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# Building Collaboration



## PERSONAL LEARNING GOALS

My personal learning goals are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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## THINGS TO DO TO STRENGTHEN OUR GSC

Notes From Lecture / Exercises	Things To Do & Ideas for Change


## The Alliance Continuum

*An alliance is a relationship between partners that is strategically formed to accomplish goals that benefit the community while strengthening the partners' organizations.* Types of alliances:

COOPERATION is the least complex relationship and is characterized by short term informal relations that exist without any clearly defined mission, structure or planning effort. Information is shared only about the subject at hand and resources are kept separate. Authority is retained by each organization and there is virtually no risk to anyone.

COORDINATION is more complex and is characterized by the sharing of some resources. Interaction is usually longer term, often focused around a specific task or program. Some planning and division of roles is required and enough information is shared about the participants to enable cooperation. Authority still rests primarily with individual organizations, but there is increased risk to all participants.

COLLABORATION connotes a more durable and pervasive relationship. There is a common mission to achieve something greater than a single project or task. Such relationships require comprehensive planning and greater - and sometimes unequal - sharing of resources and power. Authority is determined by the collaborative structure and risk is much greater because each partner is contributing its resources and reputation.

**DEFINITION: Collaboration is a mutually beneficial and well defined relationship of two or more individuals or organizations which enables a service or product that cannot be created alone.**

MERGER is the result of two organizations that become one organization. Mergers are strongest when the two organizations share the same vision, mission, strategies for achieving the mission, geographic service area, services,

and values for providing those services. Mergers are the most difficult, and rarest of alliances.\*

The Nimble Collaboration

**10 PRINCIPLES OF RESILIENCY**

1. Leaders energetically support the results partners aim to achieve.
2. There is equity - not equality - of organization power.
3. Systems are changed because individual organizations change themselves.
4. Leadership is shared.
5. Conflict is expected and will be managed effectively.
6. Collaboration is transparent.
7. Each organization is accountable to its constituents and its leadership.
8. Decision making becomes more effective as power is delegated to appropriate sub-groups of the collaboration.
9. Collaborations are not permanent, relationships are.
10. Documentation ensures resilience.

## SAMPLE DECISION MAKING PROTOCOL

We agree to abide by this decision making process:

- We talk about issues at this table, maintaining confidentiality until a decision is reached.
- We share all relevant data freely, collecting and sharing information that helps us make decisions.
- We set out to achieve consensus. We do not take “positions” early in our discussions. If a particular agency says “no” to a particular decision, then that agency clearly and honestly states why, and all partners help problem solve, create alternative solutions, or in other ways help that agency perceive options to saying “no”.
- If we cannot agree after two or three meetings, we set aside special meeting time with a facilitator to focus on this decision. If we still cannot come to consensus then we call a moratorium on this issue for a specified time.
- We represent the consensus decisions of this group in a positive light to our individual Boards. We live with our individual Boards’ decision.

- We remember that we cannot dictate what an agency should/could do, and that the changes we need to make are the changes our community want us to make....we're operating in a very big picture, and we are accountable to all the families in our community, not just to each other.

## FOUR WAYS TO BUILD TRUST

### 1. Model acceptance.

Behave as if you trust the other person. Manage meetings in a way that is respectful of differences, and encourages open dialogue. Be mindful of the impact that different work styles have on different people.

### 2. Share information.

Expect several meetings for sharing information. If you believe you know about this person and his/her organization, then ask questions to help you know more in detail. Avoid assumptions. Set a norm for information sharing by being appropriately open about yourself and your organization.

### 3. Make decisions together.

Start by making small, inconsequential decisions together: when will we meet? Where will we meet? Set ground rules for making more important decisions, and post those rules in the meeting room as a reminder. Allow enough time to make quality decisions together, but do not expect consensus on a regular basis. Use your conflict management skills.

### 4. Be authentic.

Work relationships based on trust are built one interaction at a time. Strive to be conscious of your reactions during meetings and dialogues, and provide feedback honest responses in a professional and respectful manner.

*Adapted from the work of Jack Gibb*

**How Do We Journey Together? Let's explore the four stages of collaboration.**

*An Excerpt from "The Collaboration Handbook"\**

<u>Stage 1: Envision what the collaboration can achieve</u> <i>Managing the Ups and Downs of Hill Country</i>	Secure Letters of Commitment Lay out an Action Plan Resolve Conflict
Work with an Initiator	Organize the Effort: Governance / Structure
Invite Participation by Organizations Understand Organizational Roles Disclose Self Interests	Create a Decision Making Protocol Form a Structure Decide About Staffing
Actively Choose Collaboration Embrace Interdependence	Prepare for Evaluation
Select Collaboration as a Core Strategy	<u>Stage 3: Empower the Collaboration to Sustain Itself</u> <i>Harvesting the Fertile Forest</i>
Define Desired Results Create a Logic Model	Manage the Work Invest in Change
<u>Stage 2: Ensure the Collaboration Gets Results</u> <i>Slogging Through the Marshland</i>	Rejuvenate the Effort Let Evaluation Guide Your Renewal
Organize the Core Collaboration Work Group	Celebrate, Celebrate
Focus on Work	

Stage 4: Endow Broader Collaboration

*Crossing the River*

Create Visibility

Involve the Community

End the Collaboration