

Collaboration Toolkit

A resource for individuals, leaders and teams to
implement and enhance effective collaboration



AEMO Collaboration Toolkit Overview

Why collaboration is important

Collaboration is essential when work crosses boundaries - between teams, roles, disciplines or organisations.

Collaboration can range from information sharing and coordination through to co-creation and shared ownership.

Section 1 highlights that collaboration looks different depending on the task and context, including:

Networking \longrightarrow Full collaboration



When collaboration is unclear or poorly designed, work slows and trust erodes. When it is intentional, teams deliver better outcomes with less friction.

Understanding how I approach collaboration

Effective collaboration starts with self-awareness.

Tools such as What's My Contribution? (**Section 1**) and the Trust Equation (**Section 3**) help individuals reflect on how they show up, the value they bring, and the behaviours that build (or undermine) trust in collaborative work.



= Trustworthiness

When individuals are self-aware and intentional, collaboration is more effective, trust becomes stronger and outcomes improve

CORE

CORE provides a simple, shared approach to collaboration by focusing on the conditions that matter most.



Clarity

Clear goals, timelines, trade-offs, success measures



Ownership

Who needs to be involved, what are the roles responsibilities and expectations.



Routines

How the group shares knowledge, makes decisions, tracks actions



Engagement

Are people strong 'team players' who build trust and support each other

Design / Planning

Diagnose

The CORE tools support teams to diagnose collaboration challenges and design better ways of working.

Found in **Section 3**, they clarify purpose and scope, define ownership, establish routines for decision-making and information flow, and strengthen engagement and working relationships.

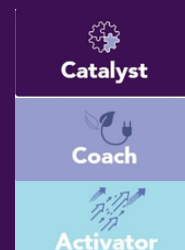


Tools to help navigate the Core Framework

Leadership is the critical enabler of effective collaboration.

Leaders create the conditions for success by setting clear intent, reinforcing ownership and routines, role-modelling trust, and addressing breakdowns early.

Section 4 focuses on the behaviours and capabilities leaders need to create the conditions for collaboration to succeed.



Understanding the role of leadership

How to use this toolkit



This toolkit, underpinned by our values of Character, Connection and Commitment, is designed to help teams work as one, build trust, engage meaningfully, and support each other to thrive. Whether you're just beginning to build cross-functional relationships or looking to refine high-performing partnerships, this toolkit offers practical tools and strategies to support your journey.

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01

Foundations

Understanding collaboration

Why collaboration matters



What's in it for me?

Clarity, confidence & less frustration at work

- Clearer expectations and priorities
- Fewer frustrating hand-offs and rework
- More confident, constructive conversations
- Stronger trust and credibility with others
- Increased career growth and learning

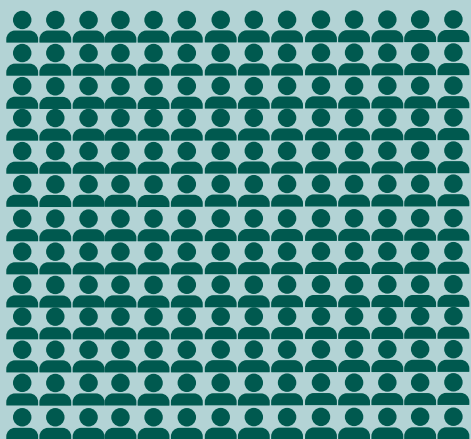
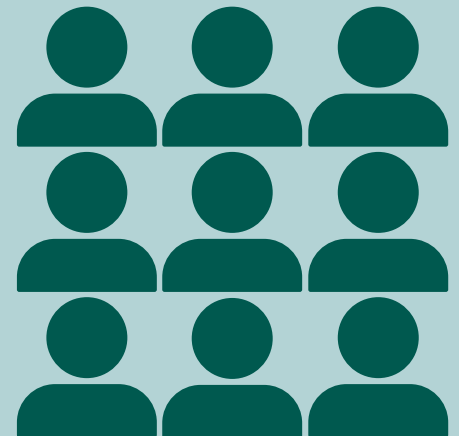
RESULT: work feels clear, easier, and more rewarding

What's in it for my team?

Stronger ways of working that actually stick

- Shared goals and ways of working
- Better role clarity and decision making
- Healthier ways to handle disagreement
- Stronger trust and accountability
- Broader career experiences and deep learning

RESULT: teams work better together, not just harder.



What's in it for AEMO?

More effective collaboration where it matters most

- Outcomes are more creative, credible and effective.
- Faster alignment of complex work
- Less duplication and inefficiency
- More resilient, connected teams

RESULT: smoother workflow, more effective solutions.

What does it take to be great at collaboration?



You know how your work connects with others.

You are clear on how your work contributes to the shared outcome, and you help others see it too. Rather than trying to involve everyone in everything, you focus effort where it matters most and align your contribution to what will move the goal forward.

Collaboration aligns effort around the goal, not universal participation.



You build strong working relationships with partners.

You invest in relationships that enable the work to happen. You build trust through how you show up: listening, respecting different perspectives, and engaging constructively, even when under pressure. You create an environment where people feel safe to contribute and challenge ideas

Collaboration grows through trust, respect, and how you show up for others.



You build shared understanding and work with others to find the best outcome.

You help create clarity around how decisions are made and how work flows. You avoid getting stuck in endless consensus, instead supporting processes that gather input, enable timely decisions, and keep things moving - even when views differ.

Collaborative quality depends good processes for getting to the best outcome.



You follow through on your commitments.

You are clear on your role and accountabilities, and you deliver on what you've committed to. You respect the roles of others, contribute your expertise without overstepping, and ensure your part of the work helps the work move forward.

Collaboration strengthens accountability rather than diluting it.



You invite feedback and offer it to others.

You actively seek out perspectives that strengthen the work and remain open to challenge. You offer feedback in a way that is constructive and helpful, contributing to a culture of continuous improvement and shared learning.

Collaboration requires trust and openness, not sameness of views.

What collaboration is



Shared purpose

Working together with a clear, common aim and agreed outcomes



Intentional involvement

The right people are involved in the right way at the right time



Joint problem-solving

Different perspectives are used to make better decisions & solutions



Clear ways of working

Expectations about decisions, communication & behaviours are explicit



Trust in action

People speak up, challenge respectfully, & follow through on commitments

What collaboration isn't



Everyone involved in everything

Too many voices, unclear ownership, and slow decisions



Endless meetings

Talking a lot without clarity, progress or outcomes



Consensus at all costs

Avoiding disagreement, not working through conflict constructively



Good intentions without structure

Assuming alignment without agreeing on goals, roles, or decisions



Politeness without honesty

Issues left unspoken, leading to frustration, rework, or erosion of trust

Who are your partners?

When time is tight, focus on the partnerships you can't succeed without- and invest in keeping them strong.

