The Process of Forming a Collaboration

* Getting the basics right:
  + The parties have a shared purpose or goal that they care about but cannot achieve on their own
  + The Parties want to pursue a collaborative solution now and are willing to contribute something to achieve it.
  + The right people are at the table.
  + The parties have an open, credible process: Joint ownership, agreed-upon norms or ground rules, knowledge of each other, transparency, skillful convening.
  + The initiative has a champion, someone with credibility and clout who makes this a high priority.
* Forming open, trusting relationships among key actors:
  + Parties have to share information, labor, and credit, follow up on tasks, and stand together.
  + Consider holding partnering workshops to establish long-term relationships between parties and help master the basics of collaboration (p. 88).
  + Army Corps of Engineers uses the partnering approach.
  + Relationships are the glue to collaborative efforts (Linden, 2002, p.94).
* Developing high stakes:
  + The task at hand is very important to employees and outside stakeholders.
  + The results are visible to others.
  + The consequences of getting it right or wrong are large.
  + Will be felt directly both those doing the work in the near term.
  + Raising the stakes involves:
    - Helping others develop a line of sight.
    - Developing a sense of urgency.
    - Making current performance visible and accountability real.
    - Identifying a higher purpose (Linden, 2002, p. 115).
* Creating a constituency for collaboration: a group who strongly believe that a collaborative effort is in their interest, who want to support it, and who have influence over the parties involved.
  + Create visible signs of success and share credit widely.
  + Set clear, simple goals that resonate with the public; invite outside groups to help and monitor progress.
  + Use symbols to reinforce the partnership's power.
  + Involve stakeholders at every step.
  + Educate stakeholders to see the connection between collaboration and their self-interest.
  + Think politically, without becoming political (Linden, 2002, p. 132).
* Building collaborative leadership: as opposed to hierarchical leadership, collaborative leaders have no formal authority over their peers.
  + Use collaboration as a vehicle for joint planning, policy development, and resource allocation.
  + Recognize the interdependence of each agency's mission, and respect each one's autonomy, diversity, and cultural values.
  + Initiate programs that are outcome-based, comprehensive, and preventive.
  + Diminish or eliminate categorical, narrowly defined programs.
  + Support replication of programs and strategies that demonstrate measurable positive outcomes.
  + Use collaborative resource allocation strategies, including pooling of funds and development of joint budgets.
  + Use accountability measures and benchmarks to track client well-being.
  + Foster creativity, mutual trust, and respect among all partners and the community.
  + Four qualities of collaborative leaders:
    - Resolute and driven -- especially about collaboration.
    - Modest -- a strong but measured ego.
    - Inclusive -- uses "pull" much more than "push".
    - Collaborative mind-set-- sees connections to something larger (Linden, 2002, p. 152).