

Introduction to Nonprofit Partnerships

La Piana
CONSULTING



Who We Are



Onuka Ibeto, Partner,
Head of People

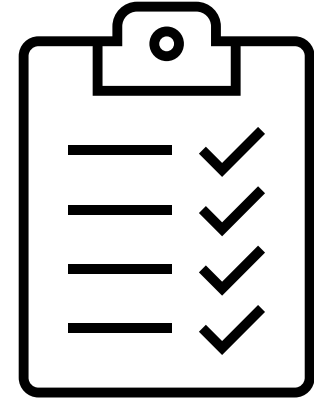


Arielle Donelan,
Associate Consultant

La Piana Consulting helps the social sector achieve its greatest impact

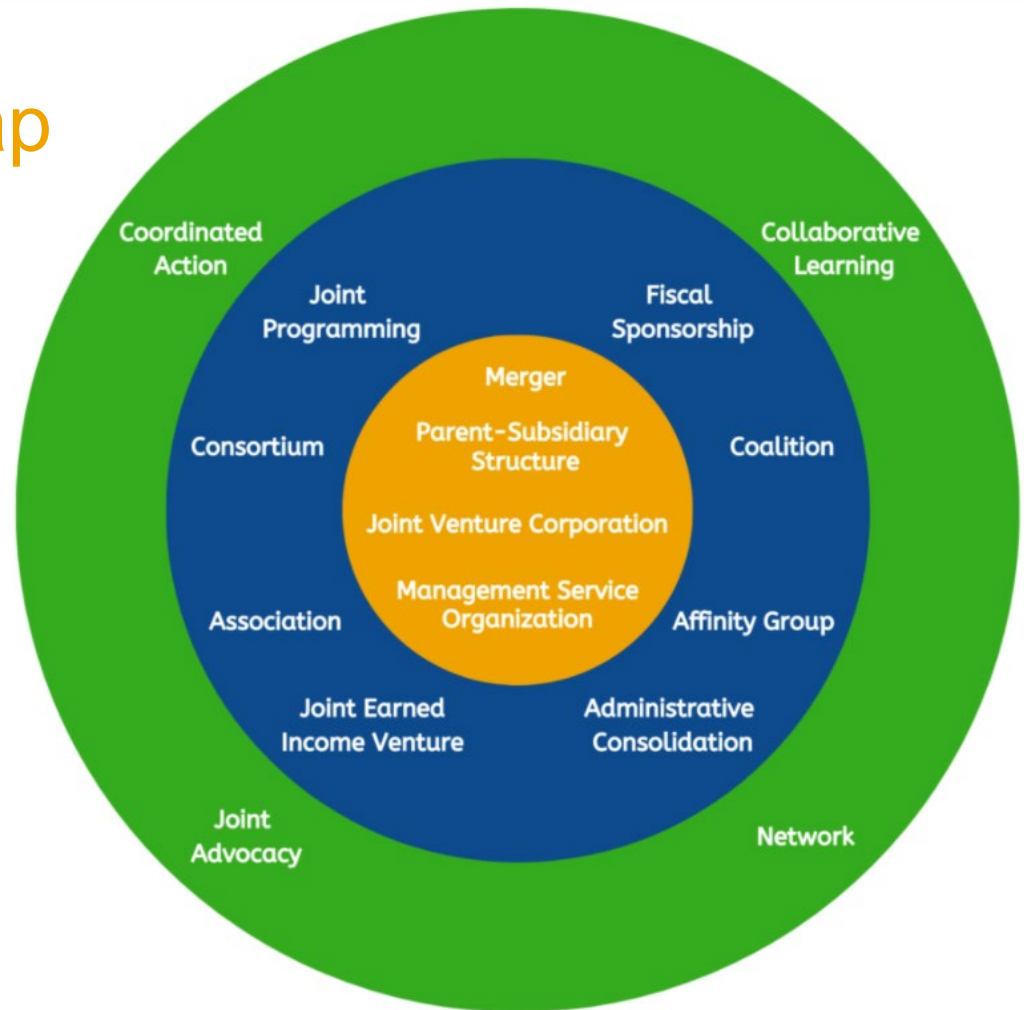
Today's Agenda

- Types of nonprofit collaborations
- Collaboration self-assessment
- Collaborate or go it alone?
- Collaborating successfully
- Q&A
- Additional Resources



