Radical Collaboration

Unleashing Collective Impact in the Nonprofit Sector

Princeton Community Works 2025 Conference

Collaboration – Initial perceptions

- Scope Creep

- Relevance

- Lack of Like-mindedness

- Poaching of ideas and staff
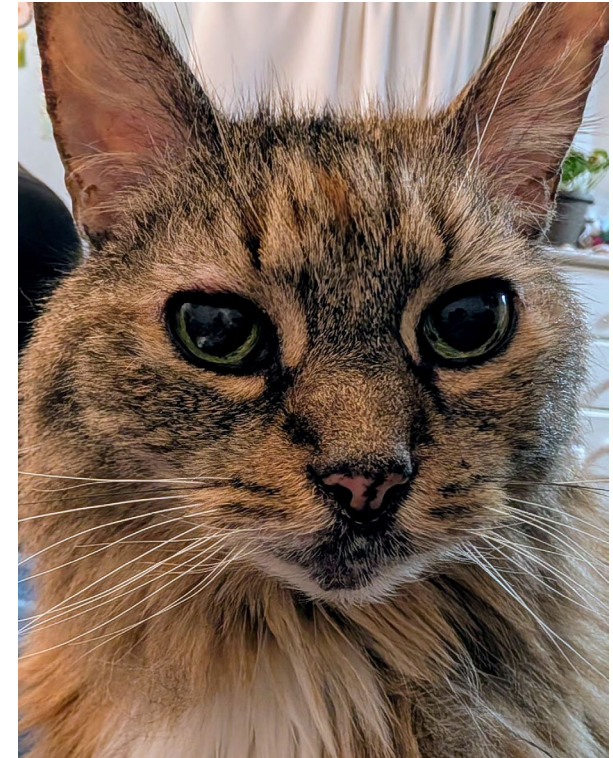
- Growth opportunities

- Greater Impact

- Energize

- Investment of time, staff, and financial resources with uncertain outcomes

- Inertia

About Me

Steven Gomez

About Me

Steven Gomez

About Me

- Always assume positive intent

- Always Be kind

- Always add value

- Always Take a meeting

- Position yourself to take advantage of opportunities

Presentation Purpose

- Define Radical Collaboration - WHAT
  - Understanding the concept and its importance

- Illustrate Benefits in Nonprofit Sector - WHY
  - How it enhances efficiency and impact
  - Examples of successful implementation

- Provide Actionable Steps for Implementation - HOW
  - Practical strategies to adopt radical collaboration
  - Steps to integrate into organizational culture

What is **Radical** Collaboration?

- Key Characteristics of Partnership
  - Shared risk/reward
  - Deep trust
  - Joint decision-making
  - Focus on systems change

Understanding Radical Collaboration

Transformative Approach

Radical collaboration emphasizes transformative partnerships that engage diverse stakeholders towards achieving shared objectives.

Openness and Trust

This approach fosters an environment of openness and trust, which are essential for successful collaboration among participants.

Shared Leadership

Radical collaboration involves shared leadership, enabling all stakeholders to contribute to decision-making processes.

