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Kristin Calvert

Western Carolina University, kcalvert@wcu.edu

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*From the Field*

## Collaborative Leadership: Cultivating an Environment for Success

Kristin Calvert ([kcalvert@wcu.edu](mailto:kcalvert@wcu.edu))  
Head of Content Organization and Management, Western Carolina University

### Abstract

This paper details the importance (and limitations) of leadership to foster an environment that supports collaboration in library acquisitions. The conditions necessary to create successful teams are examined: creating a compelling vision, enabling effective communication, and building trust among participants. The challenges of effective leadership grow in more complex collaborative endeavors, when there are mismatched priorities, or when leading teams outside of traditional reporting structures. This paper offers guidance for navigating these pain points to produce better and more inclusive processes.

Keywords: collaborative leadership, teams, acquisitions

### Introduction and Conceptual Framework

Collaboration is at the heart of acquisitions practices in libraries, most frequently with collection development. Increasingly complex purchasing models, licensing terms, and delivery mechanisms, drive us to explore innovative ways to meet the needs of our patrons with finite budgets. We look for opportunities to use our relationships with our library colleagues and external partners to achieve more than we could alone. Often these partnerships start with such promise but fail to meet their potential. Projects languish or fail to produce meaningful change in how we operate.

We define collaboration here as any undertaking requiring a group of individuals, who do not fall within a traditional, hierarchical reporting structure, to work together toward a common outcome. In their cross-disciplinary study of collaboration, Thomson, Perry, and Miller observe: “[c]ollaboration is often assumed as one way to

efficiently allocate scarce resources while building community by strengthening interorganizational ties.” Case research suggests, however, that practitioners in this environment face significant collective action problems that undermine their potential for building collaborative relationships.”<sup>1</sup> Purposeful leadership can overcome inaction and foster successful collaboration by creating a compelling vision, enabling effective communication, and building trust among participants. This paper offers guidance for navigating these approaches to produce better, more inclusive processes, which lay the groundwork for immediate success and future achievements. It will also offer advice to individuals working from positions of authority while also suggesting practices that every participant can model. Several benefits to collaboration include improved buying power, building additional staff capacity, and improved acquisitions processes and practices.



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Why should we collaborate at all when it clearly requires additional effort and coordination? Collaborations, by necessity, operate within a more complex environment of administration and governance than work done by a single acquisitions unit. We seek them out because they provide tangible benefits to our staff, the library, and the patrons we serve. Consortia acquisitions, for instance, leverage economies of scale to negotiate better business terms with content providers, as seen with ConnectNY, a consortium of independent academic institutions in New York State. By working together to build a shared collection of e-books through demand-driven acquisitions, they collectively provided 120 times the buying power of an individual library.<sup>2</sup> The collective power of the consortia deal meant lower prices, waived fees, and a larger pool of titles for each participating library.

Additional benefits arise from deconstructing the silos in which we operate. Small libraries can build additional capacity by leveraging partnerships with larger libraries or units that have additional technical skills or resources in-house.<sup>3</sup> Consortia can reduce implementation time by centralizing the work and saving each library from learning processes from scratch.

When acquisitions staff work directly with other functional areas in the library, you improve communication channels and uncover process efficiencies. You can provide better information about e-book rights to your users when you build information workflows that include cataloging and electronic resources staff. Through partnerships with interlibrary loan (ILL) acquisitions and access service units establish alternate routes to providing information with on-demand delivery of scholarly material.

Collaborative endeavors that do not fall within a traditional, hierarchical reporting structure, take one of several forms in libraries, each with its own leadership model. For instance, you may work across functional areas within a library —

as part of an informal group or on a task force — to create a new workflow. In this example, an individual has authority for enacting these changes, but the day-to-day interactions will generally involve multiple departments working in partnership. For another project, you may need to work across institutions, or within a consortium, with no central authority and each person is part of a separate reporting structure within their own institutions. Regardless of whether individuals work in positions of authority, every participant can model the practices suggested here for teams. We generalize across different scenarios to identify the conditions needed to create successful teams; with specific advice given for operations that occur in environments of greater complexity.