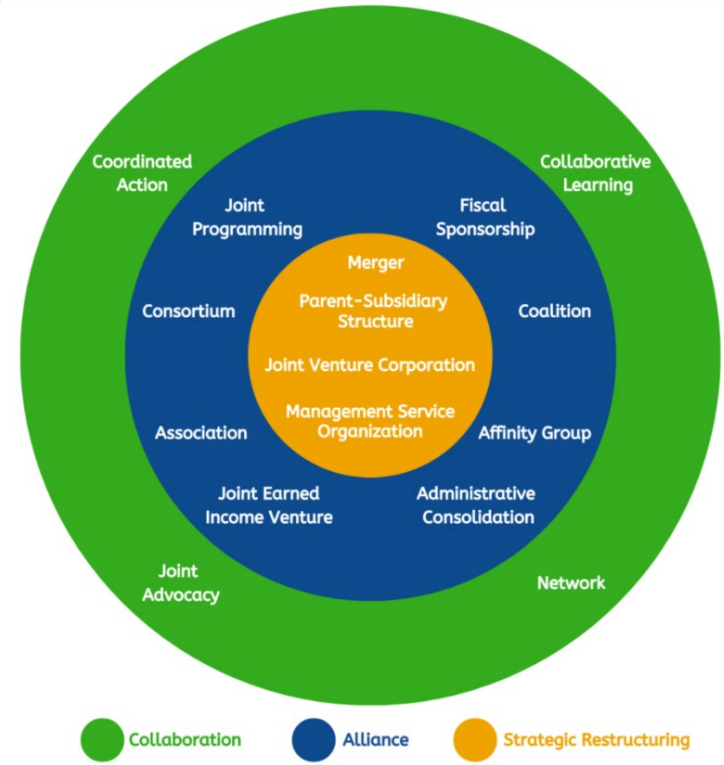
The Collaborative Map

- **Collaboration**
- **Alliance**
- **Strategic Restructuring**



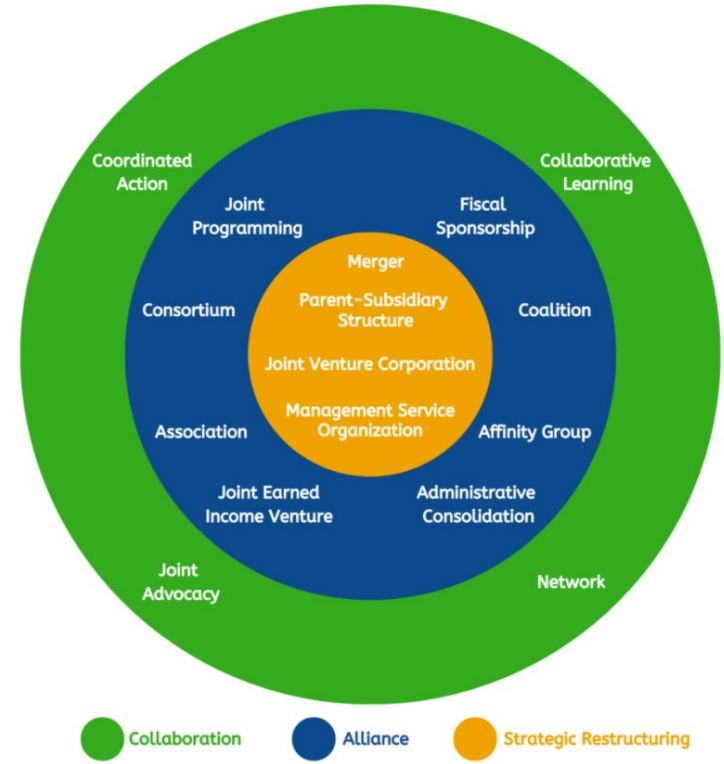
Collaboration

- Great flexibility in pursuing shared goals
- No change in how partner organizations are structured or managed
- Need only last so long as it takes for the goals to be reached



