



CFSA Collaboration Planning and Assessment Tool and Instructions July 2011

For more information:

Evan Mendelson
VP, Donor Relations and Program Services
Community Foundation for Southern Arizona
2250 E Broadway Blvd.
Tucson, AZ 85719
(520) 770-0800 x119
(520) 302-7449 - cell
emendelson@cfsoaz.org
www.cfsoaz.org

CFSA Collaboration Planning and Assessment Tool

Instructions

The Tool

The CFSA Collaboration Planning and Assessment Tool is designed to facilitate dialogue among the participants in your Collaboration about five core principles of collaboration, and the factors that relate to each principle. Successful community collaborations:

1. Have a shared vision and clarity of purpose
2. Are broad-based, include key stakeholders and reflect the diversity of the community
3. Promote a community engagement process that builds and continuously renews relationships.
4. Have public visibility and accountability
5. Are flexible and have the capacity to adapt to changing community conditions

The most important function of this tool is that it facilitates your Collaboration working towards consensus about where on the continuum your collaboration falls at this point in time and what are the most important areas of attention as you reflect on the successes and opportunities experienced as you work toward your broad goal.

The tool uses a scale that is not intended to achieve a score, but to locate the Collaboration on a continuum. This recognizes the dynamic quality of the work that goes on. Points on the continuum are defined as:

| <i>Point</i> | <i>Defined as</i> |
|----------------------|---|
| Not at this time | Progress on developing the factor is not yet discernible. It might develop given time. |
| Some progress | There is some progress being made in this area of the work, but there is still a way to go. |
| Moderate progress | There is a sense of “critical mass” beginning to form at this time. |
| Substantial progress | There is substantial progress being made in advancing this factor |
| Fully developed | The factor is present in its highest or most desirable form. |

CFSA asks each Collaboration to convene its members in a meeting to develop consensus about where you fall on the continuum at this point and time. It is strongly suggested that each group member complete the tool independently before the meeting. This will help make the discussion of differences in perception more focused. The administration of the tool will take between two and three hours. Place an “x” under the progress indicator on the continuum. Please type comments at the bottom or back of each page for the indicator.

Three guiding questions should prevail as your group works through the tool:

1. To what extent is the factor present in our community’s work?
2. What progress have we made in developing the conditions needed since we began our Collaboration work?
3. What is our collective sense of our own movement and what we need to focus on moving forward?

Reflection Questions

(To be guide the collaboration assessment facilitator and submitted with the completed assessment form)

1. How many people completed the assessment in advance of your meeting to collate, assess and reflect on the results?
2. Describe the process you used to reach consensus during your meeting.
3. What things were surprising to the group as you reflected on each other’s rankings? Why were these surprising?
4. What are some of the areas where you feel you have made progress or where you are proudest of your team? Describe how these particular results have been achieved—what decisions has your group made that allowed for this success?
5. Upon reflection, what does your team view as its collaborative strengths?
6. As you move forward as a collaboration team, what are some of the areas that you may need to focus on now? Why are these especially important at this point it time?
7. Upon reflection, what goals does your team have for furthering its collaborative processes?
8. What are some of the ways that the group’s assessment conversation has been useful?
9. Were there are any unforeseen difficulties in conducting the self-assessment? (We’d like to keep improving this document).

And finally...

If there are any unforeseen difficulties in conducting the self-assessment, we welcome your feedback about its value, its usability and ways that CFSA might improve both the tool and the process.

Glossary of Terms

Planning and Assessment Tool

Collaboration—A process by which multiple organizations, systems and community stakeholders work together to achieve outcomes that could not be reached individually.

Consensus—An opinion or position reached by a group as a whole.

Cultural competence—Requires that organizations: have a defined set of values and principles, and demonstrate behaviors, attitudes, policies and structures that enable them to work effectively cross-culturally; have the capacity to value diversity, conduct self-assessment, manage the dynamics of difference, acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge and adapt to diversity and the cultural contexts of the communities they serve; and that they incorporate the this in all aspects of policy making, administration, practice, service delivery and systematically involve key stakeholders and communities.

Facilitate—Make easier; be of use; increase the likelihood of a response

Impact—Impact is often long term. It is recognized that measuring impacts is beyond the scope of the three-year time frame and would only occur if secondary data sources were available.

Overarching, Large Goal—This is the BIG goal that partners first identified to work toward. It is timeless in nature and broad enough to invite cross-sector partners to the table.