At a leadership level, that might look like joint planning, regular cross-team meetings and setting shared priorities. For everyone, it's about showing up well, learning about each other's work, perspectives and priorities - staying aligned, following through, and building trust every day.

Level 1: Essential

Our success depends on strong alignment, communication and proactive planning.

- Our work is tightly linked - we rely on each other
- What we're doing really matters to the organisation
- If this relationship is ineffective, work slows or stops

Level 2: Important

Together, we help each other to succeed

- We connect regularly (weekly / at key points)
- We need to stay aligned to avoid delays or rework
- They support important parts of what we deliver
- If this relationship is ineffective, things get inefficient or frustrating

Level 3: Extend

We work together when needed

- We connect occasionally or for specific pieces of work
- Our work is mostly separate, with some overlap
- We connect when specific input or expertise is needed
- If this relationship is ineffective, impact is usually limited



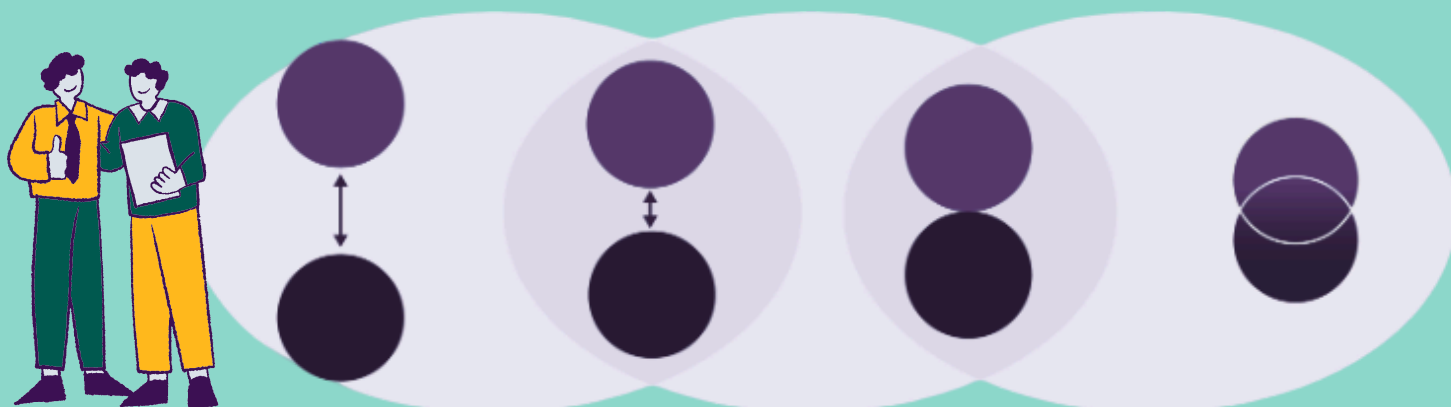
Relationship Assessment



Step	Task	Team Activity
Classify	Classify your most frequent interactions as a Level 1- 3.	
Assess	Assess strength (as High, Med, Low) on the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We understand our shared priorities • We are transparent and responsive. • We trust each other to follow through • We use feedback to build stronger working relationships. 	
Take action	For your key relationships answer: What would make the biggest different to our work together? Be transparent about your intentions to build a better working relationship. Schedule a 15-20 minute partnership conversation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are you trying to achieve right now? • Where do our goals or work connect? • What do you need from me to succeed? • What's working well, and what's getting in the way? • What's one thing we can do differently to work better together? 	

What type of 'collaborative work' is it?

Not all collaborative work is the same - tasks can range from networking, coordination, and cooperation through to full collaboration, each requiring a different level of connection, structure, and shared ownership. Understanding what type of task can help you manage your effort and intervene where it counts. Being clear about the type of collaboration helps you choose the right way of working—from simple information sharing through to deep joint problem-solving.



	Networking <u>Stay connected</u>	Cooperation <u>Help each other</u>	Coordination <u>Stay aligned</u>	Full collaboration <u>Own together</u>
What is it?	Light-touch connection and information sharing	Helping each other with shared goals, but mostly separate work	Aligning activities across interdependent work	Shared ownership of outcomes, decisions, and delivery
When to use?	When building awareness, relationships, or scanning for insights	When you need input, expertise, or support from others	When work overlaps and timing, sequencing, or hand-offs matter	When work is complex, unclear, or requires innovation
What it looks like	Informal updates, introductions, sharing knowledge	Ad hoc support, sharing expertise, contributing to each other's work	Agreed timelines, roles, milestones, and regular check-ins	Co-creation, joint decision-making, iterative working
High-impact interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep it lightweight and purposeful Share relevant updates, not everything Build relationships before you need them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain what is needed and why. Agree on key contacts, timelines, follow up. Bring in the right people at the right time Keep ownership with the right person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify roles, responsibilities, and dependencies Set simple routines (check-ins, updates). Agree review processes, timelines. Make hand-offs explicit and visible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Align on shared goals and success upfront Agree how decisions will be made Build trust and psychological safety Work in small steps and adapt together



“What are the simplest ways of working that will get the best outcome?”

“What do you need to design about our ‘ways of working’ in each condition to create shared expectations and reduce wasted effort?”