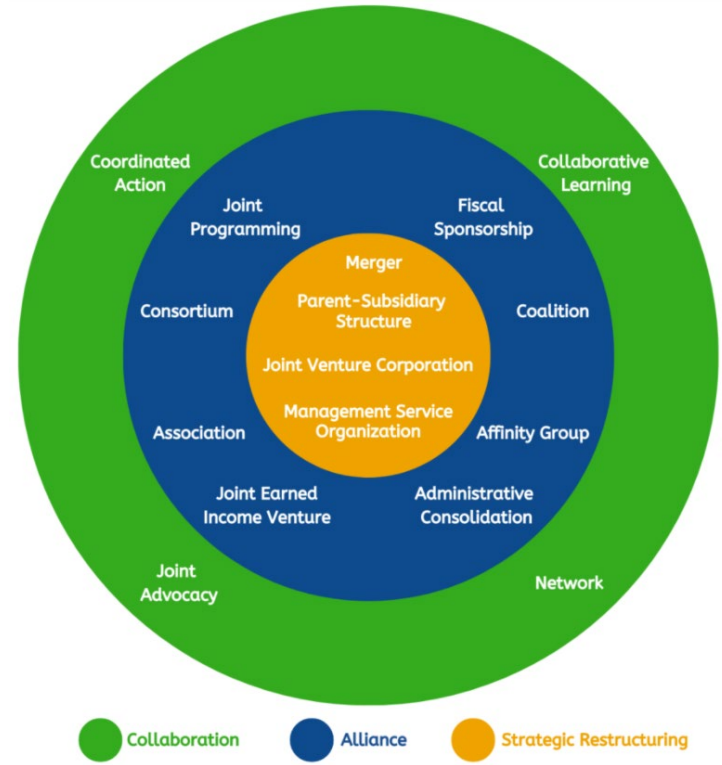
Alliance

- More formal and longer term than collaborations
- May include a legal agreement
- Still allow partners a significant level of organizational autonomy



Strategic Restructuring

- Most integrated and permanent form of collaboration
- Involves a change of corporate structure for one or more partners or creation of a new corporate entity

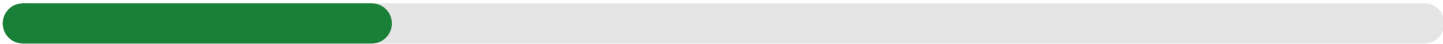




What is your personal level of experience with strategic collaboration?

Multiple Choice Poll 11 votes 11 participants

I've never been part of a strategic collaboration - 3 votes



27%

I've been part of a one or two strategic collaborations - 4 votes



36%

I've been part of three or more strategic collaborations and/or I have helped to create at least one strategic collaboration - 4 votes



36%



Where is your organization in its strategic collaboration journey?

Multiple Choice Poll



11 votes



11 participants

Not sure yet; this is a brand-new area for us - 1 vote



9%

We are skeptical that a strategic collaboration is for us - 0 votes



0%

We are open to the idea and want to learn more - 2 votes



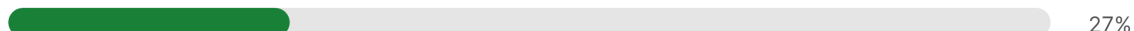
18%

We are in early stages of exploring opportunities to join or create a strategic collaboration - 0 votes



0%

We are in conversations with other organizations to be part of a strategic collaboration - 3 votes



27%

We are currently in or have recently been in one more strategic collaborations - 5 votes



45%

The background is a solid blue color. A thick, diagonal orange stripe runs from the bottom left towards the top right, crossing the blue area and extending into the white area on the right.

Collaborate or
Go It Alone?