The paper relies on research on the structure and work of teams to model interactions on collaborative projects. We use ‘team’ frequently to refer to a group of collaborators, regardless of the formality of the assembled group or the duration of the project. Hackman enumerates four essential features of teams: they have a task to accomplish, boundaries designating who is part of the team, delimited authority to manage their work processes, and stable membership.<sup>4</sup> Interdisciplinary research into the nature of collaboration characterizes these interactions in ways that mirror those of teams. There are structural and social forces that define (and constrain) how work is accomplished.<sup>5</sup> The structural component necessitates additional clarification on issues of governance and administration, including the selection of teams and the assignment of work. Socially, organizational and cultural norms play a major role in influencing how individuals cooperate with one another and what behavior is expected and accepted. What agency a team possesses may be uncertain: at the beginning, the team must establish who retains final decision-making authority and what degree of granted autonomy the team engages for determining the final product. Later sections detail



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the control you have over each of these dimensions.

The team approach to collaboration does provide additional challenges to effectively communicate, an issue we go into more detail in later sections. Managing the team's relationships with external constituents is imperative. Administrators and library colleagues expect updates. You may need to gather additional information, or delegate tasks outside the team. When you are leading the team, you need to designate specifically who has responsibility for communicating outside the group. Pay particular attention to politically influential people who need to be on board with the plan.<sup>6</sup> Providing regular reports is the task of one designated person. In a consortium, one person from each organization represents and communicates back to their institution. They should also bring information from these outside groups back to the team for discussion. Let each person know their voice speaks on the behalf of those they represent in addition to speaking to their own expertise.

The next section will walk you through each of the necessary conditions for success: creating a compelling vision, enabling effective communication, and building trust among participants. The final portion of the paper will enumerate the limitations of leadership and explore how lead from any position.

### Conditions for Success

#### Creating a Compelling Vision

In many cases, you know your project's purpose even before the selection of the team. The task force has a charge, a chair selected, and a date set for the final report. Creating a vision may strike you as a *fait accompli*; however, there is more to creating a vision than establishing an outcome. Ideally, development of a vision for what success looks like occurs as soon as possible. You want to frame your vision to build engagement and anticipate criticism.<sup>7</sup> It is crucial

that each person (or organization) invests in the endeavor even as you negotiate specific details like timetables and the recruitment of team members. Reluctant participants not only waste the team's effort, but they also affect the trust within the group, a condition we discuss later. A high degree of engagement on the part of the team counteracts inertia, particularly when the individuals are working together for the first time and progress can be slow.<sup>8</sup> As a leader, you must sell the idea to the library, to administrators, and most of all to the people doing the work. Their attitudes directly contribute to, hinder, or delay the final product. Imagine that each person is holding a length of rope attached to a block dragged over the finish line. There are several paths to take, some more difficult than others. When you fail to harness the team's efforts properly, team members fight against each other. They waste energy going off on their own direction or trying to accomplish their own objectives. With luck, you might still make it across the finish line, so long as no one is actively pulling in the opposite direction. Pick the path you want to take and convince the team that it is the best choice for everyone.

Communicating a clear vision is the best way to build staff engagement on a project. Often when we create opportunities for collaboration with our acquisitions personnel, we ask people to take on additional responsibilities. Managers should not be negligent to demand more and more of our staff and expect them to find within themselves a boundless capacity for productivity.<sup>9</sup> Ask yourself whether you are creating structural conditions where outcomes are valued over employee well-being, especially if the collaboration is meant to be a long-term project or will become a new standing process. In the short-term, the belief that the outcome is worth the cost of their labor can mitigate staff exhaustion (a strong justification for why staff engagement is critical).<sup>10</sup> In other situations, we ask people to prioritize a project over their day-to-



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day duties. Handled poorly, the demand to work on something new signals to them that you do not value their work. You have demotivated them from participating. On the other hand, if you sell the vision effectively, staff will become personally invested. Communicate to everyone involved the reasons for pursuing the project. For example, this project means our users will have access to hundreds of STEM e-books we would not be able to afford otherwise, but we need your help to find the funding. Explain to your colleagues how their expertise in this area helps colleagues in another branch implement a new process for handling e-book package subscriptions. They will not be able to do it on their own.