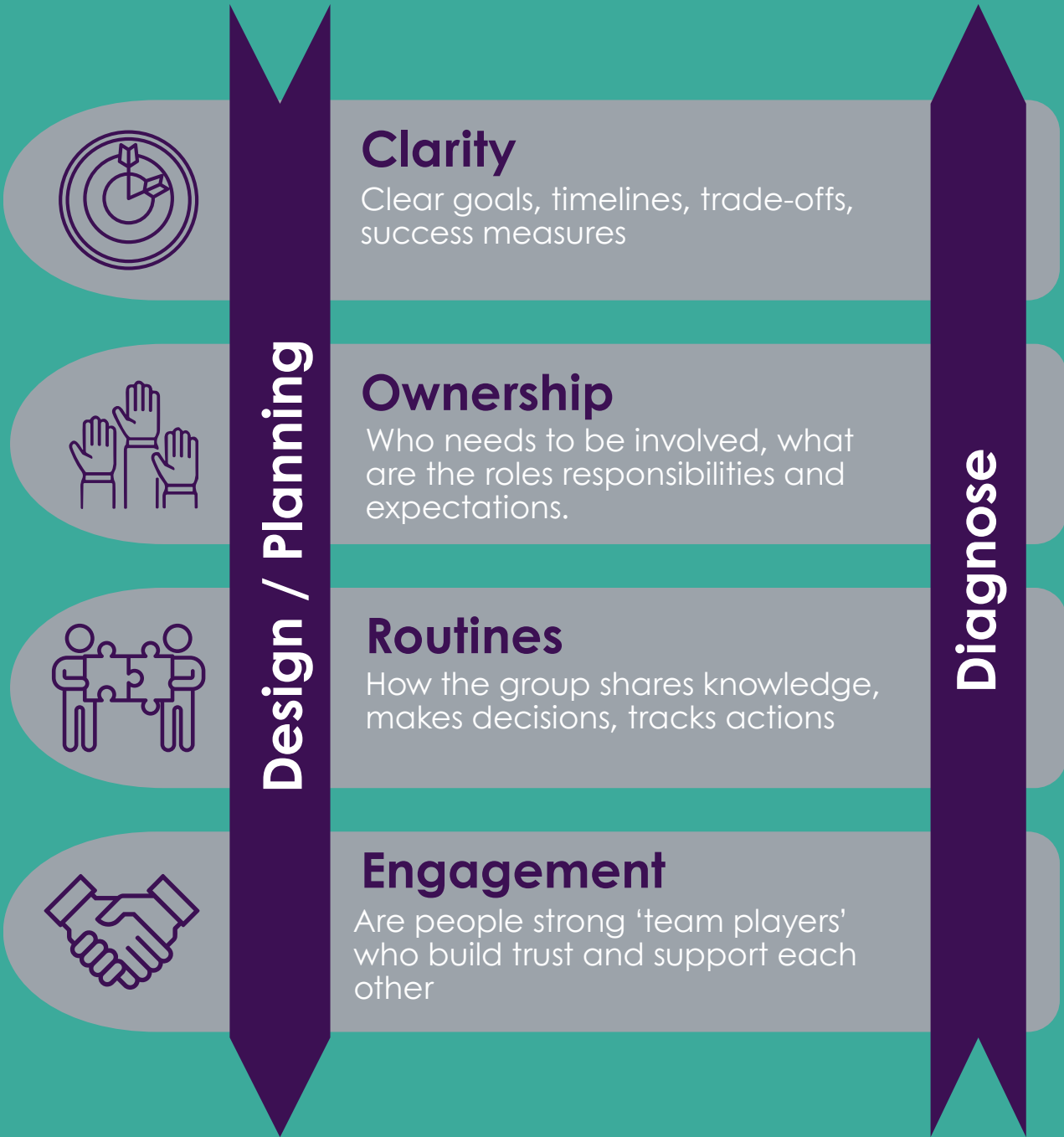
02

CORE

Evidence-based strategies for
better collaboration



CORE framework



How to use the framework

Grounded in a strong evidence base on the key drivers of team effectiveness, **CORE (Clarity, Ownership, Routines, Engagement)** provides a simple, practical way to improve how you work together.

It helps you both **set up effective collaboration and diagnose what's getting in the way** - starting with **Clarity** when building new work (aligning goals, roles, and success), then establishing ownership, routines, and ways of working.

When diagnosing existing relationships, the clearest signal is often in **Engagement**- low engagement, trust, or openness usually points to deeper issues in how the work has been set up and experienced.

CORE framework



Why this matters

What success looks like

Strategies to strengthen

C
Clarity

Without clarity, effort is wasted and priorities compete

Everyone understands the goal, what success looks like, and what matters most

- Communicate and align on shared goals and outcomes
- Be explicit about priorities and trade-offs
- Regularly check: "What is the problem we are solving right now?"

O
Ownership

Without ownership, work stalls, overlaps, or falls through gaps

Clear roles, decision rights, and accountability; people follow through

- Define who decides, contributes, and delivers
- Make ownership visible
- Begin each session with a check in with a check in on progress against last actions.

R
Routines

Without effective routines, work becomes inefficient and frustrating

Work flows smoothly with clear rhythms, effective meetings, and clean hand-offs

- Set simple, regular check-ins with purpose
- Clarify decision-making and communication channels
- Improve hand-offs and reduce unnecessary meetings

E
Engagement

Without trust and openness, people hold back and problems stay hidden

People feel safe to speak up, challenge ideas, and work through issues constructively

- Agree how decisions will be made
- Build trust and psychological safety
- Create feedback loops - 'working well' / 'needs attention'
- Work in small steps and adapt together

CORE on the run

Quick-reference questions for leaders: at every level of collaboration

- Use Level 1 questions in any quick interaction: hallway, Slack, short call.
- Use Level 2 when kicking off a piece of work or bringing in a new collaborator.
- Use Level 3 to maintain momentum on longer or larger work; return to it every 4–6 weeks.
- You don't need to ask every question. One good question, asked well, is enough.



LEVEL 1 - CORE in 5 minutes

Any interaction · quick check-in · new contact · short handoff

Use when you need to establish the basics quickly - one question per element is enough.

C

Clarity

- What are we here to do - and why does it matter right now?

O

Ownership

- What do you need from me to do and by when?

R

Routines

- When should we connect next? If something comes up, how should we reach each other?

E

Engagement

- Are you getting what you need from me?

F

Feedback



This conversation can happen in five minutes. The goal is not completeness - it's contact.



If only one question is possible, make it the E question. It signals that the relationship matters.

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LEVEL 2 - Setting up

New work · larger groups · multiple stakeholders · cross-functional dependencies

Use at the start of a piece of work — or when bringing a new person into existing work. Takes 20–40 minutes as a structured conversation, or can be woven across early interactions.

C

Clarity

- What are we here to do - and what does success look like at the end?
- What's the concern or constraint that hasn't been named yet?

O

Ownership

- Who needs to be in this work, and at what point - and who haven't we thought to ask yet?
- Where are the decisions, and who has the authority to make them?
- What does each person or team need to contribute - and what do they need from us to do that well?

R

Routines

- What will we exchange, when, and in what form - and what does each of us actually need from those exchanges?
- How will we share early drafts and work-in-progress - before things are polished?
- What's the agreed lead time for requests, and what happens when urgency shifts?

E

Engagement

- What would make this collaboration genuinely work for you?
- What's the concern or frustration you haven't said yet?
- What's your experience been of work like this in the past - and what do you need to be different this time?

F

Feedback

- How will we know if something is going wrong - and who will say it first?
- What does good collaboration look like for this group right now - and what would make it 10% better?



The F (Feedback) question is easy to skip when things feel positive at the start. Don't skip it.



The Ownership questions are where assumptions hide. 'Who hasn't we thought to ask yet?' is the most valuable question in this set.



Document what you agree - not formally, but enough that both sides can refer to it.

CORE on the run

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LEVEL 3 - Maintaining

Longer or larger work · returning to work in progress · periodic realignment

Use every 4–6 weeks on active work, or whenever something significant has shifted. Not a full reset - a check-in. Pick the questions most relevant to where the work is now.

C

Clarity

- As we know more, is the original goal still the right one?
- Have the success measures shifted - and does everyone know that?
- Is there scope that has been added or assumed that hasn't been explicitly agreed?

O

Ownership

- Have we closed the loop with people who provided input - do they know where it landed?
- Are the right people still in the work, or has something changed that means we need to bring someone in - or let someone step back?
- Where has accountability drifted - and who needs to reclaim it?

