

Expertise

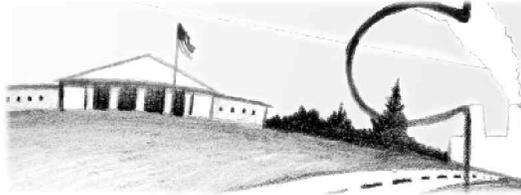
In Section 5

Tool 7: Expertise and Resources—What Does the Collaborative Effort Need?

Tool 8: Expertise and Resource Inventory

Tool 9: Guidelines for Brainstorming

Tool 10: Brainstorming Activities



The Vision

Collectively, the partners possess all necessary knowledge and skills to complete all of the tasks that will be essential to successful implementation of the collaborative effort. The partners know what resources will be required and have plans to resolve gaps in existing expertise.

Expertise

*Genius is one percent
inspiration and ninety-nine
percent perspiration.*
—Thomas Edison



Action Steps to Success

Regardless of how clear the vision or how detailed the action plan, if partners do not collectively possess the expertise to complete required tasks of the collaborative effort, there will be doubts about the project's chances for success. It may be frustrating to know what should be done, but not have the talent or skills to accomplish the vision. Each community policing collaboration requires its own specific set of skills and expertise. One of the many positive aspects of collaboration is that because numerous individuals and organizations are involved in the project, no one person must possess all of the skills necessary for success.

Step 1

Identify the Knowledge and Skills That You Will Need to Implement the Collaborative Effort.

Tool 7: Expertise and Resources—What Does the Collaborative Effort Need? will help identify the specific skills that the collaboration will need.

Step 2

Identify Partners' Knowledge and Skills.

As part of the process of identifying stakeholders for the collaborative effort, you also should have identified possible contributions that each of those stakeholders may bring to the collaborative effort. Ask each stakeholder to highlight the knowledge and the skills that s/he brings to project. Tool 8: Sample Expertise and Resource Inventory is included in this section.

Step 3

Identify Gaps in Knowledge and Skills and Develop a Strategy to Fill Those Gaps.

Once you have assessed the existing range of knowledge and skills available to the collaboration, identify knowledge/skills gaps and develop strategies for how to bring needed skills to the collaboration. For example, partners may decide to identify new stakeholders who can fill knowledge/skills gaps, or partners may choose to implement training or education activities among the existing stakeholders to fill gaps in critical

Section 5: Expertise

knowledge and skills. Only by carefully analyzing the knowledge/skills needs of the project and developing a realistic plan to access these knowledge and skills will the collaboration be ensured that the necessary expertise exists to actually implement the community policing effort.

Step 4

Ensure That Facilitation Skills Are Present within the Collaboration.

Facilitation skills are essential for project planning, sustaining stakeholder involvement, conducting effective meetings, resolving conflicts, and ensuring open communication. One or more of the partners may be a facilitator, be willing to learn the skill, or have access to a facilitator. An objective facilitator may also be employed.

Some individuals are more natural facilitators than others. However, facilitation is a skill; individuals can learn facilitation techniques, improving their skills with practice.

Facilitators act as guides rather than subject matter experts. The facilitator's responsibility is to ensure structured interaction while creating an environment in which individuals are comfortable in expressing their views and concerns and engaging in brainstorming, planning, and problem resolution.

Facilitators generally do not participate in discussions—rather, they direct them. A facilitator should:

- Enforce the meeting ground rules.
- Draw all persons into the conversation equally (see Tools 9 and 10).
- Reduce interruptions.
- Explore a variety of alternatives within the discussion.
- Avoid “taking sides” rather, mediate differences.
- Keep the meeting moving, honoring time constraints.
- Provide objective reporting of decisions.

Refer to [Learn More About It](#), found at the conclusion of this section for more resources on facilitation.

Facilitator Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- Set the room in a way that all participants can face one another.
- Break the ice in a newly formed group. (Many icebreaker exercises are readily available.)
- Sit during the discussion, unless recording discussion points on newsprint/flipchart paper.
- Clearly discuss with the group the purpose of the meeting—at the beginning of the meeting.
- Refer to the agenda and keep discussion focused on the meeting objectives.
- Listen and ask questions.
- Provide information, not opinions.
- Respond to comments with empathy.
- Give participants time to think and process information.
- Build on contributions.
- Encourage input from all participants and respect everyone's opinion.
- Postpone new topics until a future meeting.
- Summarize comments and clarify direction.
- Observe body language and respond appropriately.
- Help the group come to its own conclusions.
- Suggest problem-solving and conflict resolution techniques.

