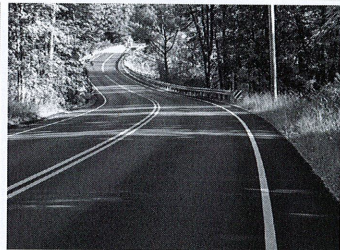# Elements of Successful Collaboration

1. Clear definitions and agreements on the roles of partners in the collaborative process.
2. Open communication within teams to share the information necessary to carry out tasks.
3. Consensus about goals and methods for completing projects or tasks. Don't move forward until all members are in agreement.
4. Recognition of, and respect for, the contribution of all collaborators. It's important to give credit where credit is due.
5. Identification of obstacles and addressing problems cooperatively as they occur. Teamwork is essential at all times.
6. Group goals are placed above personal satisfaction and/or recognition. It's crucial to put the desired project results at the forefront — this isn't about the individual goals.
7. Willingness to apologize for missteps and ability to forgive others for mistakes. Holding a grudge or sabotaging the efforts of other team members just can't happen.

Examples of Collaboration Skills

Actively listening to the concerns of team members
Agreeing on roles that capitalize on individual strengths
Analyzing problems without assigning blame
Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of partners
Brainstorming solutions to problems
Building consensus about goals and processes for group projects
Compromising when necessary to move the group forward
Defining mutually acceptable roles
Delegating tasks with open discussion
Displaying a willingness to find solutions to problems
Drawing consensus around goals and processes
Eliciting the views of reluctant group members
Facilitating group discussion
Following through with commitments in a reliable manner
Forgiving others when they come up short
Giving credit to others for contributions
Interviewing clients to determine their needs and preferences
Identifying obstacles to success
Investing the required time and energy to complete tasks
Taking a leadership role
Listening to the concerns of team members
Maintaining a sense of humor whenever possible
Making sure the perspective of quieter collaborators is heard
Meeting deadlines for individual contributions
Recognizing the contributions of other collaborators
Recognizing the strengths and weaknesses of collaborators
Selecting compatible partners to carry out projects
Sharing feelings of frustration or dissatisfaction as they occur
Speaking respectfully with team members
Taking responsibility for mistakes
Updating collaborators on developments with the project
Working hard to fulfill obligations to the team