Starter Kit
1k: Establishing Clear Roles and Responsibilities[1]

Navigating the Roadmap

Activity 1: Build a genuine, collaborative policy team.

Introduction

Teams function most efficiently when members share a common understanding of each others' roles and responsibilities. Indeed, one of the reasons why teams fail is a lack of clarity among team members regarding their respective roles, responsibilities, and the expectations they hold of one another when working together to accomplish their vision, mission, goals, and objectives. When roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, team members are more productive. There is less duplication of effort; less confusion, disappointment, and frustration; and greater productivity. When roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, team members look beyond their own individual positions and learn to understand, respect, and value the unique contributions of one another, and they recognize that the overall success of the team is a function of shared responsibility and ownership.

Purpose

- To support team members in articulating their specific roles and responsibilities with respect to the policy team and its work;
- To encourage team members to articulate the expectations they hold of one another; and
- To identify the leadership attributes and characteristics team members feel are needed to support the team's performance.

Participants

All policy team members should be involved in the development of the team members' roles and responsibilities.

Instructions

1. Working individually, have team members write three brief statements:
   - a "job description" of what they perceive as their EBDM policy team duties and responsibilities;
   - what they expect other members to contribute to the team's work; and
   - the type of leadership attributes and characteristics they feel are needed to support the team's performance.

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[1] Language adapted from CEPP, 2005.

2. When team members are finished writing their individual statements, have each member read their job descriptions and express their expectations of other team members.

3. As team members report on their job descriptions and expectations of each other, make two lists on a flip chart:
   - a list of the roles and responsibilities expressed by team members, making note of those expressed by more than one member; and
   - a list of members' expectations of other team members, again making note of those expressed by more than one member.

4. As a team, review the final lists. Compare and contrast each member's ideas about their roles and responsibilities and what they expect the other team members to contribute. Discuss any differences in opinion or observations.

5. Come to an understanding and consensus on policy team members' key roles and contributions to the team's operation.

6. Exchange comments about the role of leadership on the team, including who assumes or is expected to assume leadership roles (including the EBDM policy team chair, local coordinator, and others) and what is expected of those assuming these roles. Add these to the list as appropriate.

7. Once the team comes to consensus on the final list of roles, responsibilities, and expectations, record these in the team's charter.

Some common responsibilities of team members include
- participating actively in all meetings (responsibility);
- serving as note taker and preparing meeting records (role);
- completing assignments between meetings (responsibility);
- serving as spokesperson for the team with county administration (role); and
- serving as liaison between agency staff and the team (responsibility). [2]

Some common responsibilities of the local coordinator may include
- arranging appropriate space for team meetings, as well as equipment, food, and beverages;
- preparing materials for team meetings;
- drafting and sending correspondence;
- taking meeting minutes and creating accurate meeting records;
- collecting and synthesizing data and information to support members' work; and
- preparing reports and other documents as appropriate.

Some common responsibilities of the team's chair may include

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[2] Scholtes, Joiner, & Streibel, 2003.

- chairing team meetings, facilitating discussions, and assuring the team stays focused on stated goals;
- working closely with the local Initiative coordinator and team leadership to prepare for and follow up on team meetings, and overseeing all aspects of the team's work ;
- regularly communicating with team members about the status and progress of the team's work; and
- assigning team members to work groups to address specific issues.

Tips

- As team members consider their "job descriptions," they should not forget to account for their professional background and experience and what specific role(s) they can perform. Also, members might consider what interpersonal skills, interests, and experiences they can contribute to the team's work.
- Consider the team's goals and specific work activities over the coming months. Check to be sure that the list of team roles and responsibilities, expertise, and contributions align with expected work activities. If gaps are noted, refer to 1d: Conducting a Stakeholder Analysis.
- Be as specific as possible to define roles and responsibilities and agree on what should be listed in the team's charter.

Example: Eau Claire County, Wisconsin, Established Team Member Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles have been established to support the effective work of the policy team:

- The role of the EBDM policy team chair will be to
    - chair the EBDM policy team meetings;
    - preside over all meetings;
    - work with the local coordinator;
    - act as the lead facilitator and team builder; and
    - act as the chief spokesperson, be the public face of the team, and represent the team's interests.

- The role of the local coordinator will be to
    - adhere to the EBDM process as established by the EBDM Framework, the National Institute of Corrections, and the EBDM policy team;
    - schedule meetings and send out agendas;
    - oversee the implementation of all EBDM planning activities;
    - serve as the primary contact for the project with members, the chair, and others
    - maintain timelines established by the policy team;
    - develop and oversee the action plan; and
    - coordinate all EBDM policy team activities and work group activities as assigned.

- All policy team members will
    - serve as a liaison to the constituency/agency/interest area they are representing, carry key discussion points to these individuals, and report feedback to the policy team;

- o support the requests of the policy team and the local coordinator in an efficient manner; and
- o abide by consensus authority rule.

Additional Resources/Readings

CEPP. (2005). Teamwork exercise: Discussion of roles and responsibilities. Retrieved from http://www.collaborativejustice.org/how/tools/structure/structure-ex1.htm

Scholtes, P. R., Joiner, B. L., & Streibel, B. J. (2003). *The team handbook* (3rd ed.). Madison, WI: Oriel Inc.