R

Routines

- Are our current rhythms still working - or are they creating overhead without value?
- What's arriving late or in a lump that could be exchanged earlier and more incrementally?
- If our lead times or capacity have changed, have we renegotiated the agreements that depend on them?

E

Engagement

- Is the collaboration still working for the people in it - or has something quietly stopped working?
- Where is energy or goodwill being spent without being replenished?
- Is there a conversation that needs to happen that keeps getting deferred?

F

Feedback

- What's one thing that's working well that we should keep doing deliberately?
- What's one thing that would make this collaboration noticeably better if we changed it now?
- Who hasn't been heard recently - and what do they need to say?



The best time to use Level 3 is before something goes wrong, not after. If the answer to any Clarity question is 'I'm not sure', that's the conversation to have.



Routines that made sense at the start may not fit now. Check them, don't just inherit them.



The Feedback questions are most powerful when asked by the person with the most authority in the room.

What's my contribution?

Rate each statement honestly using the 1–5 scale below. This assessment is for your own reflection. You do not need to share your responses. Look for patterns - where are you consistently strong? Where do you consistently hold back?
 Scale: 1= Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes; 4=Often; 5=Always

Clarity: Goals, shared purpose and enterprise awareness	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I can clearly articulate what our team is trying to achieve and why it matters.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I actively check that my understanding of team goals matches those of my colleagues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I spend time building shared understanding of how each of us see the 'current state'	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When I am uncertain about priorities or trade offs, I raise it rather than assume.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I help us to get clear on success measures, actions and key milestones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I help others understand how their contributions connect to the bigger picture.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ownership: Goals, shared purpose and enterprise awareness	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I am clear about what I am personally accountable for in this team.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I follow through on my commitments reliably and flag early when I cannot.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I seek clarity on decision rights rather than waiting for someone else to decide.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I make an effort to understand the constraints and priorities of people I depend on.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I take accountability for outcomes, not just for completing my assigned tasks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Routines: Processes, coordination and decision-making	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I come to meetings prepared and contribute to making them purposeful.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I share information proactively with people who need it, without waiting to be asked.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I help the group navigate process problems when I see them rather than working around them quietly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When I disagree, I engage with the underlying issue rather than just defending my position.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I follow through on decisions once they are made, even when I did not fully agree.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Engagement: Trust, inclusion, relationships and mindsets	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I actively seek out and include perspectives that are different from my own.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When I notice trust is strained, I address it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I stay curious and open when working with people outside my area of expertise.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I take responsibility for mistakes and treat them as learning opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I demonstrate genuine interest in the work and well-being of my teammates.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I engage with collaboration as something I value, not just a process I comply with.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When I encounter complex problems, I look for root causes rather than jumping to solutions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I flag unresolved issues rather than letting them drift or become accepted as normal.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Which areas are your strongest contributions to a group? How does that support success?
 Which behaviours are least consistent? What gets in the way?
 Is there a gap between how you see yourself and how others might rate you on these same items?
 What is one behaviour you could commit to doing more consistently from next week?



03

Tools

To help build a strong
Collaborative CORE



CORE diagnostic



Collaborative Health Check

Tools



Clarity

- We have a shared understanding of what this team is here to achieve
- Our success measures are specific enough that we would know if we've achieved them
- Our priorities are consistent—we're not constantly shifting focus
- When trade-offs arise, we use shared goals to guide decisions
- We revisit and refresh our goals as circumstances change

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Ownership

- Everyone understands what they are responsible for
- It is clear who has the final say on key decisions
- We avoid duplication and things rarely fall through the cracks
- People feel genuinely accountable for their commitments
- Roles are reviewed when the work or team changes

Pages 20 & 21



Routines

- Our meetings have a clear purpose and lead to decisions or actions
- Our communication channels and ways of working are clear and followed
- We have an agreed process for making effective decisions
- Information reaches the right people in time to act
- When something goes wrong, we review and adjust—not just move on
- We regularly reflect on how we're working, not just what we're delivering
- We surface and resolve disagreements constructively

Pages 22, 23 & 24



Engagement

- People feel safe to speak up, even when it's uncomfortable
- We handle disagreement constructively and stay focused on the work
- I feel heard and valued as a team member
- Mistakes are acknowledged and treated as learning opportunities
- Different perspectives are welcomed and used productively
- Trust holds even under pressure
- There are no significant unspoken tensions or unresolved conflicts

Page 25



Where are our lowest scores - and what's the impact on your work?
What would you prioritise for action?



CLARITY: What the team wants to achieve

Teams often talk about purpose, but collaboration breaks down when clarity stays high-level. CPQQRT helps teams move from vague intent to shared understanding - by getting specific, surfacing trade-offs early, and checking assumptions as work evolves.

C	Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where does this goal fit within AEMO's priorities? Who will be affected by this work? What could enable / derail the work?
P	Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the most vital outcomes for each team? What are we trying to achieve together? How will we know if we've succeeded?
Q	Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the quality standards that must be met? What would 'good enough' look like? What is not negotiable?
Q	Quantity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What scale or scope are we aiming for?
R	Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What, people, budget, tools or support are needed? What could help us move faster / work more efficiently?
T	Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When does this need to be delivered? What are the key stages and milestones? How should the work be sequenced?

Strong clarity means the team can clearly answer:



What are we not doing?	Where might our priorities compete?	When will we pause and check whether our assumptions still hold?
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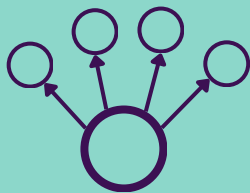
Building Shared CLARITY (60 - 90 minutes)



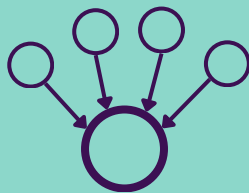
Step	Timing	Task	Team Activity
Build shared clarity with CPQQRT	30 - 45 minutes	<p>PURPOSE: Make sure everyone means the same thing when they say the goal. Work through each lens of the CPQQRT together in relation to your goal.</p> <p>Output for this step:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A shared definition of the Goal, the Current State, and the Gap Clearer expectations about <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WHO needs to be involved, WHAT good looks like, HOW the work will need to get done. 	
Use this to clearly communicate what this work is about	30 - 45 mins	<p>Translate it into ACTION by asking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How would we communicate this clearly and consistently to others? What further direction or resources are needed? Who are our key partners → move to CORE: Ownership What are the key principles that should guide our decision-making? How will we check back on this to assess whether anything has changed? 	

OWNERSHIP: Engaging key partners

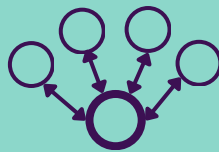
Undertake a relationship assessment to identify the teams and stakeholders who need to be informed, consulted, involved, collaborated with, or empowered. Being explicit about the level of engagement required helps set clear expectations, use time and effort wisely, and ensures the right voices are included at the right moments to support better decisions and outcomes.



