Working Together: An Introduction to Collaborative Decision-Making
Welcome
Today’s Agenda

1. Introduction to Collaboration
2. The Collaborative Process
3. Conducting a Situation Assessment
4. Being Collaborative
5. Key Collaborative Skills for Managers
Why Collaboration?

• Reinforce EPA’s Long-term history of cooperative environmental regulation
• Stakeholder involvement is central to our work
• Not a fad or short-term political initiative
Collaboration is Good Governance!

Four critical (nonvoting) capacities for democracy:

- Resolve conflicts peacefully
- Cooperate across party lines
- Inclusive agendas for action
- Capacity for citizen participation.

Source: International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
Course Goals

• Increase our knowledge of collaboration
• Know when to apply collaboration
• Explore our roles as managers in collaboration
Win As Much As You Can
Follow Trainers Instruction.
col·lab·o·ra·tion
The act of working together with one or more people, to achieve something.
What is Collaboration?

Attitude

and

Approach
Attitude

- Desire to be cooperative
- Work to understand others
- Flexible and creative
- Problem-solvers
- Partners
- Facilitators
- Leaders
Deliberate process for shared action throughout the full decision life-cycle:

- design
- convening
- implementation
You create the **culture**:
- consider collaboration
- create skills and tools for staff
- provide time and resources
- provide incentives and give recognition
- Model attitude for others
Powerful Decisions

• Don’t just solve the technical problem
• Create ownership among stakeholders
• Implementable
• Sustainable
BUY-IN
Tell me, I forget
Show me, I remember
Involve me, I understand

*Chinese Proverb*
Mind if I get in on the decision-making process?
The Manager’s Role

• Resolve issues for good
• Use our resources to implement good decisions rather than revisit bad ones.
Characteristics

• Relationships
• Cooperation
• Shared Learning
• Transformational Thinking
• Sustainability
Relationships

• Respect
• Time to learn about each other
• Trust
• Shared interests
Cooperation

- All key parties engaged
- Everyone understands problem, process, and rationale
- Work together with focus on solving the problem
Shared Learning

- Everyone understands each other
- Everyone understands the problem
- All information is transparent
- Shared development and analysis of options
Transformational Thinking

- Not compromise
- Creative thinking
- Unanticipated solutions
- Integration of interests
• Full range of stakeholder interests
• Ownership by key stakeholders
• Design for the real world
• Flexibility in implementation
• Clear roles and responsibilities
Sustainability
When Do We Collaborate?

- Informal collaboration all the time
- Formal Collaboration is a big commitment
Formal Collaboration

- Big, long-term decisions
- Requiring implementation by other parties
- Requiring diverse input and agreement
- EPA lacks the resources to go alone
EPAs Five Levels

• Based on your overall goal, you will seek more or less stakeholder interaction

• The more agreement we require, the higher level of interaction and the more collaboration
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EPA Model

Less Collaborative  More Collaborative

OUTREACH
Purpose: To provide information
Types:
- Website
- Fact Sheet
- Phone Hot Line
- Federal Register Notice
- Press Release

INFORMATION EXCHANGE
Purpose: To provide and exchange data, opinions and options
Types:
- Meetings with individuals
- Public Meetings
- Workshops
- Listening sessions
- Availability sessions

RECOMMENDATIONS
Purpose: To provide non-binding but influential advice or comments
Types:
- Advisory committees
- Scoping sessions
- Policy dialogues
- Task force
- Joint fact finding

AGREEMENTS
Purpose: Reach workable agreement or settlement
Types:
- Negotiated rulemaking
- Consensus permit
- Settlement agreement
- Consent Order
- Statement of principles

STAKEHOLDER ACTION
Purpose: Empower stakeholders to take action
Types:
- Industry sector initiatives
- Voluntary pollution reduction programs
- Watershed collaboratives
- Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE)
- Sustainability forums
The Manager’s Role

• Communicate collaboration to staff
• Believe in the potential for collaboration
• Help others understand the value of collaboration
Class Discussion

• How do you use collaboration now?
• Where are we choosing not to use it? Why?
2.0 Collaborative Process

Stage 1. Situation Assessment

Stage 2. Group Formation & Process Design

Stage 3. Shared Learning & Consensus Building

Stage 4. Implementation
Collaborative Stages

Stage 1. Situation Assessment
1. Our view
2. Who are the stakeholders
3. Their views
4. Relationships
5. BASIC assessment
6. Decision about collaboration
7. Commitment
8. Evaluation
Stage 2. Formation and Design
1. Convening and commitments
2. Build/repair relationships
3. Jointly define the problem
4. Mission, objectives, ground rules
5. Define process and facilitation
6. Communications
7. Evaluation
Collaborative Stages

Stage 3. Shared Learning/Consensus
1. Shared learning
2. ID values and interests
3. ID criteria for success
4. Joint development of alternatives
5. Group analysis
6. Build the best answer together
7. Evaluate
Collaborative Stages

