

COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIP TIPS

Collaboration = people working together (common goal)

Tolerance/effective communication = Critical conversations

- **Safe/goal oriented** – make sure the person feels safe and understands that you have the same goal (to solve the problem, serve students, etc.)
- **Body language** – be aware of your body language – try to be nonthreatening and neutral
- **Start positively** – start with a positive comment/compliment to avoid putting them on the defensive; don't get pulled into negativity or focusing on things that can't be changed
- **Use "I" messages** - be careful how you present things..focus on solving the problem
- **Realistic but child centered** – begin the conversation with a potential solution to the problem in mind; the goal is to solve the problem not rehash the past and place blame/get even

Barriers to successful collaboration

- **Advice** – avoid giving advice as to what you think they should do; help the person find the best, most beneficial solution themselves
- **False reassurances** – avoid justifying their behavior in an attempt to make them feel better
- **Wandering interaction** – try to keep the conversation/meeting focused on the goal/agenda; don't be distracted by unexpected issues
- **Interruptions** –maximize the potential for successful communication by organizing a meeting time/place to minimize possible disruptions
- **Being judgmental** – avoid; stay focused on solving the problem & common goals
- **One-way communication** –productive conversations must include both parties
- **Fatigue** – avoid potentially "hot topic" issues when you are overly tired
- **Hot words or phrases** – be careful; avoid; remain calm & unemotional
- **Complaining** = don't focus on, "*Why it won't work*" rather, "*What can we try next*" = success is often TRIAL & ERROR