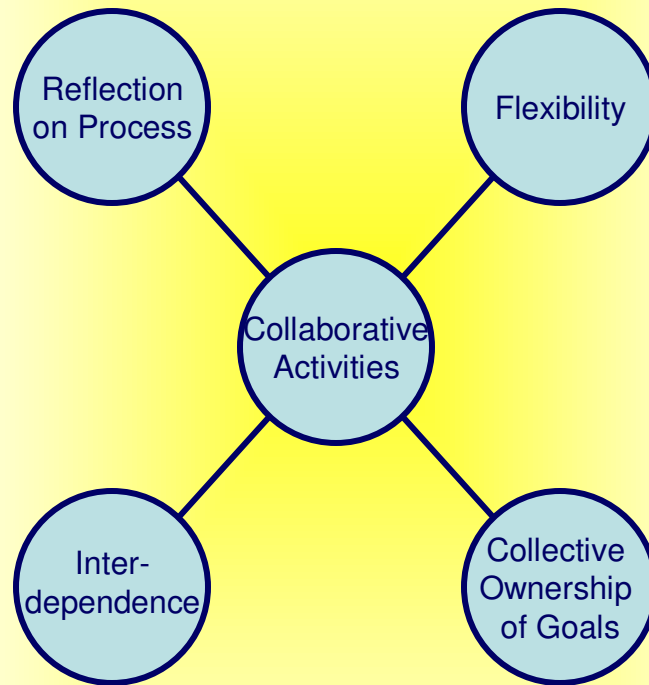


Creating a Culture of Collaboration

Meaning is what we want.
Understanding is what we need.
Choices are what we make.
Relationships are what we have.



Strengthening Interdisciplinary Collaboration

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FIVE COMPONENTS OF INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION

This model and index of interdisciplinary collaboration were developed by Laura R. Bronstein and later adapted by Debra Parker Oliver, Elaine M. Wittenberg-Lyles, and Michele Day.¹ The index measures five components of interdisciplinary collaboration.

Collective Ownership of Goals

Collective ownership of goals refers to shared responsibility in the entire process of reaching goals, including joint design, definition, development, and achievement of goals. This includes a commitment to client-centered care in which colleagues from different professional disciplines along with clients and their families are actively involved in the process of goal attainment. To engage in collective ownership of goals, each professional must take responsibility for his or her part in success and failure and behaviors that support constructive disagreement and deliberation among colleagues and clients.

Interdependence

Interdependence refers to the occurrence of and reliance on interactions among professionals where all are dependent on the others to accomplish their goals and tasks. To function interdependently, professionals must have a clear understanding of the distinction between their own and their collaborating professionals' roles and use them appropriately. Behaviors that characterize interdependence include formal and informal time spent together, oral and written communication among professional colleagues, and a valuing of and respect for colleagues' professional opinions and input as necessary to do one's job.

Flexibility

Flexibility is related to, but goes beyond interdependence to refer to the deliberate occurrence of role blurring. Behaviors that characterize flexibility include the ability to reach productive compromises in the face of disagreement and the alteration of role--for example, from worker as consultant or resource to worker as leader.

Collaborative Activities

Collaborative activities refer to collaborative acts, programs, and structures that amount to more than what is created when the same professionals act independently. These activities maximize the expertise of each collaborator. They afford agencies and professionals the opportunity to deliver services in new ways that are fundamentally and structurally different from what can occur in the absence of collaboration.

Reflection on Process

Reflection on process refers to collaborators' attention to their process of working together. This includes behaviors whereby collaborators think and talk about their working relationships and process and where collaborators incorporate feedback about their process to strengthen collaborative relationships and effectiveness.

¹ Bronstein, L. R. (2002). Index of interdisciplinary collaboration. *Social Work Research*, 26 (2), 113-126.

Bronstein, L. R. (2003). A model for interdisciplinary collaboration. *Social Work*, 48 (3), 297-306.

Oliver, D. Wittenberg-Lyles, E., and Day, M. (2007). Measuring interdisciplinary perceptions of collaboration on hospice teams. *American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine*, 24 (1), 49-53.

Wittenberg-Lyles, E., Oliver, D., Demiris, G., and Regehr, K. (2010). Interdisciplinary collaboration in hospice team meetings. *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 24 (1), 264-273.

INDEX OF INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION¹

Collective Ownership of Goals

Professionals from other disciplines with whom I work encourage family members' participation in the treatment process.

(R) My colleagues from other disciplines are not committed to working together.

My colleagues from other disciplines work through conflicts with me in efforts to resolve them.

When colleagues from different disciplines make decisions together they go through a process of examining alternatives.

My interactions with colleagues from other disciplines occurs in a climate where there is freedom to be different and to disagree.

Clients/patients/students participate in interdisciplinary planning that concerns them.

Colleagues from all professional disciplines take responsibility for developing treatment plans.

(R) Colleagues from all professional disciplines do not participate in implementing treatment plans.