Don't:

- Set the room for theater or classroom style seating.
- Make conversation only with well-known members of the group or assume that all participants know one another.
- Use a podium or present an authoritative or overbearing presence in the room.
- Develop meeting objectives in a vacuum, without input from partners, or leave objectives unstated.
- Encourage discussion of unrelated issues and suggestions or personal issues.
- Make lengthy comments.
- Use the role of facilitator to present your own ideas or get your way.
- Make negative comments.
- Fear silence or fill discussion pauses with chatter.
- Overlook even small contributions.
- Allow one individual to steal the show, or ignore others.
- Replace the current agenda with someone's current crisis.
- Act "bossy" and give directions.
- Take things personally and ignore signs that a break or shift is needed.
- Provide solutions or make decisions for participants.
- Fail to intervene.

Step 5

Know How to Conduct Effective Meetings.

While most individuals do not look forward to attending meetings, they are a necessary part of collaborative initiatives. Meetings that are well planned, focused, and conducted in a respectful, efficient manner can foster and support successful collaborative efforts. Partners in the collaboration should share responsibility for planning and conducting meetings. Sharing responsibility lightens the burden and provides opportunities for more individuals to have a meaningful role in the collaboration. There are four phases to conducting effective meetings:

Phase I: Planning the Meeting

1. Decide on a clear goal for the meeting and make sure that the agenda reflects that goal.
2. Be prepared with any information that is needed for the meeting.
3. Decide who needs to be present to accomplish the meeting goal.
4. Plan the agenda with collaboration partners. Remember that people support what they help create.
5. Include realistic time allotments for each agenda item; identify who will present or facilitate each session listed on the agenda.
6. Distribute the agenda and any background information to participants at least one week before the meeting.

Phase II: Meeting Logistics

1. Start and end the meeting on time.
2. Provide sign-in sheets with space for name, organization, and contact information.
3. Select meeting space that is comfortable, safe, and convenient.
4. Schedule informal time before and after the meeting for participants to network.
5. Have regularly scheduled meetings, but don't have meetings just to meet.

Phase III: Conducting the Meeting

1. Facilitate introductions, unless you are certain that all participants know one another.
2. Establish agreement on the agenda items and ground rules/norms (see Section 3, Tool 3: Developing Team Norms).
3. Make sure discussion stays "on track."
4. Honor agenda time allotments.
5. Wrap up each discussion by summarizing any conclusions aloud.
6. Move to the next agenda item only when all participants agree about the summary/conclusions from the previous agenda item.
7. Encourage active participation by all participants. Avoid having the meeting dominated by the most vocal participant(s).

8. As the meeting facilitator, keep the discussion balanced, never “take sides.”
9. Rotate chairing the meeting.

Tips for Meeting Leaders

- Have a sense of humor.
- Avoid being defensive.
- Use open-ended questions that require participants to say more than “YES” or “NO.”
- Look around the room for “cues” from participants that the pace of the meeting should be slowed or sped up.

Phase IV: Following Up on the Meeting

1. Periodically ask participants to assess the effectiveness of the meetings and to recommend strategies for improvement.
2. Make follow-up calls or send notes as reminders for any agenda items that require additional action.
3. Summarize decisions, announcements, date of next meeting, and follow-up responsibilities. Send this information to all participants.

The best way to avoid difficult situations is to anticipate them and implement good planning and prevention techniques. However, in spite of all efforts to plan and conduct effective meetings, a meeting can be sidetracked and lose focus. Consider the scenario in Example 10.

Example 10 Loosing Meeting Focus

There have been a number of incidents involving fights after school between two factions of the student body. The dissention is causing parents to take sides, and the incidents are continuing across the street after school hours. You (a school resource officer) and your partner (one of the school’s vice principals) have been working together for a month. During that time you have engaged a number of other individuals (two parents, a counselor, a representative of the student council, and the owner of the convenience store across the street from the school) interested in working to address the problem. You and your partner realize that it is important to have a larger group involved, so you jointly plan a meeting to develop a shared vision for the school community. You have planned the meeting carefully. The purpose of the meeting is clear. The agenda is well designed. The meeting turnout is great. You are pleased that so many people are attending the meeting, but then...

- A participant strays from the agenda.
- A participant challenges the way you are conducting the meeting.
- The group continues to raise the same point over and over.
- Some participants conduct side conversations during the meeting.
- A participant verbally attacks another group member.
- A participant continually expresses doubts about accomplishing the stated goals, saying, “Yes, but...”

