

21 A Programme of Partnering and Integrated Team Workshops

In order to achieve measured and measurable continuous improvement, it is necessary for partnering and integrated teams to meet on a regular basis. The core group should establish a structured programme of workshops and team events for the duration of the relationship. This will assist the team in growing cross-organisational understanding, building on previous successes and developing opportunities for further improvement to add value for all team members. Regular face-to-face contact also helps to break down barriers and to reduce misunderstandings.

The programme of workshops and team events should be set up at the first opportunity, once the decision has been taken to proceed with a partnering and integrated teamworking arrangement. The responsibility for setting up the programme will normally rest with the client or the client's representative. The partnering contract PPC 2000 (Association of Consultant Architects Ltd & Trowers & Hamblins, 2000) sets a responsibility on the client representative to organise value and risk management exercises, partnering workshops and a post project review.

There is a wide range of facilitators who can provide appropriate support for specific workshops. Their costs and facilitation styles will vary and availability for a specific facilitator may be at a premium, requiring pre-planning by all involved. We have set out guidance on selecting facilitators in an earlier chapter.

The team should be aware that there is a cost to the workshops. In addition to the hire costs of a venue, the core group must consider budgeting for specialist facilitation. Hired venues and outsourced facilitators will be obvious costs against the budget of the project or

116 Construction Partnering & Integrated Teamworking

individual organisations. In-house provision of facilities and facilitators will, typically, incur opportunity costs that may not be charged to the project. However, when the costs of workshops are measured and compared with the added value of an integrated team working in harmony (or, conversely, the real and opportunity costs of a team not working in harmony), the business case will almost invariably justify setting up and maintaining a structured programme of team workshops.

In addition to outgoing fees, there is the resource cost of such a programme. For an £8million project (six months in design and fifteen months on site) there will be in the order of ten workshops, each with around fifteen attendees. In this case, the resource cost is 150 management days. Whilst this may seem excessive at first sight, the regular structured workshops should lead to a reduction in the number of ad hoc meetings between the various individual members of the team and, through full-team attendance, ensure greater cross-organisational understanding. The reduction in ad hoc meetings should be quantified by the core group and presented as a benefit of the integrated team working and partnering approach to set against the costs of workshops.

Many teams may look at the apparent cost of workshops with horror and decide to save costs by meeting once in a while or by not planning future meetings. This is a mistake. The cost of ten workshops for the project outlined above (initial workshop, value and risk management, six quarterly continuous improvement workshops and one post-project review) may be in the order of £20k for facilitation and £5k for venue hire. However, bearing in mind that this project may be budgeted at around £8million, it only needs just over 0.3% value enhancement from working together to repay these costs.

In addition to structured project-focused workshops, the core group should consider the need for the team members to develop a common cross-organisational culture of partnering and integrated teamworking. This may require a training programme to include not only the technical members of the team but also their management, directors and any other interested parties who may impact on the successful delivery of the project.

It has been identified (Bennett & Jayes, 1995) that the total costs of partnering, including training and resource time, amount to approximately 1% of the project cost, although this will clearly depend on the

scale of the project and on the number and frequency of workshops. The resulting benefits from partnering and integrated teamworking have also been measured. These are in the range of 3–10% for project partnering and 10–30% for longer term, strategic relationships (Bennett & Jayes, 1995). The return on investment is therefore substantial.

The programme of workshops should be structured with the intention of benefiting the delivery of the project. These are not client workshops or design team workshops – they are integrated teamworking workshops for all team members.

The team members should be informed of the programme and the specific dates of workshops as soon as possible. They should be actively encouraged by their managers and directors to reserve these dates in their diaries and to make every effort to attend in order to maintain the drive towards an integrated team. It is important that all members attend the workshops that are arranged rather than send a representative as continuity of personnel is paramount when building relationships between organisations.

Having drawn up a programme of integrated team workshops, it is essential to adhere to it if optimum results and team motivation are to be achieved. Cancelling workshops (whether as a result of cost or for any other reason) sends a message to the team that partnering and integrated teamworking is a low priority. Cancellation of workshops dampens enthusiasm, loses the team's momentum and risks the relationship.

Social events should be an integral part of the workshop programme, as partnering and integrated teamworking depends on the interaction of team members – getting to know one another, how they work and how they respond to challenges.

Once a partnering and integrated teamworking route is chosen, the team should be brought together as early as possible at the initial partnering workshop in order that all share a common understanding of the client's and each other's value criteria and the ways in which these are to be delivered. At this early stage, all team members should be allowed the opportunity to input their own views and suggestions on delivering better value.

Following the initial partnering workshop, the team should reconvene in value and risk management and continuous improvement workshops. These will all assist in building the partnering team ethos as well as defining and refining the scheme. Following these

118 Construction Partnering & Integrated Teamworking

workshops, it may be appropriate to set up specialist task groups to address further specific topics. The proposals and results from these task groups should be fed back to the team through the core group/partnering champions.

We have set out below (with the permission of Andy Ward at JDM Accord) a good example of the work of a task group following a continuous improvement workshop proposal. In addition to encouraging the implementation of the initiative, the communication was used to clearly set out the improvement process and identify the outcome and benefit to the organisations.