Set a shared, understood vision embraced by everyone on the team as the first step. At the beginning of the project, the vision can be half-formed though you may have specific directives. As Gratton and Erickson observe, one way to engage the team in the process is to allow for some ambiguity in the goal: "If a team perceives the task as one that requires creativity, where the approach is not yet well known or predefined, its members are more likely to invest time and energy in the collaboration."<sup>11</sup> The underlying problem to solve might be to decrease the number of unfilled ILL requests for print dissertations. The charge to the team may be to evaluate current options in the market for borrowing or purchasing theses and dissertations. Within these bounds, there is room for the team to make the project their own and develop a vision for how to roll out a new service. You must establish the boundaries and authority of the group and empower it to make decisions (if any).<sup>12</sup> If the selection of a specific vendor or product has already been made, it does not behoove the group to spend time investigating alternate options that were never going to be on the table. Articulating the vested authority for the project is a crucial step for avoiding disappointment or disenfranchisement among the team. Armed

with well-defined parameters, the leader ensures the group's time undertakes the aspects where it has the agency over the outcome. In this instance, the group may reach out to libraries using the same system and gather advice for how best to manage implementation decisions.

A crucial part of team-based work can be getting buy-in from people who have not been part of the decision-making process. The task force chair may be the public speaker for the group, but it is far more effective if each person on the team also takes responsibility for talking to coworkers about what is going on. This is especially important when the collaboration happens between other libraries, or with outside agents. The representatives on the team must share progress, sell any changing goals, and gather appropriate feedback. We discuss the specifics of managing communication with outside parties in the next section.

### Enabling Effective Communication

Clear communication is vital for gaining supporters, developing and selling your vision, and executing each task along the way. Three major factors drive communication challenges: the number of collaborators, their proximity to one another, and shared cultural norms.

For complex projects that span functional areas, it is tempting to construct a very large team. You may wish to include a larger number of individuals to be sure you have the necessary expertise at hand, and to garner feedback from many different viewpoints. In large library systems, you might also recruit multiple representatives from the same functional areas. The Electronic Resources Management Pilot (ERMP) undertaken by the University of Minnesota system as a cooperative e-resource licensing venture exemplifies this strategy: "Team members and leaders [were] chosen for their skills, knowledge, and abilities pertinent to the task, especially in e-re-



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source management, licensing, collection development, and metadata. Library leadership chose ERMP members for their expertise and historical knowledge of past collaborations.”<sup>13</sup> Organizational design research suggests, however, that larger teams are not automatically more effective.<sup>14</sup>

Increasing the number of people on the team requires more complex communication structures. This fact is very important when organizations are the collaborators. First, not all styles of negotiation work with large groups. You are not able to reach consensus on every point when you have more than a handful of participants. Unanimity eventually becomes impossible and you need to take a different approach to get to an agreement. Some pathways to setting a course of action could include agreeing upon a set of criteria for evaluating a resolution, creating additional smaller outcomes along the way that are beneficial to all, or identifying core interests (instead of outcomes) you can agree upon.<sup>15</sup> Second, you need to formalize expectations for communication (e.g. meetings, working groups, reports). Formal communication systems are not negative in their own right, nor are large numbers of collaborators; rather, take care to balance the size and communication structures necessary for your team to engage fully in collaboration on the vision. Implementing shared licensing between libraries requires different structures to be effective than what it would take to route an ILL request through acquisitions for purchase instead of borrowing.

Increasing the group size generates buy-in from people early in the process: an individual’s involvement will increase their personal investment in the outcome. The depth of that involvement can and should vary; it does not mean you need to invite every person whose support you need onto the team. For complicated projects, a good practice is to undergo stakeholder analysis – a common component of project management where you identify the individuals or

groups who are crucial to the success of the project.<sup>16</sup> Creating a stakeholder matrix can help you decide which stakeholders to bring to a project and what level of communication and involvement each member has.

