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# E-PARCC

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## **Mapping Network Structure in Complex Community Collaboratives SIMULATION**

### **The Rise of Networks and Collaboration in Practice and Research**

A growing expectation today for public or nonprofit organizations is that they engage in partnerships with other organizations as a way to achieve stated goals. Although leveraging resources by engaging in partnerships has long been a predominant activity for public managers (Blau and Rabrenovic 1991), the extent to which collaboration is expected today seems to be reaching levels greater than in the past (Gittell and Weiss 2004; Rethmeyer 2005; Samaddar and Kadiyala 2005; Agranoff 2006; O'Toole 1997). O'Leary, Gerard, and Bingham (2006,8) note that "public managers now find themselves not as unitary leaders of unitary organizations... instead they find themselves convening, facilitating, negotiating, mediating, and collaborating across boundaries." Additionally, technological innovations have increased the ability for everyone to interact in a more flexible, real-time environment (Wellman, Witte, and Hampton 2001).

This push towards increasing efforts to collaborate is evident in the public sector. Kamarck (2002) notes that years of decentralization, devolution, and outsourcing have led to a world of "network government", characterized by fluid boundaries, ad-hoc structures, and participation of non-traditional partners (Hajer and Wagenaar 2003). Indeed, it is managing a "networked organizations" - multiple and varying organizations participating in the development of programs and policy, asked to share in the responsibility of their implementation - that frames much of the current dialogue for managers in both the public and nonprofit sector. Relationships that involve resource and knowledge exchange throughout the public, private, and nonprofit sectors are the

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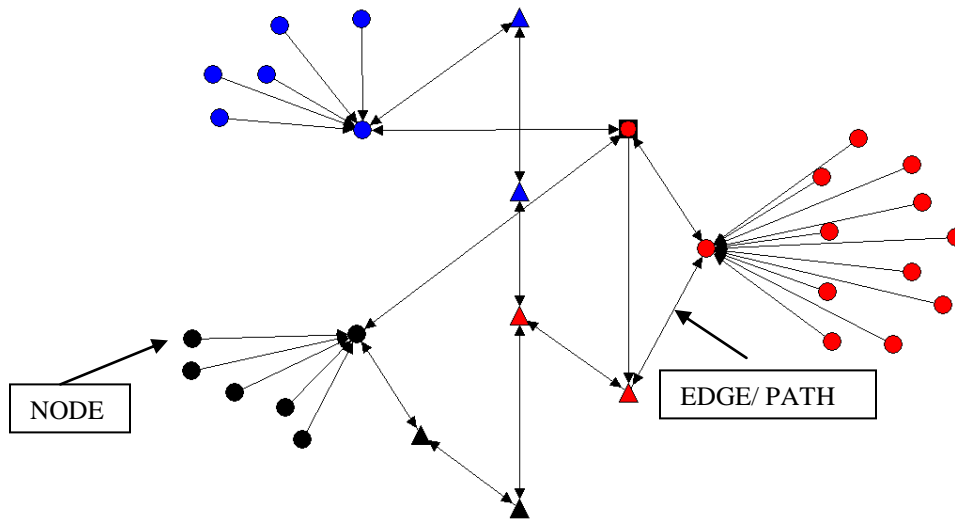
norm and certainly the latest trend in successful social service models (Gulati and Gargiulo 1999; Isett and Provan 2005; Mandell 2001; Monge, Fulk, Kalman, Flanagan, Parnassa and Rumsey 1998) and policy implementation (Brinkerhoff 1999). Blau and Rabrenovic (1991, 328) found that in the nonprofit sector “interorganizational linkages are more important than bureaucratic hierarchies for controlling and coordinating work, as linkages are used to integrate programs within a community, coordinate client services, obtain resources, and deal with governmental agencies...organizations in the nonprofit sector have more complex links than those in the profit-making sector.” Collaboration is particularly useful in solving what are termed “wicked problems”—that is, those problems that cannot be solved, or cannot be easily solved, by a single organization or individual. Public managers and not-for-profit managers today increasingly require the ability to manage collaborative processes in their tool-kit of skills. One promising tool for assisting managers throughout the collaborative process is the exercise of mapping network connections.

