



3 Ways to Build Effective Collaboration



DEDICATE TIME

Dedicate time, preferably at the beginning of the year, for team members to engage in self and social awareness reflections. The better individuals on a team know themselves and know one another, the more understanding and gracious they will be when expected to work together. In fact, spending time on this will more than double the productivity and impact of teams, leaving individuals feeling valued, empowered, and inspired.



EXPLICITLY TEACH & MODEL

The tendency is often to assume that where two or more are gathered, collaboration is happening. But steer clear of falling into the trap of faux collaboration. Instead, take opportunities to explicitly teach and model effective collaboration skills such as listening to learn, asking clarifying questions, recognizing and provoking others' geniuses, ensuring all have a voice at the table, and handling conflict productively.



PLAN INTENTIONALLY

Collaboration, even between two people, can be messy. In fact, "messy" is often where the great work happens. But there is a difference between "messy" and "sloppy". Sloppy work is the result of a lack of goals and plans. It lacks meaning and vision. True collaboration relies on intentionally set goals and intentionally created plans to work toward a collective vision, keeping in mind that plans can be adjusted accordingly along the way (because success can be messy).