

COLLABORATIVE PLANNING

COLLABORATIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

"...if schools want to enhance their organizational capacity to boost student learning, they should work on building professional community that is characterized by shared purpose, collaborative activity, and collective responsibility among school staff."

Source: Newmann & Wehlage, *Successful School Restructuring*, 1995

- * **What is the critical factor in the successful functioning of a collaborative culture?**
- * **How do team members develop the group process skills needed for working collaboratively with each other over time?**

The answer to both of these questions lies in the development of basic interpersonal skills which are at the heart of effective communication and collaboration.

In today's educational world, where collaboration is an important part of the continuous improvement process, it is critical that educators possess excellent interpersonal skills.

Examples of the types of skills needed are....

- * the ability to listen effectively
- * the capacity to get one's needs met while maintaining relationships
- * the ability to build consensus and cooperation
- * the ability to model openness, fairness, and integrity

Good communication is a two-way process; expressing your ideas clearly and articulately is only a small part of communication. By far the most important part of good communication is the ability to create a dialogue between two or more people that leads to mutual respect, collaboration, elegant solutions, and a sense of shared pride in positive results.

