



Guide for Trainers



Modules 1 & 2

Mindset for Successful Collaborations Workshop

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Practice Session on Collaborative Mindset



**Mindset for Successful Collaborations
Workshop**

Objectives:

- **To increase awareness about the mindset required to work collaboratively.**
- **To learn techniques to foster a collaborative mindset.**

	Program	Time
	Welcome, introductions, and overview of the workshop	20 minutes
	Group brainstorm: Characteristics of successful collaborations	10 minutes
	The mindset for successful collaboration	30 minutes
	Case study discussion	30 minutes
	<i>Break</i>	<i>10 minutes</i>
	Techniques for maintaining a collaborative mindset	65 minutes
	Evaluation and closing Final go around – one idea you gained from this workshop and one idea you are going to use right away.	15 minutes

This curriculum is part of the *Building Comprehensive Solutions to Domestic Violence* initiative of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, funded by the Ford Foundation.

MODULE #1

Mindset for Successful Collaborations Workshop

Trainer Instructions

Preparation

Prerequisite Modules: None

Number of participants: 5 minimum
30 maximum

Time requirements: 3 hours

Room arrangements:

Fewer than 20 participants: arrange tables in a horseshoe with chairs on the outside of the horseshoe and flip chart and easel in the open space.

20-30 participants: Use separate tables – 5-6 participants per table. Arrange tables so that all participants can see the flip chart and easel in the front of the room.

Materials:

Flip chart & easel
Markers
Masking tape
Extra pens (for participants)
Name tents (for participants)
Registration form
Participant packets

Participant packets:

Handouts #1-1 through #1-6
Workshop Evaluation form (Handout #1-7)



❖ WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

Time: 20 MINUTES

The 20 minutes is based on starting 10 minutes late. If you start on time, you will have some flexibility with time during the workshop.

Welcome everyone. Ask participants to introduce themselves, describe their work in domestic violence and give one word to describe a successful outcome for this workshop.

Review the objectives for the workshop and the program (Handout #1-1) and deal with any housekeeping items.

❖ GROUP BRAINSTORM: CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATIONS

Time: 10 MINUTES

Ask participants to turn to Handout #1-2. Read the definition of collaboration – pointing out that collaboration can mean many things. This will be our working definition to get started. Do not stop to engage in discussion about the definition of collaboration. Move on to the brainstorm to explore ideas about characteristics of successful collaborations.

Brainstorm instructions

“Let’s take 5-10 minutes to brainstorm ideas about what makes collaborations successful. This is a brainstorm, so all ideas are welcome.” Jokingly explain that there will be no eye rolling, boos, applause, or interruptions. Ask that each person suggest one idea at a time (not 2 or 3) and that no one speak a second time until everyone has had a chance to suggest an idea.

Groups with fewer than 20 participants: This is a large group brainstorm. Ask for a volunteer to tape flip chart sheets to the wall as you write. Record all ideas.

Groups with 20-30 participants: Brainstorm at individual tables – give them 3 minutes. Then ask for a volunteer to tape flip chart sheets to the wall as you write. Create a list on flip chart sheets by taking one different idea from each table until all ideas are recorded. This will create one list of ideas.

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Do not stop to ask for clarification or to discuss any items. This fast-paced brainstorm exercise is designed to engage participants in thinking about collaboration and to create safe space for all ideas. The list does not have to be complete. If you see that something major is missing, just say you're taking a turn during the brainstorming and add it (do not do this more than 2-3 times).

After the ideas are recorded, ask if anyone disagrees with any of the ideas. If so (including any the trainer disagrees with), bracket these ideas with red marker and ask for a brief explanation of the disagreement. Tell participants that we will address these points as we go through the workshop. Don't allow debate to sidetrack the program.

Keep moving. Later on in the workshop, participants also may want to add items to the list, so keep the lists posted throughout the workshop.

Remember to come back to any red bracketed items before the end of the workshop – ideally, with information from the workshop that clarifies whether the idea is appropriate for the successful collaboration list.

Ideas about successful collaborations

- A clear purpose for its existence.
- Agreed upon outcomes that the collaboration is working to achieve.
- Shared power.
- They accomplish work that is important to meeting battered women's needs.
- The appropriate people are at the table.
- All members of the collaboration are actively involved, follow through, and are accountable.
- Workload is shared.
- Resources are equitably distributed.
- Decision making is democratic within the constraints of legislation and regulations.
- An effective decision making process exists.
- Collaboration members enjoy working together.
- Mutual respect develops.
- Information sharing occurs.
- Effective communication takes place.
- Methods to resolve conflicts and negotiate are developed and used.
- Workplans and priorities are defined.



