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October 17, 2013

Building and Strengthening Collaborative Evaluation Partnerships

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Available at: https://works.bepress.com/judah_viola/16/
Building and Strengthening Collaborative Evaluation Partnerships

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10/17/2013
LEARNING GOALS

• Attendees will be able to:
  – Distinguish between contracting and collaborative evaluation partnership development
  – Articulate 2 Competencies required for effectively building collaborative partnerships
  – Identify at least 2 questions worth asking and 2 lessons learned from each of the 4 phases of the partnership building process
COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

• Collaboration as the nature of the relationship in which partners:
  – Find common purpose through information exchange, sharing risks, resources, responsibilities & rewards
  – Shared goal of mutual empowerment and learning

• Requires time and effort beyond traditional evaluation or consulting arrangements.

• Partners as experts of their context
COMPETENCIES

1. Collaborative Consultation
   – Demonstrate useful skills (e.g., Fresh perspective & methodological skills)
   – Build Trusting relationships through collaborative process
COMPETENCIES

2. Group Process Skills
   – Diverse decision making
   – Interpersonal communication
   – Conflict analysis
   – Consensus building
   – Facilitation
Four Phase Model of Collaborative Consulting and Evaluation Partnerships

Relationship Building

Collaboration & Empowerment

Phase I: Seeking

Phase II: Connecting & Negotiating

Phase III: Implementation & Maintenance

Phase IV: Ending & Capacity Building

Group Process Facilitation

Relationship Building
PHASE I ~ SEEKING

• Questions to ask
  – What benefits are probable from fostering relationship?
  – Drawbacks? (economic, credibility etc…)?
  – Who are gatekeepers & best level of entry?

• Lessons Learned
  – Make use of your network
  – Do your homework before reaching out
    • Map area and organizational assets
    • Don’t trust everything you read
PHASE II~ CONNECTING & NEGOTIATION

• Question to Ask
  – Experiences with partnerships in the past?
  – Consider power differentials
  – What org. adjustments on either side need to be made?
  – Is there hope for future capacity building expressed?

• Lessons Learned
  – Clarify shared vision & decision making process
  – Don’t overpromise or try to partner with everyone
  – Make commitments specific & explicit
PHASE III~ IMPLEMENTATION & MAINTENANCE

• Questions to ask
  – How is partnership mutually beneficial?
  – What is the impact on other stakeholders?

• Lessons Learned
  – Develop & maintain partnership norms
  – Map out & document process, use timelines
  – Multiple points of contact & channels
PHASE IV ~ ENDING & CAPACITY BUILDING

• Questions to ask
  – Is the partnership meeting its goals?
  – What have been unintended consequences?
  – What benefits can come of ending or pausing?
  – How can we sustain benefits if ending or pausing?

• Lessons Learned
  – Reflect on and evaluate partnerships with future in mind
  – Open honest communication helps at every stage & debriefing allows for closure and reduces the likelihood of repeating missteps
SUMMARY

• Distinct in approach & intensity of relationship

• Requires competency in **Collaborative Consultation & Group Process**

• Four Phases:
  – Seeking
  – Connecting & Negotiating
  – Implementation & Maintenance
  – Ending and Capacity Building