

## Stating a Mission and Developing Evaluation Criteria

1. State the mission of your partnership.

2. List up to three outcomes.	3. For each outcome, suggest a way that you will measure that outcome.
A.	
B.	
C.	

## Building on Strengths / Strengthening Weaknesses

Consider a collaborative partnership in which your organisation currently participates (or if not currently involved in collaboration, consider one from past experience).

1. Select 2 factors on which you think your partnership is strong. Write them in the first column.
2. In the second column indicate: What evidence has demonstrated to you that they are strong?
3. In the third column, indicate specific steps you can take to make these factors even stronger and build momentum for your project.

<b>Factors Which are Strong</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Steps the Project Can Take to Make Even More Progress Because of This Strength</b>

4. Select 2 factors on which you think your partnership is weak. Write them in the first column.
5. In the second column indicate: What evidence has demonstrated to you that they are weak?
6. In the third column, indicate specific steps you can take to improve on these factors.

<b>Factors Which are Weak</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Steps the Partnership Can Take to Improve on This Factor</b>

## Looking at Some Common Challenges

Factor	Rating Your Partnership	If not "as good as should be," what will you do?
<p><b>Mutual Respect</b> Members understand and respect one another</p>	<p>As good as it should be</p> <p>Might need improvement</p> <p>Definitely needs improvement</p>	
<p><i>Blending Cultures</i> Partners have (or can) eliminate conflicts in policies, standards, norms across their organizations</p>	<p>As good as it should be</p> <p>Might need improvement</p> <p>Definitely needs improvement</p>	
<p><i>Turf</i> Roles, responsibilities, power relationships are defined and accepted by partners.</p>	<p>As good as it should be</p> <p>Might need improvement</p> <p>Definitely needs improvement</p>	
<p><b>Multiple Layers of Participation</b> Levels within partner organizations are represented, involved.</p>	<p>As good as it should be</p> <p>Might need improvement</p> <p>Definitely needs improvement</p>	
<p><b>Multiple Layers of Participation</b> All levels within partner organizations maintain some involvement.</p>	<p>As good as it should be</p> <p>Might need improvement</p> <p>Definitely needs improvement</p>	
<p><b>Communication</b> Partners do (or will) interact often, update one another, and discuss issues openly – formally <u>and</u> informally.</p>	<p>As good as it should be</p> <p>Might need improvement</p> <p>Definitely needs improvement</p>	

# Tulip County Collaborative for Health Care<sup>1</sup>

The Tulip County Public Health Department was a typical county health department, with personnel involved in some broad prevention work, compliance activities, and a small amount of public health nursing outreach. It had generally been successful in serving the people of Tulip County but, in early 1997, some employees of the Department expressed concern that it was not adequately meeting the needs of the county's lower-income residents. These employees were particularly concerned about the Department's reputation within the community, fearing that its image as an aloof and bureaucratic organization prevented it from reaching certain groups of residents.

The employees' concerns eventually led to a meeting at which key Department staff discussed strategies for improving service to low-income residents of Tulip County. Meeting attendees eventually decided that, given the Health Department's weak reputation among some groups, collaboration with community-based organizations would be an essential part of any successful approach to better service. For their next meeting, they invited two groups to attend: Sunny Side Health Collective and Neighbors Working Together.

Sunny Side Health Collective had a lot of experience providing health services in low-income areas of Tulip County. As a nonprofit organization in existence for more than ten years, it provided access to health care for uninsured and low-income families. Generally, neighborhood residents, other service providers, and funders perceived it as a very effective organization. Neighbors Working Together was a residents organization with a good reputation within the community. It had a long history, kept alive by a few, core long-term members. Its number of active members varied, depending upon the perceived importance of issues in which it was involved. Politicians and others considered it a "must involve" organization in community initiatives.

At the meeting with the Health Department, Sunny Side and Neighbors Working Together offered the observation that many low-income people were also new arrivals with special needs. They suggested that the group invite New Style, a small nonprofit organization in existence just three years, to participate in the collaborative. New Style specifically addressed the need for basic necessities among persons who recently arrived in the neighborhood (housing referrals, food shelf, clothing, referrals to employment services).

Shortly thereafter, New Style was incorporated into the collaborative group. In July of 1997, the group applied for and received funding from a local foundation to develop a system for delivering counseling, information, and health services to families in one low-income neighborhood within Tulip County. The Health Department supplied additional funds for the project. The collaborative group also designated a project director for the initiative—a staff person from Sunny Side who had worked on getting the project designed and funded.