Our notion of effective workplace communication originates from co-located office spaces. We are accustomed to face-to-face interaction. People working within a common physical space create patterns of behavior and customs that enable a shared sense of purpose. This culture shapes expectations on work performance and communication styles. When we embark on collaborative projects, we often move outside these established work environments. When libraries locate technical services shops in off-site facilities, or otherwise separate them from other administrative structures, the need for virtual communication grows. Communication at a distance requires more coordination and structure. There can be no serendipitous meetings when you need to juggle time zones, and no informal lunch get-togethers to brainstorm when you are in a rut. Librarians working in these settings do not enjoy the “watercooler” socialization that occurs informally within a building.<sup>17</sup> Tong and Kisby, in their article on multi-campus library services, highlight that twice as many branch librarians report frequently feeling isolated.<sup>18</sup> When we collaborate outside our organization, we must abandon face-to-face interactions as luxuries of time and cost we no longer have. People and resources occupy different spaces (and even time zones) and require additional coordination over email or through online collaborative tools.

Building relationships is more challenging when the only team interaction is virtual. Conditions reduce the number and frequency of interactions substantially, and even when we have access to Web conference software – GoToMeeting, Skype, etc. – the experience is impersonal. If you are working with a largely distributed team, you



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need to combat these feelings of isolation by increasing your focus on intentional and meaningful communication.<sup>19</sup> You want to build personal connections, because many people struggle to interpret the tone in email messages, which are frequently read as harsher or more demanding tone than the sender intended.<sup>20</sup> When the conversation feels unwelcoming, people are less inclined to ask questions or share information freely.<sup>21</sup> You can encourage conversations where you listen meaningfully to the concerns and issues facing the other libraries.<sup>22</sup> Look for opportunities where you can link these concerns, specifically, back to the vision you have for the project, and be sure each person understands how they will benefit and how they will be of benefit to others. Acclimating everyone to serving a broader population will be an easier transition once they feel their voices are heard.<sup>23</sup>

It is good practice to establish shared expectations for email communication to avoid frustration and misunderstanding. If one of your participants responds immediately to every message—whether on weekends or in the evening—but others are unable to respond because of their other responsibilities, neither party is going to feel comfortable with that arrangement.<sup>24</sup> We suggest you break down expectations for highly formal communication. Communicating with your teammates should not only be a source of information for the project, but also for positive feedback. The ERMP improved relationships among librarians of the five campuses of the University of Minnesota system by successfully employing online collaborative systems. They took advantage of virtual tools, like Google Hangouts, for frequent communication, “instilling a sense of togetherness crucial for continued success” despite the fact 150 miles separated the campus libraries.<sup>25</sup>

Online communication enables and reinforces existing both shared cultural norms and prob-

lematic social behaviors. Digital spaces exacerbate exclusionary practices based on cultural differences. The audio clarity of phone and Web conferencing software disadvantages those who speak non-standard English.<sup>26</sup> We privilege certain dialects and judge a person’s intellect by their grammar or fluency.<sup>27</sup> Phone and Web conferencing software exacerbate accessibility issues for those who use screen readers or assistive tools for voice and audio; they “mean people with disabilities are not full and equal participants.”<sup>28</sup> As a leader, you have a responsibility to ensure that the methods of communication neither prevent individuals from contributing nor enable others to marginalize their contributions. Instead, you can build inclusionary practices into your expectations for virtual meetings that are attentive to the needs of your participants.<sup>29</sup> We will revisit these issues in more detail in the next section where we discuss how marginalization undermines trust on teams.

### Building Trust among Participants

Trust is the belief that the people you work with will act in good faith; it guides whether people share information with one another. When it is missing, you notice a lack of open communication that inhibits your ability to progress towards your goals. Mistrust often stems from suspicion over people’s motivations. It leads you to question whether they will make choices that are not to your benefit.<sup>30</sup> Establishing an effective group dynamic is more difficult in situations where the time to completion is short, and you naturally have less time to get to know each other, or when the group is too large or dispersed, and individual relationship-building is not practical. First, consider the timeline you are working from: a task force report due to your director in three months requires much less from the team than a long-term project. Will this process become a permanent part of the workflow? What are the cost investments in terms of money and personnel? A move toward consortia electronic resources purchasing has the potential to



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become a permanent part of your acquisitions workflows and require a significant cost investment. You need to trust that the benefits that come from a consortium's buying power will not come at your library's expense.

