Collaboration Across Boundaries
Insights and Tips from Federal Senior Executives

Rosemary O'Leary
Catherine Gerard

The Maxwell School of
Syracuse University

Collaboration Across Boundaries:
Insights and Tips from Federal Senior Executives

Rosemary O'Leary
Distinguished Professor
Phanstiel Chair in Strategic Management and Leadership
The Maxwell School of Syracuse University

Catherine Gerard
Professor
Associate Director of Executive Education
The Maxwell School of Syracuse University

IBM Center for
The Business of Government

Table of Contents

Foreword

On behalf of the IBM Center for The Business of Government, we are pleased to present this report, *Collaboration Across Boundaries: Insights and Tips from Federal Senior Executives,* by Professors Rosemary O'Leary and Catherine Gerard, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University.

This report, which continues the IBM Center's long interest in collaboration, provides valuable insights into how federal senior executives view collaboration. Based on survey responses from over 300 members of the federal Senior Executive Service, O'Leary and Gerard found—to their mild surprise—that nearly all those surveyed report using collaboration as a management strategy. Survey respondents clearly recognize that the job of senior executives today involves collaboration within their agency, their department, and the federal government, as well as with key external partners and stakeholders.

The O'Leary-Gerard survey of federal executives is unique in that it received open-ended answers from respondents about how to collaborate in government more effectively. The report concludes with eight insightful tips about how to collaborate in government, including the view of senior executives that the foundation of success in collaboration is common purpose, while another is "don't be afraid of conflict—expect it." The report also includes valuable insights into why agencies collaborate, the barriers to collaboration, and the skill set needed to be a collaborative manager.

This report adds to the knowledge we have gained from prior research reports by the IBM Center for The Business of Government on the important topic of collaboration. Earlier in 2012, the IBM Center published *Designing Open Projects: Lessons from Internet Pioneers* by David Witzel, which examines how individuals can work virtually across organizations and sectors on collaborative projects. This follows a 2011 IBM Center report, *Designing Collaborative Networks: Lessons Learned from Public Safety* by Jane Fedorowicz and Steve Sawyer, which examined collaboration and networks at the local public safety level.

Daniel J. Chenok

Maria-Paz Barrientos

This is the second report by Rosemary O'Leary for the IBM Center on collaboration. In 2007, Professor O'Leary wrote (with Lisa Blomgren Bingham) *A Manager's Guide to Resolving Conflicts in Collaborative Networks*. Read together, the 2007 report and *Collaboration Across Boundaries* provide highly useful information to government executives at all levels on how to collaborate, and on how to respond to conflicts that can arise during such collaboration.

We trust that this report will provide insights to government leaders engaged in collaborative efforts within their own organization, across government, and with other sectors of society.

Daniel J. Chenok
Executive Director
IBM Center for The Business of Government
chenokd@us.ibm.com

Maria-Paz Barrientos
Organization and People Leader
IBM Global Business Services
maria.barrientos@us.ibm.com
@MPBarrientos

Executive Summary

One federal executive began a collaboration with the Baltimore City Schools, local universities, and NASA to increase the number of students entering engineering schools. Another engaged tribes; federal, county, and state health officials; and school staff to set up vaccination clinics in tribal territories. A third developed coordinated white-collar crime investigations involving American, Brazilian, and European federal law enforcement officers. Collaborations among federal agencies have been formed to:

- Reshape the federal hiring process

- Identify information technology systems that might be shared

- Develop a national security research and development effort

- Improve services to veterans

- Coordinate research efforts on climate change

These are examples of the types of collaborations captured in responses to an open-ended survey of career and non-career Senior Executive Service (SES) members who described their collaboration experiences (Collaborative Leadership Survey). As the top-level leaders in federal government, SES members are the links between presidential appointees and the rest of the federal workforce, and serve key policy-making and government roles. Since SES positions require collaborative leadership qualifications, it is especially valuable to know how these leaders perceive and use collaboration as a management strategy.

Out of 305 respondents, 304 report the use of collaboration as a management strategy. This report conveys the insights of these 304 senior executives. It provides direct, practical insights into collaboration's catalysts, its barriers, and the lessons learned about both the positive and negative results of collaboration as a management strategy.

Why Collaborate? When asked *why* they chose to collaborate, the executives give five key reasons:

- *Explicit* mandates from a boss, formal agency policy, or legislation

- *Implicit* mandates by organization culture or personal values

- A desire to improve outcomes

- An effort to improve the problem-solving process

- A goal of building better relationships and credibility

Recent Collaboration Experiences: Type and Purpose

We asked SES executives to tell us about five recent collaboration experiences. Most report that they have recently been involved in a collaboration (92 percent), and most of these

involved engagement with other federal agencies or within their own organizations. Dozens of examples are provided in this report.

Goal: delivering better outcomes. For SES respondents, while their collaborations are often mandated, the overall reason to collaborate is concrete: to improve performance. Our executives report this in hard-nosed management terms: They are looking for a superior way to implement a program, to enhance a project in ways it could not be enhanced without collaborative efforts, to increase economic benefits to the government, and to better serve the public. They collaborate primarily when their personal and organizational cost-benefit analyses indicate that it will be a savvy management decision to do so. Hence, better and sustained outcomes, as well as increased quality, are mentioned by executives as both *drivers* and *results* of collaboration. This includes goal and mission achievement, capacity building, better service delivery, economies of scale, and more sustainable solutions.

What makes collaboration work? We asked SES members what makes collaboration work, given its many challenges. Five themes emerge from their answers:

- People and their relationships

- The need to achieve results

- A sense of urgency

- Directives from the top

- Organizational supports such as structure and culture

The challenges to collaboration. Six overarching categories of challenges to collaboration are emphasized by federal senior executives:

- *Relationship* challenges including turf wars, lack of communication, difficulty reaching consensus, and difficulty achieving stakeholder buy-in

- *Resource* challenges including finding the time, garnering the effort, and having the money to implement collaboration across boundaries

- *Organization* challenges such as identifying and reconciling shared mission and goals, differing agency cultures, and inadequate incentives

- *Challenges with individuals* such as lack of leadership, lack of skills, lack of expertise, and lack of motivation

- *Political* challenges, including the fact that decisions are sometimes based on politics rather than needs of collaborative entities, or needed political decisions are delayed because of collaboration

- *Unanticipated consequences* that may make problems worse

When not to collaborate. Collaboration is not always productive. Possible negative results of collaboration include time-consuming processes, difficult relationships, suboptimal outcomes, and loss of resources. Federal executives articulated several instances when collaboration should be avoided:

- When there are no common goals and benefits

- When support structures are weak

- When there are people problems that cannot be overcome

- When there are process problems

The following questions should be answered before agreeing to collaborate:

- Is this the right issue, time, and place for a collaborative approach?

- Will this approach help us reach pivotal performance objectives and better serve the public?

- Is the process being proposed or developed likely to be fair and efficient?

- Are my organization and I suited for participation in terms of mission, expertise, and time?

The skill set of the successful collaborator. According to SES survey respondents, the most important skills for the collaborator are, in order of importance:

- Individual attributes

- Interpersonal skills

- Group process skills

- Strategic leadership skills

- Substantive/technical expertise

On the first point, the most important *individual* attributes mentioned include having an open mind, patience, and self-confidence. The most important *interpersonal* skills are being a good communicator, an excellent listener, and working well with people. Desired *group process skills* include facilitation, negotiation, and collaborative problem-solving. *Strategic leadership skills* include big-picture thinking, strategic thinking, and facilitative leadership. *Substantive/ technical expertise* includes technical knowledge of the subject area, followed by project management and organizational skills.

The importance of the individual. Effective collaboration is deeply dependent on the skills of individual collaborators. The necessity of having the right people at the table with the subject area expertise, leadership, motivation, and willingness to collaborate, as well as the necessary skill set, is a salient lesson for the government executives surveyed.

Recommendations to other federal executives from survey respondents. Federal executives offer the following recommendations for successful collaborations:

- The foundation for success in collaboration is common purpose.

- Learn interest-based, collaborative problem-solving.

- Don't be afraid of conflict: expect it and learn to manage it.

- Build in face-to-face meetings. Collaboration is easier and more likely to be successful when the partners know and understand each other, which is more likely to happen when collaborators are in the same room.

- Improvise: be flexible and open to whatever comes up, moment by moment.

- Ask open-ended, thoughtful questions to build integrative solutions, break down cultural barriers, de-escalate conflicts, and provide feedback to the negotiating group.

- Don't give up.

- Focus on performance.

Use of Collaboration as a Management Strategy

Introduction

Today's public servants are working in a new landscape that requires them to be collaborative for many reasons. First, most public challenges are larger than one organization can address alone, requiring new approaches to addressing public issues. Second, the desire to improve the effectiveness of publicly funded programs is encouraging public officials to identify new ways of providing public services. Collaboration can result in innovative approaches to service delivery, including multi-sector partnerships.

Third, technology is helping government agencies and personnel share information in a way that is integrative and interoperable, with the outcome being a greater emphasis on collaborative governance. Finally, citizens are seeking additional avenues for engaging in governance, which can result in new and different forms of collaborative problem-solving and decision making. As Salamon (2002) puts it, these factors taken together shift the emphasis from management skills and the control of large bureaucratic organizations to enablement skills: the skills required to engage partners arrayed horizontally in networks, and to bring multiple stakeholders together for a common end in a situation of interdependence.

In this report, we discuss how 304 members of the U.S. Senior Executive Service (SES) perceive collaboration:

- What its catalysts are

Collaborative Public Management: *The process of facilitating and operating in multi-organizational arrangements to solve problems that cannot be solved or easily solved by single organizations. Collaboration can include the public.*

Adapted from Agranoff and McGuire, 2004

Our Survey

We designed and implemented an online, open-ended survey inviting career and non-career Senior Executive Service members to write about their collaboration experiences (Collaborative Leadership Survey). A total of 305 usable responses were received from SES members in 71 federal agencies. All but one respondent say they use collaboration as a management strategy. (See Appendix II for additional information on method and data, response rate, a list of agencies, and the demographic breakdown of the survey respondents.) In addition, 12 executives volunteered to be interviewed via structured telephone calls lasting one to two hours. The result of the study are useful insights about collaboration from executives at the highest level of the U.S. government.

- What the barriers to collaboration are

- What skills are needed in a collaborative manager

Insights about when to collaborate and when not to collaborate are offered. Both the positive and negative results of collaboration as a management strategy are addressed, and tips from these professional collaborators for catalyzing successful collaborations are highlighted. Since SES positions require collaborative leadership qualifications, it is especially valuable to know how these leaders perceive and use collaboration as a management strategy.

"A successful collaborator must have a genuinely open mind and maintain a willingness to be persuaded. The least successful (or at least the most frustrating) collaborators are just the opposite—they enter the relationship with the idea that it is a competition and getting their way is paramount to their own success."

Senior executive interviewed for this report

Reasons for Collaboration

The 304 federal executives chose collaboration as a management strategy for the following five categories of reasons:

- Explicitly mandated by external forces

- Implicitly mandated by internal organizational culture and personal values

- To improve outcomes

- To improve problem-solving processes

- To build relationships and credibility

Explicitly and Implicitly Mandated Collaboration

The idea of mandated collaboration manifests itself in a number of ways and is mentioned most often by federal executives as the reason for collaboration. Some mention explicit mandates such as legislation, policy, or leadership directives, and others describe an implicit, values-based mandate: their agency cultures value a collaborative approach.

Culture is to organizations what character and personality are to the individual. It refers to the values and beliefs that drive behavior. To be successful, accepted members of an organization, employees behave in ways that are consistent with the culture. Culture does not change easily and is passed on to those who enter an organization through formal and informal socialization. The stereotype of agencies as overly hierarchical and turf-protecting is contradicted by this important finding: senior executives describe collaboration with other organizations as part of agency culture.

