# Research Team Building Useful Tools

Materials:

Engaging in Team Science: Before you start

Checklist for Starting a Research Team

Tips for Leading an Effective Team Building Meeting

Team Building Meeting Effectiveness Survey Questions

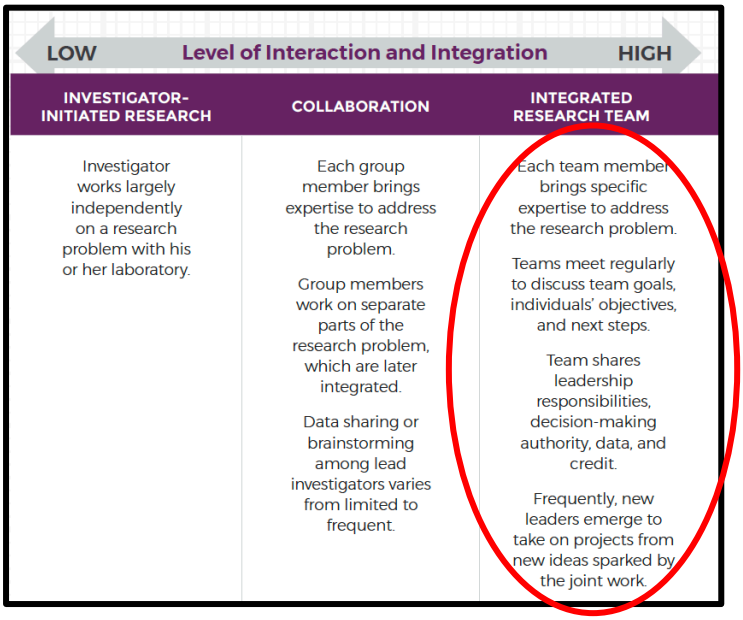
# Engaging in Team Science:
## Before You Start

**Further Reading**: Collaboration and Team Science Field Guide
By Bennett, Gadlin, and Marchand
National Institutes of Health

# What is Team Science?

Team science is a collaborative effort to address a scientific challenge that leverages the strengths and expertise of professionals trained in different fields. Although traditional single-investigator driven approaches are ideal for many scientific endeavors, coordinated teams of investigators with diverse skills and knowledge may be especially helpful for studies of complex social problems with multiple causes.

# What is a Scientific Research Team?



# Preparing Yourself for Team Science

**Ask Yourself: Am I Ready to Participate on a Research Team?**

- Can I thrive as a member of a highly collaborative research team?
- To what extent? What would it take?
- What would I gain? What do I most hope to gain?
- Do I have anything to lose? What is my biggest worry about being on a team?
- Am I willing to share data and credit with team members?
- Am I willing to accept constructive feedback and training from team members?
- Am I willing to provide constructive feedback and training to team members?
- Can I openly discuss issues and concerns with team members?

# Top Ten Take Away

- Trust
- **Vision**
- Self-Awareness and Emotional Intelligence
- Leadership
- Mentoring
- Team Evolution and Dynamics
- **Communication**
- Recognition and Sharing Success
- Conflict and Disagreement
- Navigating and Leveraging Networks and Systems

# Trust

## Four Forms of Trust

- **Calculus-based trust** – built on calculations of the relative rewards for trusting or losses for not trusting
- **Identity-based trust** – built on an assumption of perceived compatibility of values, common goals, emotional/intellectual connection
- **Competence-based trust** – built on the confidence in people's skills and abilities, allowing them to make decisions and train others
- **Swift Trust** – built on giving all team members the benefit of the doubt that their intentions are good with clear goals and limited time

**Question:**
Do you trust that your team members have your benefit in mind and will share with you the resources and credit ?