Early in the process, collaboration comes easily when participants are alike.<sup>31</sup> Self-selection is an obvious source of bias when asked to build a team to tackle a project. We select our team based on existing relationships or from people we know hold similar opinions on the issue. We, consciously and not, seek out those people who think and speak the way we do. At its heart, this behavior is actively exclusionary. Effective collaboration cannot succeed by relying on feelings of comfort as a stand-in for cooperation. You should not use a shared vision of what you hope to accomplish as an excuse to seek conformity.

"In order to yield benefits associated with diversity," write Stewart, Crary, and Humberd, "diverse individuals and perspectives must be effectively integrated into workgroup and organizational processes; thus there is emerging emphasis on the concept of *inclusion*."<sup>32</sup> In practice, we often focus on expediency and the need to accomplish a goal in a short amount of time, and we assume the way to do so is through homogeneity and harmony. Within the group, deviations from the norm present as disruptive behavior. In particular, those whose identities are unrecognized as part of the dominant culture are treated as disruptive to the team's productivity;<sup>33</sup> as Absher and Cardenas-Dow write, "[T]o exist in the dominant culture means working with the dominant culture, whether we agree or understand it."<sup>34</sup> Your responsibility is to call out this behavior, regardless of whether the behavior stems from whiteness or ableism, or around policy. Acquisitions yields a tremendous amount of institutional power through the collections budget. Collaborating across the library and across institutions creates exciting opportunities to make meaningful change to issues of major importance to libraries and our patrons.

However, we cannot be successful in addressing structural problems inherent to our field if we fail to include viewpoints that challenge the existing paradigm.

Take stock of the level of trust that currently exists within the group. If people hold back from contributing ideas in meetings, it is an indicator that not all participants feel their voices carry the same influence. Pay attention to when people ask to speak to you privately, or whether they approach another team member after a meeting to debrief, as these are signs that people do not feel they can participate openly in meetings. You must consider what structural inequities are in place that are suppressing their agency. Check that the group does not privilege contributions from certain people and marginalize others. In library organizations where there is a strong stratification of work between faculty and staff, or MLIS and non-MLIS employees, check whether the status associated with a person's position is the reason the group overlooks their contribution. Ensure that the group equally values contributions of librarians of color, untenured or lower seniority individuals, and people of all gender expressions, and the group includes such voices in the process. Call out exclusionary behavior early in the process before you create a situation that is hostile to some voices. Not only will you lose their expertise and creativity, but you have also undermined trust in the process and outcomes.

Finding success in projects builds trust, relationships, and a foundation for future collaborative work. Consider our 2016 project to create an e-book cataloging workflow. Within a small technical services department, electronic resources, cataloging, and acquisitions personnel met to develop a SharePoint workflow to ensure that they gathered all the necessary setup information when we purchased new e-book packages. Electronic resources staff needed information to configure the proxy server, gather us-





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age statistics, and check on any interface customizations. Cataloging staff needed to know how to access MARC records, what update notifications the vendor distributed, and what user limits were in place. They created a set of questions for acquisitions staff to ask the content provider at the point of purchase, which SharePoint would retain and distribute to everyone involved.

Overall, the new ebooks workflow has led to better sharing of unique ebook access information with users and public services staff; better communication among technical services staff regarding our individual roles and responsibilities in the ebook acquisition, activation and cataloging process; and a way to maintain necessary information with regard to ebook packages and individual titles for technical services staff for future reference.<sup>35</sup>

Working closely on this cross-functional workflow strengthened their relationships and has provided a deeper understanding of each other's roles within the organization.

### **The Limitations of Leadership and Reasons for Failure**

Collaboration in acquisitions, as with many areas of the library, is not without its frustrations. Not every opportunity comes with the freedom to explore ideal possibilities. Restrictions on available time or money, state or institutional regulations, and even staff turnover limit your choices. The need for consensus reduces amazing opportunities down to the lowest common denominator.<sup>36</sup> Often circumstances are outside your control, no matter how well you craft a vision, communicate, and build trust among your team: The vendor may be unwilling to negotiate; you may lose the authority to make a decision; or the library you partnered with may have a budget reversion and drop out. Sometimes inertia and conservatism within the organization

win out, and undermine sincere efforts at transformation.