Nonprofit Leaders Face an Uncertain Future

La Piana Consulting recently surveyed leaders from nonprofit organizations across the country

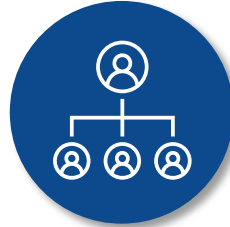
- 93% expect decreased funding
- 91% are concerned about the economy
- Nearly half anticipate significantly higher costs
- 43% are contemplating staff reductions
- Less than 20% expect increased revenue

Many are exploring collaborative strategies to set themselves up for sustainable impact

Collaboration Motivators



Market
Opportunities



Leadership
Changes



A Tired
Board



To Better
Serve the
Community



Organizational
Economics



Which of your organization's desired strategic outcomes might be most successfully achieved through collaboration (versus going it alone)?



15 Min. Break



Strategic collaboration success factors



Nonprofit Merger Myths and Misconceptions

- Not merging is failure
- There is always a winner and loser in a merger
- Mergers are the result of financial crisis or poor management
- Mergers always save money
- Funders won't continue support at the same levels following a merger
- Merging means losing your identity and your history

Collaboration Success Factors



Potential Roadblocks



**Autonomy
Concerns**



**Lack of
Trust**



Self-Interest

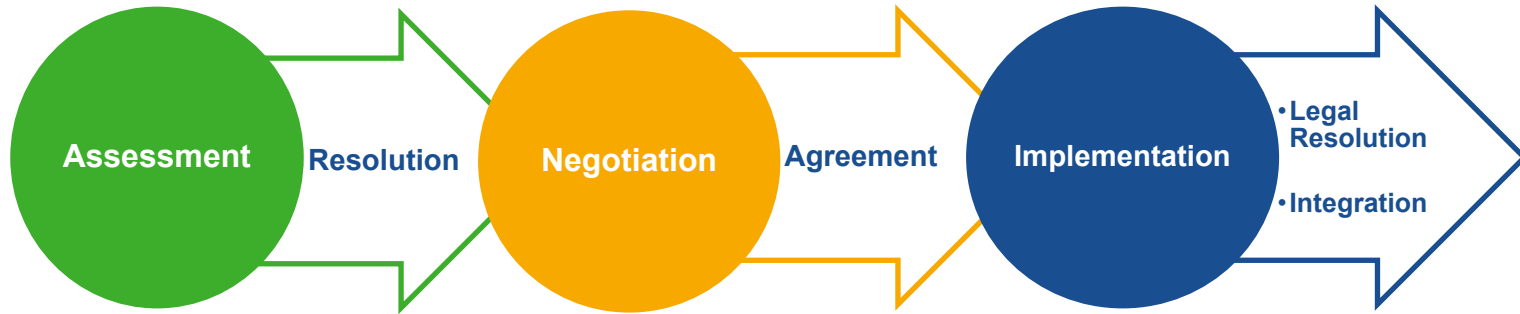


**Organizational
Culture**

Forming Collaboration

The image features a solid blue background. A white diagonal stripe runs from the bottom-left towards the top-right. Overlaid on this is a thick, bright orange diagonal bar that also runs from the bottom-left towards the top-right, positioned slightly to the right of the white stripe. The text "Forming Collaboration" is written in a bold, orange, sans-serif font, positioned in the upper-left quadrant of the image, partially overlapping the blue background and the orange bar.

