LEADING TRANSFORMATION #55:

COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP PROCESS

1. COMMON INTEREST

Collaboration begins with at least two parties being motivated by common needs and interests. Each party comes into the partnership by asking the question, “What is in it for me or my institution?” But this must be translated into the questions: “What is in it for us?” “What is the common good?”

Transparency about “interests” or “benefits” is essential to the ultimate effectiveness of collaboration. The concealing of “real interests” can be a threat to the effective collaborative leadership.

2. COMMON VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

The agreement on the common interests is followed by the shaping of a common vision, and the working out of common values and mission. This in essence defines the “spirit” or ethos of the collaborative initiative.

3. COMMON OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES AND PROCESSES

Parties come into collaborative relationships with their own established or preferred ways of doing things.

The hard work has to be done to clarify and agree on common principles and processes that define new common ways of doing business in the interest of the partnership. Each party must be willing to give and take for the sake of the common good.

4. CLARIFYING STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES

The strength of the collaboration is based on the maximization of the strengths of the parties in the relationship. The unique strengths that the parties bring should be well assessed. Collaboration works well when the environment is created for the maximization of the strengths of the parties for the common good.

The overall objective should be the building of complementary partnership, where the strengths and weaknesses of the parties are well managed for higher collective synergy and impact.

5. FORMULATING STRATEGY

The strategy that is formulated should explore the different alternate routes to the vision with a final commitment to the Best Creative Strategy for achieving the common vision and objectives.

6. EXECUTING

Execution calls for the discipline of working with the agreed upon operational principles and processes.

It is only when all parties are working with the agreed upon principles and processes that improvement can result from evaluations and lead to increasing effectiveness.

7. SHARING CREDIT

Collaborative leadership also calls for fairness and justice in the sharing of the positive results or benefits from the partnership. It is also important to acknowledge the contributions of all parties to the growth of the partnership and the realization of its goals.

Generosity is an essential attitudinal characteristic for effective collaboration.

8. EVALUATING

Constant evaluation with the motivation for improving and accelerating the realization of the goals of the partnership is essential for the overall effectiveness of collaborative relationships.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. In what areas of Collaborative Leadership do I personally need to improve in? What would it take for this improvement to take place?

2. Which elements of the Collaboration Process should be improved in order to radically increase effectiveness in a selected Collaborative Partnership?