Collaborative Leadership

Introduction, Overview, and Resources

Turning Point
Collaborating for a New Century in Public Health

Introduction and Overview

This package contains materials for a six-module learning program for collaborative leadership development among governmental public health professionals as well as diverse state and local community partners. Each module includes a *Facilitator's Guide*, a *Participant's Guide*, a PowerPoint slide set, and a self assessment tool. The *Facilitator's Guide* contains specific learning objectives, detailed activity descriptions, a list of equipment and supplies needed, and preparation required. Also provided is *Fundamental Concepts,* a compilation of fifteen learning activities designed to introduce core concepts related to collaborative leadership to audiences new to this field of study. (The *Fundamental Concepts* section is also available as a separate book. For information about ordering it, see the Turning Point Web site, as http://turningpointprogram.org or www. collaborativeleadership.org.)

Each module is designed to fit within a three- to four-hour block of time and focuses on one of six key practices of collaborative leadership: Assessing the Environment, Creating Clarity, Sharing Power and Influence, Building Trust, Self Reflection, and Developing People.

Program Philosophy

A 1988 Institute of Medicine report urged that a more focused initiative be created to develop leaders in the field of public health. But the leadership gap is not limited to the field of public health. In a review of research on collaborative leadership, the author notes, "The shift from authority-focused leadership to collaborative and team-oriented leadership has not been met with adequate leadership education and training." (Larson, C., et al., 2002) Leaders with the capacities and characteristics consistent with this more collaborative approach are essential and need to be part of any development plan.

A survey of thirty-five organizations with solid leadership development programs revealed six organizations with exemplary programs (Fulmer and Wagner, 1999). Key findings of best practices among these six include:

1. Leadership development does not stand alone. It must be aligned to the overall strategy of the organization.
2. Senior-level executives with extensive line experience must be involved in the design of the leadership development program.
3. A model of leadership competencies is developed that is consistent throughout the organization and reflects the values of the organization.
4. Best-practice organizations develop their own leaders rather than recruit them from other companies.
5. Action, not knowledge, is the goal of best-practice leadership development.
6. The leadership development process is linked to the organization's succession planning.
7. The leadership development process is a symbiotic tool of effective leadership.
8. Successful programs are continuously assessed.

The development process for collaborative leadership should consider three levels of focus to ensure effective working relationships within an ever-expanding sphere of influence (Larson, C., et al., 2002).

Level 1: The individual and her or his leadership capacities

Level 2: Individuals working within an organizational context

Level 3: Community members working across boundaries to stimulate change and solve problems

Adult learning principles (Knowles, 1990) state that any learning program should:

- Be relevant to the learner's past and current experience
- Be interactive
- Use shared goal-setting and self-directed learning methods
- Be linked to immediate and authentic application

The activities contained in this learning program are designed to connect learners to new concepts by building on learners' own experience through highly interactive and experiential learning methods that take place on site. Learners complete a self-assessment tool designed to reveal strengths and gaps in specific collaborative leadership capacities. Learners then use this information to develop their personal learning plan. The *Participant's Guide* and a Web site provide the learner with additional readings and resources to support extended learning.

The importance of immediate and authentic application of new skills cannot be over emphasized. For this reason we recommend that this learning program be a part of a leadership development program or other structured, systematic learning environment that can address the issue of on-the-job-experience combined with constructive feedback through coaching or mentoring.

Program Development

In April 2003, Turning Point hired a learning-program designer to develop a six-module learning program. Dr. Carl Larson, University of Denver, provided consultation on key concepts and research. Two Turning Point publications provided guidance: *Collaborative Leadership and Health: A Review of the Literature* (2002) and *Collaboration and the Turning Point Initiative: Proceedings of a Conference on Leadership Development Held at the University of Denver* (2001).

During summer and fall 2003, six partner agencies were identified and served as pilot sites, recruiting participants and organizing the workshop. Partners assisted in facilitating the training workshop and, along with workshop participants, completed a comprehensive evaluation. Additional activity testing was conducted in Colorado in October 2003. Feedback from 126 workshop participants informed the program revision process. The final version of the learning program was completed in November 2003.

