

Activity: Aligning Goals and Activities

While it's important for team members to be engaged in meaningful and rewarding activities, it's also important for the activities to be well-aligned with the purpose and goals of the collaboration overall.

The activity presented below is designed to help teams assess the degree to which member activities align with current goals. Seeing that the two match up will help ensure that members' time is well spent and is moving the team in the direction it needs to go.

Materials Needed

- White board or large easel pad paper
- Sticky pads
- Pens or markers

Instructions

1. On large easel pad paper, write the goals for your collaboration—one per piece of paper.
2. Display the goals in front of the group so that everyone can see them. Hang an additional, blank page labeled “Miscellaneous.”
3. Ask members of the group to write down all of the activities they are currently working on, one activity per sticky (e.g., preparing materials for the annual conference, revising a recruitment survey). Have members place each activity under the goal with which it is associated. Place activities without a clearly associated goal under “Miscellaneous”.
4. Once all activities have been placed, facilitate a discussion about the meaning of the activity. What does it reveal about the work of your collaboration? Consider questions such as the following:
 - » Are all of our activities properly assigned (i.e., assigned to the appropriate goal)? Are certain activities serving multiple goals?
 - » Are our activities and efforts equally distributed across our goals? Are we spending too much time on one particular goal and not enough on another?
 - » Are there any activities we're working on that aren't associated with any of our goals (i.e., assigned to “Miscellaneous”)? If yes, are these activities contributing to a new goal that we had not yet identified? Or are these activities we may want to discontinue because they are not helping us reach our goals or are taking time away from more productive efforts?