

(Another) 5 Tips for Creating a Culture of Collaboration

- **1. Set the Office Up for Collaborative Work**

Organisations with traditional cubicle work spaces may find the environment works against their attempts to conduct collaborative projects. Make work desks as open as possible. Have an internal instant messaging system that facilitates communication between members. Group individuals in the same office or adjacent offices who are working on similar projects.

- **2. Have an Open Dialog About What is - and Isn't - Working in the Collaboration**

This isn't just about discussing the nuts and bolts of the tasks an individual is working on and what still needs to be done. Keep the door for communication open when it comes to discussing the collaboration itself. What's working? What isn't? Be sure you understand where your team members stand on the collaboration by asking *how the collaboration itself is coming along*.

- **3. Implement the Proper Collaboration Tools for the Job**

Having the appropriate collaboration tools is especially important if your team members are located in different physical locations. Team members need a way to post ideas, discuss issues, and track where everyone else is on the project. Collaboration software is not necessarily required. You can use Skype, Google documents and other Cloud resources to assist you.

- **4. Accept that arriving at Consensus May Not be Easy**

Collaboration projects require team members not only work together, but that the work appears to be seamless when complete. That parts were worked on separately should not be obvious. To do this, team members must reach a consensus about the end result (and this relies heavily upon the clearly defined goals). There must also be a sense of accountability for all members. Ask all members to voice their concerns about each stage of the planning process – reach consensus – and any holes in your plan will be identified early on and the team can work together to overcome potential challenges.

- **5. Ensure Every Team Member Possesses the Required Knowledge for Collaboration**

Every team member needs information, collaboration tools, background & experience necessary to the project - **and** they are motivated to perform well.