Equally notable are responses characterizing collaboration as the "right thing to do." For these executives, collaboration as a management strategy is congruent with personal values about how public problems should be solved, how public work should be done, how the public should be served, and how taxpayers' money should be spent.

If collaborative leadership is, in fact, supported by a combination of directives, top leadership, organizational culture, and personal values, we may be seeing a significant shift in how at least some parts of the federal government are operating and will operate in the future.

Collaboration to Improve Outcomes

SES respondents see collaboration as a very effective way to increase performance. Some also report that it is a successful way of solving complex public problems and accomplishing their missions. Collaboration's role in better outcomes comes through loud and clear. This includes its importance for goal and mission achievement, better results, greater effectiveness, increased capacity building, better service delivery, more efficiency, and more sustainable solutions. In this context, executives say the changing nature of public problems demands new approaches. In particular, the complexity of today's problems, the interdependence of agency missions, and the need for decisions to be informed by stakeholder perspectives are drivers of collaboration.

Moreover, collaboration is seen as an important mechanism to leverage or coordinate scarce resources, such as funds, time, staff, and expertise; but also knowledge, new perspectives, and networks. For some, the need for more sophisticated, innovative products leads them to collaboration. Developing such products requires multiple actors, shared information, ongoing idea generation, and collaborative problem-solving.

Collaboration to Improve the Problem-Solving Process

SES respondents tell us that collaboration builds a richer process for working together and solving problems. Executives describe it as achieving consensus, "harmonization," compromise, integration, and teamwork. Collaborating improves problem-solving by bringing in a diversity of ideas, broadening options, catalyzing boundary-spanning, and focusing on needs. The collaborative process builds ownership of ideas and commitment to implementation, thus yielding more durable and sustainable results. A significant byproduct of the collaborative process is organizational and trans-organizational learning.

Collaboration to Build Better Relationships and Credibility

SES executives use collaboration as a management strategy for building alliances and relationships that will help them and their agencies. They say that successful collaboration builds the credibility of the players. In an operating environment where agencies are increasingly interdependent, resources are scarce, and demands for solutions are high, executives understand the importance of alliances and view collaboration as a way of developing them.

Reasons for Choosing Collaboration as a Management Strategy

Explicit Mandate
- Mandated by boss (including the President)
- Directives from agency
- Legislative mandate

Implicit Mandate
- Organization culture
- Personal values
- "Right thing to do"

Improve Outcomes
- Goal and mission achievement
- Better results
- Effectiveness
- Capacity building
- Better service delivery
- Efficiency
- More sustainable solutions

Improve Problem-Solving Process
- Achieve consensus
- "Harmonization"
- Integration
- Teamwork
- Bring in a diversity of ideas
- Broaden options
- Boundary spanning

Build Relationships and Credibility
- Build alliances
- Build credibility with others

Examples of Recent Collaboration Experiences

We asked SES executives to tell us the type and purpose of five recent collaboration experiences. Nearly all (92 percent) had been involved in a recent collaboration, and we expected to see a balanced array of collaborations and members: intergovernmental, intersectoral, and involving the public. Instead most of the federal executives report collaborating with other federal agencies or within their own organizations. Eighty-three percent of the participants in recent collaborations work in federal government agencies. In half of the instances of collaboration, *all* of the participants work in federal agencies.

Collaboration within the home organization makes up 27 percent of recent collaborations and intergovernmental collaborations (with state and local governments) compose 12 percent of recent collaborations. While the diversity of sectoral partners may be less than expected, the specific collaborations described are complex, rich, and varied. This section presents examples of all five types of collaboration.

Examples of Explicitly Mandated Collaborations

Many of the collaborations described by federal executives were mandated by directives or legislation that often resulted in new programs. New legislation requiring the payment of stimulus benefits to qualified retirees and unemployed railroad workers led to collaboration between the Social Security and the Department of Veterans Affairs: in particular, there was a major effort to develop coordinated tracking, notification, payment, data, and procedural systems.

Responding to a report finding opportunities for collaboration, the Producer Price Index Program worked with another program that produces a different price index. After several months, the collaborative group identified projects, wrote charters, recruited team members, and expanded its work to include systems development efforts.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is engaged in a major effort to reform federal hiring practices through a collaborative effort involving such agencies as the Department of Defense, the National Regulatory Commission, and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

As a result of the Troubled Assets Relief Program legislation (TARP), agencies including the Federal Housing Administration, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Federal Housing Finance Agency worked together to design new initiatives to help homeowners.

Several federal executives described collaborations responding to environmental and energy policy directives. For example:
- The U.S. Energy Independence and Security Act calls for common forest carbon assessments. Six federal agencies, along with state governments and foreign nations, are working to establish policies and procedures. The collaboration has required substantial efforts to

build trust and common language in light of the diversity of the members and the technical difficulty of the issue.

- The Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Interior, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) were convened by the Council on Environmental Quality to reduce environmental impacts for surface coal mining in Appalachia through a comprehensive program. This effort was begun by the EPA's pressing for stronger review of mining permits and expanded significantly to an interagency approach.

Examples of Implicitly Mandated Collaborations

For many federal executives, collaboration has become a natural way of carrying out the business of government. Our survey respondents say that "collaboration is a normal part of what we do," "part of our everyday function," and "how we do business." Some implicitly mandated collaborations are driven by the need to overcome scarce resources; others indicate an awareness of interdependency that makes working together a given. One federal executive comments, "Nearly everything I did in the Environmental Protection Agency required collaboration, such as Hurricane Katrina, American Samoa tsunami response … and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. An effective federal response to nearly any incident requires more than one agency to respond, hence collaboration becomes critical to mission success."

Another driver of collaboration is the citizen. An executive explains that in his work, citizens are served by multiple agencies. Therefore, citizens are disadvantaged if agencies do *not* work together. For the past four years, his organization has engaged in the redesign of all the key systems in its hospitals through collaborative groups, including representatives from the Department of Veterans Affairs, in order to better meet the needs of wounded warriors.

Providing better information and services to small businesses is the common goal of a project involving the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), EPA, the Department of Agriculture, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Department of Defense, a U.S. Senator's office, and the Small Business Administration.

Citizen focus is behind another example involving the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the IRS, and state-level authorities, who aim to understand the impact of a recent oil spill on fishers.

Some SES federal executives describe a new way of doing government-wide business through ongoing councils of agency administrators who identify issues to performance and catalyze collaborative efforts. One specific result of council work is a major effort to identify information technology systems that might be shared across federal agencies. Other executives see their agencies as embracing collaboration as the "right thing to do." The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is engaged with the Baltimore City Public Schools, a research university, and a teaching university to improve science and technology education. What began as a modest effort with the city has expanded to include multiple actors and may provide NASA with future talent. Similarly, a Health and Human Services (HHS) agency collaboration, the Health and Human Services Coordinating Committee on Women's Health, expanded its work to a larger collaborative of over 100 organizations including academic groups, nonprofits, advocacy groups, private-sector professionals, governments, and faith organizations to develop a new agenda for women's health in the 21st century.

Examples of Collaboration to Improve Outcomes

A major theme of this report is that federal executives see collaboration as resulting in better outcomes. Several examples of ongoing efforts illustrate that view.

- A collaboration involving Indian Health Services, state health departments, county, and school staffs established clinics at local tribal facilities (including casinos) and vaccinated thousands of patients, exceeding expected numbers.

- A collaboration among NASA, the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Agriculture, and private-sector organizations successfully broadened the use of the International Space Station.

- The U.S. Geological Survey and the Department of Agriculture forged and implemented memoranda of understanding (MOUs) that coordinate federal agency research on water and climate change.

- The Departments of Health and Human Services and the Department of Defense are collaborating across programs to develop medical countermeasures for chemical, biological, and radiological/nuclear threats, thus protecting soldiers as well as the general public.

- One executive cites award-winning work to develop the Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy, resulting from intensive work among the Environmental Protection Agency, Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, Washington Department of Ecology, and the Ports of Seattle, Tacoma, and Vancouver.

- Joint training efforts are also examples of improved outcomes. One example of collaboration began with two agencies working to provide integrated training to tribes receiving grants for law-and-order issues. Ultimately, the collaboration grew to involve five agencies that successfully offered a comprehensive workshop nationwide rather than requiring participation in multiple single-agency trainings.

Examples of Collaboration to Improve the Problem-Solving Process

Federal managers are using collaboration to establish shared processes and procedures and thus promote greater efficiency. For example, a collaboration involving federal and state agencies, industries, and universities is working to agree on standards for the interoperability of geoscience data.

One executive initiated an Acquisition 2.0 Group on Govloop that led to the BetterBuy collaboration between GSA, the National Academy of Public Administration, and the American Council for Technology-Industry Advisory Council. This resulted in subsequent improvements in the federal acquisition process.

In another case, the Department of the Army, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence worked together to develop a new method for security clearances. The pilot of the new procedures resulted in impressive results: processing time was reduced by 80 percent and errors decreased from 27 percent to .001 percent.

A government-wide group is developing common reporting requirements across all agencies responsible for facilities management. Similarly, nearly all federal inspectors general were recently involved in developing common IT audit standards and procedures to conduct mandatory annual cybersecurity audits.

Another example involves the Departments of Energy, Interior, Commerce, and Transportation, which are developing a network that would synchronize disparate weather observation systems.

Examples of Collaboration to Build Relationships and Credibility

Some of the most interesting collaborative experiences are aimed at building relationships, sometimes with other agencies, sometimes with other countries.

- The Department of State and other agencies mounted a bi-national symposium in Tokyo on the role of "soft power" in highlighting the value of educational and cultural programs and building good will.

- In response to financial concerns and rate pressures on customers, a forum of agency executives, investors, and customers was established to share concerns, build trust, and reduce contention on regional industry issues. One watchdog audit agency adopted a collaborative approach with agencies it oversees, involving information sharing and problem-solving. The result is a more cooperative working relationship which maintains important independent roles.

- One executive describes her work developing a collaborative project to protect coastal lands through an alliance with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, EPA, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as well as the Nature Conservancy and Land Trust Alliance.

- Another executive from the Department of Veterans Affairs comments that she was part of a collaboration aimed at improving the working relationship with the Department of Defense after serious problems affected military personnel and veterans.

- A project between the Departments of Labor and Commerce was taken on to demonstrate that the agencies could work together constructively. The end product was a training work-force center to retrain workers negatively affected by the automotive sector's reengineering. The experience of successful collaboration and the resulting trust enabled future efforts.

What Makes Collaboration Work?

Given the many challenges to collaboration, what are its catalysts? What makes collaboration work? Five major catalysts emerge from senior executives' responses, shown in the following box. They are, in order of importance:

- People and their relationships

- The need to achieve results

- A sense of urgency

- Directives from the top

- Organizational support

People and Their Relationships

Leadership is viewed as a strong catalyst for collaboration among the federal executives we surveyed. Leadership can take the form of a senior leader who champions or mandates collaboration, a new, dynamic leader with a vision for innovative thinking, or a political leader who is on board.

Individual partners in collaboration may also be catalysts. Respondents point to partners with shared missions who seek mutually beneficial solutions as a positive force for collaboration. The attitude of the collaborators, described as openness, willingness, frankness, belief in shared interests, and a desire to serve the greater good, is seen as motivational. For some, past success, positive experiences, trust, and past relationships with players contribute to the desire to collaborate. Still others point to a personal desire to learn from others and expand networks as catalysts to collaboration.

The Need to Achieve Results

SES respondents report that the need to achieve results with scarce resources and develop integrative solutions to complex issues motivates collaboration. They see collaboration as an opportunity for federal leaders to leverage resources, identify duplication, and coordinate efforts. The nature of the public problems they face—complex, cross-organizational, and cross-sectoral—also prompts a collaborative approach. And respondents say that when both parties achieve results, that acts as a powerful catalyst.

