

# Collaborating for Results: The Science of Collaboration and Innovation

## The Challenge:

More and more clients are expecting design and construction teams to work together to produce innovative, cost-effective, high-quality results, and to do this without adding cost to the project. You need to collaborate to get the job done. The differing perspectives of owners, architects, GCs, engineers, and trade contractors can be a gold mine of innovation, but often they create more conflict than collaboration. Even in teams committed to collaboration the process can be messy and inefficient. How can these diverse teams realize their potential as innovation machines?



We bring together a unique combination of design/construction experience and global leadership development to facilitate an interactive, practical, two-day workshop that will give your team the skills and tools it needs to collaborate effectively and exceed client expectations.

## The Background:

Collaboration can best be summarized as a process where teams combine differing ideas to come up with a solution that is better than any of the original ideas. Most if not all innovation has happened because someone combined ideas in a new way or looked at something from a new point of view.

The most fertile ground for innovation is a team that includes a broad spectrum of viewpoints and knowledge sets, but teams like this can also be the hardest to keep focused and driving toward a common goal. This broad spectrum provides a lot of differing ideas and perspectives, but it also often generates a lot of friction, confrontation, and gridlock.

There is a simple reason for this. We're born with a hard wired instinct to see ideas that differ from our own as threats, and when we encounter such an idea we tend to *automatically slip into a defensive mode that literally bypasses the parts of the brain that perform higher reasoning*. This response often happens without our realizing it, but we can learn to manage, control, and mitigate it.

Collaboration is often thought to be a personality trait or talent certain people are born with and the rest of us aren't. In the worlds of business management, negotiation, neuroscience, and psychology, though, there is a lot of science being done around collaboration, and this science has produced a body of specific tools - *tested, documented, learnable skills* for listening, thinking, and talking that enable interdisciplinary teams to integrate their knowledge and produce results better than any of the members could on their own.

Participants will come away from the workshop equipped with tools that will enable them to help interdisciplinary teams to produce innovative results efficiently and effectively.

## Learning Objectives:

By the end of the two-day workshop, participants will be able to:

- Develop insight into why collaborations succeed and fail
- Cultivate a mindset and practice skills to create innovation and synergy
- Apply tools for collaborating in groups that will create positive, synergistic group efforts - even if you are not in charge
- Discuss truths and myths about collaboration
- Build a concrete Action Plan to apply these skills to their own work resulting in superior project outcomes

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**Sample Two-Day Agenda:**

Day 1	Day 2
Collaboration ice breaker	Simulation: Sharing information
Introduction and context setting: Defining the challenge in the construction context – Collaboration – why bother?	Principles of Collaboration
Defining Collaboration	Communication Style Survey: Your style under “normal” pressure and under high stress and its impact on collaboration
Simulation: Collaborative problem-solving	Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy/inquiry</li> <li>• Bridging</li> </ul>
The Collaborative Mindset and how to develop it	Simulation: Application of skills and debrief
Simulation: The Great Debate	Tools for Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoiding “group think”</li> <li>• Interest-based problem solving</li> <li>• Decisions by consensus</li> </ul>
How to manage the “defense reaction” and enhance collaboration	Simulation: Consensus decision-making
Summary of learning and beginning of Action Plan	Bringing it all together – completing the Action Plan

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