

Manito-wish Qualities of Collaborative Leaders

The idea behind introducing these qualities is to simply introduce them. Deeper interpretation and application of these qualities occurs through experience and reflection. Every person will integrate them into their own wealth of experiences, which means that they may interpret them differently.

- **Builds a shared vision with those they lead**

A clear vision motivates others to commit to an idea and follow it through. It encourages others to collaborate toward the realization of that vision. What is it you want to accomplish **together**? What is your vision and what are the visions of others? How might they be combined?

- **Builds models -- Tries it... changes it... tries it again**

A trial-and-error approach, and the making of mistakes, is considered part of the continuous learning experience. If people are serious about what they do, it is necessary to build lots of models, and be prepared for success, failure, or something in-between. It is risk-taking in action, and it takes courage.

- **Shares a common space with others**

If group members are occasionally passing each other in their daily routine, dropping each other notes, email, or simply talking on the phone, it all adds up to simple communication, not collaboration. Communication is good, but it is not enough. Face-to-face contact is essential if effective collaboration is to take place. At some point, the group must meet in one place in order to throw ideas around and make important decisions.

Another aspect of sharing a common space is the idea of allowing everyone an opportunity to speak. Some people are naturally quieter than others. They must make an effort to speak up, and the more vocal must allow pauses in the conversation for the quieter folks to have an opening.

- **Lets others amplify their abilities**

Competition can get in the way of collaboration, so it is necessary for group members to leave their egos at the door. If everyone is included and they are able to draw on the strengths of everyone in the group, a synergy can develop that transcends the individuals. In other words: $1+1=3$.

- **Remembers ... followership and leadership go hand-in-hand**

Sometimes it is an act of leadership to take a step back and allow others to take the lead. Viewing “followers” as adversaries to be controlled is counter-productive. Seeing others as allies with unique gifts empowers everyone to contribute to the shared vision.

- **Doesn't collaborate to turn out the lights**

During a crisis, collaborating is dangerous. Autocratic leadership is what is called for in a crisis situation. Likewise, collaborating to complete a simple task is a waste of energy and resources. Sometimes, one person taking the initiative is enough. The term "analysis paralysis" is often used when a group realizes it is engaged in unnecessary collaboration.

- **Celebrates successful collaborations**

This is as important as celebrating individual accomplishments. Celebrating is so important and a terrific investment in the next challenge which demands that a group collaborate to achieve the vision. Theater groups have a cast party on the final night of the show. This is a good example of celebrating collaborations.

For reference, the statements on the self-assessment are meant to correspond with the following Manito-wish Qualities of Collaborative Leaders.

- Builds a shared vision with those they lead: B, H
- Builds models -- Tries it... changes it... tries it again: I, M
- Shares a common space with others: A, C, G, J, L
- Lets others amplify their abilities: E, G, J
- Remembers ... followership and leadership go hand-in-hand: C, D, G
- Doesn't collaborate to turn out the lights: D, I, K
- Celebrates successful collaborations: F