



# Prevention Collaboration in Action

Exploring Ways to Work Together

## Do's and Don'ts of Collaborative Leadership

Collaborative teams need strong leaders who are comfortable juggling the needs of multiple partners while ensuring that the work of the team continues to move forward.

This tool offers some practical tips for leading collaborative teams, organized around five key areas that leaders should consider to keep groups healthy and engaged—onboarding, group dynamics, decision making, establishing goals and actions, and leadership development.

Key Area	Do's	Don'ts
<b>Onboarding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Do</b> welcome and introduce new members to the group.</li><li>• <b>Do</b> “make room” for new team members by creating opportunities for them, like joining an ad hoc committee or taking on tasks related to their area(s) of interest.</li><li>• <b>Do</b> provide opportunities for members to learn about one another.</li><li>• <b>Do</b> check in with new members to gauge their satisfaction with the group.</li><li>• <b>Do</b> help the group accept the messiness that comes with change and be willing to work in new ways.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Don't</b> assign new members tasks and responsibilities before you have their buy-in.</li><li>• <b>Don't</b> ever say, “We don't do things that way.”</li></ul>

Key Area	Do's	Don'ts
<b>Group Dynamics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Do</b> help to create a safe and open environment.</li> <li>• <b>Do</b> establish “ground rules” for member participation.</li> <li>• <b>Do</b> help members resolve conflicts with one another.</li> <li>• <b>Do</b> provide opportunities for members to learn about each other’s decision-making styles and personalities (i.e., planner vs. doer, introvert vs. extrovert); this can help members be more objective about differences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Don't</b> ignore tension between group members.</li> <li>• <b>Don't</b> avoid conflict; be willing to have difficult conversations.</li> </ul>
<b>Decision Making</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Do</b> ask group members for agenda items.</li> <li>• <b>Do</b> help the group choose a decision-making process (e.g., voting, consensus).</li> <li>• <b>Do</b> make decisions as a group, getting input from all members.</li> <li>• <b>Do</b> make sure members have the information they need to make decisions.</li> <li>• <b>Do</b> invite and acknowledge different points of view.</li> <li>• <b>Do</b> make sure it’s clear when you are soliciting the group’s feedback versus when you are providing an update.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Don't</b> design meeting agendas entirely by yourself.</li> <li>• <b>Don't</b> make planning decisions on your own.</li> <li>• <b>Don't</b> ask for feedback if you don't plan to follow it up with action.</li> <li>• <b>Don't</b> ever override a decision that the team has made.</li> </ul>
<b>Establishing Goals and Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Do</b> institute an annual planning process.</li> <li>• <b>Do</b> bring in an external facilitator to help you plan.</li> <li>• <b>Do</b> keep your team focused on your common goals.</li> <li>• <b>Do</b> provide “big picture” updates and context about the local prevention landscape (e.g., changes in political environment or policy changes).</li> <li>• <b>Do</b> provide opportunities for members to take responsibilities related to group goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Don't</b> get lost in the weeds; keep the group focused on the team’s shared vision, concrete goals, and the actions needed to accomplish those goals.</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Do</b> cultivate leadership within your team.</li> <li>• <b>Do</b> encourage members to chair subgroups.</li> <li>• <b>Do</b> ask members to volunteer for ad hoc committees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Don't</b> do everything yourself.</li> </ul>