# The role of team leaders:

- Invite participation (and mean it)
- Admit mistakes and show fallibility
- Acknowledge gaps in knowledge—admit to not knowing something
- Be available to team members
- Be fair when holding people accountable
- Clearly convey what is acceptable

# Develop a Shared Vision

- Agree on how to achieve the vision
- Set clear and tangible short and long term research/project goals together
- Set responsibility and written agreement (MOU)

## Communication

- Communicate about science
- Communicate about other issues

## What to consider

- Meeting schedule (core member meeting vs whole team meeting)
- Method
- Communication between meetings (method? record?)
- Data sharing and storing

## Important to remember

- Differing opinions may hold the seeds to creativity and new ideas
- Team members in different disciplines may have different perspectives
- Ensure that all team members feel able to participate in discussions about all issues (research and non-research related)

## Practical steps

- Set ground rules for how people are expected to communicate with each other during meetings
- Support the contribution of team members at all levels of seniority
- Develop an expectation that data and results will be shared with all team members

## Conflict and Disagreement Resolution

- Conflict and disagreement is normal

## Practical steps

- Make a plan in advance between the core team members
- Do not ignore
- Listen
- Negotiate

# Checklist for Starting a Research Team

- **Driving Issues**
  - Why is this team being formed?
  - What are the critical issues this team should address?
  - What is the team's scope of activities?

- **Goals**
  - What are the specific project goals?
  - What constitutes success?
  - How can we make these goals measurable? If they are not quantifiable, how can we look for qualitative data about improvement?
  - How do these goals support the overall mission of this team?

- **Roles and Responsibilities**
  - Why has each member of this team been selected? Or, what skills/expertise does each team member bring?
  - What is the role of the Team leader?
  - Does the team need a Facilitator for our meetings?
  - Are there supporting staff to assist in organizing and follow up? If not, who will provide the follow up?

- **Deliverables/Timelines**
  - What is the output for this team?
  - What are our timeline and milestones?

- **Commitment**
  - How much time are we expected to spend on this effort?
  - How frequently should we meet?
  - Do all team members need to be available for each meeting?

Adopted from http://hrweb.mit.edu/learning-development/learning-topics/teams/articles/new-team

# Tips for leading an effective team building meeting

**General:**

- Select a meeting room of an appropriate size
- Have a designated person track attendance and take notes
- Provide advance notice of the meeting
- Always prepare an agenda in advance (set goals for the meetings)
- Assign pre-work
- Survey the participants after the meeting for a better grasp of the next steps
- Start and End on time
- Send out meeting minutes/action items/summary of the meeting

**In the meeting:**

- Get everyone involved (smaller meetings) –keep collaboration in mind – everyone gets to talk!
- Introduce the goals and guidelines at the beginning and make sure all participants have the same understanding
  At the start, communicate exactly what you hope to accomplish and the clear guidelines for discussion—what is off limits and what is within the boundaries.
- Give summaries before moving to the next point
- Assign personal responsibility
  Ensure everyone is cooperating to complete the goal. You can do this by assigning projects to each member that help the team make progress. (Back assignments up with an email.)
- Set Timelines/Milestones
- List resources
- Set immediate next steps
  This is actually the most important item to create at the end of a meeting. Make a list of the steps everyone will take. (Confirm this in written form, electronically.)
- Draft a written conclusion and give a summary of this before the meeting is adjourned

**Things to consider:**

- Meeting time
  - How long should the meeting be?
  - How to find a good time that will work for everybody? (doodle http://doodle.com/)
- Meeting room
  - Is the space comfortable?
  - Does the set up encourage discussion
  - Is the room equipped with video/audio systems (if you need them)
- Other issues
  - Do you need teleconferencing equipment?

- Parking and building access
- Do you want to provide snacks/water/food?

Resources:

- Association of American Medical Colleges
https://www.aamc.org/members/gfa/faculty_vitae/148582/team_meetings.html

- Growing Leaders
https://growingleaders.com/blog/leadertip-2-how-to-lead-a-productive-team-meeting/

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# Team Building Meeting Effectiveness Survey Questions

Examples:

**1.** Strongly Disagree **2.** Somewhat Disagree **3.** Neutral **4.** Somewhat Agree **5.** Strongly Agree N/A

- Did the planning meeting meet your expectation?
- You are clear about the overall mission/goal for this initiative after attending the meeting
- Were the objectives for the activities clearly presented before each activity started?
- The activities in the meeting are helpful for brainstorming and team building?
- Your voice was heard and ideas were incorporated during the discussion
- You would like to participate in the future planning meeting
- What suggestions do you have to improve the future meetings?