Development Suggestions for Collaboration

<u>Suggested Readings</u>

Title	Author/Publisher	Learning Mode
Cultivating Communities of Practice	Wenger, Etienne, Richard McDermott, and William M. Synder/ 2002/ Harvard Business School Press	Book
The Wealth of Knowledge: Intellectual Capital and the Twenty-first Century Organization	Stewart, Thomas A. / 2003 / Currency	Book
If Only We Knew What We Know: The Transfer of Internal Knowledge and Best Practice	O'Dell, Carla and C. Jackson Grayson / 1998 / Free Press	Book
The Fifth Discipline	Senge, Peter M.	Book
Harvard Business Review on Knowledge Management	Drucker, Peter F., David Garvin, Dorothy Leonard, Susan Straus, and John Seely Brown / 1998 / Harvard Business School Press	Book
Working Across Boundaries: Making Collaboration Work in Government and Private Organizations	Linden, Russell M.	Book

Development Suggestions for Collaboration, *continued*

<u>Activities</u>

1.   Analyze how you currently share information and knowledge. What is working?
      What is not? What can you do to improve?

2.   Give people options for sharing their views and ideas. Ask them to convey their
      ideas and views in a way that is comfortable for them. It could be face-to-face, via
      e-mail, or through voice mail. Make sure, though, that they understand you may
      want to contact them later with questions. Role model the skill of constructively
      seeking and accepting feedback from others.

3.   Use a calendar and mark dates of major projects or initiatives. Plan a
      communication schedule for updating people on key milestones accomplished. The
      communication schedule can be on a weekly, bi-monthly, or quarterly basis.

4.   Consider using Videoconferences when you need face-to-face interaction but cannot
      be in the same location. Establish ground rules and guidelines for more effective
      Videoconferences. Some suggestions are:

      −   Before speaking, announce from which site you are speaking and state your
          name.
      −   Avoid making sudden gestures, which can make the Video image choppy.
      −   Always pause before speaking.
      −   Look into the monitor while speaking.
      −   Don't touch the microphone. Let the technician make any adjustments.
      −   Refrain from side conversations.
      −   Refrain from shuffling papers or making other distracting noises. Microphones
          amplify sounds.
      −   Speak in a normal tone and at a normal volume.
      −   Avoid wearing clothing with narrow stripes, prominent herringbone weaves,
          small checks, and other intricate designs. These can cause distracting visual
          effects on camera.
      −   Avoid wearing very intense or "hot" colors such as deep reds because they can
          be overwhelming on the screen. Light pastels project better than a bright white
          that will make you appear to glow. Try to balance light and dark clothing so
          that the camera's exposure control gets an even reading of light.

Development Suggestions for Collaboration, *continued*

<u>Tips</u>

1. Consider how organizational processes can be redesigned to ensure that valuable knowledge is shared/distributed throughout the organization.

2. Discuss communication breakdowns with peers in other departments. Devise ways to avoid them.

3. Encourage your employees to come to you with ideas, and then support the implementation of ideas you see as viable.

4. Encourage others to express contrary views when necessary.

5. If you notice that team members are not participating in a discussion, try to draw them out by directly asking for their opinions or ideas.

6. When your team/workgroup tries to solve a problem, ask what other parts of the organization have a stake in the outcome. Find out whether your team/workgroup has received input from these stakeholders.

7. Develop a site on your company's intranet where people can find up-to-date information on projects, management initiatives, and other important topics.

8. Identify your stakeholders and ask them what information they would like to receive from you, how often, and in what form (e-mail, phone, memo, etc.) and then tell them what information you'd like from them.

9. Have members of your team serve as in-house subject matter experts on specific topics. Communicate this information throughout the company so people will know whom to contact with questions.