Leverage—Strategically applying one’s resources to influence how public and private resources are used. Effective leveraging strategies may include organizations “pooling” their influence and resources for programs, combining multiple state and federal grants to increase service capacity, jointly applying for grants with multiple entities and/or supporting the development of infrastructure components that benefit multiple organizations and can be sustained by other funding sources.

Mission—Broadly describes an organization's present capabilities, focus and activities

Outcomes—Outcomes refer to the result of the system change efforts. The outcomes are often short term.

Seven Norms of Collaboration—This refers to seven habits or behaviors known to improve the dynamics of collaborative teams— Putting Inquiry at the Center, Pausing, Paraphrasing, Probing, Placing Ideas on the Table, Paying Attention to Self and Others, Presuming Positive Intentions (for more information about the 7 Norms at The Center for Adaptive Schools website <http://www.adaptiveschools.com/>)

Strategies—Activities/actions undertaken by the Collaboration as a way of reaching their large goal.

System Change—Based on the work of Julia Coffman, *A Framework for Evaluating Systems Initiatives* (September 2007). System change initiatives aim to create lasting positive change and often involve efforts to change the systems that programs operate within. System change initiatives can focus on one or more of the following five areas: Context, Components, Connections, Infrastructure and Scale.

Vision—A vision is a statement about what an individual or organization wants to see happen. It should resonate with all members of the effort and help them feel excited and part of something larger than themselves. A vision should stretch the organization and individual capabilities and image of themselves. It gives shape and direction to the organization’s future. Vision statements range in length from a couple of words to several pages.

1. Successful collaborations have a shared vision and clarity of purpose.

| | <i>Not at this time</i> | <i>Some progress</i> | <i>Moderate Progress</i> | <i>Substantial progress</i> | <i>Fully Developed</i> |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| a. Shared vision/Large goal. Our collaborating partners have the same vision and agreed upon large goal for our Collaboration. | | | | | |
| b. Clear purpose. Our work does not duplicate existing efforts, but adds unique value to members of the group and to other related initiatives. | | | | | |
| c. Concrete, attainable outcomes. Short-term outcomes are clear and measurable. | | | | | |
| d. Long-term impacts. Long-term impacts are recognized and guide the work. | | | | | |
| e. Resources are directly linked to the Collaboration’s large goal and long-term impacts. Our resources, funding, time, talents, etc. are aligned with our large goal and long-term impacts. | | | | | |
| f. Members share a stake in both process and outcome. Collaborating partners value the process of engagement as the means to achieve their outcomes. | | | | | |

1.1 System change awareness.

| | <i>Not at this time</i> | <i>Some progress</i> | <i>Moderate Progress</i> | <i>Substantial progress</i> | <i>Fully Developed</i> |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| a. Members share a common understanding of system change. Collaborating partners are familiar with the system change framework (Julia Coffman). | | | | | |
| b. Members understand the system change focus/foci that the collaboration is working toward. Collaborating partners are in agreement with the system change focus and use this to help plan strategies | | | | | |

2. Successful collaborations are broad-based, include key stakeholders, and reflect the diversity of the community.

| | <i>Not at this time</i> | <i>Some progress</i> | <i>Moderate Progress</i> | <i>Substantial progress</i> | <i>Fully Developed</i> |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| <p>a. Appropriate cross-section of members. Our collaboration includes representation from each segment of the system that will be affected by the work.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>b. Mutual respect, understanding, and trust. Our Collaboration partners share an understanding and respect for each other and their respective organizations: how they operate, their cultural norms and values, limitations, and expectations.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>c. Continual openness to drawing in new members. Our Collaboration partners have the willingness to and a process for widening the circle to include new partners over time.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>d. Inviting new partners. Collaboration partners actively recruit new partners into the work and value their contribution.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>e. Widening the leadership team. New members are invited to be a part of the Leadership Team (as appropriate) and there is an agreed upon process for this.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>f. Cultural competency awareness. Cultural competence is important to the Collaboration as it works toward its goal.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>g. Diversity of Collaboration membership. Collaboration partners reflect the ethnic/cultural characteristics of the Community in which they operate</p> | | | | | |
| <p>h. Commitment to cultural diversity. The Collaboration has adopted a statement that explicitly incorporates a commitment to cultural diversity.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>i. Power and privilege. The Collaboration has formalized mechanisms for exploring power and privilege in its work and decision-making processes.</p> | | | | | |