Program Structure

Content

Because collaborative interaction is challenging, it takes special skills to shepherd a group through this developmental continuum. Collaborative leadership is apparent in those who inspire commitment and action, lead as peer problem solvers, build broad-based involvement, and sustain hope and participation. Based on research with noted leadership experts and the public health practice community, the Turning Point Leadership Development National Excellence Collaborative identified a number of fundamental collaborative leadership capacities in 2001. This National Excellence Collaborative, funded by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and made up of public health practitioners from around the country, has worked to better define, describe, and build the skills of collaborative leadership among those who participate in public health work.

Clearly collaborative leaders should possess a number of critical skills and capacities. Many of the skills are not necessarily unique to a collaborative form of leadership and have already been described in the literature and developed into training curricula. The work of the Turning Point Leadership Development National Excellence Collaborative, however, has identified six key elements unique to the practice of leading a collaborative process.

- Assessing the Environment for Collaboration: Understanding the context for change before you act.
- Creating Clarity – Visioning and Mobilizing: Defining shared values and engaging people in positive action.
- Building Trust: Creating safe places for developing shared purpose and action
- Sharing Power and Influence: Developing the synergy of people, organizations, and communities to accomplish more.
- Developing People: Committing to the development of people as your key asset through mentoring and coaching.
- Self Reflection – Personal Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI): Understanding your own leadership, engaging others.

Each one of these practices is addressed in its own learning module. The elements are not mutually exclusive but support each other to provide a picture of the essential skills of a collaborative leader. (Other essential practices, such as communication skills and conflict management have been addressed extensively in the literature elsewhere, so are not included in this program.)

Fundamental Concepts. Underlying any discussion of the six practices of collaborative leadership are core concepts that are fundamental to understanding them. These "fundamental concepts" include topics such as: What is collaboration? When is collaboration appropriate? and How is collaborative leadership different from other leadership approaches? Facilitators can select from a menu of fifteen activities to help learners new to the field understand these essential concepts before proceeding with the six learning modules. (See *Fundamental Concepts*)

Extended learning. A Web site dedicated to providing additional learning resources and tools (www.collaborativeleadership.org or www.turningpointprogram.org) is available to those completing the learning program. Included on the site are: reading suggestions, selected Internet links, case studies, and how-to tools.

Format

The *Facilitator's Guide* for each learning module begins with an outline of the purpose and activities for that module, a checklist of equipment and materials needed, and suggestions on how to prepare for facilitating that module. This is followed by a detailed outline of module activities. It is written in a "recipe" format for ease of use. Facilitators are encouraged to adapt the material to the needs of their audience.

Each module includes a *Participant's Guide*. It includes background information and materials, interactive worksheets used in selected learning activities, a Personal Learning Plan to be completed by the learner at the end of the workshop, and a list of recommended readings and resources.

PowerPoint slide sets provide visual reinforcement for key concepts in each module. They can be used as-is with an LCD projector or converted into overhead transparencies for use with an overhead projector. Participants will also appreciate handout copies of the slide sets.

Module Activities. Each module begins with: an introduction to the concept of collaborative leadership, a brief review of the six collaborative leadership practices identified by Turning Point, and an introduction to the module that reviews the purpose and learning objectives. Next, learners complete a self assessment tool designed to reveal strengths and gaps in leadership capacities related to the collaborative leadership practice that is the focus of the module. A short conceptual overview of the collaborative leadership practice follows.

The bulk of time is spent on three or four interactive activities designed to allow learners to experience the key concepts for themselves. This is accomplished through the use of role plays, simulations, games, small group discussions, and case studies.

Each module ends with a list of readings and resources for collaborative leadership in general and for that collaborative leadership practice, specifically. The final activity is the development of a personal learning plan, which incorporates information from the self assessment tool and insights from the workshop.

Customization. This learning program consists of stand-alone but complementary modules. Fundamental concept activities are organized by specific learning objectives so facilitators can choose those appropriate for their audience. Fundamental concept activities can be included as precursors to any of the six learning modules. The six modules can be combined in multiple ways, allowing maximum flexibility in implementation. To address varying audience needs and skill levels, facilitator's notes describe implementation options for selected activities. Information on how to write a case study or simulation is provided so that facilitators can tailor these types of experiential activities to their audience.

