

# COLLABORATION HEALTH CARE

## ALIGNING IDEAS WITH EXECUTION TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE TODAY



Collaboration Health Care, Inc., 601 Carlson Parkway, Suite 1050; Minnetonka, Minnesota 55305  
[www.collaborationhealthcare.com](http://www.collaborationhealthcare.com): [info@collaborationhealthcare.com](mailto:info@collaborationhealthcare.com) 952-475-6322

## Collaborating In Health Care

Happy Holidays to everyone. And we wish you a fulfilling and prosperous new year.

In this newsletter we'll be using an article recently published in the Harvard Business Review as a framework to discuss some of the traits that might be required to establish a collaborative health care system in our country. These traits will apply to the businesses and organizations participating in our health care system when creating innovative ideas, developing partnerships, and adding both quality and value to consumers, providers, and other stakeholders.

Collaborative health care may seem like an oxymoron in today's system. The HBR article provides the traits that are going to be required if we're going to create one .

## 8 Ways To Build Collaborative Teams

The Harvard Business Review recently had an interesting article about the process of collaboration in the business world today. Specifically, the researchers determined 8 primary factors to build successful collaborative teams to address specific business objectives. Their findings were based on the research they conducted with over 1500 individuals participating on over 55 project teams in several different industries.

The goal of the research was to study the primary levers that leaders can pull to improve team

(Continued on Page 2)

### THIS NEWSLETTER

Collaborating In Health Care	1
What Is Collaboration?	1
8 Ways To Build Collaborative Teams	1-2
Think About It	2

## Collaboration- A Definition

There are a lot of different definitions for the word "collaboration". The more formal sources are pretty short; Oxford- work in partnership, Webster- to work together, Thesaurus.com- cooperation.

The more creative Wikipedia expands the definition a little further- a structured, recursive process, where two or more people work together toward a common goal that is creative in nature by sharing knowledge, learning, and building consensus.

The Harvard Business Review article on team collaboration indirectly provides a definition that more closely reflects what we need today, "to share knowledge freely, to learn from one another, to shift workloads flexibility to break up unexpected bottlenecks, to help one another complete jobs and meet deadlines, and to share resources."

I'd only add, "to accomplish a common goal with a common purpose."

It all boils down to working together. No matter which definition you select, it involves establishing relationships and working together to achieve a common goal.

## 8 Ways (con't)

performance and innovation in collaborative tasks. Whether we realize it or not- we all need to collaborate and we do it almost every day in one fashion or another. It's important. We all need some help to achieve bigger goals whether we're a 2 person company in a local market or a 50,000 employee company operating globally. The tactics used may be different, but the intended results are the same,

So, what were the key findings determining successful collaborative teams?

1. The teams had strong executive leadership encouraging collaborative relationships and dialogue to address and solve their business issues.
2. The teams worked in a culture that supported interaction, communication, and personal relationships as a way of doing business.
3. The teams all worked in a "helping and learning environment". They learned from one-another and from their leadership for both personal and professional growth.
4. The teams were provided the tools, training, and resources to encourage collaboration between its members.
5. The teams (while focused on the task at hand) also focused on the broader aspects of the collaborative team and felt a strong sense of commitment and community.
6. The teams were provided with the right leaders to focus on exceptional project execution combined with the skills to build

and maintain relationships along the way.

7. The teams networked well and were able to build on the strength of existing relationships.
8. The teams clearly understood their roles, their tasks, and responsibilities.

These traits apply to our own industry. The HBR article provides a clear framework for what will be required by individual businesses as well as the broader industry to encourage more collaboration in addressing the many issues it faces today.

Now, more than ever the health care industry needs to open the silos that have evolved over the years. The industry needs strong leadership, a flow of innovative ideas, and open and honest communication between all stakeholders to share information, successes, and failures as it moves into a new era. It needs to create a culture of collaboration, not continue with the culture of litigation, turf-protection, and inefficiency that exists today. Then we can start to see real change.

*The Article: Eight Ways to Build Collaborative Teams; Lynda Gratton and Tamara Erickson; Harvard Business Review; November, 2007; p, 100*

### Think About It:

*"Part of being a leader circa 2007 is being able to live with an "uh-oh" feeling in your stomach all the time."  
Jack Welch; Business Week, 4-2-07*

*"Leadership is communicating to people their worth and potential so clearly that they come to see it in themselves"  
Stephen Covey; The 8<sup>th</sup> Habit*