2.1. Successful collaborations value the collaborative processes as well as the outcome.

| | <i>Not at this time</i> | <i>Some progress</i> | <i>Moderate Progress</i> | <i>Substantial progress</i> | <i>Fully Developed</i> |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| <p>a. Knowledge of The Seven Norms of Collaboration Our Collaboration partners share an understanding of the behaviors that help build positive collaboration dynamics, including the seven norms of collaboration—Putting Inquiry at the Center, Pausing, Paraphrasing, Probing, Placing Ideas on the Table, Paying Attention to Self and Others and Presuming Positive Intentions.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>b. Accountability to the Seven Norms of Collaboration Our Collaborations partners hold themselves and each other accountable to the seven norms.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>c. The collaborative process Our Collaboration’s partners value the way in which we work together, not only the results.</p> | | | | | |

3. Successful collaborations promote a community engagement process that builds and continuously renews relationships.

| | <i>Not at this time</i> | <i>Some progress</i> | <i>Moderate Progress</i> | <i>Substantial progress</i> | <i>Fully Developed</i> |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| <p>a. Development of clear roles, policy, and operating guidelines. Our Collaboration partners clearly understand the roles and responsibilities of being a member of the group and are accountable for implementing specific activities.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>b. Awareness and commitment among partners. Every level (board, upper/mid management, line staff) within each collaborating organization is aware of and is committed to the Collaboration’s goals and strategies.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>c. Decisions about resources. Collaboration partners play a part in making decisions about the work, particularly how funds are used.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>d. Goal driven. The goal of the Collaboration guides the partners when difficult decisions have to be made.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>e. Ability to reach consensus. Our Collaboration embodies a spirit of cooperation and has the ability to discuss differences of opinion and perception and difficult issues openly, working together to find out what will work best for the group.</p> | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| <p>f. Leadership is shared. Our Collaboration embodies a collective leadership paradigm. Decision-making and leadership are shared among Collaboration members (rather than the Collaboration being lead by a single leader).</p> | | | | | |
| <p>g. Progression from simple to complex activities. Our Collaboration has gained confidence through success with smaller projects and, at the appropriate pace, is undertaking more complex issues and tasks.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>h. Open communication. Our Collaboration partners interact often and have created formal, planned channels of communication to ensure all necessary information is conveyed to one another and to people outside the group.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>i. Sufficient operating resources. Our Collaboration has an adequate, consistent financial base to support its operations.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>j. Leveraging resources. Our Collaboration leverages and influences the allocation of resources to reach our shared goal.</p> | | | | | |

4. Successful collaborations have public visibility and accountability.

| | <i>Not at this time</i> | <i>Some progress</i> | <i>Moderate Progress</i> | <i>Substantial progress</i> | <i>Fully Developed</i> |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| <p>a. History of collaboration in the community. Our Collaboration partners are aware of and build on prior experience and success with the collaboration in the community.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>b. Community awareness of the issue. Our community is aware of the work of the Collaboration and understands that our work is needed.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>c. Influences the political/social climate. Our collaborative includes and works with political leaders, opinion-makers, persons who control resources, and the general public in our community to improve policies.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>d. Cultivating champions. We engage high-profile community leaders and emerging leaders who can motivate others, to assume leadership roles and promote the vision and work of our Collaboration.</p> | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| <p>e. Communication with diverse partners. Our Collaboration has developed communication strategies that identify multiple audiences and ways to listen to various partners' perspectives and be responsive to their points of view.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>f. Facilitates public dialogue. Our Collaboration facilitates a public dialogue of issues and maintains regular contact with the media.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>5. Successful collaborations are flexible, and have the capacity to adapt to changing community conditions.</p> | | | | | |
| | <i>Not at this time</i> | <i>Some progress</i> | <i>Moderate Progress</i> | <i>Substantial progress</i> | <i>Fully Developed</i> |
| <p>a. Systematic gathering of information and analysis. Our Collaboration reflects upon progress and strategies, collecting data, and getting input and feedback on an ongoing basis.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>b. Adaptability. Our Collaboration uses the information to refine our strategies and has the ability to sustain a community agenda during changes in the environment or among participants.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>c. Seeks and effectively uses outside resources to gain needed skills and knowledge. Our Collaboration seeks out and takes advantage of training/resources to increase participants' skills.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>d. Partners with organizations outside the community and other communities. Collaboration members learn and gain motivation from their peers in other communities within their regions, the state, and elsewhere.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>e. Invests in continuous learning. Our Collaboration creates opportunities to reflect, assess what is learned and apply it to their community impact work and within their respective organizations.</p> | | | | | |