Definition of Collaboration

Two or more organizations working together to achieve an agreed upon goal that each cannot achieve separately.

By sharing knowledge, information, resources, power, and decision making, the organizations work together to achieve a significant, positive impact to

- Meet the needs of battered women and their children.
- Reduce/eliminate domestic violence.

Characteristics of Successful Collaborations



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❖ THE MINDSET YOU NEED FOR SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION
Time: 30 MINUTES

Ask participants to turn to Handout #1-3 – “Characteristics of the Mindset You Need for Successful Collaboration.”

Ask participants to think about what mindset (attitudes and beliefs) they would need if they were collaborating with each other in this room to accomplish something. Explain that these characteristics (Handout #1-3) are the pre-requisites for successful collaboration with others. First, it is important to know what you want to achieve – your vision and goals. Then you need a mindset that fosters working relationships with others to achieve your goals.

Briefly explain the mindset list and then move to the case studies for participant discussion. Mindset simply means your attitude and beliefs about something.

Prior to the workshop, decide how you will explain each characteristic. Identify at least 3 examples from your own experience that you could use in explaining ideas on the mindset list. For example, you might tell an experience when you made an assumption that later turned out not to be true or a time when you were angry and blamed someone instead of looking for a win-win outcome. These kinds of examples humanize you to the group and make it safer for them to talk about their own difficulties and experiences.

You also may need to give an example of the last characteristic – what it means to see yourself as a significant partner and with the confidence to hold your own.

If one or more participants disagree with any of the mindset ideas, ask her to suggest an alternative – record that on a flipchart sheet as another idea. Ask the person to describe how this would contribute to a successful collaboration. Then go on. You don’t have to convince this person. Hopefully, the case study discussion will give you an opportunity to further explore the ideas, and everyone will learn from the issue being raised. Remember, it’s important for you, the trainer, to model the mindset.



Characteristics of the Mindset You Need for Successful Collaboration

- ◆ **Vision.** Define your vision and goals – what you want to accomplish to achieve a successful outcome.

- ◆ **Positive Attitude.** Focus on possibilities – what you can do together – while understanding limitations that may exist. Avoid being cynical – don’t decide in advance that nothing can work.

- ◆ **Willingness.** Be willing to create a recommendation, agreement, and/or plan of action with the other parties involved.

- ◆ **Openness.** Be open to being influenced by others. There may be more than one right way. Be neither doormat nor immovable object.

- ◆ **Curiosity.** Maintain a curious/investigating attitude about others’ needs, power, mandates, mission, barriers, and opportunities to move forward. Avoid blaming, “shoulding,” and/or making assumptions about others’ motives and meaning.

- ◆ **Connections.** Look for connections rather than differences – the “fit,” meeting your needs and others’ needs.

- ◆ **Confidence.** See yourself as a significant partner with confidence in your ability to “hold your own” when situations are confusing and complex.



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Transition to case studies

The purpose of these case studies is to explore the mindset characteristics list and further understand the whole idea of a mindset and why the characteristics are important. These case studies are designed to “open the door.” They are not meant to be exhaustive discussions of the situation – although sometimes participants engage in a wonderfully productive discussion that you will want to continue even if it means shortening a subsequent part of the workshop.

Prior to the workshop, develop ideas about one or two experiences you have had that you can share with the group – instances where you needed to be in a collaborative mindset, and where others would have been willing to help out, but you closed off the possibility by your attitude. Share these ideas only if participants hesitate to share their own experiences and/or you need to make some points about the value of a collaborative mindset.

It is advisable to keep participants in a big group to discuss Case Studies #1 and #2 since this is the first opportunity to find out how they will interpret the collaborative mindset ideas. This also gives you a way to make additional points about the mindset characteristics after participants give their responses. As the trainer, you may need to balance discussion and providing input to keep everyone moving toward an understanding of the collaborative mindset ideas.

Ask participants to turn to Handout #1-4 – we’ll discuss some case studies to further explore these mindset ideas. Show the mindset characteristics on the projector screen so that they will be able to look at the mindset list while discussing the case studies. Ask for a volunteer to read Case Study #1 to the whole group.

❖ CASE STUDY DISCUSSION

Time: 30 MINUTES

Case Study #1 (5-10 minutes)

- **The objective is to get participants thinking about the mindset and the consequences of what mindset you use. Discussion question is on Handout #1-4.**
- Participants often say you don’t have enough information to really know. Agree with them and then make up something that helps to move the discussion along if it’s blocked.



- Ask participants to review the characteristics list (on the overhead projector screen) – what characteristics were used, which weren't?

