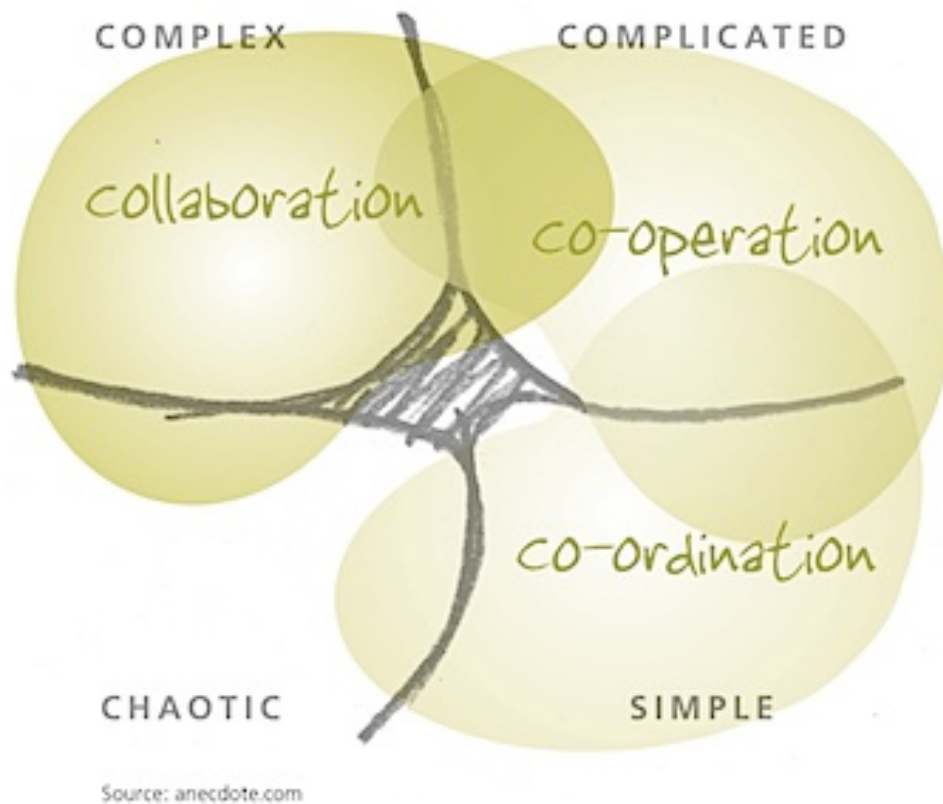


# Collaboration

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## Collaboration is...

- A process that fosters innovation and advanced problem solving among people who:
  - are of different disciplines, organizational ranks, or institutional settings;
  - band together for advanced problem solving;
  - discern innovative solutions without regard to discipline, rank, or institutional affiliation;
  - enact change based on a higher standard of organizational outcomes.

(Kinnaman & Bleich, 2004)

## **Eight Factors of Successful Collaboration**

From *“Eight Ways to Build Collaborative Teams”* – Harvard Business Review, November 2007  
[www.hbrreprints.org](http://www.hbrreprints.org) - reprint R0711F

### **1. Investing in signature relationship practices**

Leaders can encourage collaborative behavior by making highly visible investments that demonstrate their commitment to collaboration.

### **2. Modeling collaborative behavior**

In organizations where leaders demonstrate highly collaborative behavior themselves, teams collaborate well.

### **3. Creating a “gift culture”**

Mentoring and coaching – especially on an informal basis – help people build the networks they need to work across organizational boundaries.

### **4. Ensuring the requisite skills**

Human resources departments that teach employees how to build relationships, communicate well, and resolve conflicts creatively can have a major impact on team collaboration.

### **5. Supporting a strong sense of community**

When people feel a sense of community, they are more comfortable reaching out to others and more likely to share knowledge.

### **6. Assigning team leaders that are both task- and relationship-oriented.**

The debate has traditionally focused on whether a task or relationship orientation creates better leadership, but in fact both are key to successfully leading a team. Typically, leaning more heavily on a task orientation at the outset of a project and shifting toward a relationship orientation once the work is in full swing works best.

### **7. Building on heritage relationships**

When too many team members are strangers, people may be reluctant to share knowledge. The best practice is to put at least a few people who know one another on the team.

### **8. Understanding role clarity and task ambiguity**

Cooperation increases when the roles of individual team members are sharply defined yet the team is given latitude on how to achieve the task.