### **Exploring Network Visualizations as a Tool for Collaborative Decision Making**

Network visualizations can be powerful tools for exploring network data and communicating their properties. The formation of a network is a key component of collaboration and generally represents a varying different set of structural relationships, in contrast to a hierarchical working structure. Hierarchies generally represent a top-down or a chain-of-command approach. By contrast, collaborative networks tend to work as a collection of vertical relationships, often working together by consensus or collective decision making rather than a majority rule method. The varying options for how collaboratives can be structured makes visualization of these relationships a key initial step in understanding this type of networks. This understanding can, in turn, can lead to improved collaborative processes and collaborative governance. For example, by incorporating network mapping tools into collaborative practice, members can identify key actors who are missing from the collaborative, weak or redundant points in a network, and particular strengths of the network structure. Using this kind of data-driven exercise, a strategic approach can be applied to collaborative management strategies.

This simulation will apply hands-on exercises to integrate conceptual concepts of interorganizational collaboration with visual representations of these concepts to understand and process within a network collaborative. Some of the terms and concepts that make up network visualizations should be described (see Figure 1 for corresponding diagram). First, a *node* is any person, place, or thing that either gives or receives connections. An *edge* is the line that shows the connections in a network map; it lies between two nodes. If a node is *adjacent*, then it is connected to another node with at least one edge. A *geodesic* is the shortest path between any two nodes. *Cliques* are subgroups of actors. *Triples* are any three nodes and the connections among them. The *length* of a tie represents the number of edges between two nodes. For example, if it takes two steps to get from node X to node Y, then we would say that the distance is two. If that is the shortest path between those two nodes, then we would say that is also the *geodesic distance*. An *ego* refers is a focal point or respondent and an *alter* are those people identified by the ego (Wasserman & Faust, 1994).

**Figure 1. Network Visualization**



### **The Purpose of the Simulation**

This simulation is an exercise to visualize the structure of four community coalitions. Each community coalition includes a core set of players, information about assets/resources they bring to the coalition, existing relationships, and varying motivations. All simulations presented as a part of this exercise are based on real life events. This simulation is designed to help students develop a key skill in terms of collaboration: the ability to visualize and map a network of relationships, followed by decision making based on information derived from the exercise.

To complete the simulation, the instructor will break the class into teams (ideally with 6 members in each team). As a team you will read through each simulation and using the materials provided, develop a network map of the coalition assigned to you. Using this information, you will be asked to answer several questions. Depending on your role and accompanying visualization, you may choose varying paths of action from your classmates. For the final step in the exercise, your team will face a new management dilemma. You will use your existing network to problem solve and reconfigure your network to address the management dilemma.

### **Directions for Assigning Roles and Teams:**

Your instructor will break the class into up to four teams of 6 players per team. Within each team, each member will take on the role of one of the players in the coalition described. By taking on this position, you will help your team understand who you are connected to, your available assets and motivations, and other attribute information about yourself. Although each team member will represent a player in the coalition, your team should work as a single group and make decisions by consensus—*do not break your team into sub-groups*.

**Directions for Completing the Simulation:** Below are four scenarios detailing coalitions formed to solve a pressing social/political problem. Each team will be assigned one scenario. (Note: Prior to starting this simulation, be sure you and your classmates have read *Use of Network Analysis to Strengthen Community Partnerships* (by Provan et al. 2005) for background

on the network perspective to collaborative governance. In addition, your instructor should have reviewed the Mapping Your Network PowerPoint presentation.)

### **Step 1: Read the scenario**

Read the simulation to understand the context of the scenario and the various roles (see Figure 2). If it is helpful to you, feel free to jot notes on the simulation sheet. *Stop reading when you get to the “management dilemma”.*

### **Step 2: Before mapping, as a team discuss the simulation briefly**

As a team take five minutes and discuss the case. What is the policy/social dilemma the collaborative is trying to solve? Who are the actors? What are their relationships?

