

Collaboration

What is Collaboration?

The Oxford dictionary defines collaboration simply and concisely:

Noun: The action of working with someone to produce something.

The origin: Mid-19th century: from Latin collaborate ‘work together’.

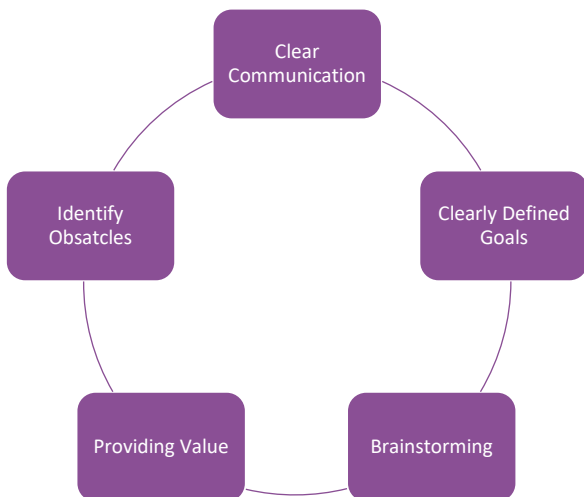
It defines collaborator just as simply:

Noun: A person who works jointly on an activity or project.

Qualities of a Collaborator

- Good listener
- Team focused
- Generous
- Curious
- Trusting
- Appreciative
- Insightful
- Able to make logical inferences
- Relationship builder
- Diplomatic

Five Elements of a Successful Collaboration



Implementing Technology to Facilitate Collaboration

Some of the different technology types that can be used to facilitate collaboration are:

- Content management systems
- Social networking tools
- Wiki
- Blogging
- Online workspaces
- Video conferencing
- Employees bring their own devices

How to Make Collaboration Work: 6 Predictable Stages

As you work to solve problems together, ask these six questions of yourself and others. Using the questions in the order listed is recommended. You can use these questions if your collaboration efforts are stuck or off track. They can help you discover where you got off track and how to get aligned.

1. Is there a problem?
2. How do you define the problem?
3. What are some possible causes of the problem?
4. What are some different ways to solve the problem?
5. What would a successful solution look like
6. Which of the possible solutions best fit the solution criteria?

Rewarding Team Collaboration

People make up our work groups and are the source of collaboration. As leaders in an organization, it is important to encourage and reward the right behaviors. We often tend to reward individual achievement. This recognition makes an employee feel valued, validated and that they are an important part of the organization.

Spontaneous gestures of acknowledgment are good; however, a formal recognition program reinforces the behaviors and achievements that align with your organizational objectives.

Features to Help Create a Collaborative Workspace

We know that the physical spaces we spend our time in have significant effects on how we feel physically and emotionally. We can change our surroundings to illicit favorable responses. Here are eight features that can help create a collaborative workspace.

1. Flexibility and variety
2. Open and cheerful
3. Writing and brainstorming space
4. Acoustics and technology
5. Food and supplies
6. No fixed seating
7. Fun spaces
8. Artwork

A formal recognition/reward program ensures all employees will receive the same awards for similar accomplishments. A formal program corrects the natural inclination to focus on star performers.

1. Reward the team, not just the individual
2. Reward the act as well as the outcome of the collaboration
3. Rewards should be meaningful
4. Solicit input from your employees
5. Provide new opportunities to learn