



# Collaboration Basics

**Collaboration:** To work with others toward a shared goal.

Every one of us is reliant on others in order to get our jobs done. That means that collaboration is a core skill that we must develop in order to be successful.

## Build relationships before you need them

When you need to collaborate with someone, you will be more successful if you already have an established relationship with them. To do this, you need to ensure that you:

- Consistently nurture your relationships. Build a practice of taking action on building relationships every day.
- Look for opportunities to expand your relationships. Who can you meet that you might need to work with in the future?
- Build time into each day to get up out of your chair and go talk with someone else. If you work remotely, then you'll need to get creative—schedule virtual coffee breaks with others.

## Balance the task with the relationship

By definition, you are working with someone else to accomplish a goal or task. It is easy to get so focused on the task that you forget about the relationship. Use these tips to stay in balance:

- When tensions get high, remember that everyone on the team is doing their best and trying to achieve what the team set out to achieve
- Are there competing objectives that are driving the tension? Each person you are collaborating with has their own underlying objectives.
- Look one level up—what is the overarching goal that everyone on the team is trying to achieve. What is the higher purpose of the objective?

## Collaborate just for the sake of Collaboration

There are a lot of things that you can do by yourself. But, just because you can, doesn't mean that you have to. Create an opportunity to work with someone else so that you can build that relationships. An easy way to do this is to ask someone to 'poke holes' in your plan.

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