### **Step 3: Map out the network**

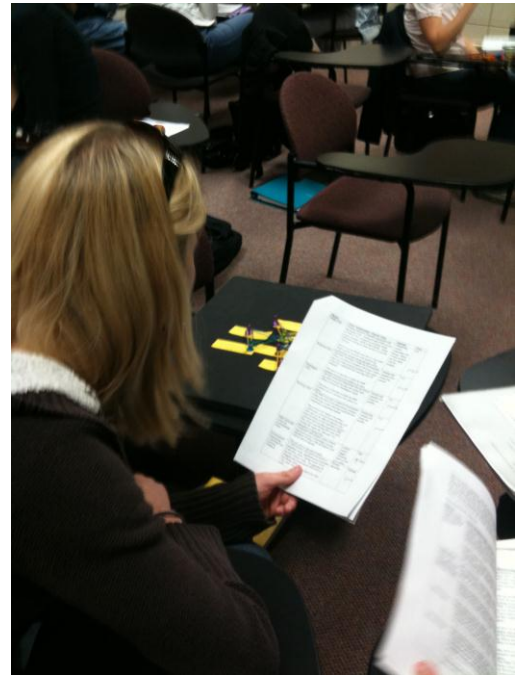
Next, your team will use the materials provided to visually map out the relationships described in your scenario. Use the information that you already have about the network (provided in the scenario) and map out this collaborative using a “network perspective”. Using the boards provided to you, as well as the additional materials, create the network as your team understands it from the explanation provided.

Each team should have:

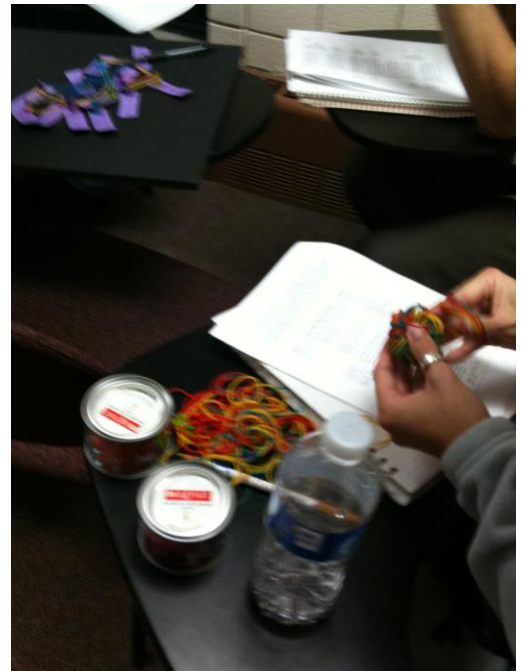
- A peg board
- Post-it note “flags”
- Colored pins
- Colored rubber bands(see Figure 3)

You will use these materials to create your network map on the peg board. The push pins should be used to represent each player in the network. Use the post-it notes to label the push pins with their appropriate identifying name. Next, use the rubber bands to represent the relationships between these actors. (If two actors do not have a direct relationship no rubber band should connect them.) You can decide where the pins should be located and how to orient the rubber bands among them. Think about who should be close to whom (hint: those with a lot of connections should be positioned closer to the center) and how to best present the detailed relationships with your rubber bands. Both pins and rubber bands are provided in a variety of colors. You should use these various colors to “code” both the types of players and types of relationships. Keep a log of the coding regime your team develops. (Example: Government Officials = Green Pins and Contractual Relationships = Red Rubber Band.) (See Figures 4 & 5)

