Assessing My Partnership

Collaborations are complex partnerships that are formed to help multiple organizations address complex issues. The definition we use is:

> *Collaboration is a mutually beneficial and well- defined relationship of two or more organizations to achieve results they are more likely to achieve together than alone.*

Collaborations grow through stages of development that allow them to mature into active, productive partnerships. Stage 1 is about mission and results, Stage 2 is about conflict resolution and decision making, Stage 3 is when pilot projects and other work is accomplished, and Stage 4 is the opportunity to end a collaboration.

This assessment instrument can help you and your partners identify what stage of development your collaboration is in, what work or activities may help it to mature, and problems you may wish to address if your collaboration is stalled.

For each item, mark it with a "T" if you believe this is *generally* true of your partnership. Mark the statement with an "F" if you believe the statement is *generally* false. Of course, very few of the statements will be completely true or completely false for your collaboration, so think of the statement in broad terms.

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Stage One

☐ True ☐ False	1.	The person or people who started our collaboration had an initial vision that was clear to each of us.
☐ True ☐ False	2.	We believe we were asked to be in this collaboration because we bring diverse cultures, backgrounds, resources and skills.
☐ True ☐ False	3.	We've asked people outside of our usual work groups and power structure to be in this collaboration because they have something important to contribute
☐ True ☐ False	4.	We have done a good job of beginning to tell others honestly what we want from this collaboration personally and for our organization.
☐ True ☐ False	5.	We have someone to convene meetings who's skilled in group process and helps us maintain a balance of power among the members.
☐ True ☐ False	6.	Our meetings are effective because everyone usually participates in important discussions, making decisions, taking action and keeping track of our accomplishments.
☐ True ☐ False	7.	Our joint vision statement is unique from the mission statement of each of the individual organizations we represent.
☐ True ☐ False	8.	Our joint vision has the support of every organization we represent.
☐ True ☐ False	9.	We have a quick and easy way to convey the essence of our vision to others.
☐ True ☐ False	10.	We have listed specific results we want from our work together that are beginning to be measurable.
☐ True ☐ False	11.	Before taking any action, we laid out a game plan for eliciting support from key stakeholders, including people we don't normally consider.
☐ True ☐ False	12.	We've begun to evaluate ourselves by reviewing everything we've accomplished and the way we worked together to accomplish it.

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Stage Two

☐ True ☐ False	13.	We've done a good job of documenting our progress to date.
☐ True ☐ False	14.	Our respective home organizations have made it clear to each of us how much money, time and other contributions we are free to bring to this collaboration.
☐ True ☐ False	15.	Each of us has a defined role in our collaboration, and I know what each partner contributes to our effort.
☐ True ☐ False	16.	We expect conflict from time to time and we discussed that we value our differences.
☐ True ☐ False	17.	We've developed rules for handling conflict, including a commitment to work on long and difficult issues.
☐ True ☐ False	18.	We acknowledge that some conflict can never be resolved and are finding ways to work together anyway.
☐ True ☐ False	19.	We've organized ourselves and clarified our roles so that we get work done in an efficient and effective way.
☐ True ☐ False	20.	We have made an active decision on how to staff the collaboration so that we can keep records, distribute minutes and do other important support functions.
☐ True ☐ False	21.	We are seeking resources to continue our work.
☐ True ☐ False	22.	We have a clear, mutually agreed upon process for making decisions.
☐ True ☐ False	23.	I know how to get information about what's going on in the collaboration.
☐ True ☐ False	24.	We have rewarded ourselves and people outside of the collaboration for contributions to our work.

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Stage Three

☐ True	☐ False	25.	We have initial successes that demonstrate to us and others the potential for this collaboration.
☐ True	☐ False	26.	We have a clear action plan that lays out responsibilities, budget and timeline.
☐ True	☐ False	27.	Each of us knows what the other is responsible for and how to demonstrate that we've fulfilled that responsibility.
☐ True	☐ False	28.	All of the member organizations have signed a joint agreement that details how the collaboration will be structured and administered.
☐ True	☐ False	29.	My organization has begun to make changes in its policies and procedures that promote working together now and in the future.
☐ True	☐ False	30.	We have begun to explore how we can influence community leaders and groups to develop collaborative approaches that solve other problems in the
☐ True	☐ False	31.	We have an evaluation plan that measures results as well as our process.
☐ True	☐ False	32.	We understand that evaluation is a learning tool to help us make ongoing improvements in what we do and how we do things.
☐ True	☐ False	33.	We have made changes in what we do and how we do things based on our evaluations.
☐ True	☐ False	34.	We have a clear plan for inviting new members, orienting them appropriately and including their self-interests and resources in our work plan.
☐ True	☐ False	35.	We have reorganized ourselves as necessary to include new members and to retire members whose job is finished.
☐ True	☐ False	36.	We have found graceful ways to deal with members who are no longer contributing, but who are having trouble separating from the collaboration.

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Stage Four

☐ True ☐ False	37.	We have agreed upon the image we wish to convey to others about our collaboration.
☐ True ☐ False	38.	We have a plan for promoting the good work we've done and our accomplishments.
☐ True ☐ False	39.	We are shameless self-promoters about the success of our work together.
☐ True ☐ False	40.	We have identified which policies and programs within our own collaboration need to be changed for us to be effective in the long run.
☐ True ☐ False	41.	In order to build longer term support for our collaboration efforts we are reaching out to broader communities.
☐ True ☐ False	42.	We have a plan for influencing key stakeholders and the broader community to develop leaders who can carry on this collaboration work over time.
☐ True ☐ False	43.	We now have a working knowledge of who needs services, what services they need and how those services are presently delivered.
☐ True ☐ False	44.	We know that to be effective in the long run, we have to change the way we provide health care, human services, education and government.
☐ True ☐ False	45.	We are beginning to make plans that use our collaboration experience to make changes in the way we provide health care, human services, education and government.
☐ True ☐ False	46.	We recognize that there is a point where the collaboration as we know it must end because our project or initiative is finished.
☐ True ☐ False	47.	We have a plan for continuing to change the way we deliver services through collaboration by continuing our efforts in some other way.
☐ True ☐ False	48.	We have created ways to mark the ending of the collaboration, for instance, by celebrating our successes.