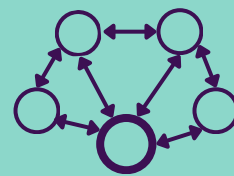
Inform



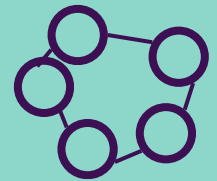
Consult



Involve



Collaborate



Empower

Do

Share relevant information to ensure all teams understand context, decisions, and impacts

Seek input from other teams to improve decisions and identify risks or opportunities

Actively engage teams in planning and problem-solving to ensure their concerns are considered

Participate in the team to co-create solutions, share ownership, and align on goals

Delegate authority to teams or groups to lead initiatives or make decisions within agreed boundaries

How

Use newsletters, dashboards, briefings, or SharePoint updates

Use surveys, feedback sessions, or targeted workshops

Include representatives in working groups or co-design sessions

Form cross-functional steering committees or joint taskforces

Enable autonomous project teams or delegate decision rights

Sounds like

"We'll keep you informed about decisions and progress"

"We'll ask for your input and let you know how it influenced the outcome"

"We'll work with you to ensure your perspectives shape the process"

"We'll make decisions together and share accountability"

"You'll lead this initiative and make key decisions within the agreed timeframes"

Key Partners Assessment (30 - 45 minutes)



Step	Timing	Task	Team Activity
Review collaboration types	5 minutes	Briefly walk through the above model. Key message: Collaborative outcomes benefit from diverse input and different skillsets, but that doesn't mean everyone needs to participate in everything	
Identify key relationships	10 minutes	Individually, list 5-8 key teams or roles the team most likely to be affected by the work. Bring back and compare with the team.	
Assess the relationships	10 - 15 minutes	For each group agree on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input or skills required • Level of connection to the work • When should they be engaged? 	
Agree on actions	5 - 10 minutes	Prioritise groups, and reach out to test your assumptions about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The input / value they have to offer • The best time to involve them • Any needs or expectations they may have, in this work 	

OWNERSHIP: Clearly defined responsibilities and Decision Rights

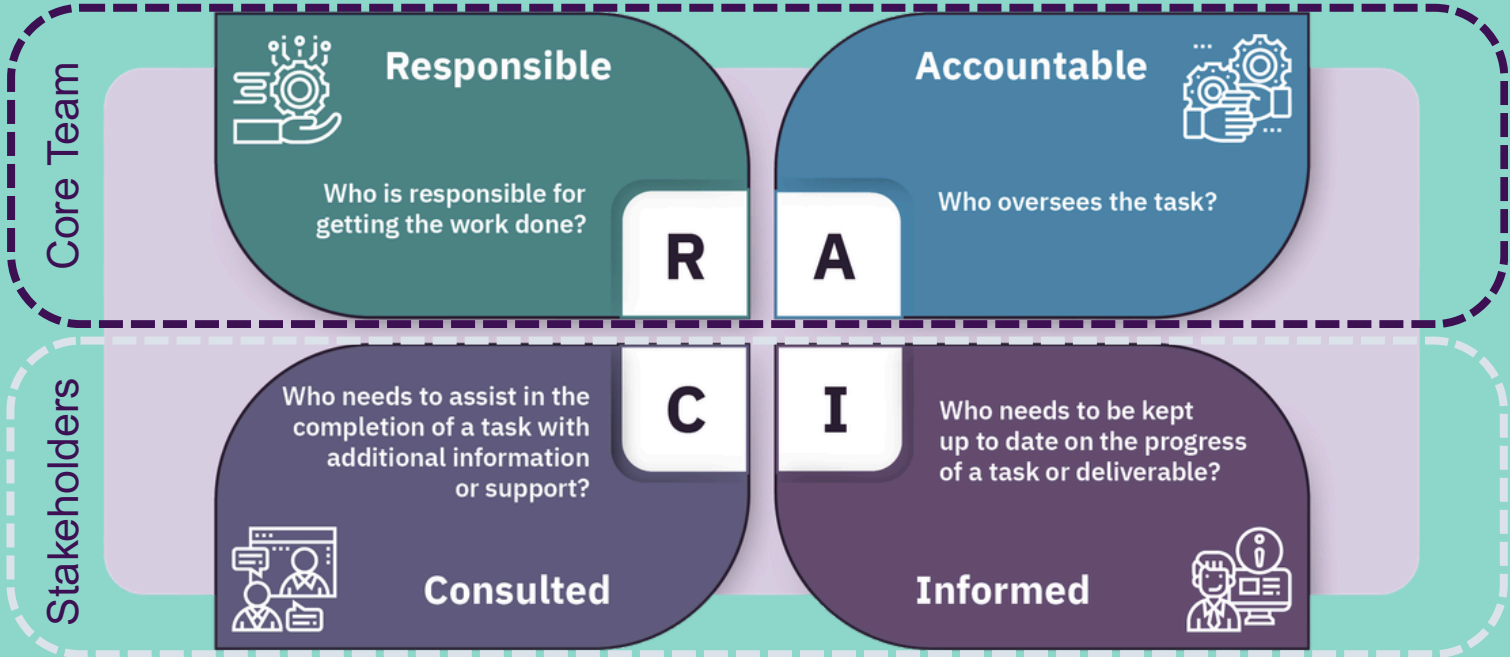
Defining ownership within the collaborative group means being explicit about who is truly part of the team and what that entails. Everyone in the working group needs clarity on what they bring to the work, what they are responsible for doing, and how decision rights are shared or delegated. Where this clarity does not exist, individuals are better positioned as stakeholders - providing input or influence - rather than as members of the core team delivering the work. Everyone who is part of the core team should have a clear R or A. Otherwise, they are a stakeholder, not a core team member.

R - Responsible (does the work)

- Keep it lean - avoid too many people doing the same task
- Be clear on what “done” looks like
- Follow through on commitments and timelines

A - Accountable (owns the outcome)

- One clear owner for each decision or deliverable
- Role has sufficient authority to make calls and unblock progress
- Stays accountable for outcomes, not just activity



C - Consulted (provides input)

- Involve the right expertise at the right time
- Be clear on exactly what input is needed and by when
- Input informs decisions—it doesn’t slow them down

I - Informed (kept in the loop)

- Share the right information, not everything
- Keep updates timely and relevant
- Avoid overloading people who don’t need to be involved



Where do we see confusion, duplication, or dropped handoffs?
 What ownership gaps are creating frustration or slowing progress?
 What is one ownership decision we need to clarify now to improve how we work together?

ROUTINES: Decision-Making

Strong collaboration depends on clear decision-making. When teams are unclear about how decisions are made, who decides, or how trade-offs are handled, work slows down, frustration builds, and accountability becomes blurred. Effective collaborative teams are deliberate about how they make decisions - balancing speed and rigour, valuing diverse perspectives, and committing to decisions once they are made. Clear decision-making processes enable teams to move forward with confidence, alignment, and shared ownership.

