

A Collaboration Checklist

Each of the following factors influences the collaborative process. After reading a brief description for each of the areas place an X in the box (see Figure 1) that best reflects your opinion of how your collaboration is functioning in each of the areas using the following scale: 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 Agree, 3 = Neither Agree or Disagree, 4 = Disagree, and 5 = Strongly Disagree.

Each of the factors are identified and defined:

1. Communication - the collaboration has open and clear communication. There is an established process for communication between meetings;
2. Sustainability - the collaboration has a plan for sustaining membership and resources. This involves membership guidelines relating to terms of office and replacement of members;
3. Research and Evaluation - the collaboration has conducted a needs assessment or has obtained information to establish its goals and the collaboration continues to collect data to measure goal achievement;
4. Political Climate - the history and environment surrounding power and decision making is positive. Political climate may be within the community as a whole, systems within the community or networks of people;
5. Resources - the collaboration has access to needed resources. Resources refer to four types of capital: environmental, in-kind, financial, and human;
6. Catalysts - the collaboration was started because of existing problem(s) or the reason(s) for collaboration to exist required a comprehensive approach;
7. Policies/Laws/Regulations - the collaboration has changed policies, laws, and/or regulations that allow the collaboration to function effectively;
8. History - the community has a history of working cooperatively and solving problems;
9. Connectedness - members of this collaboration are connected and have established informal and formal communication networks at all levels;
10. Leadership - the leadership facilitates and supports team building, and capitalizes upon diversity and individual, group and organizational strengths;
11. Community Development - this community was mobilized to address important issues. There is a communication system and formal information channels that permit the exploration of issues, goals and objectives; and,
12. Understanding Community - the collaboration understands the community, including its people, cultures, values and habits.

Figure 1
The Collaboration Checklist

A COLLABORATION PROGRESS CHECKLIST					
Factors	Strongly Agree 1	Somewhat Agree 2	Neither Agree or Disagree 3	Somewhat Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
Goals					
Communication					
Sustainability					
Research and Evaluation					
Political Climate					
Resources					
Catalysts					
Policies/Laws/Regulations					
History					
Connectedness					
Leadership					
Community Development					
Understanding Community					
Totals					
Grand Total					

Identifying the collaboration's strengths and challenges assists the collaboration in determining the best course of action to achieve its identified goals. For example, if the group scores from 0-30 the collaboration has many components that comprise a successful collaboration. There are goals, working members, and strong leadership. If the collaborative group scores between 31-48 the group has some of the factors; however, there is some need to develop the inter-workings of the group. The group may need to determine new ways of working together. However, if the group scores between 49-65 the group may wish to refocus their goals and leadership. Establishing a group's strengths and challenges can serve as a springboard to building a more effective collaborative group.

*Adapted from Lynne M. Borden and Daniel F. Perkins, "Assessing Your Collaboration: A Self Evaluation Tool," *Journal of Extension*, v. 37 no. 2, April 1999. www.joe.org