

# **Working Together: An Introduction to Collaborative Decision-Making**



WORKBOOK PAGE:

# Introductions

## 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



# Why Collaboration?

## **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



# Opening Exercise

**Win As Much As You Can**  
**Follow Trainers Instruction.**



# What is Collaboration?

## **col-lab-o-ra-tion**

The act of working together with one or more people, to achieve something.





# What is Collaboration?

## **Attitude**

and

## **Approach**



- 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



# The Manager's Role

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

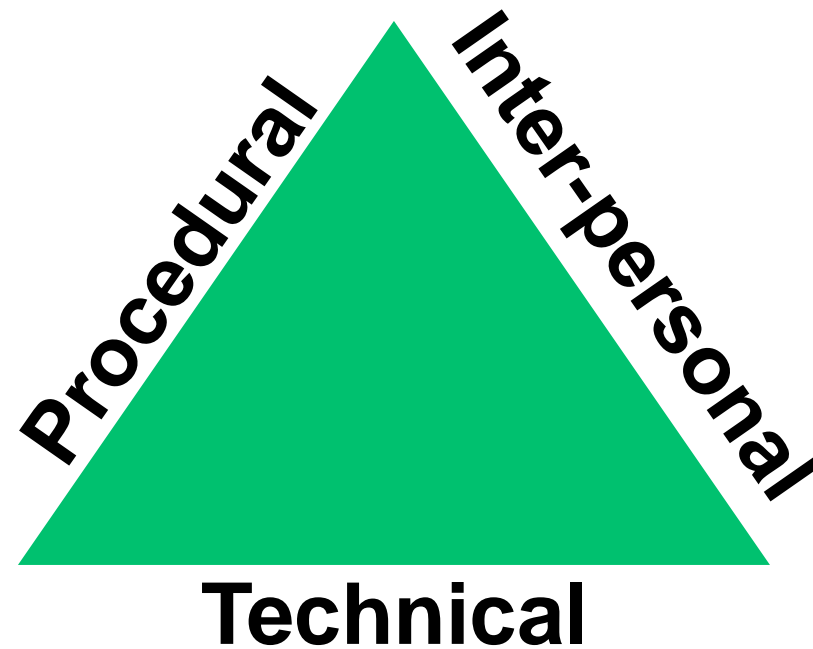
- Don't just solve the technical problem
- Create ownership among stakeholders
- Implementable
- Sustainable