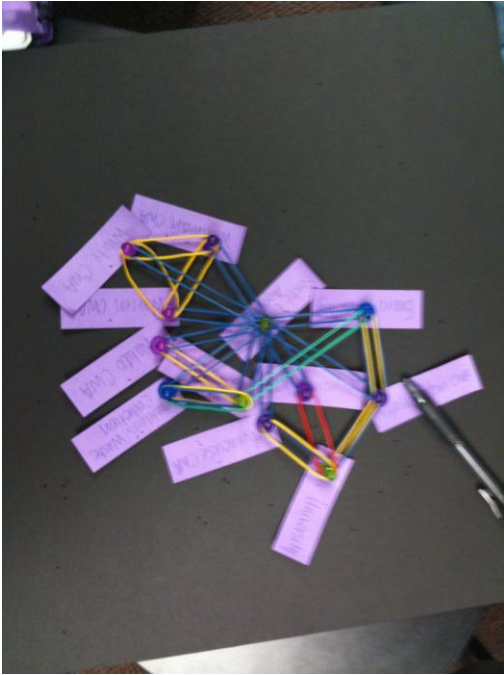
**Figure 2: Reading the Scenario**



**Figure 3: Supplies**



Figures 4 and 5: Mapping Networks (All Photos by Mark Davis)



#### **Step 4: Discuss initial questions and tasks**

After you have mapped out this network, take a few minutes to discuss the following questions with your group. Then be prepared to discuss your responses with the rest of the class. Your instructor will lead a group discussion using these questions as guides.

- 1) Is the network “appropriately” connected?
- 2) Has the network cultivated important external relationships?
- 3) Are value-added collaborations occurring in the network?
- 4) Do underlying relationship qualities yield effective collaboration at the point of need?
- 5) Does organizational context support collaboration and momentum?

#### **Step 5: Management Dilemma**

Once steps 1 through 4 are completed, continue reading the final section of the case, the “management dilemma”. Once your team has each individually read the *management dilemma*, follow the instructions and make any changes to your network based on this new challenge. After you have mapped out this revised network, discuss the following questions with your group:

- 1) What happened to your network?
- 2) How is each organization affected by this new configuration?
- 3) What changes can you recommend to the collaborative to strengthen the network?
- 4) Do you believe all organizations will remain in the collaborative, given the changes presented in the *management challenge*, or will they decide to try to solve this dilemma on their own?

Following your group discussion, be prepared to discuss your responses with the rest of the class. Your instructor will lead a group discussion using these questions as a guide.



## SCENARIO 1: FOUNDING THE RECYCLING COALITION

The State of Confusion has developed a statewide grant program designed to encourage its county-level solid waste management authorities (commonly called CWAs) to develop multi-county recycling ventures. The CWAs are established as county-level agencies by the State Legislature. Their mandate is to properly manage solid waste (trash, recycling, and composting). Within this mandate the authorities may provide services as they see fit: contracting with private firms for services, providing the services themselves, or contracting with other government agencies via interlocal cooperative agreements to provide the services. The CWAs are given local taxing authority to fund programs or they can legally provide services on a fee-for-service basis.

### Who Are the Stakeholders?

A group of four adjoining CWAs in the Northern part of the state are considering working cooperatively and applying for the new recycling grant. To tackle this problem they decide to create a coalition. The goal of the coalition will initially be to study the problem and brainstorm solutions. A longer term goal for the coalition is to create a collaborative management recycling initiative. That is, the network itself would organize in such a way that it could operate a recycling collection program eligible for State grant funding. The four have enlisted the assistance of a private waste collecting company and an environmental engineering consulting firm as additional stakeholders toward the goal of expanding their knowledge base on the topic. The table below provides further information on all of these players in the coalition. In the first column, the formal name of each player is listed. The second column lists the assets each player brings to the coalition, their existing relationships, and their vision for the coalition. The third column details each player's interest in participating in the coalition. The final column identifies the network connections that each player has to others.

Read through the table below and using the information provided, put together a visual of this coalition (using the "Connections" column to identify who is connected to whom).