Enhancing Creativity

By embracing diverse perspectives, radical collaboration enhances creativity and innovation within teams.
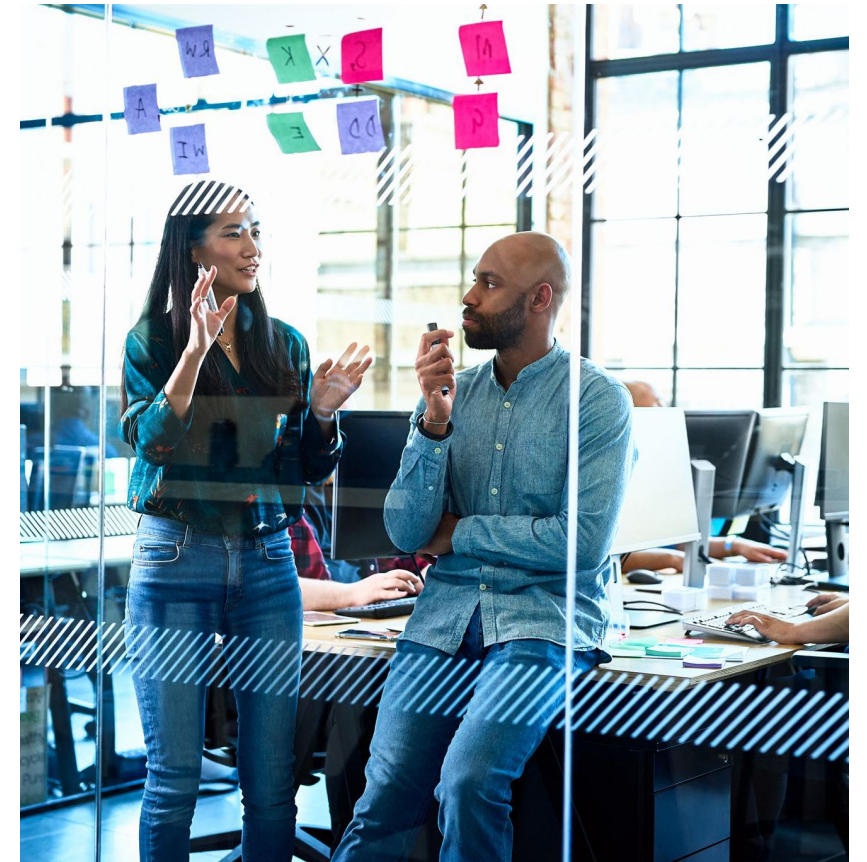
Core Principles of Radical Collaboration

Transparency

Transparency fosters trust and open communication, allowing team members to share information freely.

Shared Decision-Making

Shared decision-making encourages collaboration and empowers all members to contribute to the outcome.

Active Listening

Active listening promotes understanding and respect, ensuring that everyone's voice is heard and valued.

Mutual Benefits

Focusing on mutual benefits strengthens relationships and leads to more successful collaborations.

Collaboration examples

BOC Network

Newark CDFI Coalition

Non-profit Consulting Program – NJIT

Tech Enabled Business Initiative

SEEDing Stronger Together

Why It Matters for Nonprofits

Increased Impact
Combining efforts leads to greater results

Amplifies the reach and effectiveness of initiatives

Sustainability
Ensures long-term success and viability

Promotes resource sharing and conservation

Reduced Duplication
Prevents overlapping efforts and waste

Encourages collaboration and coordination

Innovation
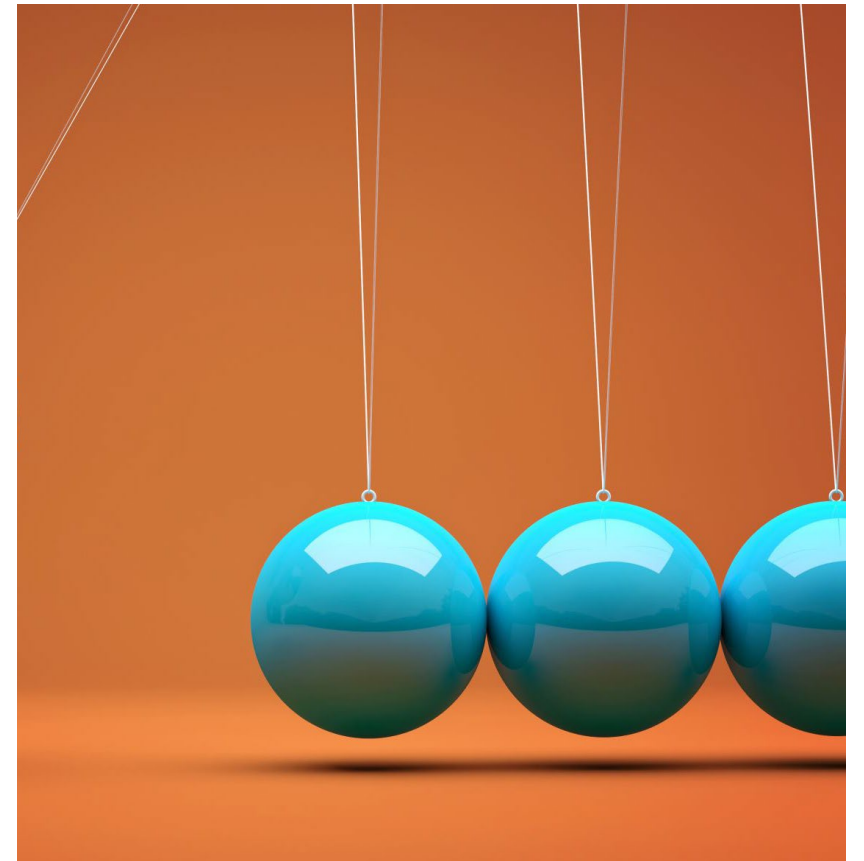Sparks creativity through diverse perspectives