What Makes Collaboration Work?
(in order of importance)

People and Their Relationships
- Leadership
- Champions
- Past positive experiences with partners
- Personal desire

The Need to Achieve Results
- Scarce resources
- Cross-sectoral challenges

A Sense of Urgency
- Crisis
- Threat
- Pressures

Directives from the Top
- Superior within organization
- Congress
- President

Organizational Support
- Governance structure
- Culture and incentives

A Sense of Urgency

For some executives, a strong sense of urgency, current crisis, or threat from external forces catalyzes collaboration. Others say they are motivated to collaborate by personal pressures, including time pressure to complete tasks and increasing workloads. While past success with collaboration is a catalyst for some executives, others point to failure with other approaches as motivating a willingness to try collaboration.

Directives from the Top

Legislation and directives from agency leaders and the President are other catalysts to collaboration. Inferred directives, including organizational culture (agency core values) and personal values, are again discussed, but this time as motivational catalysts rather than reasons for collaboration.

Organizational Support

The fifth kind of collaboration catalyst is the organization's structure and support. Agency leadership is a significant catalyst, but sometimes it is not enough. Respondents tell us that an agency's governance structure can be a catalyst for collaboration if organization design,

---

How to Create a Collaborative Environment: Advice to Agency Heads

Collaboration is a word that federal executives hear repeatedly. Agency strategic plans indicate that collaboration is a core strategy. Reports from the General Accountability Office call for increased collaboration. President Obama's memo on transparency and open government states that government *should* be collaborative. This report demonstrates that collaboration is, in fact, occurring in many federal organizations and bringing about positive results. Collaboration as a management strategy, however, is challenging and requires significant investment to continue and grow.

We therefore offer the following recommendations based on the insights of the 304 federal executives who participated in our research:

1. Educate employees about the importance of the strategic use of individual attributes, interpersonal skills, and group process skills while collaborating.

2. Incentivize and reward collaboration among individuals and organizations.

3. Embed collaboration in performance evaluation and core competencies.

4. Reshape management and leadership education to include intensive self-assessment and emotional intelligence development.

5. Train managers at all levels, but particularly senior levels, in the collaborative skills of communication, negotiation, facilitation, and interest-based problem-solving.

6. Address challenges to data sharing and incompatible technologies that block inter- and intra-agency collaborative work.

7. Address structural barriers to interagency work.

8. Document and share how collaborations are working so that managers can learn from successful and unsuccessful experiences.

---

distributed governance, and work dispersal are conducive to collaborative efforts. Another aspect of collaborative-friendly governance mentioned by federal executives is the dissemination of research findings and other information about agency work—essential building blocks of a collaborative effort. Equally important, SES collaborators tell us that incentives for those participating are crucial motivators.

Positive Consequences of Collaboration

Governments have increasingly used collaborative strategies by having multiple organizations address complex problems in diverse policy areas. The popularity of collaboration implies advantage, but assessing the results of collaborations can be challenging. In this section we discuss how SES respondents perceive the positive consequences of collaboration, using their own criteria.

Successful collaborators know why they are there: To generate new solutions to the most difficult public problems.

This section is based on responses to the open-ended question: "What are the positive results of collaboration?" Three types of outcomes were reported: categories of performance outcomes, relationship outcomes, and process outcomes. It is significant that performance outcomes dominate the positive result of collaboration, while process outcomes dominate in the negative category, discussed in the next section.

Nearly all of the federal executives who responded to our question asking about the positive results of collaboration say that collaboration yields positive results (refer to box for details).

Respondents most often mention *better performance outcomes* as the positive result of collaboration. The top outcomes mentioned concern the quality of work product or decision resulting from collaboration and include sustainability, timeliness, and better public service. Other executives describe performance outcomes as efficiencies achieved through pooling resources, lower costs, and economies of scale. Synergistic effects and learning are mentioned next most frequently. When discussing synergy, SES respondents focus on the collaborative results that trump what a single organization could have done by itself.

A second theme is *better relationship-focused outcomes*. Such outcomes include

Positive Results of Collaboration
(in order of importance)

Better Performance Outcomes
- Higher quality work
- Quality decisions
- Sustainability
- Timeliness
- Better public service
- Economies of scale

Better Relationship-Focused Outcomes
- Buy-in of parties
- Ownership of solutions
- Alliances
- Job satisfaction
- Empowerment

Better Process Outcomes
- More efficient and less cumbersome practices

greater buy-in and ownership of solutions by the collaborators, as well as less resistance. Executives describe collaboration as building relationships, including a greater willingness to collaborate in the future, more interaction among senior executives, and alliance-building. Human resource benefits such as improved job satisfaction, leveraging capability, stronger alignment of individual skills, and less stress are described as positive outcomes. Equally significant, some respondents see empowerment of collaboration participants as an important positive result.

The third theme is *better process outcomes*. Here, federal executives give examples of purposeful collaboration-streamlining processes necessarily involving two or more agencies in a program's implementation. By bringing the agencies together, a less cumbersome and more efficient process was initiated.

Challenges to Collaboration

Public executives who engage in collaboration can face substantial obstacles. We asked SES respondents to describe the challenges to collaboration. Six major themes emerge from the survey results. They are, in order of importance:

• Difficult relationships

• Lack of resources

• Discordant organizations and mission

• Unskillful individuals

• Complex political environments

• Unanticipated consequences

One SES member says the challenges can be summarized as "time, turf, ego." Another says her challenges are "cash, credit, and control." In the following section, we provide details about these intriguing responses. (See *Top Challenges to Collaboration* for a detailed list of the challenges.)

Difficult Relationships

SES respondents tell us that working with people will always present a challenge to collaborative arrangements that require the intensive, ongoing involvement of multiple individuals. These responses, summarized as relationship challenges, tie with logistical concerns as the most frequently mentioned challenges to collaboration. SES respondents say power struggles among actors are the most common and perhaps most difficult relationship challenge of all. Individuals defend turf, agency agendas, and power bases that have built up over years. Some are there to gain power or visibility for themselves or their organizations. This can be exacerbated when so-called collaborators are receiving instructions from bosses that prevent them from "sharing the rice bowl" or moving away from "turf-centric" views of problems and solutions.

Respondents report that sometimes the "right people" are not assigned to the collaboration or the essential players do not want to collaborate. Collaborative arrangements require partners with aligned missions, knowledge, experience, authority, access to resources, time, and willingness to be part of a joint solution. Without them, collaborations may not be successful. Executives report that challenges to open communication, reaching consensus, and achieving buy-in are difficult to overcome, particularly if there is lack of trust and fear of reputational loss.

Lack of Resources

Federal executives describe an array of resource challenges to collaboration. Collaborative work takes time and effort. The extensive workloads and commitments of executives reduce the

time they are willing to devote to collaboration. Scheduling, meeting design and facilitation, followup, and reporting requirements are substantial work and require staff resources or additional efforts on the part of collaborators. Lack of money, inability to shift funding, and regulatory rigidity sometimes impede the work of the group and block the implementation of results.

Discordant Organizations and Missions

The third largest category of challenges cited involves working with organizations and their missions. Respondents describe organizational challenges in terms of culture, mission, and support. Organizations often operate in silos with their own cultures, language, and ways of operating that can make interagency collaboration daunting. One executive comments, "The communities that have to collaborate on things are very vertically oriented. [Sometimes] there's really no way to bring folks together, even in the face of a crisis." Misunderstandings, miscommunication, and varying interpretations of information often are challenges stemming from different organization cultures. Some executives describe a mismatch of values whereby the agency culture fosters competition with other organizations rather than collaboration. In these cases, the shared leadership required for collaboration may be difficult to achieve.

Misalignment of mission and goals, a theme that cuts across the survey results, is another significant challenge. This impedes finding common ground among the collaborators. Moreover, collaborations require time and intensive work; some executives indicate that lack of incentives for participants is a demotivating factor. Tied in with this, shared information is the lifeblood of collaboration. Organizations that do not give up their information or lack the technology to share data to support ongoing work present challenges to learning and success for collaborators.

Top Challenges to Collaboration
(in order of importance)

Difficult Relationships
- Power struggles
- Conflict
- Turf wars
- Agency agendas
- Wrong people at table

Lack of Resources
- Lack of time
- Staff and money
- Regulatory rigidity

Discordant Organizations and Mission
- Organizational silos
- Mismatch of cultures
- Incompatible traditions and ways of operating
- Misalignment of goals
- Unwillingness to share data

Unskillful Individuals
- Incompetence
- Inflexibility
- Lack of expertise
- Lack of motivation
- Dishonesty

Complex Political Environments
- Decisions sometimes based on politics rather than needs of collaborative entities
- Needed political decisions delayed because of collaboration

Unanticipated Negative Consequences
- May make problem worse
- Weakened relationships
- Loss of power and control
- Loss of reputation
- Loss of resources
- Suboptimal outcomes

Unskillful Individuals

A clear message from SES respondents is the importance of the individual in collaboration. Negative individual characteristics, including incompetence, inflexibility, lack of expertise, ego,

lack of motivation, and even dishonesty, are significant challenges to collaboration. Executives point to the crucial role of leadership in collaboration, both from sponsors and the participants. We call this leading when you are not in charge, because most collaborative efforts will have many leaders representing many organizations. Weak leadership or lack of champions and inappropriate style in the collaboration are described as problematic. Inexperienced, unskilled, and uncooperative partners are not a good match with a collaborative approach, which requires a new way of working.

Complex Political Environments

Federal executives report to many masters with competing priorities and timelines. Agency agendas are often set and reset by multiple actors competing with each other. SES respondents tell us that collaborations face political challenges. The political environments of the collaborating agencies sometimes challenge the ability of the collaborators to achieve a common agenda and maintain focus over time. Some organizations see the collaborative approach as delaying needed political actions or restricting their ability to act independently. In this context, balancing the short and long-term political needs of organizations and the changing interests of all parties may not be in sync with the collaboration's need for aligned interests and thoughtful deliberation.

Unanticipated Negative Consequences

Collaboration may often result in better products, relationships, and process, but it is not without costs. The federal executives who responded to our survey see the negative impacts most strongly in relation to process, then relationship, and finally performance.

Collaborative processes can be time-consuming. They can slow things down. They can be burdensome in terms of reporting requirements, unfunded mandated tasks, and increased demand for communication as well as additional skills. Collaborative work requires mobilizing resources among bureaucracies that may not be set up for quick action or for the sharing of resources. The executives say that collaboration is based on everyone contributing and that this does not always occur. A significant comment offered by one executive is that, in the worst-case scenario, collaboration can sometimes transform a problem into a crisis.

Second, some SES respondents describe relationship effects as a negative outcome of collaboration. Most frequently mentioned are weakened relationships from individual and agency loss of power, loss of control, loss of autonomy, loss of responsibility, loss of credit, or loss of reputation. Another negative effect is conflict stemming from organizations with different organization cultures, different methods of operation, different stakeholder groups, different funders, and different degrees of power trying to work together. In addition, executives discuss turf battles, unwillingness to collaborate in the future, and the alienation of those who refused to collaborate in the first place as negative outcomes. In some cases, these resulted in hostility or distrust among collaborating parties.

A third theme is that collaboration may negatively affect performance outcomes. Respondents indicate that collaboration could yield suboptimal outcomes and a loss of resources, such as time, staff, funding, and political support. Equally important, the results of the collaboration are not always listened to or acted upon, in essence wasting the time and energy of the collaborators and ignoring good ideas that might have resulted in good policies and services for the public.

When Not to Collaborate

There are situations where collaboration may not be the best approach. SES respondents, particularly those interviewed, also provide insights about when not to collaborate—either because the collaboration has a high risk of failure or because it might not be the best management strategy. They advise that others think twice about collaborating under the following scenarios.