We have examined several ways teams can break down when you fail to create an environment that supports successful collaboration. The conditions we ask you to create in your libraries are no guarantee for success. These are best practices – the environment you must strive to build as a mindful leader. They certainly will not prevent you from making other missteps along the way. Below is an assortment of other ways your project might fail.

Collaboration emphasizes collegial engagement – most often working outside of traditional reporting structures. Whether you are a leader or participant, the expectation is to work with others when you lack the authority to compel them to act. Leading teams without positional authority demands a political acumen, persuasiveness, and tenacity. It requires patience and flexibility on deadlines; you will need to rely on people from outside the working group who will not share your urgency to complete specific tasks. Left unaddressed, mismatched priorities or unclear timetables create frustration and animosity, and undermines the relationships you work so hard to build.

Differences in organizational size, mission, or culture will be impediments to consensus if you fail to establish the shared expectations discussed earlier. Take the situation where you want to pursue a shared collection of e-books across libraries in the state. There is a narrow category of books that appeal to all patron types, and in this case, from the following participants: research-intensive universities, urban public libraries, community college libraries, and liberal arts colleges. The motivation for creating this type of collection – one where every participant feels they are benefiting from the new content – may be challenging or even impossible to find. In cases where there are deeper



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differences in organizational cultures, when collaborating with content providers, the proposition of a shared vision becomes even more difficult. In Murray's article on collaboration and competition in special libraries, she identifies clashing organizational missions as a major barrier to cooperation: "When partners do not agree on basic values such as access to information or client privacy, it can affect a whole project and the working relationship itself."<sup>37</sup>

One less apparent source of failure occurs when leaders push for success at too high a cost. The Harvard Management Update advocates for effective, iterative performance improvement, saying "in any major change effort, short-term performance improvements are crucial; they're proof that change can produce positive results..."<sup>38</sup> The challenge for leadership is to not let the need for short-term gains come at the expense of sustainability. Pushing hard to achieve a highly visible win may appease outside stakeholders or meet your library's strategic goals; however, without a plan to continue—ongoing funding, a stable staffing support model—you run the risk of squandering the work of the team. Lim and Mohamed discuss macro and micro views of project success. The macro view focuses on the impact of the project—the vision and purpose for the project discussed at length. Whereas the micro viewpoint considers success from the perspective of those directly involved with the execution of the project.<sup>39</sup> Your team's impression on how successful the process is, the quality of the product, and whether their time and effort is well spent, all have a significant impact on their evaluation of the project. Successful teams require you to build and spend social capital within and without the group. Were you to crank through a high-stakes project, on a short timeframe, you would burn your team out if you left no opportunity for them to recharge along the way. The burnout becomes associated with collaboration and undermines any future project you might want to undertake.

An example of an unsuccessful task force illustrates how some of these problems can play out. Our library is part of a three-university library consortium that shared print collections with a weekly van service. Our directors tasked our group to develop a workflow, based on this model of shared collections, to share e-journal articles. The task force identified numerous obstacles. To start, none of the ILL departments had a history of lending e-journal articles. There were concerns over licensing restrictions and issues with resource discovery, request routing, and staffing levels. In the end, we reported that it would not be possible without a significant commitment of resources from each institution and that it was unlikely to save the libraries from the processing and copyright costs typically associated with article borrowing. What contributed to the failure? The charge of the task force ultimately had been too narrow. The administrators' idea of success had to include no-cost article sharing. The task force's work suffered because the group focused too much on limitations and placed an emphasis on task-based management. We did not recognize our need to build a foundation for collaborative lending by first strengthening the relationships between ILL units. In hindsight, we should have reframed the project to what we could accomplish in phases, and we should have worked with administrators to adjust their expectations. Instead, everyone left feeling frustrated, and abandoning the project. By reframing what success means, you can avoid these dead-ends. Recognize that laying the groundwork for growing an organizational culture that rewards and supports collaboration can be more beneficial over the long term than one specific project. Small successes build momentum for later projects by increasing positive feelings from staff about their engagement in the process.