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Some points to make:

- ✍ It is important to define your vision and goals before you start or join a collaboration, and it's important to understand the needs, interests, and perspective of others in the collaboration.
- ✍ The success of our work depends on both getting the work done and the quality of the relationships. Positive relationships are a prerequisite to being able to accomplish our goals when we are working in collaborations. If someone responded to your domestic violence program as Mary responded, would you be interested in building your relationship with this person?
- ✍ Collaboration situations require relationship-building.
- ✍ If you close off discussion, cooperation becomes very difficult. Sometimes you need to close off discussion – make sure you know why you're choosing that action and what you will do next to move toward your goal.
- ✍ The challenge often is how to create some small steps when you want to build a relationship but the other organization(s) and/or agencies don't fully share your understanding of domestic violence and the needs of battered women.

Case Study #2 (5-10 minutes)

Ask someone to read the case study. Discuss Cynthia's mindset and how she could have handled this situation more effectively. Point to the collaborative mindset characteristics list (on the overhead projector screen). Ask which characteristics were used and which were not present in this case study.



Some points to make:

- ✍ Gather information first to find out what happened. Then decide how to respond.
- ✍ Blaming and complaining aren't productive to achieving your goals. Focus on what you want instead of what you are unhappy about.
- ✍ We all get "hooked" – our buttons get pushed sometimes. We



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need options so we can choose our response – the response that will be the most effective.

-  You need to think about (a) what you want and (b) the best way to go about getting it.
-  Relationship-building is key to success in collaborations.





Case Study #3 (10-15 minutes)

Ask participants to create groups of three. Instructions: (1) One person reads the case study aloud. (2) You are staff of the local domestic violence program – decide how you would respond now. Small groups will have 5 minutes to develop their response.

Discussion (after small group work)

Ask for a volunteer to give the response her group developed. Ask for comments about this response. Then ask if any group has a different response. If the responses have not included a statement about vision and goals, ask what vision and goals the domestic violence program might have regarding transitional housing and their collaboration with the transitional housing program. Point out how the vision and goals provide direction for the strategy they choose to use.

Some points to make:

-  Your vision and goals (what you want to accomplish) have a major impact on the response you choose.
-  Think about the consequences for your relationship as you consider your response.
-  Your advocacy position is based on your vision and goals. Be open to the possibility that there may be other ways to achieve your vision and goals in addition to **your** idea.
-  When you decide to participate in a collaboration or work in partnership with others, you must shift your focus to finding common ground with others. Otherwise, you only get compli
ance, and as soon as you look the other way, your progress erodes. You are much more likely to find common ground if you decide to look for it rather than stay focused exclusively on your idea about **the one way** to achieve your vision and goals.

❖ **BREAK**

Time: 10 MINUTES



Mindset for Collaboration Case Studies

Case Study #1

The law enforcement committee of the local domestic violence coalition is discussing an idea to develop a safety brochure. The local domestic violence program already has a handout that it uses. Mary (the representative from the local domestic violence program) says in an impatient voice, “We already do that. If you want the information, just call us and ask for it.”

*What is Mary thinking/feeling? What will be the outcome of her response?
What response would work better?*

Case Study #2

The local domestic violence program finds out that at the next coalition meeting, Denise, the Victim Witness Coordinator, is going to announce that a law enforcement committee has been created just for law enforcement officials (no representation of the local domestic violence program). Cynthia (local domestic violence program) calls Denise. When Denise answers the phone, Cynthia says, “How can you be so stupid as to think it would be the right thing to do to form the committee without our participation?”

What is Cynthia’s mindset? How could she have handled this situation more effectively?

Case Study #3

The only transitional housing program in the community does not accept children. It frequently has openings due to turnover. The local domestic violence program has met with the executive director of the housing program numerous times to request a change in the policy to open the doors to battered women and their children. The executive director says that she understands the concern but they just aren’t equipped to handle children. In addition, she is very concerned about the potential for violence if a battered woman lived there and her abuser came after her. She really must think about the safety of other residents in the transitional housing program.

You are staff of the local domestic violence program. How would you respond now?



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After the break:

❖ **TECHNIQUES FOR MAINTAINING A COLLABORATIVE MINDSET**

Time: 65 MINUTES

Tag Team Role Play: Denise and Cynthia (35 minutes)

Conduct a “tag team” role play of Case Study #2. The purpose of the role play is to see the collaborative mindset characteristics in “real life.” The trainer takes the role of Cynthia (domestic violence program). Ask someone else to volunteer to be Denise (Victim Witness Coordinator).