Tips on How to Save a Meeting ⁵

Use these tips to manage disrupters and turn bad situations into productive meetings:

- Use the agenda to keep things on track.
- Should you get off track, have the group decide what to do. For example, “We seem to have gotten off the agenda topic, so do you want to spend 5 minutes more talking about this issue, or would you rather return to the agenda and table this discussion until after we have finished our business?” Have a well-defined agenda, but allow flexibility so that stakeholders may raise issues they believe are important.
- Acknowledge the disruption. If you feel undermined or frustrated, admit it. Other group members also may be frustrated by the disruption and can work with you to get the agenda back on track.
- When appropriate, use humor to ease tense situations. You want meetings to be enjoyable, even when the work is serious. A word of caution—never use humor at the expense of a member of the group.
- Take a break and talk with the disrupter(s). Address sensitive issues outside the room.
- Appoint a subcommittee from the large group that will address the problem/issue.
- Adjourn the meeting and reschedule it to allow tempers to cool and more information to be collected about the issue. That will allow participants to make an informed decision.
- Recognize that when all else fails, you may need to ask the disrupter(s) to end their participation in the meeting.

Step 6

Recognize That Your Needs for Specific Knowledge and Skills Will Change.

Collaborative efforts grow and evolve over time. As items from the original action plan are completed, other, perhaps unanticipated, tasks will likely surface. These new tasks may require additional or different knowledge and skills. Collaboration partners should continually reflect on what needs to

be accomplished and what expertise is needed to accomplish these outcomes. Remember, collaborative efforts are like learning organizations—they evolve over time and often demand that knowledge and skills be continually developed and fostered.

⁵ KU Work Group on Health Promotion and Community Development. “Conducting Effective Meetings.” In: *Community Tool Box*. Chapter 16, Section 2. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas, 2000. Available at: <http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu>.



Avoiding the Pitfalls

When identifying and building the expertise for a community policing collaboration, beware of the following pitfalls and consider implementing some of the suggested strategies if you have already encountered these challenges. Also, to help diagnose a struggling partnership, please refer to Section 1, Tool 1: Unsticking Stuck Groups/Reassessing the Collaboration, in particular, items 13–16 to assess expertise.

Pitfall:

Partners feel overwhelmed and the project is “stuck.” When partners do not identify all of the knowledge or skills that may be necessary to conduct the tasks that support the collaboration’s goals, partners may feel overwhelmed by tasks that they are not equipped to plan or carry out. As such, partners may put off or avoid these tasks and the collaboration gets “stuck.”

Solutions:

Partners can avoid feeling overwhelmed by developing an action plan during the early stages of the project and by revisiting the action plan as the collaboration progresses (see Section 10). Don’t merely identify broad categories of skills or knowledge required for tasks—be specific.

Feeling overwhelmed can be a temporary feeling if partners can obtain the missing skills and knowledge that are needed to perform the tasks. Brainstorm together to identify knowledge gaps or specific skills that are lacking. Refer to Tool 8: Expertise and Resource Inventory to determine if a partner already has the needed expertise. If not, seek training or information to build or acquire those skills. Another option is to

identify and recruit additional stakeholders who have those skills/knowledge, or hire someone to perform the task. Approaching nontraditional partners or stakeholders may yield essential expertise—do not overlook local schools, colleges, and universities; businesses; advocacy groups; or community service agencies.

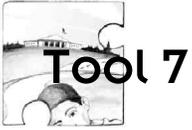
Pitfall:

Partners do not want to attend collaboration meetings. If meetings do not result in decisions or are long or chaotic, partners likely will feel frustrated and that their time has been wasted. They will not be anxious to attend future meetings. The ability to organize and subsequently facilitate meetings is a skill that can be learned. However, when partners attempt to organize and conduct meetings without at least some basic knowledge about developing agendas that are appropriate to the time allocated, setting ground rules, or involving all meeting participants in discussions, the result can be lengthy, unproductive, and chaotic gatherings.

Solutions:

Review discussions in this section, in particular, Conducting Effective Meetings, Do’s and Don’t Tips for Facilitators, and Tips on How to Save a Meeting. Additional resources can be found in Learn More About It at the conclusion of this section.

If the collaboration is addressing a very controversial issue about which participants must make a decision, consider hiring a neutral facilitator, who can ensure that the meeting is one where everyone is heard, and that discussion flows and stays on topic. A facilitator can help collaboration partners establish a consensus by guiding the processing of participant viewpoints.



Tools to Plan and Chart Your Progress

These worksheets will help to identify existing expertise among the partners in the collaboration as well as help fill gaps in the knowledge and skills necessary for successful implementation of the community policing project.

