
Partnership and Collaboration

Definitions

Handbook concise definition:

Partnership and collaboration is the organizational competency area that is concerned with optimizing performance through shared resources and responsibilities.

Competency component definitions:

Partnership (part' ner ship) n. a continuum of relationships that fosters the sharing of resources and responsibility among two or more individuals, entities, and/or organizations that share joint interests and agree to joint action

Collaboration (col lab' o ra' tion) n. the act of working together, which includes exchanging information, altering activities, sharing resources, and enhancing the capacity of another for mutual benefit and to achieve a common purpose. Multisector collaboration may be defined as a voluntary strategic alliance of public, private, and nonprofit organizations to enhance each other's capacity to achieve a common purpose by sharing risks, responsibilities, resources, and rewards.

Examples/actions:

- Manages and implements responsibilities by facilitating collaboration with groups (internal and external) to ensure participation and input from major stakeholders and constituencies
- Identifies multisector partners for potential coalitions or collaboration
- Promotes team learning



Can you think of examples of behaviors related to partnership development?

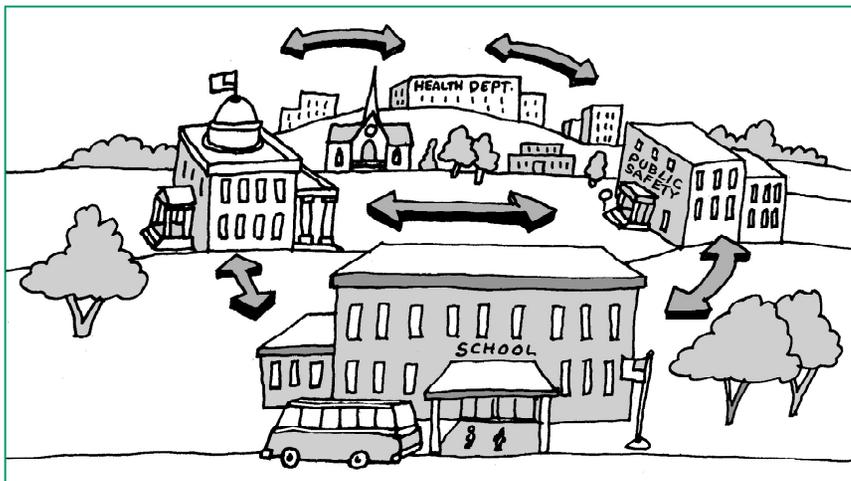
Related to partnership maintenance?

Vignette: Partnership and Collaboration

The Centerville Health Agency used to act as though it were the only institution in town. Other agencies and organizations were a burden; they had to be communicated to, negotiated with, and strategized around. There was a constant battle for public relations, funding, and good volunteers. None of this was surprising in light of agency programs frequently treating each other the same way—battling over turf and resources.

First, an internal coordinating council helped identify program duplications, redundancies, and service gaps. Then, the council worked with cross-program teams to strengthen overall capacity. The agency facilitated an audit of all the community resources and began to evaluate each in terms of what resources it represented and who in the service area it was reaching. Now each staff person is encouraged to think in terms of how to use community resources in all program development. The result is that everyone is winning, especially the population of the service area. It is not unusual to see employees and volunteers from other organizations at Centerville, and it

seems like some of Centerville's staff must have offices in other organizations. The results are such clear synergies that it is difficult to remember why it was ever different.



How important is partnership and collaboration for your organization in the future?

- High
- Medium
- Low

Himmelman has characterized relationships as a continuum from:

- Networking—sharing information
- Coordination—altering activities
- Cooperation—sharing resources
- Collaboration—sharing responsibility and accountability to achieve a common purpose

Himmelman, AT. Communities Working Collaboratively for a Change. In *Resolving Conflict: Strategies for Local Government* Margaret S. Herrman, Ed. Washington, D.C.: International City/County Management Association (1994): 27-47.