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Making Decisions Together: Team Meeting Tool Kit

Adapted from "Collaborative State Planning Tool Kit" (Smith, 2009). www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/

Barbara J. Smith
University of Colorado Denver
September, 2010

The purpose of this Team Meeting Tool Kit is to pull together in one place several resources, tools, and samples that we know help make team meetings productive and enjoyable. Using these tools can improve ownership of and engagement in team meetings and decisions. Team meetings need to encourage collaborative thinking and decision making. This tool kit is comprised of background resources, templates and samples of meeting tools and activities that can facilitate that outcome.

TACSEI and CSEFEL are partnering with States to build state-wide professional development systems that implement and sustain the Pyramid Model. Many of the resources in this tool kit are adapted from a state planning tool kit that is on the CSEFEL website on the page that includes the work of the states. TACSEI also has a web page that reflects the work in the TACSEI partner states. The state work is evolving and progressing. It is not static. Frequent visits to the CSEFEL and TACSEI state web pages and the pages of the state teams will keep you updated on products, plans and meeting resources that are being used at the state level by state collaborative teams.

The resources in this tool kit are arranged by:

1) **Background Resources**-provide an overview of the Pyramid Model planning approach (these should be reviewed by all team members early on)
2) **Team Meeting Tools and Templates**-help ensure team meetings are efficient and productive

Background Resources

There are two, short (approximately 10-15 minute) voice-over power presentations on the CSEFEL state page under "New State Resources". We encourage all planning team members to visit these important summaries of our approach. These voice-over power points are:

o **The CSEFEL and State Implementation Partnerships: An Overview**
  Roxanne Kaufman
  This presentation provides an overview of the Pyramid Model state planning purpose.
  http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/video/csefel_overview/csefel_overview.htm

o **Effective Collaborative Leadership and Teaming Strategies**
  Barbara J. Smith
  This presentation provides an overview of effective strategies for teams.
  http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/video/smith/smith.html

Teams can use these as resources for their first meeting, orienting new team members, as well as public awareness to important constituents and agency heads.

Team Meeting Tools and Templates

These templates are provided for your use. We have found them to be effective. You may put your team's logo on them and modify them to meet your needs and to encourage team ownership of the process. The templates are attached. The links refer to links on the CSEFEL state page where these samples are found.

o Sample agenda for first meeting (can also use logic models-see below, and the voice over power point presentations noted above) (document attached)
  http://www.pyramidplus.org/sites/default/files/images/1_sample_first_meeting_agenda.doc

o Templates for meeting agendas, meeting evaluations, meeting summaries, meeting role assignments, action plans (documents attached)
  http://www.pyramidplus.org/sites/default/files/images/2_sample_meeting_agenda.doc
  http://www.pyramidplus.org/sites/default/files/images/2_sample_meeting_agenda_template.doc
  http://www.pyramidplus.org/sites/default/files/images/2_meeting_evaluation.doc
  http://www.pyramidplus.org/sites/default/files/images/2_meeting_summary.doc
  http://www.pyramidplus.org/sites/default/files/images/2_actionplan_template.doc

o Ground Rules & Logistics for effective meetings (document attached)
  http://www.pyramidplus.org/sites/default/files/images/3_meeting_ground_rules.doc

o Sample of ground rules
  http://www.pyramidplus.org/sites/default/files/images/4_nc_ground_rules.pdf

Your logo here

Pyramid Model Team Meeting

Date:
Place:

Agenda

Objectives:
1. Provide an orientation to the initiative
2. Review purpose of team
3. Adopt ground rules for collaborative planning
4. Review draft action plan format
5. Adopt goal/vision
6. Identify challenges to goal/vision
7. Confirm team membership
8. Plan next steps
9. Identify meeting roles
10. Evaluate meeting

Agenda:

9:00   Welcome, review agenda and confirm **next meeting time and place**

9:15   Review purpose of team

9:30   Review, revise and adopt ground rules for meetings

9:45   Review draft action plan format

10:00   Adopt goal/vision for the group's planning

10:45   Identify challenges to the goal/vision and strategies for addressing challenges

11:45   Review team membership: do we have who needs to be here given our vision? Other venues for stakeholder input?

12:45   Plan next steps: roles for next meeting; objectives for next meeting: discuss training of trainers, selection of coaches and demonstration sites, etc.

1:00   Complete meeting evaluation

Your logo here

Pyramid Model Team Meeting

Date:
Place:

Meeting Roles
Host:
Facilitator:
Time-Keeper:
Refreshments:
Note-taker:
Buddy for absent members:

Meeting Objectives:
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.

Next Meetings dates and places:

Agenda:

Time Required?	Item	Type of Action	Decision
9:00	**Welcome/Introductions**	**info sharing**	**no**
9:15	**Action plan updates**	**discussion**	**yes**
10:15	**Selection of Coaches**	**discussion**	**yes**
11:15	**Continued planning of train the trainer event**	**discussion**	**yes**
Noon	**complete meeting evaluation & adjourn**		

Your logo here

Pyramid Model Team Meeting

Date:
Place:

Meeting Roles
Host:
Facilitator:
Time-Keeper:
Refreshments:
Note-taker:
Buddy for absent members:

Meeting Objectives:
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.