Strategic Partnership Phases



Assessing Readiness



1 How might a collaboration advance your strategy?

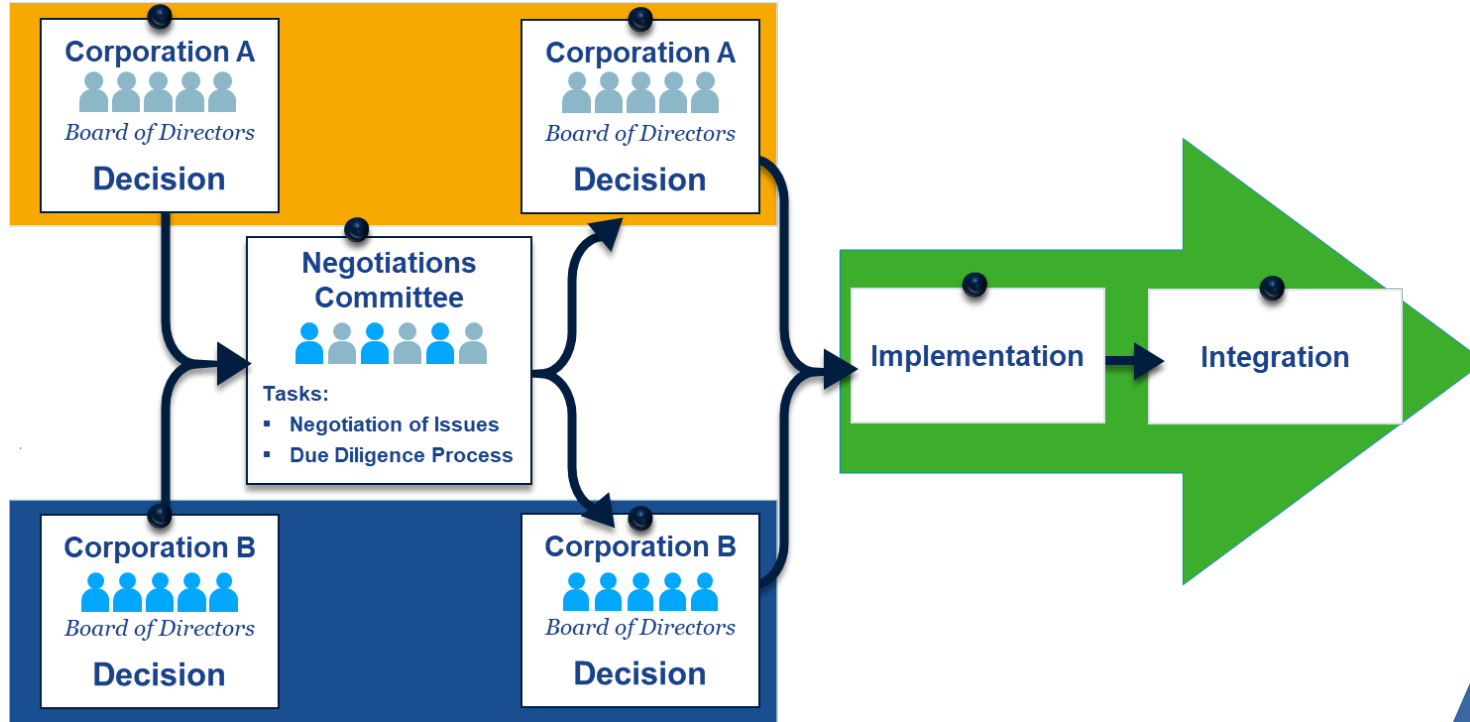
2 What collaborator traits are most important?

3 Do you have the capacity to explore a collaboration?

Criteria for Potential Collaborators

- Do you have similar or complementary missions and visions?
- Do you share common values, customs, beliefs, and practices?
- Have you worked well together before?
- Do you have a high enough level of trust on which to build a relationship?
- Do your strengths complement each others' needs?
- Does their financial status raise any concerns?

Negotiating



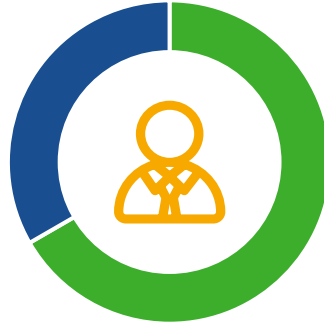
Issues to resolve typically include governance, financial model, leadership, staffing, capital, programs/services, communications, etc.