Stage 4. Implementation
1. Written agreements
2. Explicit implementation plans
3. Plan for the real world
4. Clarify roles and responsibilities
5. Outreach and education
6. Evaluate
Collaboration is Different

• Different Process leads to different outcomes
Leader

- Convenes
- Responsible for success
- Convenes group
- Pays for process resources
- Ultimate decision-maker
Participant

- Key stakeholder
- Collaborative attitude
- Contribute resources
Facilitator

- Whole process manager
- Content neutral if in formal role
Facilitator Roles

- Create positive environment
- Logistics
- Get everyone heard
- Design process
- Guide and enforce process
- Assist in consensus
The Manager’s Role

- Know the role(s) EPA is playing
- Prepare staff appropriately
When has EPA played these different roles:

How did we make positive contributions?

What more could we have done?
3.0 Situation Assessment

Three Phases

- Internal
- External
- Selecting the right approach
BASIC Assessment

- Barriers
- Assumptions
- Strengths
- Incentives
- Commitments
Manager’s Role

Be realistic and provide leadership:

• What needs attention
• Build enthusiasm
• Incentivize and reward
• Build internal capacity
• Explain decisions
• Be ready to stop what does not work
Exercise

- Conduct a BASIC assessment on a project you are or may be facing
- Just identify one or two issues per box
External Assessment

- Directly with Stakeholders
- Often by a neutral
- Confidential
- Report not for attribution
What are the Issues?

- Needs, interests, values
- Past history
- Level of knowledge
- Time, schedule constraints
- Desired outcomes
- Risks of non-resolution
Who is Involved?

- Recognized participants
- Who is missing?
- Who’s support is needed?
- Who’s opposition would hurt?
What’s Next?

• Possible approaches
• Additional information needs
• Get others interested
• Needed resources/facilitation
• Realistic end products
• Commitments needed
Selecting the Right Approach

- Goals, commitment, roles
- Time and resource availability
- Credibility and trust
- Importance of issue
- Relationships and willingness of stakeholders
- Controversy and Complexity of issues
- Range of stakeholders
Know and Decide:

- Nature of decision
- Relationships with stakeholders
- Willingness and flexibility of EPA

Use your resources wisely
Table Exercise

Pick a project:

- What level of collaboration makes sense?
- What prevents us from being more collaborative?
- How do we overcome these barriers?
EPA needs to lead
Foundations

- Credible Lead Agency
- Clear Purpose
- Functional Relationships
- Trusted Information
- Dialogue
- Clear and Managed Process
The Manager’s Role

• Model collaborative behaviors
• Provide guidance and support
Credible Organizations

- Truthful
- Transparent
- Responsible
- Caring
- Consistent
“I don’t care how much you know until I know how much you care.”

--Every Stakeholder
Public Goodwill Accounts

- Deposits
- Withdrawals
- Balance
The Manager’s Role

- Know Your Balance!
- Make Deposits!
Table Discussions

• What is EPA’s goodwill balance with some of our key stakeholders?

• What can we do to make more deposits?
Collaborative Behaviors

- Willingness
- Openness
- Civility
- Humility
- Partnering
The Manager’s Role

• Again, model these behaviors
• Create a collaborative culture
Table Exercise

- Match the attributes of collaborative vs. competitive groups
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Debate/Argument</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective is to <strong>Win</strong></td>
<td>Objective is to <strong>be understood</strong></td>
<td>Objective is to <strong>find common understanding</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s all about me</td>
<td>Me first</td>
<td>You first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are my opponent</td>
<td>You need to be convinced</td>
<td>You are my colleague</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudeness OK</td>
<td>Politeness expected</td>
<td>Truly interested</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Balance advocacy and inquiry
• Build Shared meaning
• Listen deeply
• Pay attention to your intentions
• Identify common ground
• Explore impasses
The Manager’s Role

- Practice dialogue internally
- Encourage staff to engage in dialogue
Listening?

“Conversation in the United States is a competitive exercise in which the first person to draw breath is declared the listener.”

- Nathan Miller
• Take this test for how you behave at work
Types of Listening

- Ignoring
- Arguing
- Passive
- Active
Manager’s Role

• The better you listen, the better your staff will listen
• Then everyone will be heard
Step 1. Get Ready to Listen

• Stop talking
• Get rid of distractions
• Put your own thoughts aside
• Share responsibility for communication
Step 2. Focus on the Speaker

- Empathize
- Express interest
- Encourage equally
- Be patient
- Listen to how something is said
- Pay attention to non-verbal clues
- Ask clarifying questions
- Reflect back what you’ve heard
Step 3. Monitor Yourself

- Know yourself
- Do not argue mentally
- Recognize your own prejudices and avoid judgments
- Do not antagonize the speaker
- Avoid assumptions
- Focus on the ideas
Summary

• This is not new
• It is a part of good governance
• Both attitude and approach
• Keep it simple
• Focus on behavior
• Pay attention to process
• Not always appropriate
• Sometimes we need help