Next Meetings dates and places:

Agenda:

Time Required?	Item	Type of Action	Decision
9:00			
9:15			
10:15			
11:15			
Noon			

Your logo here

[template]

Pyramid Model State Team Meeting

Meeting Evaluation

Meeting Date:

_____

Meeting Objectives *(copy objectives from agenda here)*
1.
2.
3.
4.

Please answer the following questions
(1 being the lowest rating, 5 being the highest):
_____

- *Degree to which the meeting objectives*
  were achieved   *1   2   3   4   5*

- *Facilitation of the meeting was*   *1   2   3   4   5*

- *I would rate my own contributions to*
  the meeting as   *1   2   3   4   5*

- *Degree to which I think this meeting contributed*
  toward achieving our purpose   1   2   3   4   5

Additional comments…

Your logo here

Pyramid Model Team Meeting Summary

Date of Meeting:

In attendance:
Roles:

Next Meeting Dates, Time & Location:

_____

Meeting Objectives:

    11.

Issue I. Summary of Discussion & Decisions on the topic of:

Logistics (Review of summary of previous meeting, Team member updates, meeting dates, place, etc):

Miscellaneous follow-up to last meeting:

Issue II. Summary of Discussion & Decisions on the topic of:
Action Planning:

Issue III. Summary Discussion & Decisions on the topic of:
Other items:

Meeting Evaluation Summary:

Next Steps:

    1.

PYRAMID MODEL STATE TEAM ACTION PLANNING FORM

Date _____

Goal/Vision_____
_____
_____

Objective
_____
_____
_____

Work Group Members
_____
_____
_____

Strategies to Achieve Objective	Timelines, Persons Responsible,	Resources Needed	Indicators of Success & Evaluation Plan	Date & Status or Date Completed

Date: _____ **Present:** _____
Notes: _____

Date: _____ **Present:** _____
Notes: _____

Date: _____ **Present:** _____
Notes: _____

Date: _____ **Present:** _____
Notes: _____

Collaborative Team Meeting Ground Rules & Logistics: What Works

Barbara J. Smith
University of Colorado Denver
September, 2009

These collaborative team meeting ground rules help to make meetings productive and efficient while promoting shared team ownership.

- **Team Membership**: Approximately ten (10) decision makers passionate about the topic. Membership depends on purpose. Members need to be decision makers who have a stake in the purpose of the team and whose buy-in is important to the success of the effort. Members need to be able to commit resources toward the work of the team as well as the eventual goal of the work. If the decision maker can not be a member, their designee needs to be able to have ready access to them and to be able to commit resources and report decisions within one or two weeks of the meeting. Team members need to be committed to team decision making and being a positive and productive team member.
- **Team Roles**: (Some or all of these roles can be volunteers from team; can be scheduled ahead of time or designated at each meeting)
  - **Team Members** = Participate fully. Communicate with the constituencies they represent. Have the willingness and expertise to help the team accomplish its work.
  - **Host** = Handle logistics of meetings. NOTE: This role may be shared if the team believes that it is helpful to rotate meeting locations.
  - **Facilitator** = Leads team meetings in a way that is perceived to be fair, helping the team stay focused, and supporting the building of relationships needed for effective work. NOTE: This role may be an outside facilitator or a team member that is viewed as objective and fair or a role that is shared by team members who take role at different times. It may also be the same person as the Convener. The key is to have a facilitator that is experienced in using activities and strategies that promote shared decision making and ensuring all opinions are heard, as well as able to facilitate difficult decisions and discussions.
  - **Recorder** = Record decisions for team and disseminate to team; each member will take their own notes. Maintain team's "master" file or notebook.
  - **Timekeeper** = Keeps track of time allotments on agenda and reminds team of time remaining for each agenda item so that the team can complete items in a timely manner OR adjusts agenda as needed.
  - **Provider of refreshments**=if the team chooses to provide refreshments, this task can also be shared among team members.
  - **Ad Hoc Members/ Stakeholder Input**: use of ad hoc members, workgroups and focus groups to ensure broad representation and needed expertise and input. Not necessarily on team as regular members but involved on an "as needed basis" via work groups, survey, interviews, special projects, etc. as needed to accomplish particular tasks.
- **Meeting Attendance**: Teams should meet at least monthly. Members attend rather than sending representatives, prepare for meetings, if must be absent-review summary, talk to peer for updates.

➢ **Decision Making**: Use consensus if possible. If consensus is not achieved, use: "*modified consensus*", i.e., what can be changed so that we can live with this decision and publicly support it?

➢ **Support Decisions:** team decisions must be supported by everyone; use modified consensus if necessary; if it is necessary to miss a meeting, support decisions made in your absence.