When There Are No Common Goals or Benefits

SES respondents tell us that the foundation for success in collaboration is common purpose, common mission, or common desired product. They suggest that collaboration is not the right approach if the goals of the collaborating parties are not aligned or if the measures of success are not explicit. Further, the collaboration project needs to be important to the mission of the participating organizations to warrant the time and effort involved. Managers need to assess the nature of the problem itself: Not all problems have significant levels of complexity or a need for innovative, cross-organizational thinking. The costs of a collaborative process may outweigh the benefits. In the same vein, executives warn others not to collaborate unless there are benefits for all participating—both at the organizational and personal level.

When Support Structures Are Weak

Several interviewees and survey respondents comment that managers should not enter into collaborations unless adequate support structures are in place. These include information systems that provide readily available and accessible information, designated individuals to perform followup activities between meetings, and, in some cases, neutral facilitators. Sometimes the vertical or hierarchical nature of organizations makes it impossible to assemble the right mix of individuals, or to respect horizontal collaborative work. Executives suggest that it may be better not to collaborate if the project does not have leader-champions and thus a strong chance of getting the time, resources, and support needed for successful implementation.

When There Are People Problems That Cannot Be Overcome

SES respondents tell us that the nature and motivation of the collaborators themselves is important to consider. A collaborative process is only as good as the people at the table. Put another way, the individuals who participate can make or break a collaboration. Senior executives suggest that it is better not to collaborate if the partners have predetermined solutions to the problem. Tied in with this, experts with narrow technical views who cannot shift to bigger picture thinking are ineffective collaborative partners. The SES executives interviewed agree that those who are not open to collaboration, and for whom maintaining face and ego is more important than the common goal, are the wrong people to have at the table. As one executive says, "If you have an impatient introvert who is overconfident and not flexible, you are going to have trouble in the collaboration world." In contrast, the "right people" at the table are those with information and expertise who can make decisions or have access to decision-makers, who bring resources, and who have the necessary skills and attributes.

When There Are Process Problems

Senior executives caution about collaborating when adequate processes are not in place. For example, an over-reliance on technology in a collaboration might be a signal not to collaborate. Several interviewees indicate that they would not enter into a collaboration that was exclusively technology-based and did not include processes that required face-to-face meetings. Human interaction is essential to establishing trust, understanding personal styles, and weathering the inevitable conflicts that arise in collaborative work, according to federal executives. Tied in with this are ideas about the media. Executives comment that collaboration requires confidentiality. Participants need the freedom to speak and disagree. Some issues will naturally have broad media exposure. Those may not be appropriate areas for collaboration.

To Collaborate Or Not?

One federal executive we interviewed recommends that all managers and leaders maintain a healthy skepticism about collaboration and weigh on a case-by-case basis whether to collaborate or not. She recommends answering the following questions, found in a National Audubon Society publication (Dukes, E. Franklin and Karen Firehocks, 2001), before agreeing to collaborate:
- Is this the right issue, time, and place for a collaborative approach?
- Will this approach help you reach pivotal performance objectives and better serve the public?
- Is the process being proposed or developed likely to be fair and effective?
- Are you and your organization suited for participation (mission, expertise, time)?

The Skill Set of the Successful SES Collaborator

We asked senior executives to describe the skill set of the successful collaborator. Based on the public management and leadership literature, we predicted that their answers would fall into three groups. First and foremost, we expected SES respondents would talk about strategic management and visioning (Goldsmith and Eggers 2004; Milward and Provan 2006; McGuire and Silvia 2009). Next, we thought SES respondents would talk about facilitation and collaborative problem-solving (Huxham *et al* 1993, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2005; Williams 2002; Crosby and Bryson 1992, McGuire and Silvia 2009; Silvia and McGuire 2010; Getha-Taylor 2008; Emerson and Smutco, 2011). The final skill we expected to hear about was interpersonal skills (Getha-Taylor 2008 Silvia and McGuire 2010; Emerson and Smutco, 2011).

Our survey respondents surprised us. The most frequent answers to this question deal with individual attributes and interpersonal skills, followed by group process skills, strategic leadership skills, and substantive/technical expertise (in that order). Figure 1 shows the number of times federal executives mention ideas in each category in their written responses. Since executives could have more than one answer, percentages are not calculated for this figure only.

"A successful collaborator has to be concerned not only with his or her own interests, but the interests of others. They must recognize the benefits of synergy and the great ideas it produces. That means recognizing that no one individual has all the best ideas.

Collaboration with others results in ultimately identifying the best ideas and solutions. In addition, respect is a foundational quality. When you respect someone enough to involve them and seek out their opinions, you help create mutual respect between the parties. The resulting collaboration builds an atmosphere of support, mutual goal setting, and shared accomplishments."

Senior executive interviewed
for this report

Previous studies have discussed collaborative competencies, including specific skills for collaborators, but the individual attributes that leaders possess have not been emphasized in the literature and have been mentioned by only a few authors. (See, e.g., Linden 2002; Crosby and Bryson 2005; and Morse 2008). Analyzing this part of our survey presented a complex challenge. The exploration took us far beyond skills into attributes, and into the middle of a debate over whether effective collaborators are born or made, and, more important, whether the individual attributes needed by collaborative leaders can be acquired.

Figure 1: Skill Set of the Successful Collaborator—Summary
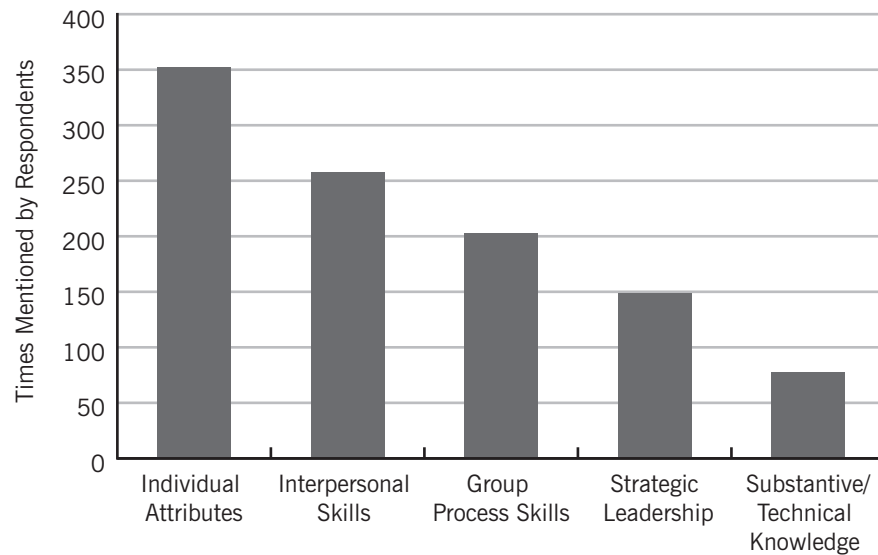
Individual Attributes

Federal executives believe collaborators have distinctive individual attributes. They say that the primary skill of the successful collaborator is an open mind. Respondents identify the need for collaborators to be open to new ideas, to the ideas of others, to change, and to helping others succeed. Patience is frequently mentioned as an important attribute. One executive calls it "the patience of a saint." The collaborator is seen as self-confident and risk-oriented. Other important attributes are being flexible, unselfish, persistent and diligent, diplomatic or tactful, empathetic, trustworthy and trusting, respectful, and goal-oriented. Respondents point to the need for a collaborator to demonstrate honesty and integrity, self-awareness, decisiveness, friendliness, and a sense of humor. Humility is also important. Figure 2 shows the percentage of survey respondents who mentioned each concept.
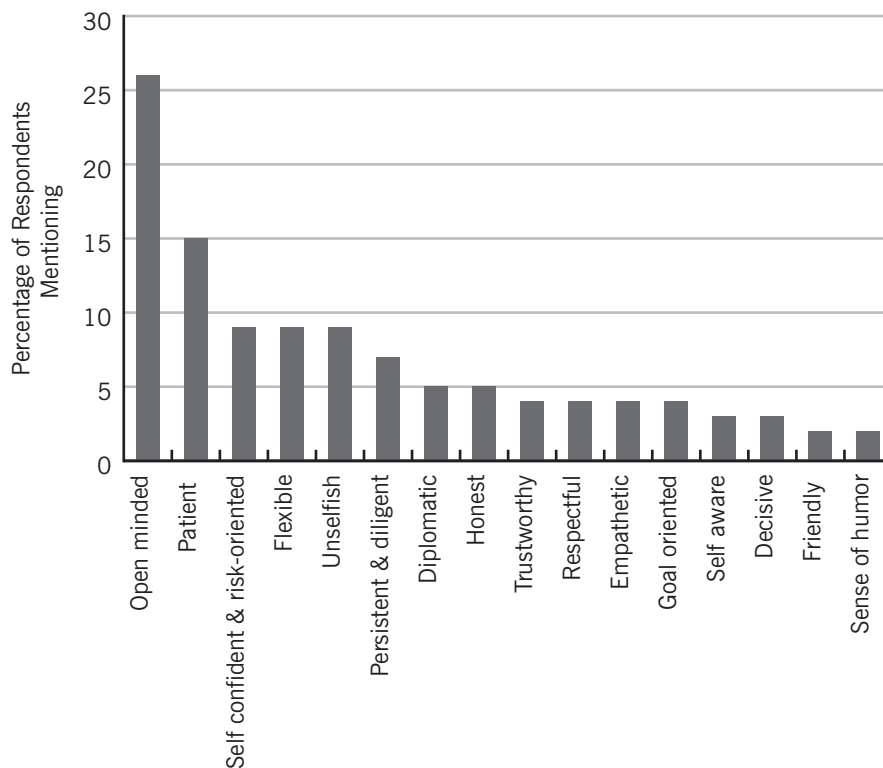
Interpersonal Skills

SES executives believe that a collaborator must be a good communicator, an excellent listener, and adept at working with people through interpersonal communication. As one respondent puts it, "The successful collaborator is open to listening to other points of view and has the ability to see how they may improve the policy/initiative." Figure 3 shows the percentage of survey respondents who mention each concept.
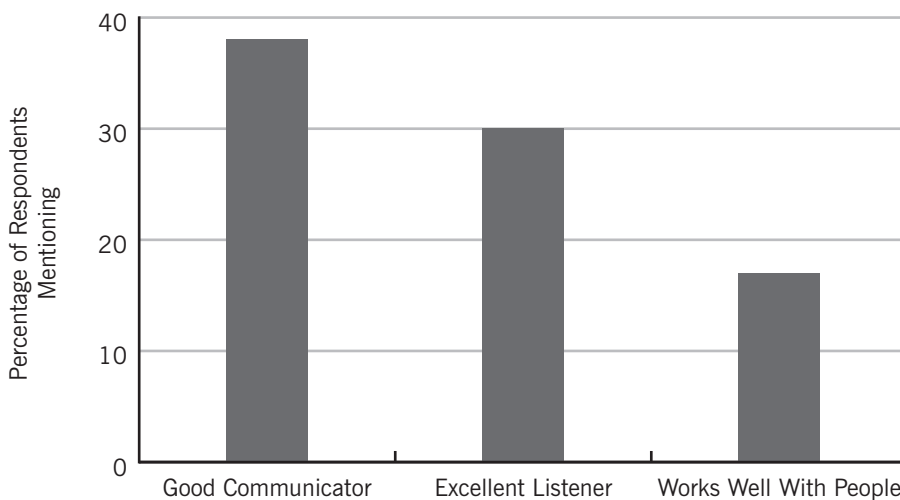
Group Process Skills

Group process skills are the category mentioned next as important for the successful collaborator. These include facilitation, negotiation, interest-based or collaborative problem-solving, skill in group dynamics, organization culture and dealing with personalities, compromise, conflict resolution including de-escalation, consensus building, and mediation, in that order. Figure 4 shows the percentage of survey respondents who mention each concept.

