

## **Collaboration Exercise: Facilitator Guide**

**Purpose of Exercise:** To involve certificated staff in creating expectations for professional collaboration

**Product:** Staff collaboration norms

**Participants:** Classroom teachers and special program specialists

**Process Steps:**

05 minutes	<p><b>Purpose</b> Today's meeting will involve staff in creating expectations for professional collaboration.</p> <p><b>Supplies:</b> Individual copies of the Collaboration Exercise or presentation software featuring the same information</p>	<p>Facilitator: Read the purpose statement to the participants. Make any connections to previous faculty endeavors (e.g., developing a code for staff behavior) and current school goals (e.g., to become a more effective professional learning community).</p>
15 minutes	<p><b>Introductions</b> Whole-group sharing: Name, assignment, earliest collaborative memory</p>	<p>Whole-group sharing (sitting in a circle): Participants share their name, assignment, and earliest collaborative memory (e.g., building backyard childhood forts with a sibling). Be prepared to identify qualities of collaboration that are revealed by the stories. Building forts with a sibling, for example, requires a healthy amount of communication and teamwork.</p>
10 minutes	<p><b>Reflection Opportunity</b> Whole-group reflection: What connections do you make to the following quote by Roland Barth (2003)?: <i>If you want to have your say, you've got to be present for the conversation.</i></p>	<p>Whole-group reflection (sitting in a circle): Ask participants to make a connection to the Roland Barth quote: <i>If you want to have your say, you've got to be present for the conversation</i> (e.g., staff members should attend pertinent staff, committee, and parent organization meetings if they want their voices heard). Acknowledge each participant's contribution in a supportive, constructive manner (e.g., "Our new school staff behavior code should help us increase positive staff involvement").</p>

## **Collaboration Exercise: Facilitator Guide (continued)**

<p>20 minutes</p>	<p><b>Outcomes</b> Whole-group sharing: In regard to today's meeting and mission, what outcomes are you looking for? Supplies: A beanbag or small stuffed toy, such as the school mascot</p>	<p>Whole-group sharing (standing in a circle): Tell participants that you will be a better facilitator if you know the outcomes they have in mind regarding today's meeting. Toss a beanbag or stuffed animal to individual participants to signal the opportunity to share desired outcomes. Participants should be encouraged to share, but may also take a pass. Affirm responses through paraphrasing (i.e., restating the statement in your own words) or amplification (i.e., expanding upon the comment while adhering to the initial intent).</p>
<p>30 minutes</p>	<p><b>Collaboration in Action</b> Individual task: Read the following articles and highlight the collaboration practices. Put a ★ by the practices you believe would be valuable for this school. Be prepared to share any insights you gain from reading these articles. Joan Richardson, "The Ultimate Practitioner," <i>Phi Delta Kappan</i> Jennifer L. Steele &amp; Kathryn Parker Boudett, "The Collaborative Advantage," <i>Educational Leadership</i> Supplies: Pencils, highlighters, and pre-purchased copies of the articles. (Tip: Save the articles for future readings and discussions.)</p>	<p>Distribute the articles with pencils and highlighters. Tell participants to read each piece and highlight collaborative practices, put a ★ by the practices they believe would be valuable for this school, and jot down any insights gained from the material. Article Sources: Joan Richardson, "The Ultimate Practitioner," <i>Phi Delta Kappan</i>, 93(1), September 2011). Order copies from PDK Online Store, www.pdkintl.org. Jennifer L. Steele &amp; Kathryn Parker Boudett, "The Collaborative Advantage," <i>Educational Leadership</i>, 66(4), 2008 / 2009. Order copies from ASCD Store, <a href="http://shop.ascd.org">http://shop.ascd.org</a>. Allot 15–20 minutes for reading and note-taking. When completed, invite participants to share their insights.</p>

### **Collaboration Exercise: Facilitator Guide (continued)**

15 minutes	<p><b>Collaboration Attributes</b>            Whole-group brainstorm: What are the qualities of exemplary collaboration?            Supplies: Chart paper and felt pens or an interactive whiteboard</p>	<p>Whole-group brainstorm: With the help of participants, list the qualities that typify exemplary collaboration on chart paper or an interactive whiteboard.</p>
15 minutes	<p><b>Collaboration Defined</b>            Partner work: Craft a definition for collaboration for the team’s consideration.</p> <p>Whole-group task: After reviewing the definitions of collaboration prepared by partner groups, create a final definition.            Supplies: Chart paper for each group, felt pens, tape</p>	<p>Partner work: Pair off participants (e.g., hand a roll of chart paper to a member of the group and tell <i>that</i> person to choose a partner). Then instruct the partners to draft a definition of collaboration using the previously brainstormed attributes as a resource.</p> <p>Whole-group task: Hang the drafted definitions and read each aloud. Invite participants to identify the strengths of each. Then give one colored dot to each participant. Instruct group members to place their dot on a preferred definition. (Note: It is acceptable for participants to identify just a portion of a definition.) After this task is completed, help the group link desired definitions—or phrases—together to form just one definition.</p>
10 minutes	<p><b>Wrap-Up</b>            Whole-group reflection: What have we learned?            How do we put collaboration into practice in our school?</p>	<p>Whole-group reflection (standing in a circle):            Invite each participant to respond to the two reflection questions.</p>