Collective Power

Costs of Collaboration

- **Resource Allocation**
- **Financial Investment**
- **Cultural Differences**
- **Power Imbalances**
- **Communication Barriers**
- **Competition for Resources**

Building a Culture of Collaboration

Step 1 - Shared Goals and Vision

- Importance of a Shared Vision
    - Creates unity and direction
    - Enhances collaboration and teamwork

- Techniques for Collaborative Visioning
    - Brainstorming sessions
    - Workshops and retreats

Step 2 - Trust and Communication

- Importance of open communication and trust
  - Facilitates collaboration and understanding
  - Builds strong relationships

- Strategies for building trust
  - Consistent and transparent communication
  - Active listening and empathy
  - Delivering on promises

Step 3 - Shared Governance

- Models for Joint Decision-Making
  - Various frameworks for collaborative decision-making
  - Ensuring all voices are heard

- Importance of Clear Roles and Accountability
  - Defining specific roles within the team
  - Establishing accountability to ensure responsibilities are met

Step 4 - Measurement and Evaluation

- Importance of measuring collective impact
    - Ensures all stakeholders are aligned
    - Helps in assessing the effectiveness of initiatives

- Tools and methods for shared data analysis
    - Facilitates collaboration among different groups
    - Enables real-time tracking and adjustments
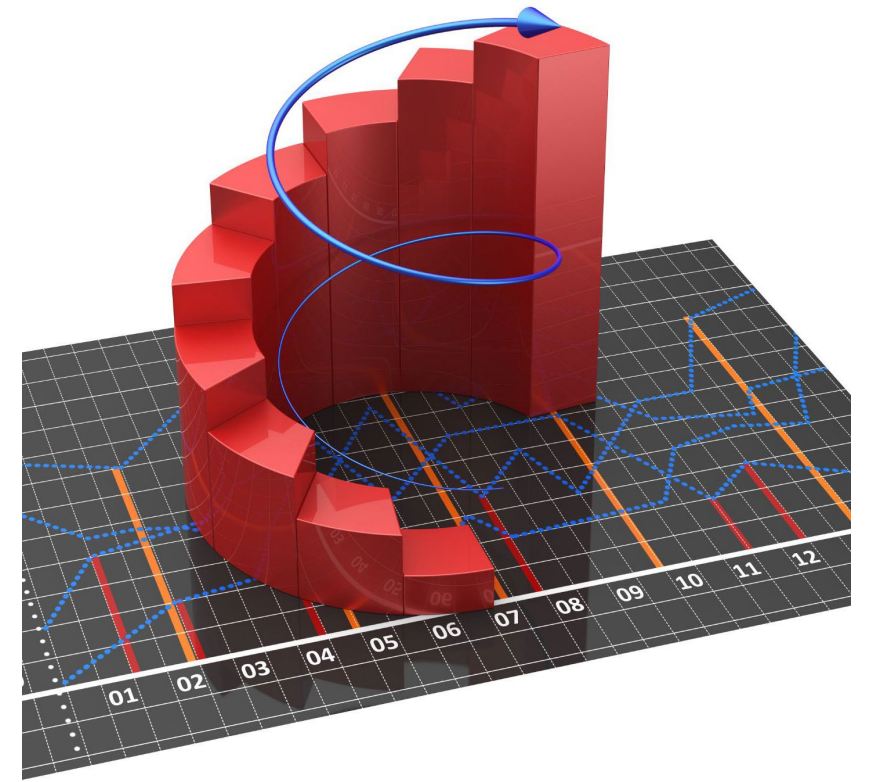
Step 5 - Learning and Adaptation