As a group process skill, conflict management in collaboration is brought up repeatedly throughout survey responses. About two-thirds of respondents answer "yes" when asked if collaboration yields conflict. When asked how they manage conflict within collaborations, the senior executives describe a range of methods. The conflict management strategy mentioned

Figure 2: The Skill Set of the Successful Collaborator—Individual Attributes

Figure 3: The Skill Set of the Successful Collaborator—Interpersonal Skills

Figure 4: The Skill Set of the Successful Collaborator—Group Process Skills
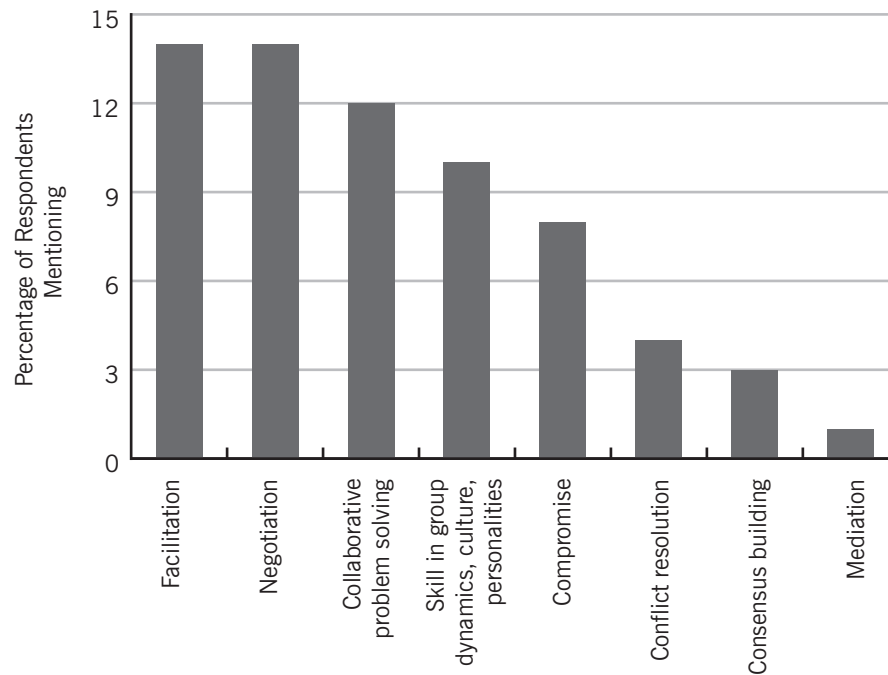
most frequently is "allowing conflict to happen." The use of conflict management processes such as interest-based problem-solving, mediation, and negotiation are mentioned next most often. Other, less commonly cited methods of managing conflict included compromise, breaking down the conflict into smaller issues, neutralizing opinions through diffusing and depersonalizing the conflict, and avoidance.

The most common facilitation strategies for managing conflict include identifying common ground, giving all parties at the table a voice, and listening. Another common strategy among respondents concerns clarifying the rules, frameworks, goals, and problems the collaborative group faces. This includes creating agreement frameworks, clarifying goals, identifying the core of the problem, reframing the issues, and focusing on outcomes. Less commonly cited methods include consensus building and relationship building. The O'Leary and Bingham 2007 IBM report, *A Manager's Guide to Resolving Conflicts in Collaborative Networks*, provides a more in-depth discussion of managing conflict in collaborations.

Strategic Leadership

Strategic leadership has been defined as "a person's ability to create a vision" (Ireland and Hitt, 1999). It is currently championed by many who study networks and collaboration (e.g., Milward and Provan, 2006). SES respondents agree that strategic leadership skills are important, yet these skills had the second to the lowest number of responses. Nonetheless, they describe the successful collaborator as a skilled visionary who has the ability to see the big picture and who thinks strategically, developing goals and the structures, inputs, and actions needed to achieve them. The collaborative manager exercises facilitative leadership and uses creative approaches to problem-solving. Less frequently mentioned but equally significant is the ability to share. Respondents mention the sharing of leadership, power, goals, and credit as central to collaboration. Figure 5 shows the percentage of survey respondents who mention each concept.

Substantive/Technical Knowledge

SES respondents identify expert technical knowledge of the subject area, project management and organizational skills, and time management as fifth in important skills for achieving the goals of a collaboration. Figure 6 shows the percentage of survey respondents who mention each concept in their written responses.

Figure 5: Skill Set of the Successful Collaborator—Strategic Leadership
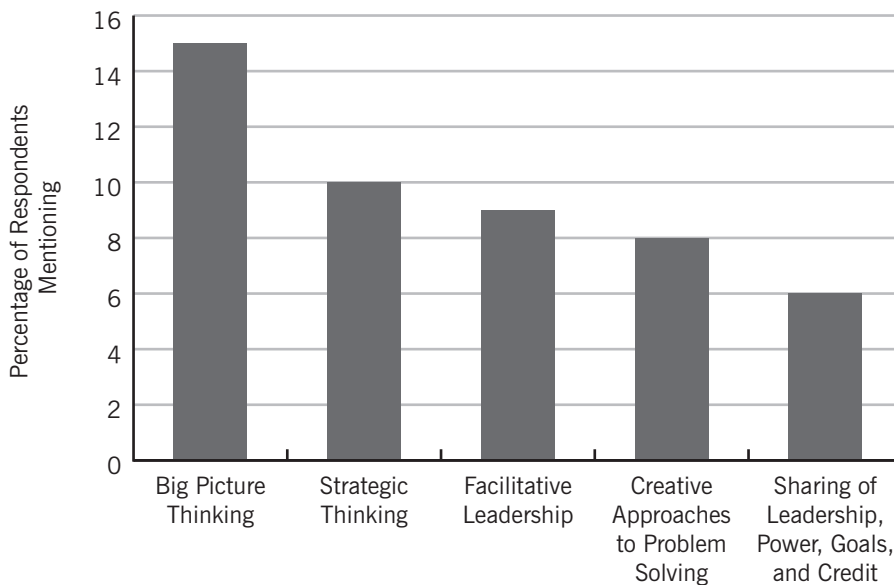
Figure 6: The Skill Set of the Successful Collaborator: Substantive/Technical Knowledge
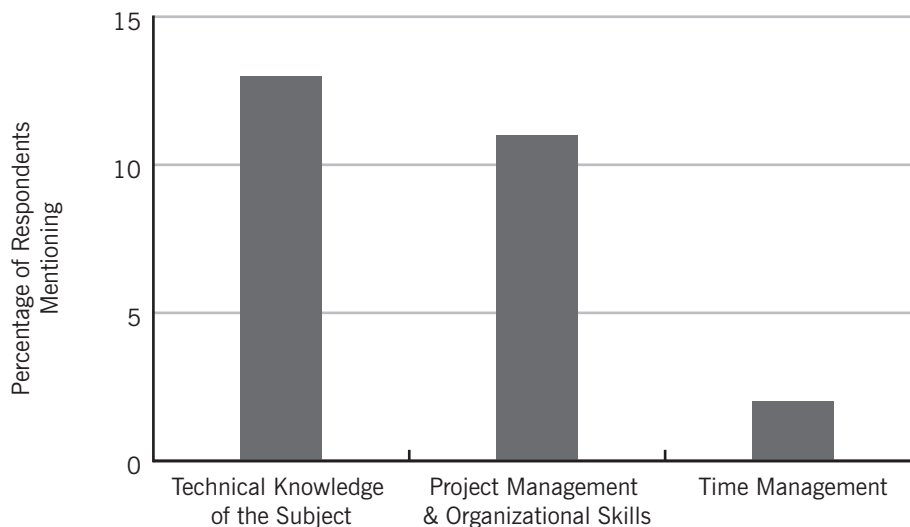
Recommendations

This report has shared how 304 federal executives in the United States government perceive collaboration: its catalysts, its barriers, and the skill set needed to be a collaborative manager. Executives have offered their insights about when to collaborate and when not to collaborate, and about the positive and negative results of collaboration as a management strategy. We conclude this report with eight tips for catalyzing successful collaborations.

Tip One: The Foundation for Success in Collaboration Is Common Purpose

Collaboration researchers have long pointed to common purpose as an essential component of collaboration, and senior executives agree 100 percent. "Problem-setting" and problem definition in the first phase of collaboration provide the opportunity for collaborators to recognize their interdependence and begin to create positive beliefs about what they can accomplish (Gray 1985). If collaborators cannot agree on common purpose, they may not be able to move forward and reach agreement in other areas (Huxham and Vangen 2005).

SES executives advise that collaborations should begin with a clearly stated common purpose, mutual goals and needs, and shared benefits. Given different organizations' cultures, languages, and outlooks, this is not always simple or quick, but it is worth the effort for many reasons. First, the required discussion begins to break down barriers and uncovers shared interests and other commonalities. This starts trust-building. Next, the initial discussion and agreement is the basis of ongoing accountability and serves as the cornerstone for the group. If the group cannot agree on common purpose and goals, collaboration may not be the most appropriate strategy.

Tip Two: Learn Interest-Based Collaborative Problem-Solving

Interest-based collaborative problem-solving is an idea that has come to encompass the principled negotiation approach advocated by the Harvard Negotiation Project (Fisher and Ury, 1992; Fisher and Brown, 1988; Ury, 1991; Ury, Brett and Goldberg, 1989). It includes collaborative, win-win bargaining, a process of discussion and give-and-take among individuals who want to find a solution to a common problem. It is usually contrasted with positional, confrontational, competitive, or adversarial bargaining (Lax and Sebenius, 1986). It is an outgrowth of work on integrative bargaining that originated with Mary Parker Follett, an early 20th–century scholar of public and private organizations and conflict.

SES respondents frequently use the language of interest-based collaborative problem-solving, including:

- Focus on interests

- Consider multiple options

- Go for joint gains

- Be creative

- Collaboration versus competition

- Seek to achieve as much of your interests as you can, while giving the other side as much of theirs

- Strive for good process

- Create the conditions for effective problem-solving

They recommend that leaders and managers learn how to do interest-based collaborative problem-solving (see Figure 7 and *How to Do Interest-Based Collaborative Problem-Solving*). For a step-by-step explanation of how to problem-solve collaboratively, see *A Manager's Guide to Resolving Conflicts in Collaborative Networks*, O'Leary and Bingham's 2007 IBM report.

How to Do Interest-Based Collaborative Problem-Solving

- Define the issue and frame it as a joint task to meet both parties' needs
- Educate each other about your interests (disclose and listen)
- Look for ways to expand the pie (create value before you claim value)
- Generate multiple options for settlement; if you get stuck, refer to definitions of the issue and team member's interests
- Evaluate the options (how well do they meet needs?)
- Select/modify options based on which best meet needs
- Use objective criteria to resolve impasses
- Develop a plan to implement and monitor the agreement.

Source: *A Manager's Guide to Resolving Conflicts in Collaborative Networks,* O'Leary and Bingham, 2007

Figure 7: The Differences Among Collaboration, Competition, and Compromise (adapted from Thomas, 1976)

Tip Three: Don't Be Afraid of Conflict—Expect It

Senior executives say that collaboration creates conflict, which can be a productive element of learning and creativity. Conflicts in collaboration are rooted in change. A successful collaboration often demands a change in one's style of dealing with others, in one's understanding of the problem, and in one's positions on issues. Expect people to be uncomfortable, and expect that discomfort to be expressed as conflict. The key is to acknowledge and manage the conflict so that it becomes a productive and energizing learning mechanism for the group. This takes time, patience, interaction, skilled facilitation, and openness.

Tip Four: Build in Face-to-Face Time

Collaboration is easier and more successful when the partners know and understand each other. Don't underestimate the need for face-to-face interaction and socializing to build understanding, trust, and commitment.

