

2016 Fall Forum

The Magic of Collaboration



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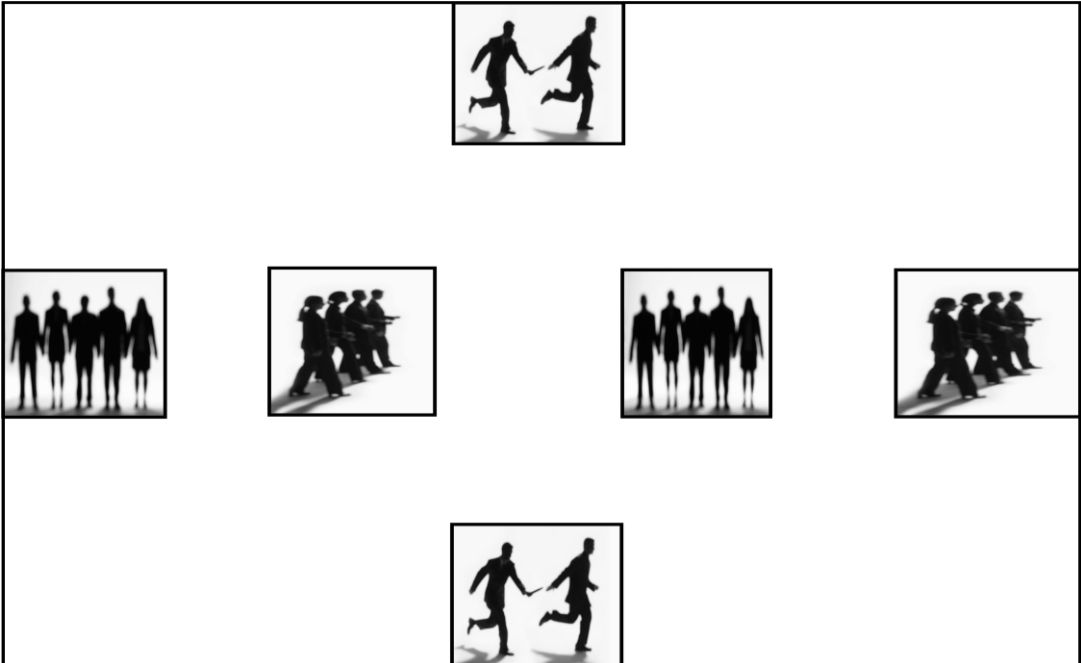
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The Magic of Collaboration

Collaboration is defined as "the act of working together to produce or create something." In this complex environment, people are being asked to share knowledge freely, to learn from one another, to flexibly shift workloads, to help one another complete jobs, and meet deadlines, and to share resources-in other words, to collaborate. This activity is about behavior, work habits, culture, management, and business goals and value.



Consider, "How likely are your employees to say they "sink or swim" together, want each another to succeed, or view their individual goals as compatible with their organizational goals?"

Bringing people together is no longer an option. It is the only way to assemble the knowledge and experience required to accomplish complex tasks faced by organizations in today's society.

Six Ways to Build Collaboration



- 1. Model collaborative behavior** – Your actions send a clear message – do yours "say" collaboration is important? When the senior team works well together, and internal communication is frequent and open the collaborative nature trickles down throughout the organization.
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2. Create a culture of generosity – Regular mentoring and coaching

helps establish a culture of generosity and cooperation in place of a more transactional "I'll do this for you if you do that for me" culture. When individuals give freely of their time to support the success of another employee, everyone wins.



3. Ensure the right skill set – Employees are encouraged to cooperate, and they want to cooperate, but do they know how? Crucial skills include holding difficult conversations, appreciating others, questioning to clarify ideas, attentive listening, disagreeing in a constructive way and productively resolving conflicts. Explicitly develop these skills – don't let it be left to chance.

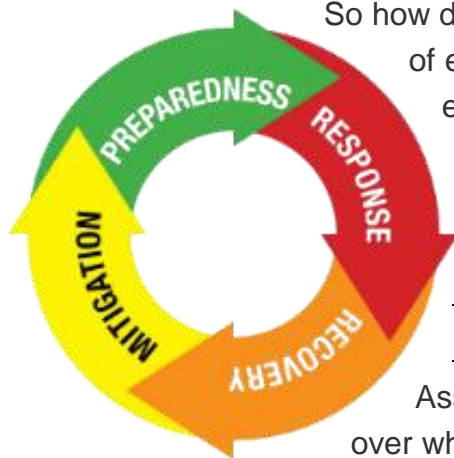
4. The right team leaders – Teams need strong leadership, and strong leaders are often task - or relationship-oriented. When a complex problem is at hand assigning leaders who are both task- and relationship-oriented will support the high level of collaborative behavior required for success. Which of your leaders possess strong project management skills and the ability to foster the environment of trust and cooperation which supports knowledge sharing?