Begin the role play with Cynthia’s call to Denise – modeling the collaborative mindset principles. After a couple of minutes, stop and ask for help – ask someone to come up to the front with you and help out. Continue to play the role of Cynthia with your helper – there now are two Cynthias. A little later on ask for someone to come up and help Denise or an additional person to help out Cynthia. Invite others to come up if they have an input to provide and others to sit down when they’ve had a turn. Usually, two or three participants will volunteer. Sometimes others come up – especially other Denises to add a scenario they have experienced. Be sure that as the trainer, you are playing the “hard” part (the DV program) and give a lot of support to anyone willing to come help out.

During the role play, use start/stop segments to make points about using a collaborative mindset and to discuss alternative responses that might be used next or in place of what is happening. Participants also may suggest other “what ifs.” Ask participants for their suggestions and then add any additional points that are needed to clarify use of the collaborative mindset.

❖ **RATING FORM EXERCISE AND TECHNIQUES FOR MAINTAINING A COLLABORATIVE MINDSET**

Time: 30 MINUTES

The purpose of this exercise is to reflect on the use of collaborative mindset characteristics in the role play which participants have just experienced. Ask participants to turn to Handout #1-5 – “Rating Exercise.” Ask them to rate Cynthia’s use of the collaborative mindset characteristics (just Cynthia, not Denise).



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Poll the group for each characteristic, one at a time. Rating is on a scale of 0-3, where 3 represents the effective use of this characteristic. Discuss any differences of opinion. Ask participants to describe what contributed to maintaining a collaborative mindset (when that happened) and to moving away from a collaborative mindset (if/when that happened).

If you still have time, ask participants to turn to Handout #1-6. Ask them to work in pairs and brainstorm situations that are most likely to “push their button”/make it difficult to maintain a collaborative mindset. Then come up with three ideas for maintaining a collaborative mindset in these situations. Give small groups 5 minutes.

Ask groups to give one idea at a time in “round robin” – one idea from each group until all ideas are given.

❖ **EVALUATION AND CLOSING**

Time: 15 MINUTES

(Be sure that you have addressed all of the red-bracketed items on the list of successful collaborative mindset characteristics which resulted from the initial group brainstorm.)

Ask participants to complete evaluation forms and to select one idea from the workshop that was especially meaningful and one idea that they are going to use right away. Explain that after evaluations are completed, the closing will be a go-around with each person sharing these two ideas.

Closing exercise – Ask for a volunteer to go first and then go around the room. When everyone has shared ideas, add your own, and thank everyone for coming.

If you are conducting a second module in the afternoon, use the same go around and then close with information about lunch and the starting time for the afternoon session.



MINDSET WORKSHOP – HANDOUT #1-5

Rating Exercise
Mindset Characteristics

Rate Cynthia’s use of collaborative mindset characteristics in the role play with Cynthia and Denise. Use a scale of 0-3 (3 = effective use of this characteristic).

1. **Vision.** Define your vision and goals – what you want to accomplish to achieve a successful outcome. **Rating:** _____
2. **Positive Attitude.** Focus on possibilities – what you **can** do together – while understanding limitations that may exist. **Rating:** _____
3. **Willingness.** Be willing to create a recommendation/agreement/plan of action with the other parties involved. **Rating:** _____
4. **Openness.** Be open to being influenced by others. There may be more than one right way. Be neither doormat nor immovable object. **Rating:** _____
5. **Curiosity.** Maintain a curious/investigating attitude about others’ needs, power, mandates, mission, barriers, and opportunities to move forward. Avoid blaming, “shoulding,” and/or making assumptions about others’ motives and meaning. **Rating:** _____
6. **Connections.** Look for connections rather than differences – the “fit” which would meet your needs and others’ needs. **Rating:** _____
7. **Confidence.** See yourself as a significant partner, with confidence in your ability to “hold your own” when situations are confusing and complex. **Rating:** _____



How to Maintain a Collaborative Mindset

What are situations that “push your buttons”/make it difficult to maintain a collaborative mindset?

Use the mindset characteristics list to identify situations when it is difficult to maintain this mindset. An example might be: *“When I work with people who don’t understand domestic violence, I feel impatient and frustrated rather than open to possibilities for working together.”*

How to maintain a collaborative mindset in these situations: (List at least 3 ideas)



Evaluation Form

Mindset for Successful Collaborations Workshop

1. What was the most useful part of the workshop for your work?
2. Please rate the following using a scale of 0-5 (5 = very helpful and useful)
Presentations _____
Relevance/usefulness of case studies _____
Handouts _____
Role plays, if used _____
Other comments/ratings:
3. Please rate trainer's teaching/coaching on a scale of 0-5 (5 = excellent)
Rating: _____
Comments:
4. How can the workshop be improved?
5. What is one idea you will begin using immediately?
6. Other comments. (Please use the other side of the page for additional comments.)

Thanks!



