



Collaboration In The Nonprofit Community– The Many Benefits Of Working Together

Collaboration is a process where two or more parties get together to work on common goals. The advantages of collaboration are numerous, and they benefit all parties involved. This article lists what I feel are the major advantages of collaborating with your colleagues.

1. Collaboration is educational. It helps all participants learn about each other's agencies, mission, programs, services, eligibility criteria, etc. In addition, when you collaborate with your peers, they often know about other resources with which you may not be familiar. Collaboration helps build your knowledge base. And, of course, the more knowledge you possess and resources you are aware of, the more you will be able to help your clients.
2. Collaboration results in appropriate referrals. When you collaborate with other professionals, and understand their programs and services, you are able to make more appropriate referrals, when needed. For example, you may not have a service that Client A needs, but you know that Organization XYZ does. When you make the right referral, it saves time and is a win-win situation for all parties involved.
3. Collaboration helps prevent the duplication of services. When you collaborate with your peers, individuals will be directed to the agency that is in the best position to provide those services and programs that they need most. This frees up time for professionals to focus on the provision of services for which they are most skilled and qualified.
4. Collaboration saves time. When professionals collaborate, they can reach more people, as they will know exactly where to send people to meet their specific needs. When an individual is referred to the appropriate agency from the beginning, service providers will not be spending time on shuffling people from one organization to another. Instead, it will free up their time to serve more people.
5. Collaboration helps organizations to pool their resources to meet a common goal. For example, it may be cost prohibitive for one organization to host a "technology for persons with disabilities" conference. However, if they partner with other organizations serving people with disabilities, each organization could contribute a portion of what it takes to finance the conference. Also, grantors like to see collaborative efforts, and in some cases, they are more willing to fund organizations that collaborate on specific projects.

6. Collaboration allows you access to each other's skills, experience, and expertise. This not only improves your knowledge base, but it can also save organizations money, as they would be less likely to hire a consultant.
7. Collaboration provides coordinated training opportunities. When organizations collaborate, they are in a better position to jointly develop and offer a wide variety of training opportunities that benefit their staff members. This can save them money, as they are pooling their resources, offsetting the costs involved with training.

While it is true that collaborating with other nonprofit organizations takes time and energy, the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. Collaboration helps agencies to share expertise, make appropriate referrals, avoid the duplication of services, save money, and ensure a seamless system of service delivery. It is a win-win situation for all parties involved.

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If you want to make positive changes in your professional life, and create the job or career you desire and deserve, then working with Executive & Life Coach, Sharon L. Mikrut, is the solution. Although her specialty is in partnering with nonprofit executive directors and managers to maximize their resources in a competitive environment, she is passionate about working with all individuals committed to personal and/or professional growth. Visit her website at <http://www.createitcoaching.org> or Nonprofit Professionals blog at <http://www.createitcoaching.com>, and sign up for her free monthly newsletter that provides information and resources designed to help you manage your nonprofit organization in a more effective and efficient manner. You can also visit her Empowerment blog at <http://www.createitcoaching.net>, and sign up for her free monthly life coaching newsletter.