1 Group defines key principles that should guide decisions and trade offs.

2 Group defines a 'clean process' - how decisions are made.

- Consensus, consent, or one person decides?
- Each decision has one person who is accountable for it
- Disagree and commit - once made, everyone acts on the decision - including those who didn't agree

Avoid 'reactive' or 'competitive' decision-making processes

3 **Widen your options**
Name at least two genuine alternatives before discussing any one option

Reality-test your assumptions
Name the key assumptions behind your preferred option

Attain distance
Step back from sunk cost, politics, or urgency. Ask what a trusted outsider would advise

Prepare to be wrong
Agree on the conditions that would tell you the decision needs revisiting. Set a review date.

4 Take a balanced view - ensure you use a diverse thinking style.

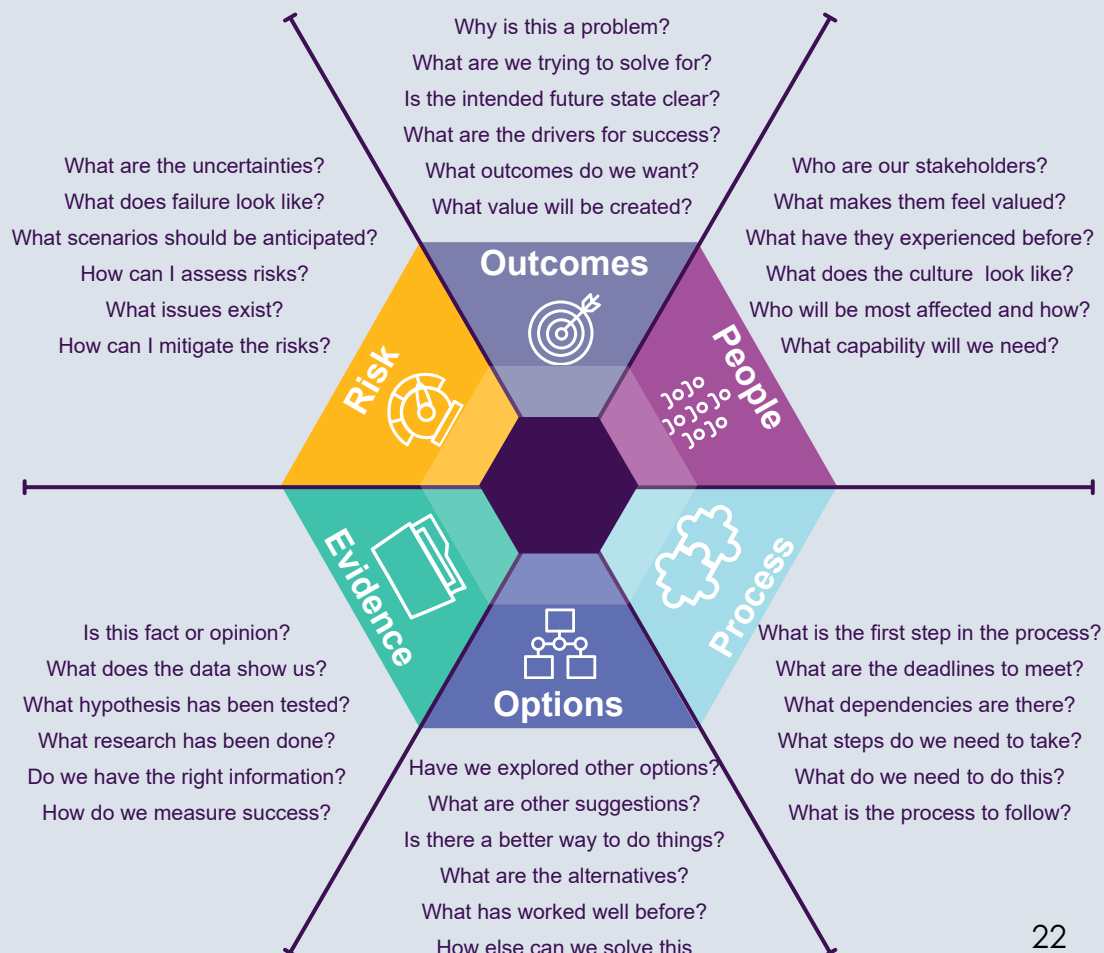
Diverse Thinking Preferences (the "who" & "how")

When working on complex challenges, use different lenses to explore the issue: outcomes, people, process, options, evidence, and risk.

Ask: Which perspectives are we naturally using?

Which are missing or under-represented?

Invite team members to contribute from different lenses, rather than defaulting to a single approach. This helps teams slow down, broaden understanding, and make more informed decisions together.



Clear, intentional communication is essential to effective collaboration. When teams are explicit about how, when, and why they communicate, work moves faster, misunderstandings are reduced, and trust is strengthened. Strong communication ensures the right people have the right information at the right time—so decisions stick, risks are surfaced early, and effort isn't duplicated.



Agree on channels and cadence

Collaborative teams deliberately agree on their communication rhythm:

- How often will we meet?
- How will we communicate between meetings?
- Who are the key groups that need to be kept informed?
- How will decisions be communicated to people outside the team?

Being clear upfront avoids confusion, missed messages, and over-communication.

Make meetings count

Before scheduling a meeting, ask:

- What is the purpose of this conversation - to inform, decide, align, or solve?
- Who needs to be involved? (Aim for fewer than 8 people where possible.)
- What do we want to leave with - a decision, clear actions, or shared understanding?
- What information should be shared in advance to make the meeting efficient?

Before closing a meeting, ask:

- What are the key decisions and actions?
- Who owns what, and by when?
- What would make our next meeting more effective?

Communicate in a way that keeps work moving

In day-to-day collaboration, effective communication is:

Timely

- What do others need to know now to keep progress moving?
- Is there information I'm holding onto that should be shared earlier?
- Are risks, issues, or dependencies being raised early enough?

Clear and Jargon-Free

- How can I explain this more clearly?
- Would someone outside this team understand what I mean?
- What are the few key points or decisions we need to be clear on?

Curious and Open

- What's driving your thinking on this?
- What pressures or constraints are you working within?
- What might I be missing from your perspective?

Curiosity improves understanding, surfaces constraints, and leads to better outcomes - especially in cross-functional work.