Tool 7

Expertise and Resources—What Does the Collaborative Effort Need?

The following questions are designed to guide you in identifying the expertise and means you need to accomplish your collaborative initiative. Answers to the questions will also point to areas that will require assistance from outside the current collaboration. Taking the time to complete this process on a regular basis will help you identify potential obstacles to success and direct your thinking to overcoming these obstacles.

1. On the following chart, list the tasks that need to be completed and the timeframe for completion.
2. For each task, answer the following questions:
 - What expertise will it take to get this task done?
 - Do we have this expertise within our collaboration?

- If “YES,” name the person (or persons) who can successfully take on this task.
- If “NO,” do we know someone outside the team who might help us? Who is the best person within the team to request the outside assistance?
- In addition to personal expertise, what else do we need to complete the task (e.g., time, money, people)?
- Are these resources available within the collaboration? If not, are there other ways to access what is needed? If not, do we need to modify our plan?
- What is our next step?

Expertise and Resources—What does the Collaborative Effort need?						
Task	Completion Timeframe	Expertise Required	Source of Expertise	Other Resource Needs	Source of Resources	Next Steps



Tool 8

Tool 8

Expertise and Resource Inventory

Each member of the collaboration has experiences, contacts, resources, and skills that will support the collaboration. Take the time to have each member of the group complete this expertise and resource inventory. Modify this form to fit your project.

Expertise and Resource Inventory

Name: _____

Affiliation (if appropriate): _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Address: _____
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

1. Areas of Expertise. Please identify areas where you can help support the collaboration.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Administration/Computer | <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Artistic/Creative Projects | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Data Analysis | <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising | <input type="checkbox"/> Member Recruitment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Planning Celebrations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations/Publicity | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please be specific) _____ |

2. Who is Missing? Please list any government officials, media personalities, business owners, school board members, or others that you know and believe might support this project. (Please include contact information.) Also consider individuals who might not have the time to commit to ongoing work, but who would lend their support and influence for special circumstances.

Name	Organization	Address	Phone/Fax	E-mail

3. Time. Approximately how much time can you devote to this project over the next (6 months/year/school year)?

What is the best day for you to attend meetings? _____

What is the best time of day for you to meet? _____

4. Special Considerations. Do you have any special considerations that we should be aware of as we schedule meetings (e.g., preferred locations, childcare needs, access for persons with disabilities, other)?

Thanks for being a part of this collaborative community policing effort.



Tools 9 & 10

Tool 9

Guidelines for Brainstorming

Brainstorming is based on the premise that two heads are better than one, and that three heads are better than two, and so forth. One of the primary benefits of brainstorming with a team is that each person will draw upon a different knowledge and experience base and therefore will be able to offer various options and solutions.

- Welcome all ideas. It is easier to tame an extremely innovative idea than to put life into an ordinary one.
- Encourage the team to strive for a large number of ideas and not worry about the quality of those ideas. Quantity leads to quality.
- Do not discuss or judge ideas. After the initial brainstorming, allow time for questions, clarification, and comment. If criticism occurs while ideas are being generated, the whole purpose of brainstorming is lost.
- Record all ideas on a flipchart. It may be helpful to have two notetakers to make sure that all ideas are captured quickly and accurately.
- Encourage the team to “piggy-back” on each other’s ideas.

Tool 10

Brainstorming Activities

Sample Activity 1: Unstructured Brainstorming

The time allocated for this activity can vary from 5 to 30 minutes, based on partners’ preferences and the complexity of the topic or question to be brainstormed.

1. Select a facilitator. A facilitator should review the guidelines for brainstorming with the team.
2. The facilitator, with the partners’ help, should set a specific time limit to brainstorm. (Most original and useful ideas tend to surface within 5 minutes.) Select a timekeeper.
3. Open the floor for partners to offer ideas as they arise.
4. When time is up, stop the process. The facilitator should give a 30 second warning so that team members have time to offer their last ideas.
5. Review each idea separately and provide time for questions, clarification, and comment.
6. The facilitator should help partners review the list, delete duplicates, and organize similar ideas into groups or themes.
7. Use these ideas to make decisions about the topic or question that was brainstormed.



Sample Activity 2: Round Robin

This activity can take from 10 to 20 minutes, depending on how many ideas are offered.