Implementing



Planning

- Strategic, program, and operational plans
- Change management and culture



Legal Resolution

- File legal documents
- Begin operating as collaborators



Integration

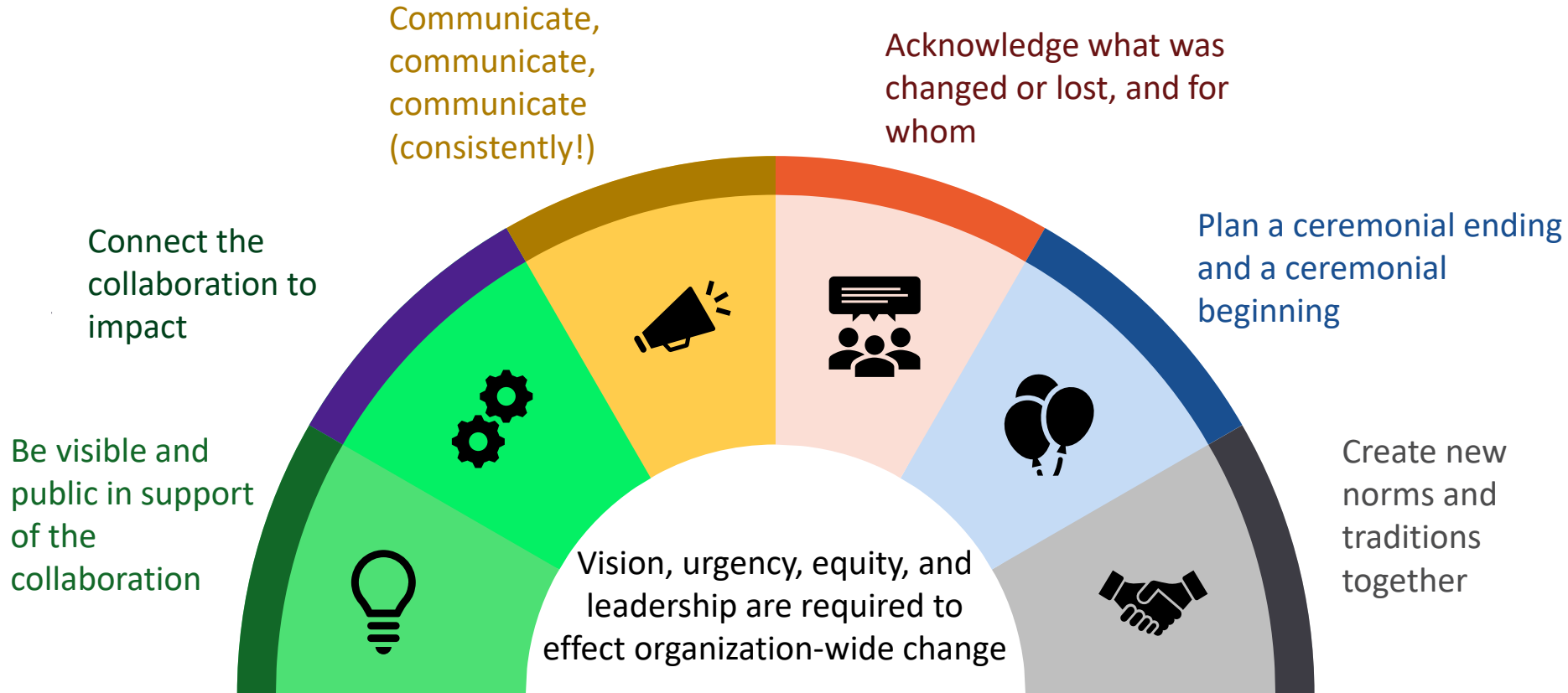
- Systems
- Administration
- Programmatic
- People and Culture
- Communications

Third-Party or Self-Facilitation?