5. Role clarity – Collaboration improves when the roles of individual team members are clearly defined and well understood. Without such clarity, team members are likely to waste too much energy negotiating roles or protecting turf, rather than focusing on the task.

6. Rewards – How does your company reward its employees? In a culture of collaboration rewards are based on team performance – it can't be a zero-sum game or heavily weighted to individual results.

- S** *Specific with Strategy* Does your organization's culture truly support
 - M** *Measurable* collaboration? Strengthening your organization's capacity for
 - A** *Attainable and Achievable* collaboration requires a combination of long-term
 - R** *Results-oriented* investments in building relationships and trust and
 - T** *Time-bound* developing a culture, in which senior leaders are role
- models, and S.M.A.R.T. short-term decisions about the ways teams are formed, roles are defined, and challenges and tasks are articulated.

Collaborative Emergency Management

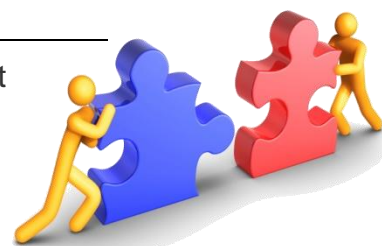


So how does collaboration work in the preparation and practice of emergency management to create a collaborative environment? Collaborative emergency management is achieved when two agencies, work together on a comprehensive emergency management plan designed to benefit a community.

Assets are accounted for, allowing one agency to look over what another agency might have available, so emergency plans that possibly utilize those assets can be made available for use. Or, in the case of buildings, the operational status of such structures can be analyzed before an event, paying particular attention to age and what equipment might be located onsite.

By developing a comprehensive list of available assets and personnel, emergency management staff can have a better idea of what is available and then construct a plan suitable for all agencies involved, whether it is at a local, state, or national level.

This assessment also allows utilities to assess their current capabilities and determine if they will meet emergency management plans. If not, then they can apply for improvements that will bring their capabilities up to the



level. These capacities are needed to implement a successful recovery post-disaster effectively.

The main thrust of the assessment is to compile a full list of assets, determine where they lie on the level of priority based on their impact on a recovery, determine how the assets will be inspected, and designate personnel to inspect those assets on a timely basis.

By utilizing experts within each different sector or utility involved in a disaster recovery plan, efforts can be coordinated more effectively. This engagement usually requires the establishment of an emergency response panel, with experts from each sector participating and giving their knowledge in their particular area of expertise. By working together, utilities and private companies across the local, state, and national levels can more effectively plan a disaster recovery.

Six Considerations to Sustain Collaboration

Collaboration is the interactive dynamic of engaged people, who, when electing to work together, adopt shared behaviors and goals through conversation and activities, with an objective of driving new, emergent, innovative insights and measurable outcomes.



1. **Engagement:** Starts with listening, being in the moment. Active listening and engagement are necessary to establish rapport and trust.

2. **Keeping it Authentic:** Organizations must always expect authenticity across collaboration efforts. We have to be who we say we are - and not “role play” to expectations or false projections.

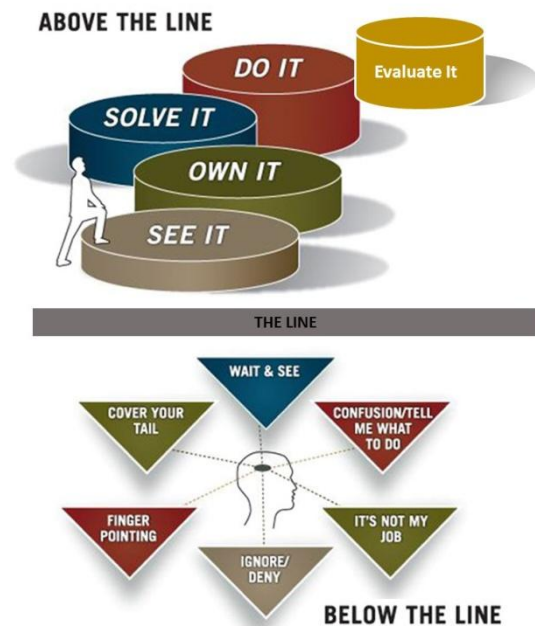
3. **Learning & Discovery Bias:** Develop a curiosity for learning and model that behavior in groups. Ask why frequently, with a desire to understand, not to

critique. Learn to seek resolution of ambiguity. This exploration also uses conflicting positions to embrace new perspectives and to expand horizons.