### Introducing the Players

Players	Assets /Relationships / Network Vision	Interests	Connections
Strong County Waste Authority (CWA) (a local government agency)	Solid source of tax-based funding, 5 years experience operating a recycling collection facility, and an existing relationship with the private waste hauler. Strong CWA has offered to be a "collection hub" for materials collected by the cooperative. <i>Strong County CWA envisions itself as the center of the network. Initially sharing their vast knowledge; eventually operating as a recycling collection hub for the smaller and weaker CWA surrounding them.</i>	Providing services to surrounds SWAs to fund further growth of their own program. Wants to be viewed as a leader, innovator, and a key central node.	Private Waste Hauler; Whitman CWA; Wyracuse CWA; Environmental Engineering Consulting Firm
Whitman CWA (a local government agency)	Existing cooperative recycling program via an interlocal governmental agreement with Strong CWA. This has worked successfully for three years. Beyond this, limited funding, limited staff time, and limited knowledge. <i>Whitman envisions a similar cooperative could work successfully for Waldo and Wyracuse.</i>	Delivering recycling services at the lowest cost possible.	Strong CWA

<b>Players</b>	<b>Assets /Relationships / Network Vision</b>	<b>Interests</b>	<b>Connections</b>
Waldo CWA (a local government agency)	Existing private recycling collection contract with the private waste hauler. This has worked successfully for a year. Beyond this, limited funding, limited staff time, and limited knowledge. <i>Both Waldo and the private waste hauler view this as a successful model and the network could replicate this relationship.</i>	Meeting state mandate at the lowest cost possible.	Private Waste Connections
Wyracuse CWA (a local government agency)	The Environmental Engineering Firm [see below] has offices around the state; they have a contract with Wyracuse CWA to house one of their field offices in Wyracuse County. This CWA is negotiating a contract with Strong CWA for a collection drop-off. At this time Wyracuse has no recycling program, limited funding, limited staff time, and limited knowledge. <i>They have no idea how to tackle the state's recycling mandate and are turning to the cooperative for ideas.</i>	Meeting state mandate at the lowest cost possible.	Strong CWA; Environmental Engineering Consulting Firm
Environmental Engineering Consulting Firm (a private company)	A staff member with interest and expertise in recycling, significant access to knowledge in the area, clearly “seeking business” for firm but also willing to help. Currently, they also have a contract with Strong CWA for the engineering design of the collection drop off sites. <i>Beyond “seeking business” the firm has no preconceived notions relating to the cooperative.</i>	Business opportunity.	Wyracuse CWA; Strong CWA
Private Waste Collection Company (a private company)	A dedicated staff member for recycling services, significant access to knowledge in the area, clearly “seeking business” for firm but also willing to act as a central collection hub. <i>They do not share Strong CWA's vision as the central node. They feel as a private company they could better provide this service and operate as the central node.</i>	Business opportunity.	Strong CWA; Waldo CWA

**Once you have the network mapped out, using the details in the table above, answer the following discussion questions.**

- 1) Is the network “appropriately” connected?
- 2) Has the network cultivated important external relationships?
- 3) Are value-added collaborations occurring in the network?
- 4) Do underlying relationship qualities yield effective collaboration at the point of need?
- 5) Does organizational context support collaboration and momentum?

**[Stop reading here and complete the first four steps of the simulation now.]**

### **Step 5: Management Dilemma**

The Strong County SWA that had offered to be a regional hub has had a devastating fire at their landfill. They decide they must concentrate on “problems at home” and completely withdraw from the network—including cancelling their existing contract with Whitman CWA. *This withdrawal has implications for the network as a whole, but also each individual organization.*

Rebuild your network based on this new challenge. After you have mapped out this revised network, discuss the management dilemma questions below:

- 1) What happened to your network?
- 2) How is each organization affected by this new configuration?
- 3) What changes can you recommend to the collaborative to strengthen the network?
- 4) Do you believe all organizations will remain in the collaborative, given the changes presented in the *management challenge*, or will they decide to try to solve this dilemma on their own?

