

Collaboration Contract

Collaboration is an effective and valuable tool in some leadership endeavors. However, for some it can be intimidating, overwhelming, or just plain frustrating. Some of those feelings are fostered by previous experiences in which people may have felt disrespect or not valued in a group.

To create a trusting and respectful collaborative environment for everyone, consider creating a Collaboration Contract—an agreed upon philosophy of *Mutual Respect* that will be used in all of your group interactions.

Begin by doing a personal reflection.

What behaviors demonstrate respect and build trust in groups?

What behaviors demonstrate disrespect in a group and break teams apart?

What are some effective ways to respond to disrespectful behaviors in a group?

Next, ask the group to brainstorm ideas of what behaviors or beliefs would be mutually respectful.

If they are struggling, or don't create an exclusive list, suggest some of your own

Once this list of respectful behaviors is complete, type up the "contract" and ask everyone to sign it as a show of their commitment to mutual respect. Be sure you sign it as well, to affirm your belief in and accountability for the expectations as a member of the group.

Contract ideas adapted from www.goodcharacter.com

Here are a couple of suggestions that you might want to consider for your contract:

- ✓ Treat others as you would want to be treated.
- ✓ Be considerate of others.
- ✓ Respect the dignity of all people.
- ✓ Accept personal differences.
- ✓ Work to solve problems without violence.
- ✓ Be helpful, not hurtful.
- ✓ Apologize for mistakes.