4. **Respect for Community Members:** Seek out others with similar interests and greater knowledge. Interestingly, collaborative partners are engaged at various levels. As a result, physical presence at every activity is not required. Respect the value of member contributions and their time. It is important for partners to feel as if a seat at the table is earned and they bring value.
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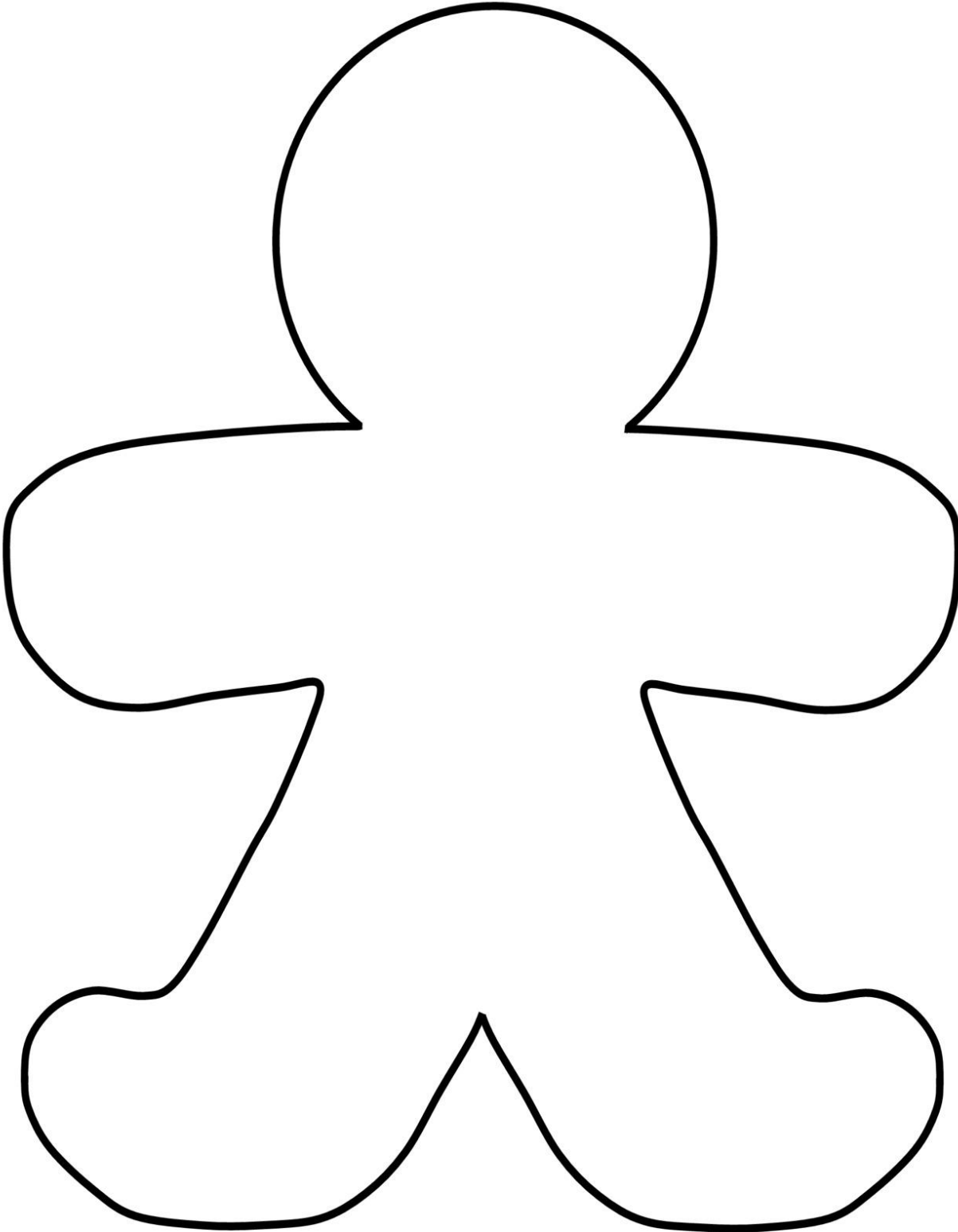
5. **Driving Positive Energy:** We all want an upbeat and exciting work dynamic. It is fun - to have fun. While culture is often hard to define, it is a key factor in the way people behave at and during work. Leaders are called upon to model desired behaviors, so they play a fundamental role in creating an environment conducive to collaboration. Incentives can help, but with collaborative teams, sometimes the only incentive is the value of insights or friendships gained by being there.
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6. **Focus on Results:** Champion measurable outcomes. Challenge people to think "Above the Line." Asking results based questions. So what can we do about that? Where can we take the group's insights? How can we apply them? What will we benefit from this?
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It has been a struggle with collaboration for years, usually in the context of organization and employee projects in public sector silos, seemingly designed to shut down cross-functional collaboration. The challenge is

Internal and External Characteristics of a collaborative environment



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