

B

APPENDIX B

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SUCCESS OF COLLABORATION

The list below defines elements of successful collaboration. It was taken from *Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities*, a resource for social workers, employers and community organizations designed to help them implement strategies to improve services for clients, raise retention rates for new hires from poverty, and increase understanding of the differences in economic cultures and how those differences affect opportunities for success.

Factors influencing the success of collaboration

ENVIRONMENT	
1. History of collaboration in community.	History of collaboration or cooperation exists which offers potential partners understanding of roles and expectations, enabling them to trust process.
2. Collaborative group seen as leader in community.	Collaborative group is seen as leader, at least related to goals and activities it intends to accomplish.
3. Political/social climate favorable.	Political leaders, opinion-makers, those who control resources, public support, no obvious opposition to mission of group.
MEMBERSHIP	
4. Mutual respect, understanding, and trust.	Members share understanding of each other and their respective organizations (i.e., how they operate, cultural norms, values, limitations, and expectations).

MEMBERSHIP (continued)	
6. Members see collaboration as being in their self-interest.	Partners feel that collaboration, with its resulting loss of autonomy and “turf,” will have benefits for them that exceed costs.
7. Ability to compromise.	Partners are able to compromise, since all decisions cannot possibly be molded to conform perfectly to preferences of each member.
PROCESS/STRUCTURE	
8. Members share stake in both process and outcome.	Group members feel “ownership” both in how group works and results of its work.
9. Multiple layers of decision-making.	Every level (upper management, middle management, operations) within each organization that is part of collaborative structure needs to participate in decision-making.
FACTOR	DESCRIPTION
10. Flexibility.	Group remains open to varied ways of organizing itself and accomplishing its work.
11. Development of clear roles and policy guidelines.	Group clearly understands roles, rights, responsibilities – and how to carry out those responsibilities.
12. Adaptability.	Group has ability to sustain itself in midst of major changes, even if it needs to change some major goals or members in order to deal with changing conditions.

B

COMMUNICATION	
13. Communication.	Group members interact often, update one another, discuss issues openly, convey all necessary information to one another and to people outside group.
14. Establish informal and formal communication links.	Channels of communication exist on paper, so that information flow occurs; members also establish personal connections that will produce better informed, more cohesive group working on common project.
PURPOSE	
15. Concrete, attainable goals and objectives.	Goals and objectives of group appear clear to partners and can realistically be attained.
16. Shared vision.	Partners share same vision with clearly agreed-upon mission, objectives, and strategy.
17. Unique purpose.	Mission and goals or approach of collaborative structure differ, at least in part, from mission and goals or approach of member organizations.
RESOURCES	
18. Sufficient funds.	Group requires adequate, consistent financial base to support its operations.
19. Skilled convener.	Individual who convenes group has organizing skills, interpersonal skills, reputation for fairness, and perceived legitimacy in convener role.

From Bridges out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities. Ruby K. Payne, Phillip E. DeVol, Terie Dreussi Smith. Aha! Process, Inc. revised edition, 2009.