References

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How to Write a Case Study

Definition and Description

A case study is a reconstruction of a real-life situation designed to be examined by learners. It should include: problem solving, decision making, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, all directed toward establishing general principles or discovering applications of concepts illustrated by the case.

Case studies, ideally, are complex educational instruments that teach by example and vicarious experience. They inject an air of plausibility and reality into purely theoretical teaching. They use methods that encourage learners to communicate their ideas more effectively and examine complicated issues in more critical ways. The use of case studies increases learners' curiosity, improves decision-making, and generally increases their respect for the views of others.

What Makes a Good Case?

- Forces learners to consider the complexity of problem-solving processes required in real life situations.
- Drives the need for further learning, research, and information.
- Elevates tensions in the narrative between conflicting points of view.
- Invites readers to engage with the characters and should end on the horns of a dilemma in order to encourage debate.

General Characteristics

1. It presents one broadly applicable theme, even though several issues and sub-issues can come into play.
2. The story takes place in a complex context (a school, an organization, a society) that features characteristics shared by other settings.
3. The story includes a web of decisions by a protagonist who must analyze a situation, identify alternative courses of action, and act—usually under pressure.
4. It allows for other observant witnesses to provide alternate points of view and present different accounts of the same events.
5. It has one major decision point and a resolution that reveals the road taken.
6. The events perplex and irritate the character who experiences them. "How could it have been handled better? What went wrong? Why didn't we see this coming? What can we do to prevent this from happening again?"
7. When analyzed, the case events yield rules that can apply to a variety of similar situations.

Sitting Down to Write

In order to develop good cases three steps are critical: Outlining the learning outcomes expected from the case, selecting and writing the case narrative, and developing appropriate study questions to accompany the cases.

1. Outline the learning outcomes expected from the case.
   - What objectives will the case address?
   - What's the big idea?
   - What are the behavioral changes sought?

2. Select and write the case narrative.
   - Select a problem and situation. Real-life situations tend to work best. The chosen problem and situation should allow the participants to apply, identify, use, discover, and learn some of the objectives of the learning module.
   - Research the facts.
     - Each case should contain facts about the situation being studied which allow learners to consider the situation intelligently, but also force the learner to seek additional information.
     - Suitable facts also add to the plausibility of the case.
     - Cases should not allow learners to make intuitive judgments based on little information, but rather should make them seek valid explanations to support their ideas or help them formulate (valid) new ones.
     - References to support the case should be provided as a starting point for participants' further research.
   - Write the scenario.
     - Be compelling and personal. At its best, a case is a compelling story. Personal stories are often interwoven into case narratives.
       - The opening - should draw the readers in and hook them immediately.
       - The compelling story - should be built around events of consequence. Examples from our own experience will perhaps be the best source of good stories. However, remember to thoroughly disguise characters. The last thing we want is a libel suit!
     - Define the characters.
       Get the participants to engage with the story and characters in the case. The characters should be realistic, multi-dimensional personas. Real characters wrestling with confounding variables can encourage learners to project themselves into a similar situation.
     - Set up the dilemma.
       The dilemma is the force that drives spirited discussion. Contrived or phony dilemmas will reduce the impact of the case, while realistic dilemmas will make the case worth the participants' time.
     - Write an engaging dilemma.
       The narrative should elevate tensions between conflicting points of view and should be written so that readers engage with the characters and dilemmas in the case. The narratives should be credible.
     - Make a cliffhanger ending.
       At the end of the case, the issues should not be resolved. Good cases should continue to tease the minds of the participants.

3. Develop appropriate study questions to accompany the case.
   - Each case should include questions that provoke a thoughtful discussion of the important issues raised.
   - Questions should require students to examine concepts and issues related to the chosen objectives and relevant to the case.
   - Questions should demand intelligent and critical thinking about the issues rather than simply requiring factual information and specific answers.

References

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How to Write a Role Play

Definition and Description

Role plays involve participants assuming and acting out characters, personalities, and attitudes other than their own. They may be tightly or loosely structured. Participants may assume multiple roles or reversed roles.