- Importance of Flexibility and Learning from Mistakes
  - Adaptability is crucial for growth
  - Mistakes provide valuable learning opportunities

- Collaboration as an Ongoing Process
  - Teamwork enhances problem-solving
  - Continuous collaboration fosters innovation

Overcoming Challenges

- Potential Challenges
    - Differences in cultures
    - Power imbalances
    - Communication barriers

- Strategies to Address Challenges
    - Facilitated dialogues
    - Mediation

Practical Tools, Resources, and Next Steps

- Self Evaluation
    - SWOT
        - Focus on Strengths – Drives Value
    - Website
        - Does our website convey value? Does it connect and/or celebrate others?
    - Internal Culture
        - Are we ready for collaboration?
    - Environment
        - Are there existing partner frameworks, or are we all siloed?

- Identifying Partners
    - Current Partners
    - Possible Partners

- Evaluating potential

- Take Action!

IDENTIFYING STRATEGIC PARTNERS

What are we trying to accomplish that could benefit from engaging strategic partners?

As defined by John Paul Lederach, "the strategic who is the smallest, most diverse possible group of people who if assembled and set in motion as a team has the capacity to set a lot more in motion."

- Who do we see as our strategic who for this project?
- What's in it for them to partner with us on this?
- What are we learning/discovering?
- What actions are emerging as possible next steps?

EVALUATING STRATEGIC PARTNERS

ASSESSING PARTNERSHIP SYNERGY

	0 = none	3 = good
	1 = marginal	4 = great
	2 = modest	5 = extra-ordinary

PARTNERS	EXPAND REACH	ENHANCE SERVICES	ATTRACT OR SHARE RESOURCES	INFLUENCE SYSTEMATIC CHANGE	RAISE PROFILE	TOTAL	(a/b) x 100	PERCENT OF SYNERGY POTENTIAL REALIZED
Partner 1	a / b	a / b	a / b	a / b	a / b	a 0 / 0 b	(a/b) x 100 =	
Partner 2	a / b	a / b	a / b	a / b	a / b	a 0 / 0 b	(a/b) x 100 =	
Partner 3	a / b	a / b	a / b	a / b	a / b	a 0 / 0 b	(a/b) x 100 =	
Partner 4	a / b	a / b	a / b	a / b	a / b	a 0 / 0 b	(a/b) x 100 =	
						a 0 / 0 b	(a/b) x 100 =	

INSTRUCTIONS: Identify four prospective partners with whom you perceive the most win-win potential. Then indicate for each, what is the current synergy being achieved (numerator), and what is the perceived potential for synergy (denominator). Total across the rows. Do the math: (a÷b) x 100. Then total down.

Articles and Resources

Title / Link	Organization	Author
Why and How Do Nonprofits Work Together?	Philanthropy News Digest	May Samali, Nathalie Laidler-Kylander, Bernard Simonin, Nada Zohdy
5 Tips for Nonprofit Collaborations	National Council of Nonprofits	Jennifer Chandler
How To Collaborate Successfully: A Complete Guide For Nonprofits	Nonprofit Megaphone	Emily Baxley
Centering Equity in Collective Impact	Stanford Social Innovation Review	John Kania, Junious Williams, Paul Schmitz, Sheri Brady, Mark Kramer & Jennifer Splansky Juster
https://www.johnpaullederach.com/	John Paul Lederach	John Paul Lederach
Assessing Partner Synergy	SEED Impact	Melinda Lackey / Barry Kibel

Key Takeaways / Call to Action

- Communicate with staff
- Establish and share clear vision and goals

- SWOT
- Partner Evaluation

- Engage Partners
- Active Listening

- Finding our "Strategic Who"
- Ecosystem Scan

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