The executives who responded to our survey are users of technology, but they warn that teleconferences and e-mails are not substitutes for direct interaction and experience. Often, collaborations build from self-interests expressed not only in words, but in more subtle signals that technology cannot represent. A corollary to this tip is that the earlier in the collaboration you can involve all the players, the easier it is. Adding players later in the project means that the group has to re-socialize, often deal with new conflict, and enter again into trust-building.

Tip Five: Improvise

Facilitating, listening, negotiating, and integrating are only a few of the skills used by experienced collaborators. One of the most important overarching concepts is improvisation: shifting from one skill to the other as the need arises. Some of our executives called this situational thinking; others called it a merger of improv and strategy.

Improv is an acting technique of response to the stimulus of one's immediate environment. An openness to whatever arises is important (see *Lessons from Improv,* page 33). The challenge is the same: To be able to analyze the situation in real time, to match the need with an approach, and to have the skills to act. Strategic collaboration takes work and requires a combination of training, repeated hands-on experience, and learned instincts.

Tip Six: Ask Thoughtful Questions

One of the top skills of the successful collaborator is communication, very carefully defined as communication that expresses openness and elicits other points of views. Argyris and Schon (1996) refer to this as balancing advocacy and inquiry. Managers express what they say and feel, ask questions designed to understand the thoughts and feelings of others, and actively listen to what is said. Peter Senge (2006) finds that this model of communication is essential to learning. Senior executives use this communication model repeatedly to elicit ideas and build integrative solutions, to break down cultural barriers, to de-escalate conflicts, and to provide feedback to the group that heightens their performance.

Lessons from Improv

One of our most interesting interviews with an SES respondent centered on his use of improv performance techniques (acting in the moment and in response to the stimulus of one's immediate environment and remaining open to whatever arises) to learn to be a good collaborator. Improv taught him how to connect with others, solve unexpected problems in the moment, and create better ways of working. In addition, it taught him how to create something out of nothing on the fly, especially when "the best-laid plans" go awry. Some of his improv ideas to promote creative problem-solving as a collaborative leader include:

- *Don't judge* the initial statements of collaborators at the table. Give the process time.
- *Stay open* to the ideas of others.
- *Don't say no* immediately to offers or ideas. Instead, ask the thoughtful question or say "tell me more."
- *Don't stop the action* when brainstorming: You may stifle creativity.
- *Start anywhere* to forge solutions.
- *Pay attention* to what others are saying, as well as the dynamics in the room.
- *Face the facts* in front of you, not what you wish they would be.
- *Stay on course:* Try not to get off topic.
- *Wake up to the gifts* of other collaborators. Combine, build on, and enhance the diverse ideas that arise.
- *Make mistakes, please.* This attitude frees you up to be creative in your problem-solving.

Tip Seven: Don't Give Up

Senior executives are persistent. They tell us that without collaboration, we cannot expect to achieve national priorities. While collaboration may take time and may be work-intensive, it is important and essential. If you can, begin by keeping it simple, at a level that all can relate to. Don't be frustrated if the pace slows down and progress is uneven. Stay focused, and help others maintain focus with statements of purpose, ground rules, and dynamic measures. One executive reminds us that collaboration rarely yields the easy, efficient solution, but the innovative and effective one: "Step back from your ego and remember that tomorrow is another day."

Tip Eight: Focus on Performance

Successful collaborators know why they are there: to generate new solutions to the most difficult public problems. They are always conscious of representing their organizations and constituents. Egos and turf-protecting maneuvers, conflicting personal agendas, and poor communication are typical.

Executives warn that it is important to stay focused on the common goal, performance. This can get lost if negative group dynamics overwhelm the work of the group. As one senior executive puts it, "You won't always like the people you're working with, but that is not why you are there. Use your collaborative skill set to achieve your mission and the missions of others. If you focus on performance, that really cuts through all other issues. Remember, people are there to get something done on behalf of the public they serve."

Recommended Websites

- IBM Center for The Business of Government: www.businessofgovernment.org

- Maxwell School of Syracuse University Collaborative Governance Initiative: www.e-parc.org

- Policy Consensus Initiative: www.policyconsensus.org

- U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution: www.ecr.gov

- University of Michigan Ecosystem Management Collaboration: http://www.snre.umich.edu/ecomgt//collaboration.htm

- The Alliance for Regional Stewardship: www.regionalstewardship.org

Appendix I: Collaborative Skills, Attributes, and Strengths: Making Sense of SES Skill Set Findings

The findings presented in this report have received great interest from the academic community, largely because much of the public management literature touts strategic leadership as the number-one skill of the collaborative executive. Federal executives in this study rank strategic leadership fourth. In this section, we discuss why it is important to pay attention to individual attributes, interpersonal skills, and group process skills.

The reasons that organizations and the people who represent them collaborate are numerous. For most, it is an attempt to create a product, service, or outcome that one organization alone could not produce. While collaborations among SES respondents are often mandated, the most frequently cited reason for collaboration is, overwhelmingly, to improve performance. Our executives report this in very hard-nosed management terms: they were looking for a superior way to implement a program, to increase possible solutions to a problem, to increase economic benefits to the government, and to better serve the public. They collaborate primarily when their personal and organizational cost-benefit analyses indicate that it will be a savvy management decision to do so.

Given this rationale, one might hypothesize that strategy, visioning, and technical skills like cost-benefit analysis would be those most highly prized by SES respondents. Instead, as noted, strategic leadership skills, as a group, were ranked fourth overall by our respondents, and substantive/technical knowledge—although deemed important—came in fifth.

The extent to which individual attributes are ranked first in the skill set of successful collaborators is very significant. While other researchers have found that individual attributes are important (see, e.g., Linden 2002, Crosby and Bryson 2005, and Morse 2008), we believe that the empirical evidence has never been as strong as it is in our Collaborative Leadership Survey.

Why Our Findings Are Significant

As Salamon (2002) put it, collaborative governance shifts the emphasis from management skills and the control of large bureaucratic organizations to enablement skills, the skills required to engage partners arrayed horizontally in networks, and the skills to bring multiple stakeholders together for a common end in a situation of interdependence. Our findings concerning individual attributes, interpersonal skills, and group process skills are important because those are the skills that enable federal executives to do what Salamon described.

The discussion of individual traits in the management and leadership literature began in the early 1900s when "great man" theories were popular. These theories focused on "identifying the innate qualities and characteristics possessed by great social, political and military leaders" (Northouse 2001: 15). Scholars at that time believed that leaders were born, not made, and numerous studies of "great" leaders were carried out to determine the specific traits that clearly separated leaders from followers (Bass 1990; Jago 1982). Trait research was challenged, however, when the idea of situational leadership grew in appeal. "An individual with leadership traits who was a leader in one situation might not be a leader in another situation. Rather than being a quality that individuals possessed, leadership was reconceptualized as a relationship between people and a social situation" (Northouse 2001: 15; Stogdill, 1948, 1974).

Personal traits or attributes were still seen as important, but were to be viewed as relative to the situation at hand. Studies shifted to understanding characteristics of transformational leaders and leadership style. However, scholars continue to study leadership using trait theory. In their well-known work, Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991:49) claimed that "successful leaders are not like other people" and identified several traits as separating leaders from non-leaders: Drive, the desire to lead, honesty/integrity, self-confidence, cognitive ability, and knowledge of the business. Northouse summarized major leadership traits as intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability (Northouse 2001: 19-20). Judge *et al* (2002), in a work reexamining the five-factor personality model and leadership, identified extroversion, emotional stability, conscientiousness, and openness to experience as correlated to leadership effectiveness. Trait theory is alive and well today. At the same time, there is a realization that situations matter, that followers matter, and that any one person may not be a stellar leader at all times.

But which of the specific attributes mentioned by SES respondents are important for the skilled collaborator? As noted, the most frequently mentioned attributes, in the order in which they were most mentioned, are:

- Open-minded
- Patient
- Self-confident
- Risk-oriented
- Flexible
- Unselfish
- Persistent
- Diligent
- Diplomatic
- Honest
- Trustworthy
- Respectful
- Empathetic
- Goal-oriented
- Self-aware
- Decisive
- Friendly
- Possessing a sense of humor

Comparing these to the top five listed by Northouse, there is overlap in three areas: determination (persistent), integrity (honest, trustworthy), and sociability (friendly, sense of humor). Similarly, there is some overlap with Kirkpatrick and Locke in two areas: drive (persistent) and honesty/integrity (honest). Open-minded is among the most frequently mentioned attributes identified by the SES respondents; this is somewhat similar to the personality trait, "openness to experience." This survey's responses are also similar to more recent work by Morse (2008) that describes the attributes of collaborative leadership as a collaborative mindset, passion toward outcomes, system thinking, openness and risk taking, sense of mutuality and connectedness, and humility. The collaborative mindset (coined by Linden 2002) is described as seeing synergy, connections, and possibilities, rather than problems. We see our SES executive self-reported individual attributes as capturing at least some aspects of the collaborative mindset.

Delving deeper into the SES respondents' answers yields more evidence about the skill set of the successful collaborator. One senior executive puts it this way:

> A successful collaborator has to be concerned not only with his or her own interests, but the interests of others. They must recognize the benefits of synergy and the great ideas it produces. That means recognizing that no one individual has all the best ideas. Collaboration with others results in ultimately identifying the best ideas and solutions. In addition, respect is a foundational quality. When you respect someone enough to involve them and seek out their opinions, you help create mutual respect between the parties. The resulting collaboration builds an atmosphere of support, mutual goal setting, and shared accomplishments.

Another senior executive offers this insight:

> A successful collaborator must have a genuinely open mind and maintain a willingness to be persuaded. The least successful (or at least the most frustrating) collaborators are just the opposite—they enter the relationship with the idea that it is a competition and getting their way is paramount to their own success.

It makes sense, then, that interpersonal skills were mentioned frequently as pivotal to the skill set of the successful collaborator.

Of course strategic leadership skills and technical skills are of great importance, but they are not the most important factors prompting successful collaborations according to federal executives. Our findings are in part similar to those of Daniel Goleman, who found that IQ and technical skills were "threshold capabilities" to effective leadership (2004: 2), but that emotional intelligence—comprised of self-awareness (self-confidence, realistic self-assessment, self-deprecating sense of humor), self-regulation (trustworthiness and integrity, comfort with ambiguity, openness to change), motivation (strong drive to achieve, optimism even in the face of failure, organizational commitment), empathy (expertise in building and retaining talent, cross-cultural sensitivity, service to citizens and customers) and social skill (effectiveness in leading change, persuasiveness, expertise in building and leading teams)—was the *sine qua non* of leadership.

The correlation of SES respondents' insights with Goleman's emotional intelligence model is striking: persistent, open-minded and honest (self-regulation), humorous (self-awareness), friendly, and unselfish (empathy). Our findings are different from Goleman's in that we conclude that our 304 federal executive respondents send a clear message that strategic leadership (including visioning) and technical skills are not threshold capabilities to successful collaborations, but secondary variables affecting the success of a collaboration. More important, according to SES respondents, are individual attributes, interpersonal skills, and group process skills. One reason for this may be the political climate in which they work every day.

Table A.1: The Emotional Competence Framework

Personal Competence	Social Competence
Self-Awareness • Emotional Awareness, Accurate Self-Assessment, Self-Confidence **Self-Regulation** • Self-control, Trustworthiness, Conscientiousness, Adaptability, Innovation **Motivation** • Achievement Drive, Commitment, Initiative, Optimism	**Empathy** • Understanding Others, Developing Others, Service Orientation, Leveraging Diversity, Political Awareness **Social Skills** • Influence, Communication, Conflict Management, Leadership, Change Catalyst, Building Bonds, Collaboration and Cooperation, Team Capabilities

Source: Goleman, 1998, pp. 26-–27

Using Skills and Attributes Consciously and Strategically

It is one thing to possess skills and attributes. It is another to use them consciously and strategically. Senior executives are situational leaders who analyze the environment in which they find themselves, consider the skills and attributes that will contribute to success, and use those they deem appropriate. One executive describes it this way: "Depending on the environment, I will work one way. If I am dealing with a different bunch of folks (from local government, as opposed to federal), I will work in a different way because their interests and concerns are different." Another comments, "I think that traits are applied strategically, but in a sense they are part of the tool kit of who we are as leaders. You assess the situation and you have to do the right thing and you have to apply the right trait or attribute (e.g. patience)."