1. Select a facilitator.
2. Arrange the seating so that everyone can see one another—either around a table or in a circle.
3. Review the guidelines for brainstorming with the team.
4. The meeting facilitator states the topic or question for discussion. Ask another partner to restate the brainstorming topic or question. Make certain that the team agrees on the nuances of the topic or question.
5. Record the agreed-upon topic or question on a chalkboard or flipchart—make sure that all participants can see it.
6. Now begin with a partner and ask that person to state his/her idea. The facilitator or notetaker should record that idea on the chalkboard or flipchart.
7. Go around the circle, with each person offering an idea and the notetaker recording each idea (using the participant's words, rather than trying to interpret or interrupt the process to gain clarification).

8. When everyone has offered one idea, go around the circle again. Partners can “pass” if they have no new ideas to offer.
9. End the process when everyone “passes.”
10. The facilitator should help the partners review the list, delete duplicates, and organize similar ideas into groups.
11. Use these ideas to make decisions about the topic or question that was brainstormed.

Sample Activity 3: 4 people-3 ideas-5 minutes⁶

This activity can take approximately 20 to 25 minutes, depending on how many partners are involved.

1. Select a facilitator, who will review the guidelines for brainstorming with the team.
2. Arrange the seating so that four partners are at one table.
3. The meeting facilitator states the topic or question for discussion. Ask another partner to restate the topic or question to be brainstormed. Make certain that the team agrees on the nuances of the topic or question.
4. Each person should write the topic or question on a piece of paper. (If multiple topics need to be brainstormed, different tables can brainstorm on different topics.)

⁶ Adapted from: Schlicksupp, H. “The 6-3-5 Method.” In: Brasser, M. and Ritter, D. *The Memory Jogger II: A Pocket Guide of Tools for Continuous Improvement and Effective Planning*. Methuen, MA: Goal/QPC, 1994.

Section 5: Expertise

5. The facilitator should inform participants that they have 5 minutes to list three ideas on their sheet of paper.
6. After 5 minutes, the partners at a table give their paper to the person on their right.
7. The facilitator tells participants that they have 5 minutes to read the ideas on the paper and list three more of their own ideas. This rotation process continues until all participants have recorded ideas on each paper at the table.
8. The facilitator collects the papers and consolidates the ideas into one list that everyone can see (e.g., on a flipchart or blackboard).
9. The facilitator should help participants review the list, delete duplicates, and group similar ideas.
10. Use the ideas to make decisions about the topic or question that was brainstormed.

Learn More About It

Facilitation

Quinlivan-Hall, D., and Renner, P. *In Search of Solutions: 60 Ways to Guide Your Problem-Solving Group*. San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer and Company, 1994.

This useful and comprehensive guide can help anyone who oversees meetings. Sixty different facilitation strategies are provided that focus on creating the right meeting atmosphere, agenda planning, time management, and action planning. Available for purchase at: www.amazon.com.

Rees, F. *Facilitator Excellence: Helping People Work Creatively and Productively Together. Instructor's Guide, Handbook, and Skills Profile*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1998.

This is a complete workshop guide for managers and employees on effective facilitation skills. It includes an instructor's guide, handbook, and profile. Available for purchase at: www.josseybass.com.

Schwarz, R. M. *The Skilled Facilitator: Practical Wisdom for Developing Effective Groups*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1994.

This practical guide is for those charged with the task of maximizing group performance through facilitation. It discusses the skills needed to help groups reach their full potential. Topics include increasing employee commitment, company flexibility, improving overall effectiveness of an organization, and facilitative leadership. Available for purchase at: www.josseybass.com.

Conducting Effective Meetings

Daniels, W. *Orchestrating Powerful Regular Meetings: A Manager's Complete Guide*. San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Co, 1993.

This resource gives the manager or committee chair insight into conducting effective meetings. It describes the basics of meeting planning, provides step-by-step guidelines to guide groups in their work, and includes exercises useful in training group members for effective participation in meetings. Available for purchase at: www.amazon.com.

Katz, S. N. "Power Skills for Effective Meetings." *Training & Development*. 45:7 (July 1991).

This article discusses strategies for conducting productive and worthwhile meetings. It identifies problems and solutions for holding successful meetings and also includes a discussion on facilitation. This journal article is available at university or regional libraries.

Tropman, J. E. and Mills, B. *Effective Meetings: Improving Group Decision Making*. 2nd edition, Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1996.

Targeting those in human services, this is an excellent resource for those who have ineffective and unproductive group meetings. It provides a comprehensive outline on how to conduct an effective meeting by focusing on key areas: rules for effective group decision making, positions and roles for effective group decision making, different kinds of decision groups, and special topics. Available for purchase at: www.amazon.com.