The collaborative initiative was intended to last at least three years. In October of 1997, as the project was just getting underway, the group held a planning retreat. In attendance were five representatives from Sunny Side, including the agency's executive director and the project

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<sup>1</sup> An actual case. Names have been changed.

director of the collaborative initiative. Other attendees included four representatives from the Health Department, six from Neighbors Working Together, and three from New Style. During the morning of the retreat, participants completed the Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory. Wilder Research Center staff attended, tallied the group members' responses, and presented the results to the group for discussion. The following table summarizes the group's ratings for each of the twenty success factors.

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Whole Group (18)</b>	<b>Sunny Side (5)</b>	<b>Tulip Co. PHD (4)</b>	<b>Neighbors (6)</b>	<b>New Style (3)</b>
History of collaboration or cooperation in community	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.4	4.0
Collaborative group seen as a legitimate leader in the community	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.8	4.0
Favorable political and social climate	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.6
Mutual respect, understanding, and trust	3.3	4.0	3.4	3.2	2.7
Appropriate cross-section of members	4.4	4.0	4.0	4.8	4.6
Members see collaboration as in their self-interest	4.5	4.8	4.5	4.6	4.0
Ability to compromise	4.3	4.4	4.0	4.5	4.4
Members share a stake in both process and outcome	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.8	4.0
Multiple layers of participation	4.6	4.8	4.5	4.5	4.6
Flexibility	4.4	4.2	4.5	4.5	4.4
Development of clear roles and policy guidelines	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.0
Adaptability	4.6	4.8	4.5	4.5	4.6
Appropriate pace of development	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3
Open and frequent communication	4.4	4.6	4.0	4.4	4.4
Established informal relationships and communication links	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.1
Concrete, attainable goals and objectives	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.4
Shared vision	4.4	4.2	4.5	4.5	4.4
Unique purpose	4.0	4.6	2.5	4.5	4.2
Sufficient funds, staff, materials, and time	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.4	4.6
Skilled leadership	4.4	4.0	4.5	4.5	4.6

## Problems and Potential Solutions

The following problems, and possible solutions, were identified by participants in approximately 40 different partnerships. This represents the thinking of the partners; it does not imply that all these solutions were effective.

Problems	Solutions
Communication	<p>Regular meetings.</p> <p>Good minutes of decisions.</p> <p>Regular email update of activities, progress, issues.</p>
Building Trust	<p>Focus attention on relationship-building.</p> <p>Have off-site residential meeting, involving as many staff as possible.</p>
Blending Cultures	<p>Identify differences, acknowledge them.</p> <p>Try to establish common policies for the partnership, on issues where differences exist.</p> <p>Social activities among partners to build relationships.</p>
Turf issues	<p>Management style of leadership can have a big effect; Let the group make group decisions in meetings.</p> <p>Clarify roles.</p> <p>Meet with partners face-to-face and consult together.</p>
Missing or ambiguous policies	<p>Establish more understandings in writing.</p> <p>Devote time at partnership meetings to discussion of policies, and create them.</p> <p>Have one partner focus on facilitating resolutions for policy differences.</p>
Lack of sufficient funds	<p>Ongoing solicitation of funding for the program from a variety of sources.</p> <p>Have staff person dedicated to fundraising.</p> <p>Ask partners to contribute to finding resources and contacts.</p>
Not having enough staff	<p>Understand that this problem will always be present in our work. Train staff to accept it.</p>
Staff turnover	<p>Involve management from each partner; this will reduce turnover.</p> <p>Cross-training among staff.</p> <p>Establish larger relationships with the partner organizations.</p>
Not having decision-makers "at the table" when needed.	<p>Establish policy for decision makers to attend governance meetings.</p>

<b>Problems</b>	<b>Solutions</b>
The evolutionary nature of the project – not knowing exactly how everything needs to be established, until we reach a certain point in the project	<p>Communicate this fact up-front and frequently.</p> <p>Open, complete communications on all activities.</p> <p>Encourage an attitude that is open to trial and error.</p>
Misunderstanding about the role and function of the project by the community	Better define the project through publications and community meetings.
Travel distance	Use e-mail and set calendar for meetings on year in advance.
Convincing the partners that this is a collaboration	An off-site residential gathering together to build a common vision.
Perpetually educating new people, bringing them up to speed	Regular meetings and communication
Motivation and enthusiasm, especially long-term motivation	Fun events, brochures.