Which brings us to an important question: Can the skills and attributes that promote successful collaborations be taught? Or is it just the lucky few, born with certain personality traits, who can and should participate in collaborative activities? Again, we turn to Daniel Goleman for insight. Goleman maintains that, while certain people are born with greater levels of emotional intelligence and that emotional intelligence increases with age, it can be taught. Goleman uses the example of an executive who does not listen; she interrupts people and does not pay close attention to what they're saying. Goleman emphasizes that such an individual can learn emotional intelligence, but she "needs to be motivated to change, and then she needs practice and feedback from others" (Goleman 2004: 4). Goleman continues:

> A colleague or coach could be tapped to let the executive know when she has been observed failing to listen. She would then have to replay the incident and give a better response; that is, demonstrate her ability to absorb what others are saying. And the executive could be directed to observe certain executives who listen well and to mimic their behavior (Goleman 2004: 4).

Rautalinko and Lisper (2004) report on the successful training of insurance company employees in the area of reflective listening and "no lose problem-solving." This training consisted of 24 hours spread over four days. Participants observed a model and then role-played reflective listening, including using open-ended instead of closed-ended questions.

Goleman describes other ways to increase one's emotional intelligence: live in a foreign country where you do not speak the language; monitor your reactions there to the unfamiliar and your openness to people who are different from you. Use on-the-job situations as opportunities to practice listening and hearing people. Have yourself videotaped in meetings; ask those who work for and with you to critique your ability "to acknowledge and understand the feelings of others" (Goleman 2004: 4).

Goleman advises organizations to be cautious of traditional training techniques for developing emotional competencies in executives. He provides a set of comprehensive guidelines outlined in the box below. They include assessing the job to be done, assessing the strengths and limitations of the individual, delivering assessments with care, and motivating with clear payoffs.

Based on our research and our experience as trainers and teachers of both executive education and management graduate students, we believe that the skills of the successful collaborator can be taught to most individuals. For example, O'Leary, Bingham, and Choi (2010) offer the theoretical and pedagogical underpinnings of a course that teaches students how to work successfully in a collaborative network, including facilitation skills, communications skills, and collaborative problem-solving skills. The Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration (PARCC) at the Maxwell School of Syracuse University offers free online cases and simulations on collaboration to be used in the classroom and in training (www.e-parc.org or www.maxwell.syr.edu/parcc.aspx/eparc/).

Leadership education programs have long emphasized the role of self-assessment and awareness as the foundation for executive development. The Center for Creative Leadership, Federal Executive Institute, and National Training Lab (to name a few) all feature extensive assessment centers. This approach is grounded in the work of many who argue that leadership education should promote the understanding of personality attributes and an understanding of which attributes are appropriate for a given situation (Boyatzis 2002). Others claim that leaders cannot be open to new ideas unless they understand their own hidden mental models (Senge 2006:164) and espoused theories (Argyris 1985:80). Bingham, Sandfort, and O'Leary (2008) point to the work of Donald Schon and others to introduce reflection into the teaching of professional students through case studies and situational exercises. Similarly, Morse forcefully argues that leadership development begins with personal self-awareness, reflection, and mentoring: "A focus on skills or tools will be useless if the personal attributes are not in alignment. The attributes must come first." (Morse 2008: 97).

Guidelines for Emotional Competence Training

- Assess the job and focus on competencies that matter
- Assess the strengths and limitations of the individual
- Deliver assessments with care
- Gauge readiness and focus training on those who are ready
- Motivate with clear pay-offs
- Help people choose their learning goals
- Focus on plan and specific changes
- Help when people relapse
- Give feedback and support
- Encourage practice
- Provide models and examples
- Encourage change that fits with organizational values
- Reinforce change
- Evaluate successes and failures

Source: Goleman 1998: 251–253

Appendix II: Research Methods, Demographics, and Respondents' Organizations

Research Methods and Research Team

As key leaders in federal government, SES members are the link between Presidential appointees and the rest of federal workforce, and serve in important roles in national policy-making and government activities. In their selection, the Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) identified by the OPM are required for their entry. These are Leading Change, Leading People, Results Driven, Business Acumen, and Learning Coalitions. Of the five qualifications, the ECQ that best captures our definition of collaborative leadership is "building coalitions," described by OPM on its website as "the ability to build coalitions internally and with other Federal agencies, State and local governments, nonprofit and private sector organizations, foreign governments, or international organizations to achieve common goals." The competencies OPM requires to be successful at coalition building are partnering, political savvy, and influence/negotiating.

As of 2011, there were 7,893 SES members (Carey, Congressional Research Service, 2011). We asked both career and non-career SES members to respond to a confidential, online survey with open-ended questions about their collaboration experiences. The e-mail addresses of our survey sample were obtained from "Leadership Library on the Internet," an electronic source of contact information of all federal agencies (www.leadershipdirectories.com) and Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

We received a total of 305 usable responses from 71 federal agencies, which is a 5.05 percent response rate. Initially, the low overall response rate was disappointing, yet by reading, coding, and analyzing the 305 responses, we realized that, with one exception, we had attracted the believers in collaboration. Three hundred and four out of 305 SES members answered "yes" to the question of whether they use collaboration as a management tool. We call these respondents believers because they provided over 500 single-spaced pages of generally positive comments and insights about collaboration. Given the busy schedules of senior executives, there would be the incentive to simply delete our request for information. These 304 respondents went in the opposite direction, offering example after example about how they used collaboration as a management strategy. We found tremendous value in learning about the skill set of the successful collaborator from those who do it all the time.

Open-ended survey data were analyzed using ATLAS.ti., a qualitative analysis software package (http://www.atlasti.com/). Codes were generated based on inductive readings of the responses as well as a priori research questions. The final codebook contains 249 codes nested in 44 code families that hold the schema. In order to facilitate quality control, the coders participated in the development of the codebook and in intensive inter-coder alignment activities over a three-month period prior to actual coding. In terms of intersubjective coding agreement, the group agreed 80 percent on average about which codes to apply to give questions and close to 95 percent on what codes not to apply.

Table A.2: Demographics of 305 SES Survey Respondents

Category	Count	Percent	Total
Age			305
22–35	5	2%	
36–45	32	10%	
46–55	116	38%	
56–65	130	43%	
65+	22	7%	100%
Gender			
Female	111	36%	
Male	194	64%	100%
Education			
Not College Graduate	7	2%	
College Graduate	60	20%	
Advanced Degree	238	78%	100%
Location			
D.C.	211	69%	
Not D.C.	94	31%	100%
Organization Tenure (years)			
0-1	41	13%	
2-3	37	12%	
4-5	18	6%	
6-7	12	4%	
8-9	17	6%	
10+	180	59%	100%
Position tenure (years)			
0-1	87	29%	
2-3	109	36%	
4-5	44	14%	
6-7	23	8%	
8-9	14	5%	
10+	28	9%	100%
Type			
Career SES	274	90%	
Non-career SES	26	9%	
Non-response	6	2%	100%

List of SES Respondents' Organizations

Administration on Aging
Border Control
Bureau of Indian Affairs
Bureau of Land Management
Census Bureau
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
Consumer Product Safety Commission
Department of Agriculture (includes Forest Service)
Department of Commerce
Department of Defense
Department of Education
Department of Energy
Department of Health and Human Services
Department of Housing and Urban Development
Department of Justice
Department of Labor
Department of State
Department of the Interior
Department of the Treasury (includes FinCEN; Bureau of Public Debt, Office of Financing)
Department of Transportation
Department of Veterans Affairs
Drug Enforcement Administration
Economic Development Administration
Energy Information Administration
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (includes USITC)
Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Federal Highway Administration
Federal Labor Relations Authority
Federal Trade Commission
General Services Administration
Government Accountability Office
Health Resources and Services Administration
Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Interagency Council on Homelessness
Internal Revenue Service
Medical Center or Hospital
Military (Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR; SAF/GCQ))
National Aeronautic and Space Administration
National Archives and Records Administration
National Institute of Health
National Institute of Standards and Technology
National Institute on Aging
National Labor Relations Board
National Nuclear Security Administration
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and National Weather Service
National Telecommunications and Information Administration
National Transportation Safety Board
National Science Foundation

Department of Homeland Security
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Occupational Safety and Health Administration
Office of Employment Discrimination Complaint Adjudication
Office of Government Commerce
Office of Inspector General
Office of Management and Budget
Office of National Drug Control Policy
Office of Personnel Management
Office of Planning and Performance Management
Office of the Secretary of Defense
Office of the United States Trade Representative
Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory
Railroad Retirement Board
Selective Service
Small Business Administration
Social Security Administration
Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration
United States Geological Survey
United States Environmental Protection Agency

References

Agranoff, Robert, and Michael McGuire. 2004. *Collaborative Public Management: New Strategies for Local Governments.* Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Argyris, Chris and Donald A. Schon. 1996. *Organizational Learning II: Theory, Method and Practice.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Argyris, Chris. 1974. *Behind the Front Page; Organizational Self-Renewal in a Metropolitan Newspaper*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Argyris, Chris. 1974. *The Applicability of Organizational Sociology.* Cambridge, UK : Cambridge University Press.

Argyris, Chris. 1985. *Strategy, Change, and Defensive Routines.* Boston, MA: Pitman.

Bass, Bernard M. 1990. "From Transactional to Transformational Leadership: Learning to Share the Vision." *Organizational Dynamics,* Vol. 18 no 3.

Bingham, Lisa Blomgren and Rosemary O'Leary. 2008. *Big Ideas in Collaborative Public Management*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

Bingham, Lisa Blomgren, Jodi Sandfort and Rosemary O'Leary. 2008. "Learning to Do and Doing to Learn: Teaching Managers to Collaborate in Networks." In Lisa Blomgren Bingham and Rosemary O'Leary (eds), *Big Ideas in Collaborative Public Management.* Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

Bingham, Lisa Blomgren and Rosemary O'Leary. 2007. *A Manager's Guide to Resolving Conflicts in Collaborative Networks*. IBM Center for The Business of Government.

Boyatzis, Richard E. 2002. "Core Competencies in Coaching Others to Overcome Dysfunctional Behavior." In Vanessa Urch Druskat, Fabio Sala, Gerald Mount (eds), *Linking Emotional Intelligence and Performance at Work: Current Research Evidence with Individuals and Groups*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Boyatzis, Richard E. 2002. "Unleashing the Power of Self-Directed Learning." In Ronald R. Sims (ed), *Changing the Way We Manage Change.* Westport, CT: Quorum Books.

Carey, Maeve P. 2011. *The Senior Executive Service: Background and Options for Reform.* Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service.

Crosby, John M. and Barbara C. Bryson. (1992). *Leadership for the Common Good: Tackling Public Problems in a Shared-Power World*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Dukes, E. Franklin and Karen Firehocks. 2001. *Collaboration: A Guide for Environmental Advocates.* Washington D.C.: National Audubon Society.

Emerson, Kirk and Stephen Smutco. 2011. *UNCG Guide to Collaborative Competence*. University Network for Collaborative Governance, National Policy Consensus Center, Portland, OR.

Fisher, Roger and Scott Brown. 1988. "How Can We Accept Those Whose Conduct Is Unacceptable?" *Negotiation Journal,* Vol. 4 no 2 (April).

Fisher, Roger and William Ury. 1992. *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.

