

# KEEPING FIT IN COLLABORATIVE WORK: A Survey to Self-Assess Collaborative Functioning

Often, collaboratives get off to a great start with an infusion of resources, and then lose impetus as projects come and go. Successful collaboratives have the willingness and ability to assess their organizational functioning as well as progress in strategies, projects or activities.

## Guidelines for Using the Survey:

1. **Collaborative members can complete the survey separately** and then come together to discuss results and plan action steps. Modify the assessment criteria to fit your group's needs.
2. **Once members have completed the survey, the group can determine what areas were most often marked "successful" or "partially successful."** These are areas in which your collaborative is well functioning and strong. How can you maximize these strengths?
3. **Now, determine which questions were most often marked "challenging" or "very challenging."** These are areas that require action. What will you do to improve local collaborative functioning in these areas? Who is willing to take the lead?
4. **Create a plan of action** that includes the name of someone who has agreed to take the lead and a timeline for implementation.

**Please rate the following questions in each area using the scale below:**

### **I. Shared Vision**

1 = Successful    2 = Partially Successful    3 = Challenging    4 = Very Challenging

1. Our collaborative revisits our vision periodically and revises when needed.	1	2	3	4
2. Our vision is the starting point for setting goals, developing strategies, and creating change.	1	2	3	4
3. Our vision represents input from a broad range of people in the community.	1	2	3	4
4. Collaborative members can see where their personal vision fits in the shared vision.	1	2	3	4

## II. Inclusivity & Participation

1 = Successful 2 = Partially Successful 3 = Challenging 4 = Very Challenging

1. Collaborative membership is open – that is, anyone can join.	1	2	3	4
2. Our collaborative members represent a wide range of people and groups (e.g., parents, faith, business, local associations, etc.)	1	2	3	4
3. Our collaborative works with a broad range of community groups (outside of the partnership itself).	1	2	3	4
4. Collaborative meetings and materials are presented in languages that are accessible to members and community residents.	1	2	3	4
5. The membership of the collaborative reflects the ethnic, racial, socioeconomic and age diversity of our community.	1	2	3	4
6. Our membership includes a balance of community members and agency representatives.	1	2	3	4
7. Members share responsibility and workload so that the work of the collaborative is accomplished.	1	2	3	4

## III. Sound Decision-Making

1 = Successful 2 = Partially Successful 3 = Challenging 4 = Very Challenging

1. Our collaborative has an agreed upon decision-making process that is spelled out in writing and is understood by all members.	1	2	3	4
2. Collaborative members have an opportunity to participate in decision-making.	1	2	3	4
3. We are able to resolve conflict in order to reach decisions.	1	2	3	4
4. Our collaborative uses consensus as a decision-making tool.	1	2	3	4
5. Decision-making power is shared and not concentrated in the hands of a few.	1	2	3	4

6. Our collaborative collects information and data and uses it to make informed decisions.	1	2	3	4
--	---	---	---	---

#### IV. Facilitative Leadership

1 = Successful 2 = Partially Successful 3 = Challenging 4 = Very Challenging

1. Leadership is shared among members.	1	2	3	4
2. New members of the collaborative have the opportunity to take leadership roles.	1	2	3	4
3. The collaborative provides leadership within the broader community on health issues.	1	2	3	4
4. Ideas of all members are heard and respected.	1	2	3	4
5. We take time out to have fun and celebrate success.	1	2	3	4
6. Capacities and skills of collaborative members are recognized and used by collaborative leaders.	1	2	3	4

#### V. Effective Communication

1 = Successful 2 = Partially Successful 3 = Challenging 4 = Very Challenging

1. Information about collaborative activities and decision-making is freely shared and easily accessible – there is not a lot of “insider” information.	1	2	3	4
2. Our collaborative has a communication plan that fosters communication among members and the larger community (e.g., newsletters, meetings, community forums).	1	2	3	4
3. Information about upcoming events and activities received via e-mail, fax or post is communicated to all collaborative members.	1	2	3	4
4. Collaborative activities are conducted in language that everyone can understand (e.g., no jargon, multilingual).	1	2	3	4
5. The results of our work are shared with the larger community.	1	2	3	4

6. Our collaborative has a visible presence and identity in the community (e.g., logo, slogan, etc.)	1	2	3	4
--	---	---	---	---

## VI. Sustainability

1 = Successful 2 = Partially Successful 3 = Challenging 4 = Very Challenging

1. The collaborative periodically evaluates its efforts and identifies activities members want to sustain or drop.	1	2	3	4
2. The collaborative has built a constituency – that is, community residents who are committed to sustaining school readiness efforts.	1	2	3	4
3. The collaborative has built its capacity – and that of residents – to understand how policy is made and influenced.	1	2	3	4
4. Members have formed relationships to gain support of local institutions and formal policy bodies.	1	2	3	4
5. The collaborative has implemented policy and systems change strategies.	1	2	3	4
6. Successful activities and programs initiated by the collaborative are incorporated into the ongoing work of local institutions or community groups.	1	2	3	4
7. The collaborative has a plan for sustainability.	1	2	3	4
8. The collaborative has a fund development plan to sustain both core functioning and successful strategies.	1	2	3	4