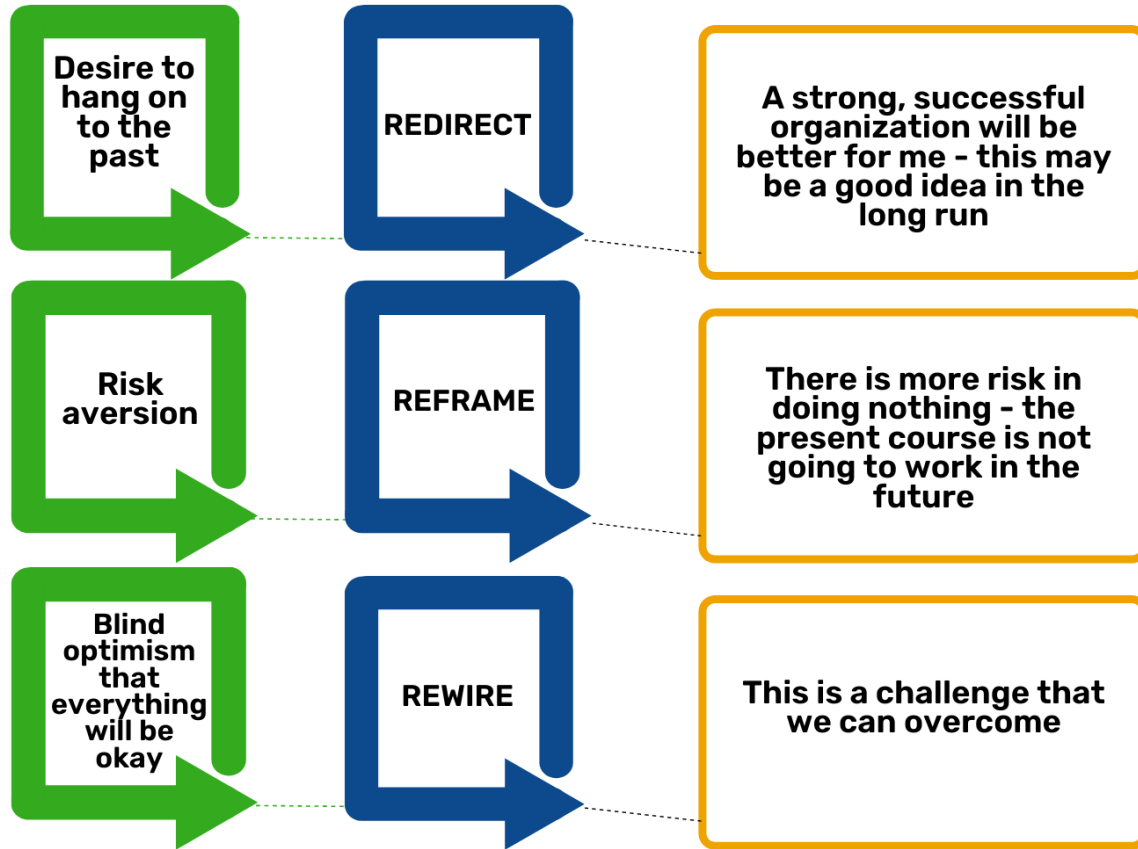
An objective third-party can add value to negotiations, such as:

- Facilitation
- Objectivity
- Tracking actions and agreements
- Financial due diligence and/or modeling
- Assistance with communications
- Crisis management
- Coordination with attorneys
- Management and/or Board presentations

Strategies for Leading Change



Redirect, Reframe, Rewire



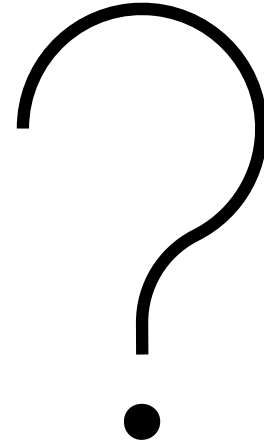
Sustaining Strategic Collaborations



Sustaining Collaboration

- Make it official by documenting mutual commitments
- Plan for leadership turnover
- Make data work for you and track progress toward key outcomes
- Cultivate broader involvement beyond the core group
- Continually learn from and adjust what you are doing
- Build on the experience and your understanding of the issues you are addressing

Questions?



Closing Thoughts

- Collaborations are part of an impact strategy
- First clarify the goals of the collaboration, then pick a structure
- Collaboration takes time, resources, authentic stakeholder engagement, and capacity
- A strong process will provide confidence and structure
- The more integrated the collaboration, the more likely some supporters will choose to leave

Resources

Flexible support for the journey
toward all forms of collaboration

- AAN Presentation Slides
- Collaborative Map Deep Dive
- Merger & Alliance Toolkit



<https://www.lapiana.org/aan/>

Thank you!

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