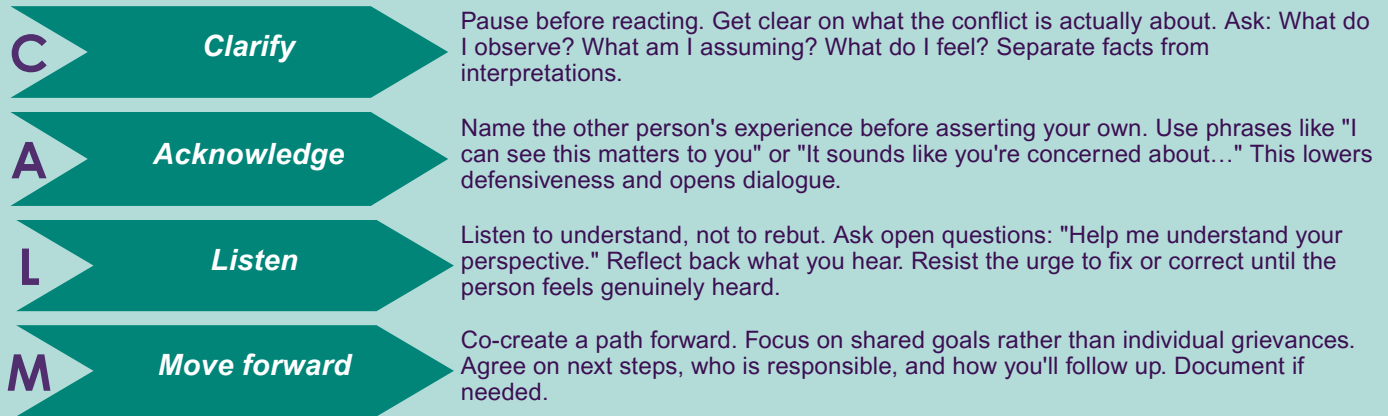


ROUTINES: Productive disagreement in collaborative work

Conflict is not a sign of dysfunction - it's a signal that people care enough to disagree. In collaborative environments, how we respond to conflict determines whether it becomes a source of insight or a source of damage. These frameworks belong to everyone in the group, each of us can use them to navigate tension constructively.

The CALM Framework

Use CALM to structure any difficult conversation - particularly when emotions are running high.



Remember: CALM is not about avoiding conflict; it's about entering it with intention. The 'M' only lands well when C, A, and L have been honoured first.

Getting to the root of the disagreement

When we shift from arguing positions to exploring interests, conflicts that seemed irresolvable often reveal common ground. The goal is not compromise (splitting the difference) but integration (finding solutions that address core interests).

	Position	Interest
<i>Definition</i>	What someone says they want	Why they want it — the underlying need, concern, or goal
<i>Example</i>	"We need to rewrite the entire system"	"I'm worried the current approach won't scale and we'll lose time later"
<i>Risk</i>	Leads to win/lose standoffs	Reveals shared ground and creative solutions
<i>Your move</i>	Don't argue the position	Ask: "What's driving that for you?" or "What are you hoping this will achieve?"



Putting it into practice

- Start by mapping interests.** Before any conflict conversation, ask yourself: what might each person's underlying needs be?
- Use CALM as a private checklist.** You don't need to announce the framework, just let it guide your pacing.
- Surface, don't suppress.** Name the conflict constructively:
- Reframe together:** Shift from "you vs. me" to "us vs. the problem"
- Avoid the fix-it trap.** Resist jumping to solutions before people feel heard. Premature solutions often re-ignite conflict.
- Follow up.** One conversation rarely resolves deep conflict. Check in, honour commitments, and close the loop.



During the conflict...

- Am I responding to their position or their interest?
- Have I acknowledged their perspective before asserting mine?
- What am I assuming that I haven't checked?

After the conversation...

- Did we move forward together, or just manage tension?
- What did I learn about their interests that I didn't know before?
- What follow-up have I committed to, and have I done it?

ENGAGEMENT: How will we work together?

Collaboration typically breaks down not because of poor intent, but because of how people work together day to day. Engagement is about the behaviours, habits and interactions that build trust over time. When teams are deliberate about these behaviours, they reduce friction, surface issues earlier, and create the conditions for productive challenge and shared ownership.

Trust is built through everyday behaviour

Effective collaboration is grounded in trustworthiness, which shows up through four things:



Build Credibility

How believable you are - your expertise, honesty and clarity

- Share relevant expertise and experience
- Be honest about what you know and what you don't
- Be prepared and ready to add value to discussions

Build Reliability

How dependable you are - consistently delivering on commitments

- Follow through on commitments
- Be clear about deadlines and dependencies
- Flag early if something is at risk

Build Intimacy

How safe others feel sharing with you - your ability to create openness and confidentiality

- Create space for open and respectful conversations
- Acknowledge mistakes and learn from them
- Handle sensitive information appropriately

Reduce Self-orientation

How much your focus is on yourself versus others - lower self-orientation increases trust

- Put shared goals ahead of personal agendas
- Be transparent about interests and constraints
- Focus on outcomes, not credit

When things are working well

- Open conversations and healthy challenge
- Clear follow-through on actions
- People raise risks early
- Decisions are supported once made

When things aren't working

- Misunderstandings or untested assumptions
- Silence or disengagement
- Re-litigating decisions
- Conflict becoming personal/ competitive



What do we each need to be able to do our best work in this group?
 What behaviours will help us work well together?
 How will we give feedback or raise concerns if something isn't working?
 How will we build trust and psychological safety over time?

04

Leadership

the critical enabler



Building collaborative capability is a critical leadership role

How we show up - through our behaviours, decisions, and everyday interactions - shapes how collaboration feels and functions around us. This page invites leaders to reflect on the influence they have on others, on group dynamics, and on shared outcomes. Effective collaboration comes from being intentional about how we contribute, and from flexing between Catalyst, Coach, and Activator leadership modes to support the needs of the team and the work.



Great leaders:

Are great collaborators

- They build relationships and collect information which helps them take on an 'enterprise view'.
- This helps them to anticipate future needs, position their team appropriately, and gain support for ideas

Coach & empower 1:1

- They recruit, develop and reward people to develop the skills, mindset and experiences that help them be more effective and add more value.
- They inspire them to take initiative, use their judgement and extend their impact

Build collaborative teams

- Help people in the team understand their interdependencies, share skills and information, learn and solve problems together

Build strong collaborative team partnerships

- Identify opportunities to improve work or efficiencies, or increase their team's understanding of priorities and skillsets within the organisation.

Develop stakeholder relationships

- Build trust and credibility with key stakeholders by understanding their priorities, managing expectations, and engaging them early and transparently to enable better decisions and shared outcomes.

