

Common Mistakes

We set ourselves up to fail when we make common mistakes such as these:

- There is a lack of clarity about the purpose of the collaboration.
- There is insufficient interest, patience, or time for an independent assessment of the collaboration's viability.
- The focus is on short-term fixes for the problem, rather than on root causes and long-term solutions.
- The collaborative process is a façade for a predetermined outcome.
- The timing is such that the issue has exploded and sides are firmly entrenched before starting a collaborative process.
- The collaboration has little likelihood of success, (i.e., little or no political or policy pull, insufficient funding, few interested people).
- There are unrealistic expectations about the time and funding needed.
- It is unlikely that the decisions produced will be implemented.
- The expertise of a facilitator/project manager who can carefully design and guide the collaboration process is missing.
- There is “stacking of the deck” with homogeneous voices rather than diverse opinions of all those impacted by the issue.
- No disclosure has been made at the front end that the decisions arrived at by the group will only be a set of recommendations.



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