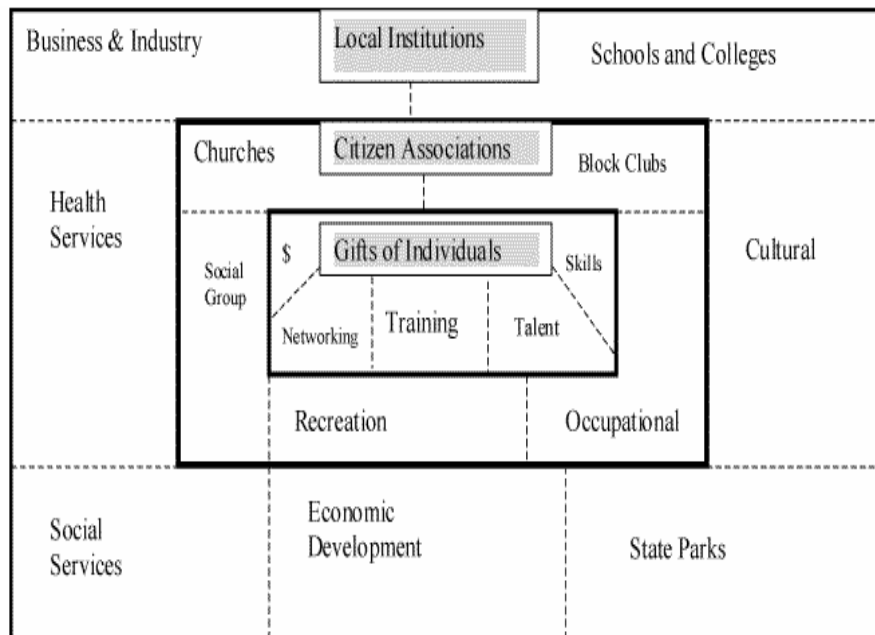


What Does Collaboration Mean for a Community?

Collaboration is working together to achieve a goal. Teams that work collaboratively can obtain greater resources, recognition and results. Collaboration encourages introspection of behavior and communication, sharing and collecting of and information/data, and allows for shared leadership, decisions, ownership, vision, and responsibility to increase the success of teams as they engage in strategic planning. It discovers solutions and expands capacity within the organization and the community.

Community Partners for Collaboration

Engaging the community will very often involve building coalitions of diverse organizations. A community coalition can be defined as "a formal alliance of organizations, groups, and agencies that have come together to work for a common goal."



"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." *Helen Keller*

"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success." *Henry Ford*

"The only place you'll find success before work is in the dictionary".
Mary B. Smith

Collaboration Process 101

1. Start with a unifying purpose. The purpose may need to be broad enough to bring in enough people with energy, imagination, commitment, resources, and creativity, to generate success.
2. Create, maintain, and update, simple and practical Mission and Vision statements.
3. Set goals and objectives. Goals are where you want to go. Objectives are how you are going to get there. Goals should be measurable and observable.

4. Build relationships. Allow time before and after meetings for visiting. Build friendships/relationships with members of the organization outside of the meeting times.
5. Communication. Real listening shows respect. It creates trust. As we listen, we not only gain understanding, we also create the environment to be understood. Take time to solicit opinions and ideas, use surveys, smaller groups to increase participation, promote and encourage open dialogue. Use the media and other communication tools to communicate with stake holders outside of the collaboration. Send letters, e-mails, agendas, notes, flyers, etc. to other members of the coalition on a regular basis.
6. Be organized. Take notes every meeting, always start and end on time.
7. Motivate and persevere. Building Collaboration requires substantial and sustained effort, often without recognition or equal distribution of responsibility. Keep the passion and interest alive. Complete and encourage the completion of assignments, provide accountability.
8. Continuity, consistency, dependability. Even though the organization or collaboration may evolve over time, it is important to demonstrate consistency and dependability in values and character. There should be continuity in programs and message. Changes in direction should be openly discussed, understood, and consensual.
9. Success. Look for and learn to recognize success. Celebrate small successes and big successes. Celebrate publicly and privately. Acknowledge and reward success.

"With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it, nothing can succeed. Consequently he who molds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions."
Abraham Lincoln (August 21, 1858)