



surface to soul  
going deeper with vibrant faith

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## BECOMING A COLLABORATIVE LEADER

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***“Effective leaders understand that they can't do it alone. They find ways to get things done through others.”***

Collaborative leaders seek out individuals, teams, and organizations who can fill their gaps in knowledge, skills, and wisdom; and are willing to share what they have with others. They have an “abundance” mindset that celebrates the gifts, assets, passions, perspectives, and wisdom found in people and places at their congregation and beyond.

### **WHY bother? What are the benefits?**

- Bringing people together from across functional and organizational lines to accomplish shared outcomes.
- Gathering the collective knowledge and wisdom of all stakeholders to make better decisions.
- Mobilizing people's gifts and passions toward goals that could not be realized independently.
- Increasing buy-in, trust, and synergy among stakeholders.
- Raising up new leadership to address complex issues now and in the future.

### **WHAT do all partners need to bring to the table?**

- Be sufficiently passionate about the cause to make it a priority for themselves and their organization.
- Model mutual trust and respect.
- Be willing to share control related to decision-making, information, and execution.
- Be willing to take risks, learn from failure, and try new approaches.
- Plan in advance to provide appropriate lead times for all parties.
- Have a bias for action and a mindset for creating excellence in all facets of ministry.
- Have a willingness to address problems as they arise in transparent, grace-filled ways.

### **WHAT are the roles and responsibilities of a collaborative leader?**

- Establishing group norms around meetings, communication, and follow through.
- Framing conversations in ways that allow everyone to be heard.
- Building trust among team members; teaching leaders how to play well and have fun together.
- Working behind the scenes to ensure that progress is being made between meetings.
- Clarifying expectations, addressing issues as they arise, and mediating conflict.
- Soliciting people's opinions and perspectives about past, present, and future projects.
- Framing decision-making in ways that address the most pressing issues and give voice to people's concerns.
- Gathering ongoing feedback needed to make course corrections and adjustments to plans and projects.

### **HOW does one design a collaborative process? What are the essential steps?**

1. Articulate a shared goal to rally around; name the “big win” and confirm buy-in from all parties.
2. Identify key players that will serve as the glue for holding together the collaboration.
3. List each party's needs and potential contributions related to the shared goal.
4. Establish clear roles, responsibilities, and expectations for all parties; create a written plan, listing key milestones.
5. Develop and monitor communication channels and protocols to ensure ongoing engagement of stakeholders.

### **NEXT STEPS**

1. What areas of ministry would benefit from increased collaboration?
2. With whom do you need to collaborate with more intentionally (staff, Board, teams, local churches, etc.)?
3. What do you need to start or stop doing to be a more collaborative leader?