Interdependence

I utilize other professionals in different disciplines for their particular expertise.

I consistently give feedback to other professionals in my setting.

Professionals in different disciplines in my setting utilize me for a range of tasks.

(R) Teamwork with professionals from other disciplines is not important in my ability to help clients.

(R) The colleagues from other professional disciplines and I rarely communicate.

The colleagues from other disciplines with whom I work have a good understanding of the distinction between my role and their role(s).

(R) My colleagues from other disciplines make inappropriate referrals to me.

I can define those areas that are distinct in my professional role from that of professionals from other disciplines with whom I work.

I view part of my professional role as supporting the role of others with whom I work.

My colleagues from other disciplines refer to me often.

(R) Cooperative work with colleagues from other disciplines is not a part of my job description.

(R) My colleagues from other professional disciplines do not treat me as an equal.

My colleagues from other disciplines believe that they could not do their jobs as well without my professional discipline.

¹ Bronstein, L. R. (2002). Index of interdisciplinary collaboration. *Social Work Research*, 26 (2), 113-126.

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Flexibility

I am willing to take on tasks outside of my job description when that seems important.

(R) I am not willing to sacrifice a degree of autonomy to support cooperative problem solving.

I utilize formal and informal procedures for problem-solving with my colleagues from other disciplines.

(R) The professional colleagues from other disciplines with whom I work stick rigidly to their job descriptions.

Colleagues from other disciplines and I work together in many different ways.

Collaborative Activities

Distinct new programs emerge from the collective work of colleagues from different disciplines.

Organizational protocols reflect the existence of cooperation between professionals from different disciplines.

Formal procedures/mechanisms exist for facilitating dialogue between professionals from different disciplines (ie, at staffings, inservice, rounds, etc)

(R) I am not aware of situations in my agency in which a coalition, task force, or committee has developed out of interdisciplinary efforts.

Working with colleagues from other disciplines leads to outcomes that we could not achieve alone.

Creative outcomes emerge from my work with colleagues from other professions that I could not have predicted.

Reflection on Process

Professionals from different disciplines are straightforward when sharing information with clients/patients/students.

My colleagues from other disciplines and I often discuss different strategies to improve our working relationships.

My colleagues from other professions and I talk about ways to involve other professionals in our work together.

(R) Colleagues from other disciplines do not attempt to create a positive climate in our organization.

I am optimistic about the ability of my colleagues from other disciplines to work with me to resolve problems.

I help my colleagues to address conflict with other professionals directly.

Colleagues from other disciplines are as likely as I am to address obstacles to our successful collaboration.

My colleagues from other disciplines and I talk together about our professional similarities and differences including role, competencies, and stereotypes.

(R) My colleagues from other professions and I do not evaluate our work together.

I discuss with professionals from other disciplines the degree to which each of us should be involved in a particular case.

THE ITALIAN JOB



The Italian Job, a 2003 film directed by F. Gary Gray, provides examples of each of the components of interdisciplinary collaboration. Each of the main characters in this heist movie brings a different discipline: planner (Donald Sutherland and Mark Wahlberg), safe cracker (Charlize Theron), getaway driver (Jason Statham), computer genius (Seth Green), explosives expert (Mos Def), and auto mechanic (Franky G.)

Each component of interdisciplinary collaboration is listed and briefly described below followed by pertinent scenes from *The Italian Job*.

Collective Ownership of Goals:

... a commitment ... in which colleagues from different professional disciplines ... are actively involved in the process of goal attainment.

- “It’s not about the gold” 0:26:36 – 0:29:34 “She’s in.”

Interdependence:

... professionals must have a clear understanding of the distinction between their own and their collaborating professionals' roles and use them appropriately.

- Meet the team:

- Stella 0:24:14 - 0:25:10 “Makes it feel like I’m alone.”
~ Safecracker
- Team 0:30:26 – 0:33:34
 - ~ Lyle – Computer expert
 - ~ Left Ear – Demolition expert
 - ~ Handsome Rob – Getaway driver
 - ~ Charlie – Planner/ organizer

Flexibility:

... the deliberate occurrence of role blurring ... the alteration of role ...

- Wrench 0:57:35 – 0:58:10
~ Mechanic

- Practice Drive 1:0:43 – 1:01:30

Collaborative Activities:

... collaborative acts, programs, and structures that amount to more than what is created when the same professionals act independently. These activities maximize the expertise of each collaborator.

Heist 1 – 1:25:43 – 1:29:35 (Napster, Drivers, Left Ear, Wrench)

Heist 2 – 1:29:57-1:33:25 (Stella finds it’s a different safe, has to use older methods)

Chase Scene 2 - 1:37:40 – 1:38:22 (Heist scene is better display of collaborative activity)

Reflection on Process

... collaborators' attention to their process of working together.

- Celebration 1 0:17:23 - 0:18:00 (Not a great example of “reflection on process,” but a nice way to close the viewing of scenes – and pertinent nonetheless)