You can affect the environment in which your team operates whether you are leading from the top or the bottom, and positively contribute to



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its success. This occurs in numerous ways. Leadership is the responsibility for keeping meetings on track and keeping conversation productive, setting meeting agendas, helping group members communicate with one another, preventing any one voice from dominating the conversation, and developing a shared understanding of what you want to achieve. Leaders focus the group on the tasks that lead to fulfilling their charge. Leadership requires that you know the strengths and expertise of the people with whom you work to leverage them accordingly.<sup>40</sup> Not every aspect of leadership must be handled by one person; however, it is important that when you set about to do collaborative work, these aspects are fully attended to. You must model the behavior you expect of others.<sup>41</sup> You must commit to creating a space where everyone's contributions are valued and heard; where you welcome disagreements because candor is safe; where the values lies with inclusivity and checks are on put on viewpoints for privilege; and where there is understanding that each person has an individual responsibility for the construction of this environment.

### Conclusion

On a team, leading well can pay dividends towards creating an environment that fosters positive and effective interactions that directly contribute to the success of a project. On this path, you will create a coalition behind your project and define what success will mean for your team. You will set expectations for participant interactions that will facilitate open conversations – even in circumstances where you cannot work face-to-face. You will build buy-in from stakeholders by managing communication and expectations of those outside your team. You will build a team that is inclusive, and which creates the types of relationships that foster collaboration in the future. You will not be able to do it alone; outside forces may make it difficult. You can do everything possible to stack the deck in ways that will benefit acquisitions financially

and strategically when working across departments and with other library partners. In the words of Gratton and Erickson, your focus should be on “[s]trengthening your organization’s capacity for collaboration [which] requires a combination of long-term investments – in building relationships and trust, in developing a culture in which senior leaders are role models of cooperation...”



<sup>1</sup> Thomson, Perry, and Miller, "Conceptualizing and Measuring Collaboration," *Journal of Public Affairs Research and Theory* 19, no. 1 (2007): 24.

<sup>2</sup> Bart Harloe, Pat Hults, and Adam Traub, "What's the Use of Use? Return on Investment Strategies for Consortial DDA Programs," *Journal of Library Administration* 55, no. 3 (2015): 254-55.

<sup>3</sup> Harloe, Hults, and Traub, "What's the Use of Use?" 254-55.

<sup>4</sup> Hackman, *Leading Teams: Setting the Stage for Great Performances*, 41.

<sup>5</sup> Thomson, Perry, and Miller, "Conceptualizing and Measuring Collaboration," 25.

<sup>6</sup> Bolman and Deal, *Reframing Organizations*, 211.

<sup>7</sup> Bolman and Deal, *Reframing Organizations*, 213.

<sup>8</sup> Hackman, *Leading Teams*, 129.

<sup>9</sup> For more on library employee resiliency see Jacob Berg, Angela Galvan, and Eamon Tewell, "Resilience, Grit, and Other Lies: Academic Libraries and the Myth of Resiliency" (presentation, Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) Biennial Conference, Baltimore, MD, March 23, 2017), accessed on July 24, 2017, <https://eamontewell.files.wordpress.com/2008/03/academic-libraries-and-the-false-promises-of-resiliency-laac-2017.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> Hackman, *Leading Teams*, 65.

<sup>11</sup> Gratton and Erickson, "8 Ways," 108.

<sup>12</sup> Hackman, *Leading Teams*, 71.

<sup>13</sup> Sunshine Carter and Danielle Ostendorf, "Processes and Strategies for Collaboratively Purchasing Electronic Resources," *Collaborative Librarianship* 9, no. 1 (2017): 64.

<sup>14</sup> Hackman, *Leading Teams*, 118-19.

<sup>15</sup> Bolman and Deal, *Reframing Organization*, 216-17.

<sup>16</sup> For an application of stakeholder analysis of libraries' core services and strategic plans, see Manda Vrkljan, "Breaking Down Silos: Using Stakeholder Analysis to Improve Communication Among Library Departments" (poster, Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) Biennial Conference, Baltimore, MD, March 23, 2017).

