



Readiness Matrix for Cross-Sector Collaboration

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Description:

The Readiness Matrix for Cross-Sector Collaboration, shown in Figure 1, is a structured process for the potential collaborative members to discuss what they have in common, their differences, barriers holding them back from collaborating, and what it will take to collaborate. This matrix is a way to capture and record the responses visually. Once these responses are recorded and discussed, the cross-sector collaborative should decide if it can move forward, or if the barriers and differences are too great to overcome. If the decision is to move forward, it is important to address the barriers and differences and determine how they can be resolved before taking on a community health improvement initiative. If these are not addressed up front, they will more than likely surface as the collaborative tries to work on a community health issue and may derail the initiative at some point, with organizations going back to protecting their silos.

When to Use:

A Readiness Matrix for Cross-Sector Collaboration is a visual tool that maps out what is working and what can get in the way of developing a cross-sector collaborative. Before starting to try to address a community health issue, a cross-sector collaborative should first understand what the members have in common, where there are differences, and any perceived barriers to collaboration. Then, the collaborative is ready to determine the focus areas of the cross-sector initiative.

Readiness Matrix for Cross-Sector Collaboration

Other Health and Human Services Organizations	Anchor Organization	
	1. Commonalities	2. Differences
	3. Barriers	4. Collaboration Areas

Figure 1

Readiness Matrix for Cross-Sector Collaboration Construction Steps:

1. Identify an anchor organization for the initiative. This organization serves as the convener and coordinator of activities throughout the initiative. The anchor organization provides the start-up resources for the collaborative, meeting summaries, and communicates the initiative's progress.
2. Invite appropriate community organizations to a meeting to discuss forming a cross-sector collaborative to address a community health issue.
3. Draw the **Readiness Matrix for Cross-Sector Collaboration**, as shown in Figure 1, on a flip chart.
4. Have a neutral facilitator to run the process. A neutral facilitator will focus on the process, and not the issue, while making sure that all responses are clarified before posting in the appropriate quadrant of the matrix.
5. Discuss commonalities among the members, their organizations, and their approaches to community health, and record them in Quadrant 1.
6. Discuss the differences among the members, their organizations, and their approaches to community health, and record them in Quadrant 2.
7. Discuss the barriers that exist among the members, their organizations, and their approaches to community health, and record them in Quadrant 3.

8. Discuss areas of collaboration that the members and their organizations are willing to undertake through the collaborative and record them in Quadrant 4.
9. When the matrix is completed, review it with the participants. It is at this point when collaborative members need to determine if they can proceed as a cross-sector collaborative. This requires addressing barriers and differences up-front so that these issues do not surface later on and derail the community health improvement initiative.

Example: The Tri-County Public Health Department convened community partners to determine if they could have a cross-sector collaborative. The public health department served as the anchor organization to get the process started.

Readiness Matrix for Cross-Sector Collaboration

Public Health

Other Human Services Organizations	1 Commonalities	2 Differences
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on improving community health • Similar customers • Understand the need • Have the desire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce skills • Vocabulary • Funding sources • Different services
	3 Barriers	4 Collaboration Areas
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silos • Stay in your lane mentality • Staff to engage others • Workforce gaps • Sharing information • Not willing to share resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align priorities • Focus on SDoH • Willingness to leverage resources • Engage in cross-sector initiatives

Figure 2