



**WORKSHOP:** Forming Strong, Mutually Beneficial Partnerships. Discover New Partners during “Collabro-dating”  
**HOST:** Multnomah County Citizen Involvement Committee  
**SETTING:** 2013 NW Public Employees Diversity Conference  
**DATE:** October 15, 2013

### **SUMMARY OF TIPS FOR FORMING STRONG, MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL PARTNERSHIPS WHEN DOING OUTREACH TO DIVERSE COMMUNITIES**

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- 1) Identify groups to work with by looking at your own service gaps (e.g., based on race, ethnicity, income, etc).
- 2) Identify your program goals and look for partners that share similar goals and commonalities.
- 3) Tips for successful partnerships:
  - a) Start with small goals and build to more complex relationships.
  - b) Don't ask partners to commit more than you can reasonably deliver to them.
  - c) Dedicate time to make partner relationships work. It's not easy—it takes time and effort.
  - d) Equity with partners means equal outcomes, not equal treatment.
  - e) Each community organization is different so try different things to learn what works.
  - f) Prepare to examine your own policies and procedures to better work with other community organizations.
  - g) Cultivate relationships with the leaders in the partner organizations you would like to reach.
  - h) Identify leaders to disseminate information and collect feedback within the partner organizations you would like to reach.
  - i) Use the connections that your volunteers, interns and Americorps members have as bridges for identifying new partners. They can also provide outreach, translation, recruitment and other services within the communities you would like to reach.

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- 1) Most importantly, partnerships are relationships involving close cooperation between specified parties with joint rights and responsibilities.
- 2) Build strong and caring relationships based on trust, understanding, and shared goals.
- 3) Partnerships take time. You will need time before, during, and after any “projects” to build and maintain the relationships.
- 4) Be aware that communication styles may vary across cultures with which your partner organizations work. Get support and training on cross cultural communication, cultural competence and cultural humility.

- 5) Never take words, concepts, or objectives at face value. Words have different meanings for individuals and organizations in different communities.
- 6) When engaging in partnership projects, be ready with culturally and linguistically appropriate and sensitive materials, translated into appropriate languages.
- 7) Be curious and willing to learn when approaching individuals and organizations from the diverse communities with which you'd like to work. Ask questions and listen more than you speak.
- 8) Don't come to partner meetings with an agenda. Relationship ethics are more important than work ethics!
- 9) Engaging with individuals and organizations from different communities requires flexibility. This includes identifying comfortable meeting locations.
- 10) Partnerships are never done! Be committed to ongoing engagement relationships. If you're unable to continue engagement over time, it may be better not to engage at all as you may lose future opportunities with partner organizations.



**Multnomah County Office of Citizen Involvement**

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