The Art and Science of Collaboration

New Deans and Directors

Washington DC

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Learning Objectives

• How to determine if you should collaborate on a project across departments, colleges, or state lines?

• What is the purpose or performance challenge of your project? Does your project require a “Joint Work Product”?

• Clarify your interests, understand interests of potential collaborators, determine potential synergy from collaboration.

• Joint work products require “the discipline of real teams”. Use a “single-leader unit” if joint work products are not needed to accomplish your project.
Continuum toward Collaboration

• Independence with random communication—no joint work products produced, may include expectations about when and how to communicate, e.g. contacts at professional meetings.

• Cooperation—proactive about instances in which you will contribute to a work effort, e.g. planning regional conferences, reviewing articles.

• Collaboration—producing a joint work product together, effort is ongoing resulting in synergy.
Increased Need for Collaboration

• More complex issues requiring joint work products across disciplines and state lines
• Research, Teaching, and Extension
• National Research Initiative (NRI)
• If there is a need for a joint work product—then synergy from collaboration has the potential to create impacts where 1+1 can = 3, 10, or 100
• Collaboration requires an abundance mindset—there is plenty out there for everyone
The Role of Interests in Collaboration

• Be clear and focus on your interests, not positions
• Understand your collaborators’ interests
• Invent options for mutual gain with your collaborators
• Have clarity of purpose regarding performance goals
• If there is potential benefit and synergy from working together and a need for a joint work product—then apply the discipline of “real teams”
• Be soft on the people, hard on the problem

Fisher, Getting to Yes
Power of Divergent Thinking in Collaboration

• Peter Senge says “the discipline of team learning starts with dialogue. The ability of a team to suspend assumptions and enter into a genuine” ‘thinking together’.

• Seek divergent thoughts in a team before converging on a solution—the goal is to have a team develop its joint skill in fostering a team IQ that exceeds individual IQ.

• Dialogue—the free flowing of meaning between two or more people.

Senge, the Fifth Discipline
Single-Leader Unit

The *single-leader unit* is based on the classic managerial approach where one person is in charge, makes the key decisions, assigns individual tasks and delegates responsibility. The single-leader is accountable and chooses when and how to modify working approaches.

If the sum of the individual contributions to a task can best meet the performance challenge, then a single-leader working unit will make the most sense and should be used.

*Katzenbach, Wisdom of Teams*
A real team is “a small number of people with complementary skills who are equally committed to a common purpose, goals and working approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.”

Katzenbach, Wisdom of Teams
Katzenbach’s Six Team Basics

1. Are you small enough in number to integrate work efforts effectively?

2. Do you have adequate levels of complementary skills and skill potential in functional/technical, problem-solving / decision-making, and interpersonal categories for team performance?

3. Do you have a broader, meaningful purpose that all members aspire to?

4. Do you have a specific set of performance goals agreed upon by all?

5. Is the working approach clearly understood and commonly agreed upon?

6. Do you hold yourselves individually and mutually accountable for the group’s results?
Katzenbach’s Three Litmus Tests for Real Teams

1. Clear collective work products dependent on the joint application of multi-person skills.

2. Shifting leadership roles to be filled by different people at different stages of the effort.

3. Mutual (as well as individual) accountability for the group’s overall results.

*Katzenbach, Teams at the Top*
When to Use a Real Team *versus* a Single-Leader Unit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Real Team</th>
<th>SLU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issue area is broad and complex</td>
<td>Issue area is specific and defined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involves joint products / services for best outcomes</td>
<td>Individual contributions can be combined to achieve efficient outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need several years to benefit from creativity and innovations</td>
<td>Issue / task is short-lived or periodic in nature</td>
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When to Use a Real Team versus a Single-Leader Unit

**Real Team**
- Requires substantial active involvement of customers
- Requires both mutual (team) and individual accountability
- When synergy of team members and citizens will grow in performance over time

**SLU**
- Requires less involvement and/or short-term involvement of customers
- Can be achieved with individual accountability
- When synergy of group members and citizens is not necessary
When to Use a Real Team *versus* a Single-Leader Unit

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involves varied client needs, variety of product or service responses,</td>
<td>When client is specific, product or service responses are specific,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>budget and resource entrepreneurship</td>
<td>budgets and resources are assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flourishes in organizational context of shared leadership and</td>
<td>Can accommodate a command and control organizational environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>empowerment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership is treated as a function and team members rotate leadership</td>
<td>Can be used for short term projects or committee work inside a real</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>based on need</td>
<td>team</td>
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Project Teams as a Crucial Component of Real Teams

Internal & External Collaborators

Real Core Team

Project Team

Project Team
Structure of Self-Directed Real Teams

- **Core Group**: Team Members, Coordinator / Facilitator / Shared Leader(s)

- **Invited and Occasional Members**: Core Group, Subgroup, Short-term Efforts

- **Linkages**: Linkages to Administrative Levels, Plus Person that may serve as Coach

Leholm & Vlasin, Increasing the Odds for High Performance Teams
Building Blocks for Real Teams
If there is a need for a Joint Work Product, then

1. Proceed with real team development—micro-vision, purpose with clarity of the performance challenge, objectives and goals, timelines
2. Team members’ roles and responsibilities
3. Team values and code of conduct, including how you will handle disagreements
4. Team Operating Plan: Team Leadership, Team Structure, Communication Protocol, etc.
5. Access to “Wise Counsel”—Coaching Function