

TEAM COLLABORATION

EIGHT FACTORS THAT LEAD TO SUCCESS

1. Investing in Signature Relationship Practices. Executives can encourage collaborative behaviors by making highly visible investments – in facilities with open floor plans to foster communication, for example – that demonstrate their commitment to collaboration.

2. Modeling Collaborative Behavior. At companies where the senior executives demonstrate highly collaborative behavior themselves, teams collaborate well.

3. Creating a “gift culture.” Mentoring and coaching – especially on an informal basis – help people build the networks they need to work across corporate boundaries.

4. Ensuring the Requisite Skills. Human resources departments that teach employees how to build relationships, communicate well, and resolve conflicts creatively can have a major impact on team collaboration.

5. Supporting a Strong Sense of Community. When people feel a sense of community, they are more comfortable reaching out to others and more likely to share knowledge.

6. Assigning Team Leaders that are both Task- and Relationship-Oriented. The debate has traditionally focused on whether a task or a relationship orientation creates better leadership, but in fact both are key to successfully leading a team. Typically, leaning more heavily on a task orientation at the outset of a project and shifting toward a relationship orientation once the work is in full swing works best.

7. Building on Heritage Relationships. When too many team members are strangers, people may be reluctant to share knowledge. The best practice is to put at least a few people who know one another on the team.

8. Understanding Role Clarity and Task Ambiguity. Cooperation increases when the roles of individual team members are sharply defined yet the team is given latitude on how to achieve the task.