The purpose of a role play is to allow participants to experience or observe the application of a skill or concept. Role playing teaches through vicarious and experiential learning modalities.

What Makes a Good Role Play?

- *A situation that allows for a variety of roles and perspectives.* Since the focus of this learning program is collaborative leadership, most situations should involve the effective facilitation of a diverse group of people. Work with participants to identify roles relevant to the topic and choose those that require only minimal set-up. Players should be able to get into character easily without much direction. Encourage conflicting points of view to be played out; it increases the authenticity of the activity.

- *A topic that is interesting and somewhat controversial.* It should be a compelling problem or issue that will engage the participants and create motivation for role players. The outcome or resolution should not be obvious or pre-determined and there should be several logical solutions.

- *A situation that involves problem solving and decision making.* The focus of the role play is on the application of a new skill or concept, not on star quality performance from the players. It should focus on the learning objective related to this section of the module.

Developing the Role Play

1. Choose a topic that is familiar to your audience. It doesn't have to be one that they have detailed knowledge about or experience with, but it should be one that will be easy for them to relate to. For example, a role play about alcohol risk reduction would be appropriate for most public health groups.

2. Think of an authentic situation that can be easily described and acted out within your timeframe, (i.e., a committee meeting or a city council hearing).

3. Write a short description of the situation to post or hand out to participants.

4. Identify roles. Choose the number of roles feasible for the size of your group and your timeframe. If the group is large, consider a fishbowl approach where a limited number of roles are enacted by those in a small circle within a larger outer circle of observers. In this scenario, as the role play progresses, members of the outer circle can advise players or switch places with them.

5. Write short descriptions of each role to hand out to players. Give some background information of the personality and perspective of each role so the player can get into character quickly and easily.

6. Write clear and targeted debriefing questions. Sivasailam Thiagarajan (better known as Thiagi), a learning game expert, recommends a six-phase process:

a. *How do you feel?* This broad question invites participants to identify their feelings about the activity process and outcomes.

b. *What happened?* Ask specific questions designed to highlight key processes and outcomes.

c. *What did you learn?* Present a principle or concept and ask participants to present data from the activity that either supports it or rejects it. Ask them to offer other principles or concepts based on their experience.

d. *How does this relate to the real world?* This is an important connection. Participants need and want to see how this "game" is relevant to their work.

e. *What if?* Present a change in the scenario and ask participants to speculate on how it would have affected the processes and outcomes. Invite participants to offer their own scenarios and discuss them.

f. *What next?* Ask participants to suggest strategies for future versions of the role play (or activity). Ask them how they would change their real-world behaviors as a result of insights gained during the activity.

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The references below are included in the *Participant's Guides* for each of the modules.

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Web Resources

eric.web.tc.columbia.edu/families/TWC

www.ncrel.org/cscd/pubs/lead21

www.collaborativeleaders.org

www.pew-partnership.org

www.kettering.org

Community Toolbox. http://ctb.ku.edu/. The Community Toolbox's goal is to support your work in promoting community health and development. It provides over 6,000 pages of practical skill-building information on over 250 different topics. Topic sections include step-by-step instruction, examples, checklists, and related resources.

Working Together for Healthier Communities: A Framework for Collaboration Among Community Partnerships, Support Organizations, and Funders. Community Toolbox. http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/en/section_1381.htm.

Center for the Advancement of Collaborative Leadership Strategies in Health. www.cacsh.org . The Center for the Advancement of Collaborative Strategies in Health at The New York Academy of Medicine helps partnerships, funders, and policy makers realize the full potential of collaboration to solve complex problems related to health or any other area.

Free Management Library. Management Assistance for Nonprofits. http://www.managementhelp.org. Complete, highly integrated library for nonprofits and for-profits.

Assessing the Environment

Background Reading

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The Mentoring Group provides consulting/technical assistance, skill-based training, skill assessment, research/evaluation, and publications related to mentoring. www.mentoringgroup.com.

National Mentoring Partnership is an advocate for the expansion of mentoring and a resource for mentors and mentoring initiatives nationwide. www.mentoring.org.

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