AEMO LEADERSHIP MODES emphasize THE WAY WE COLLABORATE



Builds trusted relationships to drive collaboration, shared perspectives

Considers future needs, identifies opportunities for change

Develops solutions for enterprise challenges, strategy & purpose



Develop themselves and others through coaching and feedback

Creates a culture of empowerment, growth & learning

Fosters safe, inclusive effective team environments



Takes accountability for delivery, consistency & quality

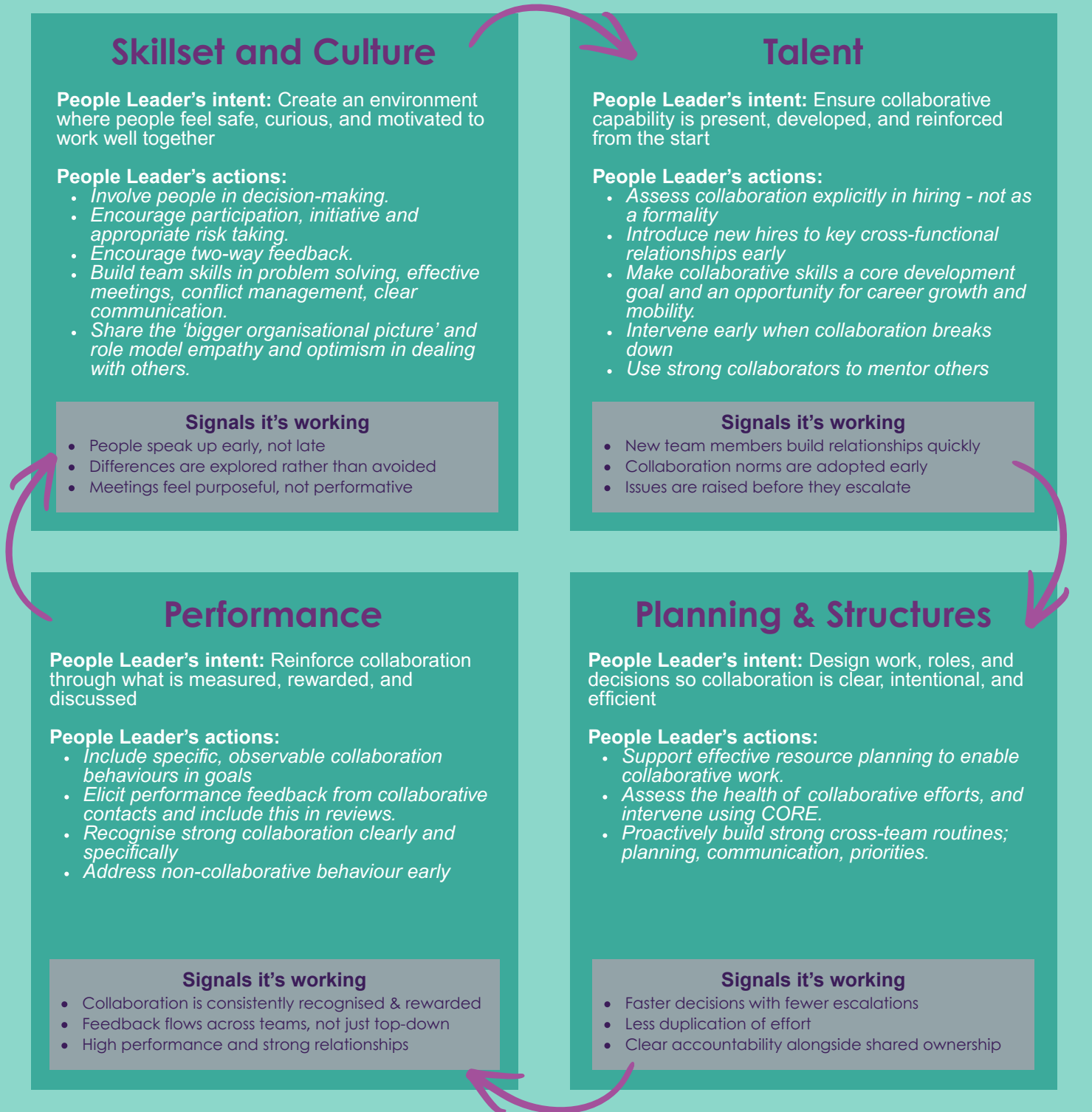
Address risks & barriers to performance

Builds alignment on goals, resources & success measures

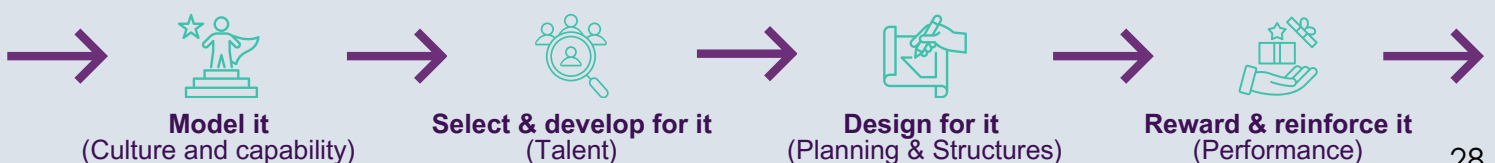
Building Collaboration Capability in your people

Leaders play a critical role in creating the conditions where collaboration can thrive.

In 1:1, team and cross-functional work, they have a powerful role in **modelling collaborative behaviours, selecting the right people, setting clear expectations, structuring for success, and recognising and rewarding shared outcomes.**



Leader's reinforcement loop



Leadership self-assessment

Rate each statement honestly using the 1–5 scale below. This assessment is for your own reflection. You do not need to share your responses. Look for patterns - where are you consistently strong? Where do you consistently hold back?

Scale: 1= Never; 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, 5=Always

Skillsets & Culture: <i>Creating an environment where people feel safe, curious, and motivated to work well together</i>	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I actively involve people in decisions that affect them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I encourage participation, initiative, and appropriate risk-taking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I create space for two-way feedback, not just top-down communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I build team capability in problem-solving, meetings, conflict, and communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I help people see the bigger organisational picture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I role model empathy and optimism in how I engage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Talent: <i>Ensuring collaborative capability is present and developed</i>	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I assess collaboration explicitly when hiring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I connect new team members early to key cross-functional partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I position collaboration as a core development and career skill	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I intervene early when collaboration isn't working	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I actively develop strong collaborators and use them to support others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Performance: <i>Reinforcing collaboration through what is measured and rewarded</i>	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I include clear collaboration behaviours in individual goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I seek and use feedback from stakeholders outside the team	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I recognise strong collaboration clearly and specifically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I address non-collaborative behaviour early and directly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I regularly recognise and celebrate collaborative behaviours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Set Them Up for Success: <i>Designing work so collaboration is clear and effective</i>	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I ensure resourcing supports effective collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I regularly assess collaboration health and intervene using CORE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I establish strong cross-team routines (planning, communication, priorities)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When people are working collaboratively, I ensure that the group has:	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Clarity about the collaborative goals, outcomes and expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ownership: input from the key partners, and clearly defined roles and responsibilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Routines: effective communication, strong decision-making processes constructive conflict.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Engagement: trusting, respectful and supportive interactions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Where are your strongest areas?

Where are your lowest scores - and what impact is that having?

What is one action you will take to strengthen collaborative skills in your people?

Want more support?

Visit: aemcloud.sharepoint.com/sites/LearningandCareers/SitePages/Collaboration
Contact: Learning.Development@aemo.com.au