Getha-Taylor, Heather. 2008. "Identifying Collaborative Competencies." *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, Vol. 28.

Getha-Taylor, Heather. 2008. "Learning Indicators and Collaborative Capacity: Applying Action Learning Principles to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security." *Public Administration Quarterly,* Vol. 32 no 2.

Goldsmith, Stephen and William D. Eggers. 2004. *Governing by Network: the New Shape of the Public Sector*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institute.

Goleman, Daniel. 2004. "What Makes a Good Leader?" *Harvard Business Review,* Vol. 78 no 2.

Gray, Barbara. (1985). "Conditions Facilitating Interorganizational Collaboration." *Human Relations* vol. 38 no 10 (October 1985).

Huxham, Chris. 1993. "Pursuing Collaborative Advantage." *The Journal of the Operational Research*, Vol. 44 no 6 (June 1993).

Chris Huxham, 1996. *Creating Collaborative Advantage*. Thousand Oaks, CA : Sage Publications.

Huxham, Chris and Siv Vangen. 2000. "Ambiguity, Complexity, and Dynamics in the Membership of Collaboration." *Human Relations*, Vol. 53 no 6.

Huxham, Chris and Siv Vangen. 2004. *Managing to Collaborate : The Theory and Practice of Collaborative Advantage.* London : Routledge.

Huxham, Chris and Siv Evy Vangen. 2005. *Managing To Collaborate: The Theory and Practice of Collaborative Advantage*. New, NY: Routledge.

Ireland, R. Duane and Michael A. Hitt. 1999. "Achieving and Maintaining Strategic Competitiveness in the 21st Century: The Role of Strategic Leadership." *The Academy of Management Executive,* Vol. 13 no 1 (Feb.).

Jago, Arthur G. 1982. "Leadership: Perspectives in Theory and Research." *Management Science*, Vol. 28 no 3 (March).

Judge, Timothy A., Joyce E. Bono, Remus Ilies and Megan W. Gerhardt. (2002). "Personality and Leadership: A Qualitative and Quantitative Review." *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 87 no 4 (August).

Kirkpatrick, Shelley A. and Edwin A. Locke. 1991. "Leadership: Do Traits Matter?" *Academy of Management Executive*, Vol. 5 no 2.

Lax, David A. and James K. Sebenius. 1986. *The Manager as Negotiator: Bargaining for Cooperation and Competitive Gain.* New York, NY: The Free Press.

McGuire, Michael and Chris Silvia. 2009. "Does Leadership in Networks Matter? Examining the Effect of Leadership Behaviors on Managers' Perceptions of Network Effectiveness." *Public Performance and Management Review*, Vol. 33 no 1 (September).

McGuire, Michael and Chris Silvia. 2009. "How Good? The Impact of Leadership on Network Effectiveness." Paper presented at *The 10th Public Management Research Association Conference*, October 1–3, Columbus, OH.

Milward, H. Brinton and Keith G. Provan. (2006). *A Manager's Guide to Choosing and Using Collaborative Networks*. Report published by the IBM Center for The Business of Government, Washington, DC.

Morse, Ricardo S. 2008. "Developing Public Leaders in an Age of Collaborative Governance," Chapter 6 in Ricardo S. Morse and Terry S. Buss, eds., *Innovations in Public Leadership Development.* Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

Northouse. Peter G. 2001. *Leadership: Theory and Practice.* Second Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

O'Leary, Rosemary and Lisa Blomgren Bingham. 2007. *A Manager's Guide to Resolving Conflict in Collaborative Networks.* Washington, D.C. IBM Center for The Business of Government.

O'Leary, Rosemary, Lisa Blomgren Bingham and Yujin Choi. 2010. "Teaching Collaborative Leadership: Ideas and Lessons for the Field." *Journal of Public Education,* Vol. 16 no 4.

Rautalinko, Erik and Hans-Olof Lisper. 2004. "Effects of Training Reflective Listening in a Corporate Setting." *Journal of Business and Psychology,* Vol. 18 no 3.

Salamon, Lester M. 2002. *A Guide to the New Government*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Senge, Peter M. 2006. *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of The Learning Organization.* New York, NY: Doubleday.

Siliva, Chris and Michael McGuire. 2010. "The Effect of Problem Severity, Managerial and Organizational Capacity, and Agency Structure on Intergovernmental Collaboration: Evidence from Local Emergency Management." *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 70 no 2 (March/April).

Stogdill, Ralph M. 1948. "Personal Factors Associated with Leadership: A Survey of the Literature." *The Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied*, Vol. 25 no 1.

Stogdill, Ralph M. 1974. *Handbook of Leadership: A Survey of the Literature*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Thomas, Kenneth W. 1976. "Conflict and Conflict Management." In *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*. M.D. Dunnette (ed) Chicago, IL: Rand McNally College Publishers.

Ury, William. 1991. *Getting Past No: Negotiating with Difficult People*. New York, NY: Bantam.

Ury, William, Jeanne M. Brett and Stephen B. Goldberg. 1989. *Getting Disputes Resolved: Designing Systems to Cut the Cost of Conflict.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Williams, Paul. 2002. "The Competent Boundary Spanner." *Public Administration,* Vol. 80, no. 1 (Spring).

Acknowledgements

About the Authors

Rosemary O'Leary is Distinguished Professor of Public Administration and International Affairs, Phanstiel Chair in Strategic Management and Leadership, and Director of the Collaborative Governance Initiative at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. She is the former Co-Director of the Syracuse University Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration (PARCC). O'Leary is also the Birkhead-Burkhead Professor of Teaching Excellence. Previously she was a professor of public and environmental affairs at Indiana University and a co-founder and co-director of the Indiana Conflict Resolution Institute.

O'Leary is the author or editor of 11 books and more than 100 articles on public management and public policy. She has won nine national research awards, including Best Book in Public and Nonprofit Management for 2000 (given by the Academy of Management), Best Book in Environmental Management and Policy for 2005 and 1999 (given by the American Society for Public Administration, ASPA), and the Mosher Award, which she won twice, for best article by an academician published in *Public Administration Review.*

From 2003 to 2005, O'Leary was a member of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Return to Flight Task Group, assembled in response to the Columbia space shuttle accident. In 2004, she also served as a member of NASA's Aerospace Safety Advisory Panel. O'Leary has worked as a consultant to the U.S. Department of the Interior, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution, the National Science Foundation, the National Academy of Sciences, the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, and the International City/County Management Association. She has worked as an attorney and as an administrator in Kansas state government.

Catherine M. Gerard serves as Director of the Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration (PARCC), Associate Director of Executive Education Programs, and Adjunct Professor of Public Administration at Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. In her role as Director of PARCC, she oversees an internationally known center for theory-building and practice in conflict and collaboration. Her research focus is the education and practice of managers and students in the skills of collaborative leadership and change. As Associate Director of Executive Education, she oversees the executive degree programs and develops and instructs executive education programs for domestic and international customers.

Previously, Gerard was Assistant Director for the New York State Governor's Office of Employee Relations, where she led a consulting and training organization that designed and implemented an award-winning statewide management training and organizational effectiveness system. Throughout her 13-year state government career, she specialized in assisting agency leaders with organizational change efforts and in developing system-wide training programs. In addition, Ms. Gerard served as adjunct faculty member at the Rockefeller College of Public Affairs at SUNY Albany.

Ms. Gerard teaches leadership and collaborative management for managers at many levels. Her graduate courses in leadership, group conflict, and conflict fundamentals at the Maxwell School are targeted for mid-career managers from public and nonprofit organizations in the United States and abroad. She recently conducted leadership training for executives in New York State government, the United States government, and officials from China, Thailand, and India. Ms. Gerard consults with public and nonprofit organizations in the areas of strategic planning, leadership/management, organizational change, team-building and conflict resolution.

Key Contact Information

To contact the authors:

Rosemary O'Leary
Distinguished Professor
Phanstiel Chair in Strategic Management and Leadership
Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration
Suite 400 Eggers Hall
The Maxwell School of Syracuse University
Syracuse, NY 13244
(315) 443-4991

e-mail: roleary@maxwell.syr.edu

Catherine Gerard
Director
Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration
Suite 400 Eggers Hall
The Maxwell School of Syracuse University
Syracuse, NY 13244
(315) 443-4000

e-mail: cgerard@maxwell.syr.edu

Reports from

IBM Center for The Business of Government

For a full listing of IBM Center publications, visit the Center's website at **www.businessofgovernment.org.**

Recent reports available on the website include:

Assessing the Recovery Act

Recovery Act Transparency: Learning from States' Experience by Francisca M. Rojas
Key Actions That Contribute to Successful Program Implementation: Lessons from the Recovery Act by Richard
     Callahan, Sandra O. Archibald, Kay A. Sterner, and H. Brinton Milward
Managing Recovery: An Insider's View by G. Edward DeSeve
*Virginia's Implementation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Forging a New Intergovernmental
     Partnership* by Anne Khademian and Sang Choi

Collaborating Across Boundaries

Designing Open Projects: Lessons From Internet Pioneers by David Witzel
Designing Collaborative Networks: Lessons Learned from Public Safety by Jane Fedorowicz and Steve Sawyer

Conserving Energy and the Environment

Implementing Sustainability in Federal Agencies: An Early Assessment of President Obama's Executive Order 13514
     by Daniel J. Fiorino
Breaking New Ground: Promoting Environmental and Energy Programs in Local Government by James H. Svara,
     Anna Read, and Evelina Moulder

Fostering Transparency and Democracy

Assessing Public Participation in an Open Government Era: A Review of Federal Agency Plans by Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer,
     Joe Goldman, and David Stern
Using Geographic Information Systems to Increase Citizen Engagement by Sukumar Ganapati

Improving Performance

Forging Governmental Change: Lessons from Transformations Led by Robert Gates of DOD and Francis Collins of NIH
     by W. Henry Lambright
Improving Government Contracting: Lessons from Bid Protests of Department of Defense Source Selections by
     Steven M. Maser
A Guide to Data-Driven Performance Reviews by Harry Hatry and Elizabeth Davies

Managing Finances

Strategies to Cut Costs and Improve Performance by Charles L. Prow, Debra Cammer Hines, and Daniel B. Prieto

Strengthening Cybersecurity

A Best Practices Guide for Mitigating Risk in the Use of Social Media by Alan Oxley
A Best Practices Guide to Information Security by Clay Posey, Tom L. Roberts, and James F. Courtney

Transforming the Workforce

Engaging a Multi-Generational Workforce: Practical Advice for Government Managers by Susan Hannam and Bonni Yordi
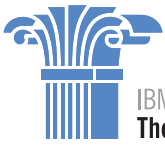*Implementing Telework: Lessons Learned from Four Federal Agencies* by Scott P. Overmyer

Using Technology

Working the Network: A Manager's Guide for Using Twitter in Government by Ines Mergel
Reverse Auctioning: Saving Money and Increasing Transparency by David C. Wyld
Using Online Tools to Engage—and be Engaged by—The Public by Matt Leighninger

About the IBM Center for The Business of Government

Through research stipends and events, the IBM Center for The Business of Government stimulates research and facilitates discussion of new approaches to improving the effectiveness of government at the federal, state, local, and international levels.

About IBM Global Business Services

With consultants and professional staff in more than 160 countries globally, IBM Global Business Services is the world's largest consulting services organization. IBM Global Business Services provides clients with business process and industry expertise, a deep understanding of technology solutions that address specific industry issues, and the ability to design, build, and run those solutions in a way that delivers bottom-line value. To learn more visit: ibm.com

For more information:

Daniel J. Chenok
Executive Director
IBM Center for The Business of Government
600 14th Street NW
Second Floor
Washington, DC 20005
202-551-9342
website: www.businessofgovernment.org
e-mail: businessofgovernment@us.ibm.com

Stay connected with the IBM Center on:

or, send us your name and
e-mail to receive our newsletters.