<sup>17</sup> Tim Bottorff, Robbin Glaser, Andrew Todd, and Barbara Alderman, "Branching Out: Communication and Collaboration Among Librarians at Multi-Campus Institutions," *Journal of Library Administration* 48, no. 3/4 (2008): 351.

<sup>18</sup> Min Tong and Cynthia Kisby, "A Partnership Approach to Multi-Campus Library Services," *Collaborative Librarianship* 1, no. 4 (2009): 134.

<sup>19</sup> Bottorff et al., "Branching Out," 343.

<sup>20</sup> Terri R. Kurtzberg, *Virtual Teams: Mastering Communication and Collaboration in the Digital Age* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2014), 5.

<sup>21</sup> Kurtzberg, *Virtual Teams*, 5.

<sup>22</sup> Tong and Kisby. "A Partnership Approach," 134.

<sup>23</sup> Tong and Kisby, "A Partnership Approach," 134.

<sup>24</sup> Kurtzberg, *Virtual Teams*, 35.



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<sup>25</sup> Carter and Ostendorf, "Processes and Strategies," 67.

<sup>26</sup> Kurtzberg, *Virtual Teams*, 5.

<sup>27</sup> Heidi Landecker, "Discrimination's 'Back Door': Tackling Language Bias on Campus," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 63, no. 4 (September 18, 2016), accessed July 24, 2017, <http://www.chronicle.com/article/Judge-What-I-Say-Not-How-I-/237777>; Kurtzberg, *Virtual Teams*, 176.

<sup>28</sup> Mary Jo Mueller, Marc Johlic, and Susann Keohane, "Overcoming Accessibility Challenges of Web Conferencing," IBM Human Ability and Accessibility Center, (PDF presentation, 2013): 13, accessed July 22, 2017, [https://www-03.ibm.com/able/education/downloads/IBM\\_Overcoming\\_Accessibility\\_Challenges\\_of\\_Web\\_Conferencing-CSUN13.pdf](https://www-03.ibm.com/able/education/downloads/IBM_Overcoming_Accessibility_Challenges_of_Web_Conferencing-CSUN13.pdf).

<sup>29</sup> Mueller, Johlic, and Keohane, "Overcoming Accessibility Challenges," 20; These steps could include distributing accessible information ahead of meetings, asking each person to say their name before speaking, understanding the features (and limitations) of your conferencing software, verbally describing visual materials, and providing alternative avenues for responses, whether in chat or over the phone.

<sup>30</sup> Thomson, Perry, and Miller, "Conceptualizing and Measuring Collaboration," 43.

<sup>31</sup> Gratton and Erickson, "8 Ways," 102.

<sup>32</sup> Marcus M. Stewart, Marcy Cray, and Beth K. Humberd, "Teaching Value in Diversity: On the Folly of Espousing Inclusion, While Practicing

Exclusion," *Academy of Management Learning & Education* 7, no. 3 (2008): 374-75.

<sup>33</sup> Hackman, *Leading Teams*, 127.

<sup>34</sup> Linda U. Absher and Melissa Cardenas-Dow, "Collaborative Librarianship: A Minority Opinion," *Collaborative Librarianship* 8, no. 4 (2016): 162.

<sup>35</sup> Tina M. Adams and Paromita Biswas, "Nobody Knows and Nobody is Responsible: Issues in Ebooks Workflow and Access," in *Proceedings of the 2016 Charleston Library Conference* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2017). DOI:10.5703/1288284316459

<sup>36</sup> Carter and Ostendorf, "Processes and Strategies," 64.

<sup>37</sup> Tara E. Murray, "Collaboration and Competition in Special Libraries," *Journal of Library Administration* 55, no. 2 (2015): 146.

<sup>38</sup> "The Critical value of Short-Term Wins," *Harvard Management Update* 10, no.3 (2005): 3.

<sup>39</sup> C. S. Lim and M. Zain Mohamed, "Criteria of Project Success: An Exploratory Re-examination," *International Journal of Project Management* 17, no. 4, (1999): 244.

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