➢ **Decision Making Strategies**: use strategies and activities that promote shared decision making as well as ensuring that everyone feels that their opinions are valued. Decision making activities are important to ensure that all voices are heard, the best decisions are made and that there are no feelings of "winners and losers". A resource for meeting facilitation activities is: Hayden, Frederick & Smith (2003); *A Road Map for Facilitating Collaborative Teams;*
http://store.cambiumlearning.com/InitialSearchResults.aspx?searchtype=Basic&sorttype=Basic&Query=Hayden&criteria=0100&site=sw

➢ **Interactions**: Respect all opinions (all ideas have value), engage in respectful disagreement, talk one at a time, share decision making, share the floor, honor confidentiality, etc.

➢ **Establish Shared Meaning**: establish a team vision and mission statement to ensure all are on the same page about the direction of the collaborative work; establish shared ground rules about meetings and interactions; ensure shared understanding of terms, concepts and where there is confusion or uncertainty, establish shared definitions.

➢ **Meeting logistics**: establish schedule of meetings (should be at least monthly); time of meetings (often teams find that meeting first thing in the morning contributes to better attendance) and most meetings can be productive in 3-4 hours; determine culture of group re: providing refreshments, location of meeting, whether there will be administrative support or whether all tasks will be shared by team members, whether family members need support such as stipends, whether free parking is needed, etc.

➢ **Meeting Agendas**: each meeting should be driven by a written agenda with meeting objectives which is sent ahead of time asking for input.

➢ **Action Plans:** the work of the team should be guided by a written Action Plan. This plan is based on the shared vision; contains measurable goals and objectives with timelines, resources needed for meeting the objective and who is responsible. The Action Plan can be used as the meeting agenda to ensure that all meetings are action oriented and focused on the shared vision and Action Plan the team has adopted and that progress is being made on the vision and Action Plan.

➢ **Meeting and Team Evaluation**: provide an evaluation form at the end of every team meeting that asks if the objectives of the meeting were attained, was the meeting worth while, and did the team member feel they participated and felt valued.

➢ **Worthwhile Meetings:** make sure that every team meeting accomplishes something on the Action Plan so that all team members can see tangible evidence that the meetings are worth their time. Have short and long term objectives so that the team can accomplish actions early on while working on the harder more long term items.

➢ **Meeting Summaries**: written summaries of the meetings are provided after each meeting containing at a minimum the decisions and actions taken at the meeting. The team can decide how thorough they want the meeting summary/minutes to be.

➢ **New Member Orientation**: "Buddy System" (a member provides information and a file of up to date materials to new member).

➢ **Universal signal**: i.e. hold up index card if group should move on from current issue.

➢ **Start and end on time**.

- ➢ **Stay outcome-focused:** Use "Parking Lot" when appropriate.
- ➢ **Celebrate big and small accomplishments**! All work and no play or celebration makes the team dull! Celebrate accomplishments, birthdays, other professional and personal milestones. Become a community and build relationships. Remember: the team members were selected because of their commitment and passion toward the focus of the team. Everyone wants to succeed and make headway. Stop and acknowledge each step toward the vision!

North Carolina/CSEFEL
Meeting Ground Rules

- **Team Membership**: The team will consist of approximately twelve (12) decision makers.
- **Team Roles:**
  - **Team Members =** Each team member will participate fully and will communicate with the constituencies they represent. Members will be selected who have the willingness and expertise to help the team accomplish its work. Each member will take his/her own notes at meetings.
  - **Convener =** This role will rotate among members since meetings are held in various locations. The convener arranges the space for the meeting.
  - **CSEFEL Resource/Consultant =** The consultants provide support to the team to help it achieve the goals and interface with project. (Barbara Smith and Tweety Yates)
  - **Facilitator =** This role will rotate among tem members. The facilitator leads team meetings in a way that is perceived to be fair, helping the team stay focused and supporting the building of relationships needed for effective work.
  - **Note-taker =** This role will rotate among members. The note-taker will record the minutes (including summary discussion and decisions) and will send minutes to Margaret and Tasha for review and distribution to the team. Tasha will maintain the team's "master" notebook.
  - **Timekeeper =** This role will rotate among members. The timekeeper keeps track of time allotments on agenda and reminds team of time remaining for each agenda item so that the team can complete items in a timely manner OR adjust agenda as needed.
  - **Ad Hoc Members =** Ad hoc members are involved on an "as needed basis" via survey, interviews, special projects, etc. as needed to accomplish particular tasks.
- **Meeting Attendance**: Members will attend meetings rather than sending representatives and agree to prepare for meetings. If a member must be absent he/she will review the meeting minutes and will contact the note-taker for clarification, if needed. Members will support decisions made in their absence.
- **New Member Orientation**: The departing member will provide information and a notebook of up-to-date materials to the new member.
- **Stakeholder Input**: The team will use ad hoc members, workgroups and/or focus groups to ensure broad representation and input.
- **Decision Making**: Decisions will be made by consensus if possible. If consensus is not achieved, the team will use "*modified consensus*", i.e., what can be changed so that we can live with this decision and publicly support it?
- **Interactions**: Members agree to respect all opinions (all ideas have value), share decision making, share the floor and honor confidentiality.
- **Universal signal**: Members will hold up an index card if group should move on from current issue.
- **Start and end on time**.
- **Stay outcome-focused:** The team will use a "Parking Lot" when appropriate.
- **Celebrate big and small accomplishments**!