Collaboration Discussion Facilitator's Guide

Thank you for agreeing to facilitate a discussion about collaboration in your EPC chapter.

Preparation

You don't need to be an expert. It is not even required that you have any collaboration experience of your own. We designed this program to be a peer-to-peer learning experience. In advance of the meeting you should:

1. Read the two white papers,
2. Review the PowerPoint slides, and
3. Review the rest of this Facilitator Guide.

Your main role is to keep the discussions going. You don't need to have the answers.

Learning Goals

The purpose of this meeting is simply to <u>raise awareness of collaboration principles.</u> It is our hope that this will motivate members after the meeting to:

1. Learn more about collaboration through individual study (by reading the white papers),
2. Talk about collaboration with peers and clients, and
3. Improve the quality of client service through effective collaboration.

PLEASE NOTE: We do not expect you to try to lead everyone to come to the same conclusions reached in the white papers. Differences of opinions are okay—even welcome. The main goal is to get discussion going on the topic.

How to Start the Meeting

As facilitator, here is an outline of items to cover as you begin the meeting:

1. Welcome.
2. Today, our topic is collaboration.
3. Our national organization, NAEPC, has developed a strategic initiative to encourage more collaboration and has developed the materials we are using today.
4. Our format today will be small group discussions around a series of questions.
5. We will divide ourselves into groups of about eight.
   A. I will give you a question to discuss for ten minutes.
   B. Then I will ask for a representative to give a one-minute report on the key points from your discussion.
   C. Then we will move to the next question.
6. I will be the timekeeper.
7. Go ahead and form your groups. Make sure you have at least one person from each discipline represented in your group.

The Questions

The questions listed below are in the PowerPoint slides. If you have a projector, show the questions one at a time as you move through the program. If no projector is available, you can distribute the questions as a handout.

1. NAEPC has observed that the word "collaboration" can mean different things to different people and, therefore, can lead to

ambiguity and misunderstanding. To overcome this confusion, they have suggested a working definition of collaboration.

Collaboration occurs when two or more advisors agree to work together (with authorization from the client) to:

- Choose, design and recommend strategies.
- Explain their conclusions and recommendations.
- Execute their responsibilities.

What does collaboration mean to you and how do you feel about the definition NAEPC has advanced?

2. NAEPC's white paper suggests that both clients and advisors are better served when advisors work together as a collaborative team. Make a list of conditions that have to be true in order for this to work.

3. What are some reasons that some advisors might be cautious or reluctant to invite other advisors to be involved in a client matter?

4. NAEPC has suggested that overall client fees for a particular planning engagement might actually be lower if advisors collaborated effectively. What would have to happen for this to be the case? When might this not be the case?

5. NAEPC has suggested that there may be simple transactions that do not warrant collaboration and other situations that deserve full collaboration. What are some examples of situations that might not require collaboration and other situations that deserve full collaboration?