JDM Accord – Shropshire CC Partnering Initiative – Office Paper Recycling

We have started to recycle unusable office paper at the Longden Road depot. SITA have provided twelve cardboard recycling boxes that are located throughout the offices, a supply of plastic liners to hold the waste paper, a skip specifically for waste paper located outside the workshops and a disposal point at Granville where the paper will be bailed, compacted and forwarded to recycled paper manufacturers. The message is first to re-use paper if at all possible and second to recycle it by placing it in the cardboard bin. You will be surprised by the amount we discard. By participating in this recycling activity we are all saving JDM Accord the cost of disposal and we are helping in diverting biodegradable material from landfill.

Following implementation of the scheme, the office cleaner reported a 60% reduction in the general office waste, indicating the amount of paper discarded.

During the remainder of the project, the team should meet on a quarterly basis in continuous improvement workshops which may be targeted at specific areas of the project. These may also be an opportunity to develop the team through non-project teambuilding exercises.

After handover, the team should meet again for a post-project review to celebrate success, close out any remaining issues, agree and report on KPIs and take forward the successes and opportunities to their next projects.

A Programme of Partnering and Integrated Team Workshops 119

The partnering programmes set out below are based on typical scenarios:

A single project; not forming part of an alliance or framework; six months in design and fifteen months in construction; handing over in month 21 (a programme for this scenario is shown in Fig. 21.1):

- ❑ the initial partnering workshop will be held in month 1 followed closely by the initial value and risk management workshops
- ❑ continuous improvement workshops will be scheduled quarterly for months 4, 7, 10, 13, 16 and 19
- ❑ after completion and handover in month 21 the post-project review will be held in month 24.

An alliance or framework, contracted for five years with multiple individual contracts:

- ❑ the initial framework partnering workshop will be held in month 1
- ❑ full team training will, if appropriate, be held at about the same time
- ❑ a continuous improvement workshop will be scheduled for month 7 and may also take place at other times during the framework

	Design	Construction	Post Project
Initial Partnering workshop	●		
Value Management workshop	●		
Risk Management workshops	●		
Continuous Improvement review	●	● ● ● ● ●	
Post Project review			●

Figure 21.1 Programme of project workshops.

120 Construction Partnering & Integrated Teamworking

- ❑ annual reviews (incorporating continuous improvement workshops) will take place in months 13, 25, 37 and 49
- ❑ a post-framework review should be held in month 63 to ensure all issues have been addressed and all objectives met.

Within the alliance or framework, each single project (four months in design; eight months in construction; handing over in month 12):

- ❑ an initial partnering workshop in month 1 followed closely by the initial value and risk management workshops. One of these may be held on the same day as the initial partnering workshop or on the following day if the team is conversant both with each other and with the principles and processes associated with value and risk
- ❑ a continuous improvement workshop should be scheduled for month 9
- ❑ a post-project review in month 15 after completion and handover in month 12.

We acknowledge that workshops are resource hungry, so every effort should be made to maximise the output by preparing in advance and making the experience as enjoyable as possible for the team. This will motivate the team members and assist them in producing quality output.

Whilst hiring a venue may appear extravagant when boardrooms are available the use of quality facilities, away from the offices of those organisations concerned, has many benefits. Over the years we have facilitated workshops in hotels and in the offices and site huts of many organisations. We can confirm that the quality of output from workshops is directly proportional to the suitability of the venue. A suitable venue drives a successful workshop where every team member chooses to participate with energy and a positive attitude because they are comfortable and feel valued. A quality, neutral venue ensures that:

- ❑ team members interact during breaks and don't disappear to their desks, for example to check emails
- ❑ interruptions are only for the one really important message
- ❑ there is evidence of a greater respect for people and value for the team

- there is a whole team focus on the workshop rather than organising the sandwiches and clearing away the teacups
- all facilities (flip charts, projectors, pens, paper, etc.) are provided
- there is an adequate provision of power outlets
- the room size and layout are appropriate as specified in advance, leaving the facilitators free to concentrate on the workshop preparation rather than clambering over old flip charts, chairs, etc. and rearranging boardroom tables against the wall.

Before the workshop, the facilitators should ensure that the venue is laid out appropriately. Our preference is for no tables, as tables are a barrier to open communication and we want to encourage openness. The absence of tables also enables the team members to move around easily into various groups as appropriate during the day. Cabaret style layout also facilitates group work but boardroom layout should be avoided if at all possible as it is liable to set up confrontation.

The facilitator should inform all delegates of the date and venue as soon as possible and send a formal delegate pack two weeks before the workshop, containing:

- agenda
- details of the venue
- list of delegates
- relevant project information (budget, start and handover dates, etc.)
- questionnaire as appropriate to elicit successes, opportunities and responses to performance (for example, against the partnering charter).

The questionnaire should include a specific return date for responses and details to enable return by email, fax or post.

One week before the workshop the facilitator should analyse all quantitative and qualitative responses to the questionnaire and prepare material for the workshop.

The workshop report and a one-page executive summary should be issued to all team members within three days of the workshop.

A structured programme of team workshops and social events, involving all team members and held in appropriate venues, will help to build the integrated teamworking ethos. Developing and

122 Construction Partnering & Integrated Teamworking

communicating this programme early in the relationship will demonstrate the commitment of the core group to making partnering work and provide the opportunity to monitor the progress of the relationship, driving continuous improvement to maximise value for all parties in the partnering and integrated team.