Defining Collaboration

• From the Latin *collaboratus*: “to labor together”

• From Webster’s Online Dictionary:
  – “To work jointly with others or together, especially in an intellectual endeavor”
  – “To cooperate with or willingly assist an enemy of one’s country and especially an occupying force”
  – “To cooperate with an agency or instrumentality with which one is not immediately connected”
Cooperation v Collaboration

- Cooperation from Latin *cooperatus*, “to operate together”
- Webster’s Online: “to act or work with another or others”
- You *cooperate* with your friends, you *collaborate* with the enemy
- Is trust the critical difference?
The ‘collaborative method’

“Increased success in collaboration can occur through deliberate group setup, self-awareness and appropriate communication.”

Wikipedia
Barriers to Effective Collaboration

“A main barrier to collaboration may be the difficulty in achieving agreement when diverse viewpoints exist. This can make effective decision-making more difficult. Even if collaboration members do manage to agree they are very likely to be agreeing from a different perspective.”

Wikipedia
Barriers to Effective Collaboration

• “A culture where rank or job title is important…the lower rank person is told what to do. This is not collaboration.”
• ‘stranger danger’ – reluctance to share with others unknown to you
• ‘hoarding’ – reluctance to share knowledge due to zero sum view of power
• ‘Not invented here’ – devaluation of knowledge that was not originally developed within the group or institution

Wikipedia
Creating “scientific collaboration”

• “first step…is that the partners get known to each other…”
• “the second step is the compatibility of the aims of the organizations…”
• “the personal preconditions comprise the ability to communicate and the willingness to share ideas and develop them further together in a possibly unknown direction”
“Musical Collaboration”

• “Occurs when one or more musicians in different places or groups work on the same album or song”

• Ex: Oscar Peterson & Yitzhak Perlman
How to be non-collaborative

• Channel your competitiveness inside the organization rather than outside to the real competitors
• Lose patience, demand quick answers/results
• Wear your functional hat, not your enterprise hat
• Win at all costs mindset, even if it disserves the customer
• View conflict as always dysfunctional
• Stifle dissent and debate – “that’s not how we do things here”
The Leader as Collaborator

• Lead with questions, not answers
• Seek first to understand
• Create an environment in which associates are encouraged, rewarded and empowered to find solutions to new or existing problems
• Demonstrate that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts
• Have more dialog and less discussion