Stronger Together

Strategic Collaboration, Shared Services, and Joint Fundraising

Presented by Andy Robinson for the Adirondack Nonprofit Network
Getting started…

• What are the benefits of collaboration?

• What are the risks or challenges?
Step 1: Clarify your niche

What are your unique assets? Compared to peers, where are you strongest?
MacMillan Matrix
Created by Ian MacMillan
of the Wharton School,
University of Pennsylvania

Four criteria:

1. Alignment with mission and abilities
2. Program attractiveness: “easy” or “difficult”
3. Competitive position compared to others
4. Alternative coverage – who else is doing overlapping work?
MacMillan Matrix rephrased for grassroots organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOOD FIT WITH MISSION AND ABILITIES</th>
<th>HIGH PROGRAM ATTRACTION: “Easy” Program</th>
<th>LOW PROGRAM ATTRACTION: “Difficult” Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong Competitive Position</td>
<td>Alternative Coverage High</td>
<td>Alternative Coverage High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Affirm this program and negotiate functions with other organizations.</td>
<td>5. Collaborate to share the load or help fund resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Grow in order to provide this service to the movement.</td>
<td>6. “Soul of the Organization” – find support for this or limit its scope.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Competitive Position</td>
<td>3. Give this away quickly.</td>
<td>7. Give this to other organizations supportively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Decide with other organizations who should do this.</td>
<td>8. Collaborate to share the load or give it away.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POOR FIT WITH MISSION AND ABILITIES</td>
<td>9. Give this away quickly.</td>
<td>10. Give this away systematically.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 2: Use this tool to figure out when...

- Your organization should lead
- It’s best to support other groups
- You might be stronger working together!
Consider using this matrix for a joint exercise with potential partners
## Step 3: Know your options

**Tamarack’s Collaboration Spectrum**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compete</th>
<th>Co-exist</th>
<th>Communicate</th>
<th>Cooperate</th>
<th>Coordinate</th>
<th>Collaborate</th>
<th>Integrate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Competition for clients, resources, partners, public attention</td>
<td>No systematic connection between agencies</td>
<td>Inter-agency information sharing (e.g., networking)</td>
<td>As needed, often informal interaction on discrete activities or projects</td>
<td>Groups and organizations systematically adjust and align work with each other for greater outcomes</td>
<td>Longer team interaction based on shared mission, goals; also shared decision-making and resources</td>
<td>Fully integrated programs, planning, and funding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Turf**
Examples: ever-closer relationships

Cooperate: Jointly sponsored programs

Coordinate: Shared support services
(accounting, payroll, office space, etc.)

Collaborate: Shared staff; ongoing shared program planning, fundraising, board contact, etc.

Integrate: Full merger or strategic partnership
Breakouts

• Other potential examples: What’s possible?
• Real-life examples: What’s happening now?
Step 4: Seek out potential partnerships

- On the collaboration spectrum, where is the relationship now? (And do you both agree?)
- Further collaboration opportunities: What could you do better together?
- Try something – OK to start with low-risk options
Step 5: Seek out

Shared fundraising opportunities

- Grant proposals
- Funder briefings
- Joint fundraising events (virtual?)
- “Giving days”
- Joint approaches to major donors
- Shared training
Shared fundraising success… in April!

• April 7, 2020: Statewide giving day
• $5 million for 900 organizations – a 40% increase over 2019!
• Lots went to non-COVID-19 response organizations: animal welfare, charter schools, etc.
Peer stories

“We split grants with partners, regardless of who wrote the proposal. It takes a lot of trust and partnership, but we realize we can both do more together than we can apart.”
Peer stories

“We do a major donor event with another organization. We save land, the other organization builds trails. Our donors like to meet their donors and everyone gets more support. And we drink a lot of whiskey!”
Peer stories

Four local groups raise money for a shared van

- Pick up salvaged food from grocery stores; take it to multiple food shelves
- Prepared meals go to community food sites
- Transport kids to youth ski programs
Advice from your peers

• Internal consensus first:
  Why are you doing this?

• “Don’t let a funder
  arrange the marriage.”

• Partners need shared
  values

• Clear agreements:
  Contracts and MOUs!
Advice from your peers

• “Not easy. Requires a lot of dialogue and planning. On the upside, it can lead to a larger pot of funding.”

• “I truly believe donors really appreciate it.”

• “We don’t own donors.”

• “Embrace a culture of generosity and plenty! It always produces better results!”
Questions?
Train Your Board (And Everyone Else) To Raise Money

Andy’s book – with Andrea Kihlstedt

Available from
www.emersonandchurch.com
Stay in touch!

www.andyrobinsononline.com
www.trainyourboard.com