Evaluating and Improving Organizational Collaboration

Introduction

1. What interests you most about evaluating organizational collaboration?

2. What are you hoping to learn/get out of this workshop?

The direction, speed and depth of program implementation is mediated by collaboration - the structure and dynamics of the ties between people and organizations.

Collaboration Evaluation and Improvement Framework

Evaluating and Improving Organizational Collaboration

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1. Operationalize collaboration
   The evaluand of collaboration must be characterized by specific attributes so that its existence, development, quantity, quality and effects can be measured, observed, and/or documented.

Collaboration - 5 Principles

- Levels of integration
- Predictable stages of development
- Nested and networked phenomenon
- People collaborate
- Shared purpose


The sine qua non of collaboration is shared purpose.

People Collaborate

Two or more entities come together for a reason – to achieve a vision, to do something that could not otherwise be accomplished as independent actors working alone.
Evaluating and Improving Organizational Collaboration

North, South, East & West: Compass Points

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<th></th>
<th>North</th>
<th>West</th>
<th>East</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acting — “Let's do it.” Likes to act, try things, plunge in.</td>
<td>Paying attention to detail — likes to know the who, what, when, where and why before acting.</td>
<td>Speculating — likes to look at the big picture and the possibilities before acting.</td>
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Nested and Networked Phenomenon

Predictable Stages of Development

Transform or Adjourn

Storm and Perform

Assemble and Form

State Oral Health Coalition

Business

Fluoridation

Government

Community

School

Providers

Third-Party Payers

Policy

Research/Professional Education

Public
Figure 1 – Stages Model of Collaboration from Measuring Collaboration Among Grant Partners: Frey, Lohmeier, Lee, & Tollefson, American Journal of Evaluation 2006

Levels of Integration

- Cooperate
- Coordinate
- Collaboration
- Coadunation

Levels of Integration Model (Dipja, 2004)

Levels of Integration

- Shared Information & Mutual Support
- Common Tasks & Compatible Goals
- Integrated Strategies & Collective Purpose
- Unified Structure & Combined Cultures

Adaptation of Figures 1.1 and 1.2 in Bailey and Koney (2000), pgs.7 & 9

Figure 2 – Identify and map communities of practice

Because teams are the predominant unit for decision-making and getting things done in any organization, it is important to ascertain an accurate picture of the essential groups at work in a strategic alliance.

Nested and networked groups/teams are the building blocks of organizations.
List the teams/groups/committees that you attend, lead, and/or of which you are a member.
Diagram an organization, project, and/or program of your choice.

Depict organizations, groups, people and connections between them.

“Poor organizational design and structure results in a bewildering morass of contradictions: confusion within roles, a lack of co-ordination among functions, failure to share ideas, and slow decision-making bring managers unnecessary complexity, stress, and conflict.”


3 Monitor stage(s) of development
All strategic alliances and all communities of practice need to successfully navigate predictable stages of development; monitoring the stages enhances organizational performance.

Stages of Development

- Transform or Adjourn
- Norm and Perform
- Storm and Order
- Assemble and Form
**Monitoring Questions**

**Formation stage:** In this stage of collaboration success hinges on the level of shared clarity around purpose, structures, strategies, leadership, and key tasks.

Suggested developmental/formative assessment interview questions:

1. How is/was the leader identified?
2. How were members recruited and was enough time spent in the recruitment process?
3. How representative is our partnership membership with regard to its purpose?
4. Do leaders and members share a common understanding of the alliances’ purpose?
5. Do we have the right people and organizations at the table?
6. Are leaders’ and members’ roles and responsibilities transparent and understood by all?
7. Do each of us understand why we are here and what we are hoping to accomplish?
8. Are anticipated linkages between the members’ parent organizations and the alliance clearly delineated?


**Stages of Development TRY IT**

Identify a key group/team — at what stage of development is it? What evidence do you have to support this judgment? What resources/support might the group need to transition to the next stage?

OR

How might you go about assessing/evaluating stages of development in your own project/program/partnership? What roadblocks might you encounter and how might you overcome them?
Levels of Integration

Levels of Organizational Integration Rubric

NSF EPSCoR
Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research

Federal funding to support collaborative research
Inter- and intra-jurisdictional partnerships formed to address an agreed upon research problem and to advance excellence in science and engineering research and education

Eligible Jurisdictions

UNH Durham
UNH Manchester
Plymouth State University
Saint Anselm College
Granite State College
Rivier College
Great Bay Community College
White Mountain Community College

Current/Projected LOI NH EPSCoR Overall
Evaluating and Improving Organizational Collaboration

Measuring Collaboration Among Grant Partners
Frey, Lohmeier, Lee & Tollefson, American Journal of Evaluation 2006
TRY IT: Rate Levels of Linkage

1. Set an organizational boundary. Identify teams/groups/committees within that organizational boundary.
2. Make a spreadsheet; the x and y axes are the teams/groups/committees
3. Use LOIR to rate current LoL, rate projected LoL, compute averages
4. Feeling adventurous?! Draw/make a picture depicting strength/type of connections between groups.

Social Network Analysis

A mathematical and graphical means to examine the structure and attributes of networks (e.g. friendship, professional, etc.) and what passes through them (e.g. advice, innovation, power, money, information, resources, influence, disease, etc.) in order to describe network functioning and/or predict how networks influence outcomes (safety, engagement, achievement, etc.)

Selected SNA Software

**UCINET Software**

**NetDraw**

**Gephi** - open-source network analysis and visualization software package
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Using Mixed-Method Design and Network Analysis to Measure Development of Interagency Collaboration


Safe School Healthy Students Initiative (SS/HSI)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network Cohesion</th>
<th>PRE (n=58)</th>
<th>POST (n=41)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Degree</td>
<td>5.74</td>
<td>10.488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>0.117</td>
<td>0.262</td>
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<tr>
<td>Components</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Distance</td>
<td>2.569</td>
<td>1.901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diameter</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
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5 Assess cycles of inquiry
Assessment of team dialogue, decision-making, action, and evaluation helps stakeholders to improve group dynamics, make meetings more meaningful, and builds group capacity to attain performance goals.
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Team/Community of Practice Level of Collaboration

Team Level Cycle of Inquiry

Team Collaboration Assessment Rubric (TCAR)

See handout


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Collaboration Evaluation and Improvement Framework

1. Operationalize collaboration
2. Assess levels of integration
3. Monitor Stages of Development
4. Assess cycles of inquiry
5. Identify and map Communities of Practice
6. Assess energy and power

In organizations, real power and energy is generated through relationships. The patterns of relationships and the capacities to form them are more important than tasks, functions, roles, and positions.

– Margaret Wheatley

Thank You

Workshop slides/materials made available on AEA website

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