Creating and Managing Effective Partnerships

Training 2 Work 3 (T2W3) – New Grantee Orientation

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Today’s Session...

- Keys for an “Effective Partnership”
- Using the MOU in Partnerships
- Group Exercise: Managing, Maintaining and Assessing Your Partnerships
What is a T2W3 Partnership?

- A working relationship between the T2W3 program and one or more other organizations that is designed to:
  - Provide services, opportunities or other value for the people enrolled in the T2W3 program, and
  - Provide mutually beneficial outcomes for all the partners that support their organizational goals and objectives (win-win style of negotiations).
Keys for an “Effective Partnership”

- Joint Planning
- A Clear Vision
- Set Ground Rules
- Clarify Roles and Responsibilities
- Share Decision Making
- Stay Flexible
- Keep Tending the Relationship
- Be Strategic
Keys to Joint Planning

✓ Often partners don’t really begin working together until “the check is in the mail.”

✓ More effective approach is to get the leadership of the partner organizations together at the outset to conduct joint planning, visioning and problem solving.

✓ Make sure the needs from both sides of the partnership are a main focus for planning.
Keys to a Clear Vision

✓ The only reason to work in a partnership is to accomplish goals you can’t accomplish separately.

✓ The most effective partnerships develop and own a shared sense of purpose.

✓ Most partnerships have found it useful to create a written vision statement that guides all of their subsequent work as a part of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
Keys to Setting Ground Rules

✓ Jointly develop ground rules for:
  ❖ who will lead meetings,
  ❖ how decisions will be made,
  ❖ how problems will be addressed,
  ❖ how grievances will be handled, etc.

✓ Use an MOU! You won’t be able to anticipate every challenge, but clear guidelines and procedures can help your partnership avoid unnecessary pitfalls.
Keys to Clarifying Roles/Responsibilities

✓ Effective partnerships rely on clear communication and a shared understanding of responsibilities.

✓ Given that there may be multiple players involved on both sides of the partnership, it’s best to get written agreements (MOUs) and protocols that outline the basic elements of the partnership.

✓ These written documents should be jointly developed by the partners.
Keys to Shared Decision Making

✓ From day one all partners who should be consulted and have opportunities to provide input and feedback.

✓ Shared decision making and strong leadership are not contradictory.

✓ Depending on the issue, one partner can and should become the group’s natural leader.
Keys to Shared Decision Making (cont)

✓ Remember to Prepare Team Members to Work Together.

❖ Make sure you arrange for joint orientation and training opportunities for all the partners to develop the skills they will need to make their collaboration work.

❖ Small, interactive workshops should focus on developing team building, shared decision making, communication and conflict resolution skills.
Keys to Staying Flexible

✓ Effective partnerships require willingness for all involved to be flexible.

✓ Remember that the context on both sides of the partnership may change over time.
Keys to Maintaining Relationships

✓ Team building is not a one time event. It needs continued examination and daily effort.

✓ Teams must have a clearly stated objective.

✓ Diverse objectives must be linked by a common purpose.

✓ Successful teams are mutually supportive.

✓ Team leaders recognize the real and symbolic needs of its members.
Keys to Being Strategic

✓ In meetings with partners, listen carefully to what’s on their minds.

✓ Think about ways you can respond to all partners’ needs.

✓ Constantly assess what your partners are bringing to the partnership.
A Partnership Agreement:

✓ May be a Formal Contract
✓ May also be a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
An MOU is

✓ Formal Agreement
✓ Two or More Parties or Organizations
✓ More than a “Handshake Agreement”
✓ Usually Not Legally Binding But May Lead to a Legal Contract or Subcontract
Reasons to Use an MOU

- Required by the U.S. Department of Labor
- Reduces Formality as Opposed to a Contract
- Helps to Eliminates Confusion
- Clearly Establishes Expectations
- Offers a Quick Start-Up
- Will Help Clarify Roles
Components of a MOU

- Mission of the Organizations
- Purpose and Scope of the MOU
- Understanding and Responsibilities
- Duration and Termination
- Disclaimers Clause
- Resource Allocation if Needed
- Process for Dispute Resolution
- Signatures/Titles/Dates/Contact Information
Telling Your Story - Sustainability

- People need to know who you are and what you are doing.
- Program successes need to be documented, celebrated and distributed among partners and the community.
- Stories bring the invisible and abstract to life.
- Stories are memorable and statistics are not.
Using the template provided, and working as a team, identify a partnership that a T2W3 program needs, list the anticipated benefits of the partnership, outline the process you will use to assess the value of the partnership, and outline how you will manage the partnership over the lifetime of the program.
Report Out and Question and Answer Period