most important areas for improvement in self-reflection?

Readings and Resources

Fundamental Concepts

Collaborative Leadership and Health: A Review of the Literature. Turning Point National Office, University of Washington, January 2002.

http://www.turningpointprogram.org/Pages/devlead_lit_review.pdf.

Collaboration and the Turning Point Initiative: Proceedings of a Conference on Leadership Development Held at the University of Denver, April 6, 2001.

http://www.turningpointprogram.org/Pages/devlead_expert_panel_full.pdf.

Turning Point. www.turningpointprogram.org. Collaborative leadership readings, Web links, products, case studies, and more.

Bolman, L. and Deal, T. *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice and Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997.

Chrislip, D. *The Collaborative Leadership Fieldbook*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002.

Chrislip, D. and Larson, C. *Collaborative Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994.

Chrislip, D.D. and Flowers, J. (2001) The Change Project: David Chrislip. Collaboration: The New Leadership. A conversation between David Chrislip and Joe Flowers.

www.well.com/user/bbear/chrislip

Heifetz, R. and Linsky, M. *Leadership on the Line*. Harvard Business School Press, 2002.

Kouzes, J. and Posner, B. *The Leadership Challenge*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 1995

Kouzes, J. and Posner, B. *The Leadership Challenge Planner*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 2000.

Lasker, R. and Weiss, E. Broadening Participation in Community Problem Solving: A Multidisciplinary Model to Support Collaborative Practice and Research. *J. of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy*, vol. 80, No. 1, March 2003.

(<http://www.cacsh.org/pdf/modelpaper.pdf>)

Northouse, P.G. *Leadership: Theory and Practice*. Sage Publications. Thousand Oaks, CA. 1997.

Senge, P. *The Fifth Discipline*. New York: Doubleday. 1990

Senge, P. *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*. New York: Doubleday. 1994.

Sorenson, T. and Epps, R. Leadership and Local Development: Dimensions of Leadership in Four Central Queensland Towns. *Journal of Rural Studies*. 1996. 12(2) 113-125.

Winer, M. and Ray, K. *Collaboration Handbook: Creating, Sustaining, and Enjoying the Journey*. Amerst H. Wilder Foundation. 1994.

Web Resources

eric.web.tc.columbia.edu/families/TWC

www.ncrel.org/cscd/pubs/lead21

www.collaborativeleaders.org

www.pew-partnership.org

www.kettering.org

Community Toolbox. <http://ctb.ku.edu/>. The Community Toolbox's goal is to support your work in promoting community health and development. It provides over 6,000 pages of practical skill-building information on over 250 different topics. Topic sections include step-by-step instruction, examples, checklists, and related resources.

Working Together for Healthier Communities: A Framework for Collaboration Among Community Partnerships, Support Organizations, and Funders. Community Toolbox. http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/en/section_1381.htm.

Center for the Advancement of Collaborative Leadership Strategies in Health. www.cacsh.org. The Center for the Advancement of Collaborative Strategies in Health at The New York Academy of Medicine helps partnerships, funders, and policy makers realize the full potential of collaboration to solve complex problems related to health or any other area.

Free Management Library. Management Assistance for Nonprofits. <http://www.managementhelp.org>. Complete, highly integrated library for nonprofits and for-profits.