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# Powerful Decisions



# Powerful Decisions

Tell me, I forget  
Show me, I remember  
Involve me, I understand

*Chinese Proverb*





**THAT'S LIFE** MIKE TWOHY



# 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



# Sustainability

- 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



# EPA's 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



# 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

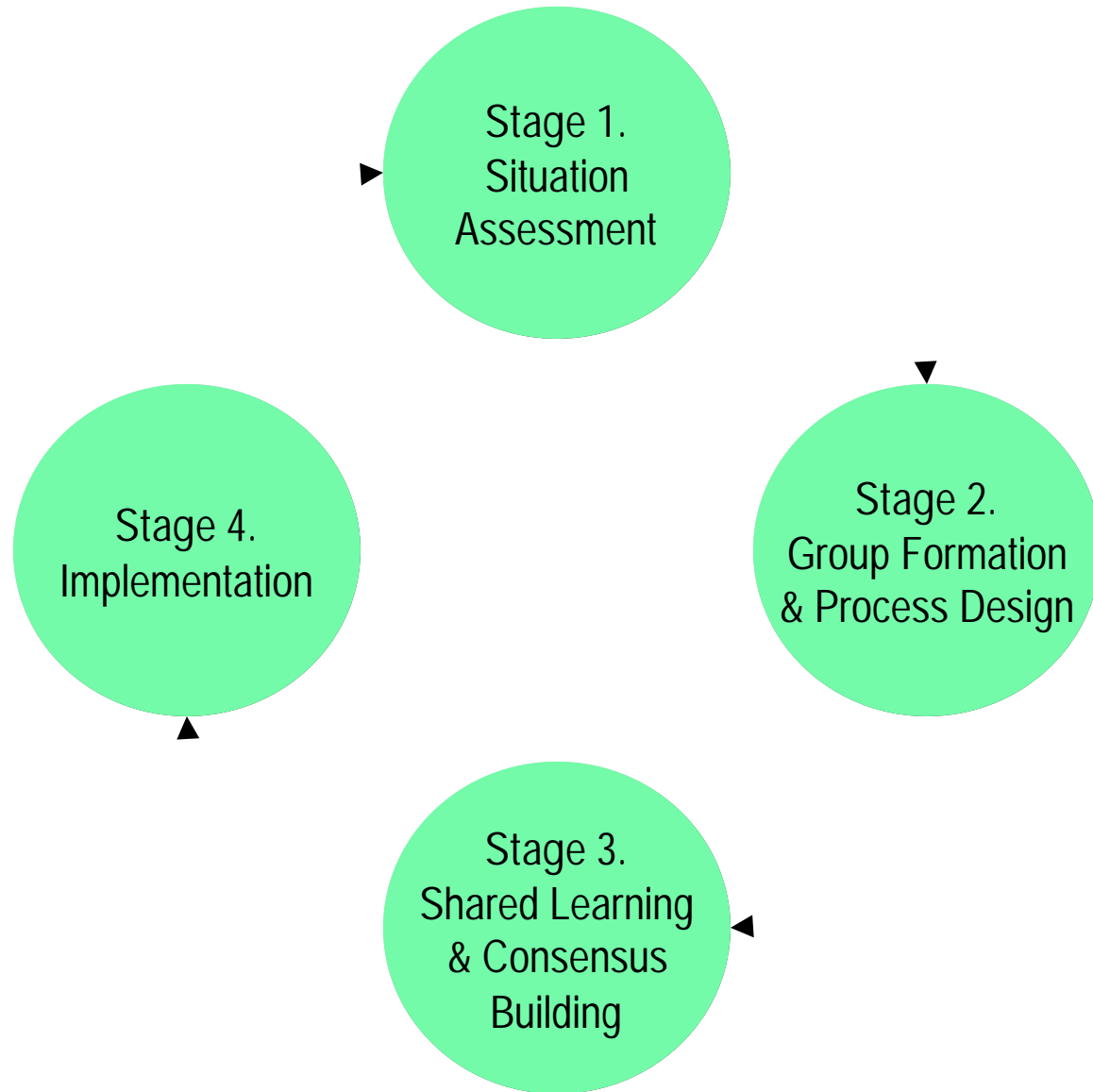


# Class Discussion

- How do you use collaboration now?
- Where are we choosing not to use it? Why?



## 2.0 Collaborative Process





# 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



# Collaborative Stages

## **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



# Class Discussion

- 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



# Internal Assessment

## **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



- 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





# External Assessment

## What are the Issues?

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



# External Assessment

## Who is Involved?

- Recognized participants
- Who is missing?
- Who's support is needed?
- Who's opposition would hurt?



# External Assessment

## 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



# The Manager's Role

## **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?



## 4.0 Being Collaborative

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



# Credible Organizations

*“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



## Dialogue



Debate/Argument	Discussion	Dialogue
Objective is to <b>Win</b>	Objective is to <b>be understood</b>	Objective is to <b>find common understanding</b>
It's all about me	Me first	You first
You are my opponent	You need to be convinced	You are my colleague
Rudeness OK	Politeness expected	Truly interested

# Debate to Dialogue

- 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



# Listening Skills Test

- 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





## 3 Steps to Active Listening

### **Step 1. Get Ready to Listen**

- Stop talking
- Get rid of distractions
- Put your own thoughts aside
- Share responsibility for communication



## 3 Steps to Active Listening

### **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



## 3 Steps to Active Listening

### **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



- 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