**SCENARIO 2:  
EMERSON COUNTY ADOPTS AN ILLEGAL OPEN BURNING ORDINANCE**

**Defining the Scenario** - The State of Confusion has mandated counties within the state to adopt ordinances that greatly restrict, or completely ban, outdoor burning. This law was enacted after many fires occurred across the state during the recent drought. Fall leaf burning has long been a tradition among many residents in the State of Confusion. However, the cost of the occasional fire that got out of control combined with health and environmental concerns have ultimately resulted in this ban. As a home rule state, however, the legislature has decided local county governments should ultimately decide the “how” toward the implementation of this ban.

**Who Are the Stakeholders?** – The Emerson County Commissioner has assembled representatives of what she considers to be the key stakeholders to develop an open burning ordinance. These key representatives are: the Health Department Commissioner, the local Fire Chief, the County Sheriff, a representative from the “Clean Air” citizens group, and a representative from the “Citizens for Hot Dog Roasts and Campfires.”

The table below provides further information on all of these players in the coalition. In the first column, the formal name of each player is listed. The second column lists the assets each player brings to the coalition, their existing relationships, and their vision for the coalition. The third column details each player’s interest in participating in the coalition. The final column identifies the network connections that each player has to others—note that sometimes a connection is not necessarily favorable or friendly. Read through the table below and using the information provided, put together a visual of this coalition (using the “Connections” column to identify who is connected to whom). Then answer the questions below.

**Introducing the Players**

<b>Players</b>	<b>Assets /Relationships / Network Vision</b>	<b>Interests</b>	<b>Connections</b>
County Commissioner	Commissioner has budget oversight for all the government agencies represented. Both citizens groups have both supporters and detractors of the County Commissioner. The County Commissioner appointed the Health Department Commissioner as the coalition’s leader. <i>The county commissioner feels the best way for her to save face over this contentious issue is if this committee can collaborate and reach a consensus based version of the final ordinance.</i>	Meeting state mandate while keeping local voters happy.	All



<b>Players</b>	<b>Assets /Relationships / Network Vision</b>	<b>Interests</b>	<b>Connections</b>
Health Department Commissioner	<p>The Health Commissioner has long felt this type of ordinance was needed because of damning public health studies regarding open burning, but there has never in the past been a political will for such an ordinance. The Health Department Commissioner has a long-standing relationship with the County Commissioner regarding other public health problems.</p> <p><i>Based on past interactions, views the “Citizens for Hot Dog Roasts and Campfires” as malcontents/nuts.</i></p>	Meeting state mandate and improving public health.	County Commissioner; Citizens for Hot Dog Roasting & Campfires; Clean Air Citizens Group
Local Fire Chief	<p>The Fire Chief has for years documented the cost of fire runs caused by this type of fire and has long felt this type of ordinance would be useful, but there has never in the past been a political will for such an ordinance. Based on this knowledge, the County Commissioner asked the Fire Chief to join the coalition.</p> <p><i>It is not a secret that many of the “Clean Air” Citizen Group members are also volunteer fire fighters.</i></p>	Preventing unnecessary fire runs.	County Commission; Clean Air Citizens Group; Sheriff
County Sheriff	<p>The County Sheriff is concerned this ordinance is needless bureaucracy that will hinder the “more important” law enforcement duties his deputies already conduct. As the only other elected official, the Sheriff is also very aware of the political implications of this ordinance. Like the county commissioner, he has supporters and detractors in the citizen groups.</p> <p><i>The Sheriff and County Commissioner have never been political allies. While they do disagree on this issue, the Local Fire Chief has been a long time political supporter of the Sheriff. These personal relationships temper the Sheriff’s approach to this committee.</i></p>	Minimizing enforcement requirements.	County Commission; Fire Chief; Citizens for Hot Dog Roasting & Campfires
“Clean Air” Citizens Group	<p>Vocal group of engaged voters. The representative has been hand-picked by the County Commissioner because of past working relationships.</p> <p><i>Beyond wanting an ordinance the representative has no preconceived committee notions.</i></p>	Stopping all burning.	County Commissioner; Fire Chief
“Citizens for Hot Dog Roasts and Campfires”	<p>Vocal group of engaged voters who at a minimum want cooking fires and campfires to be exempted—but they would really like to see leaf burning included too. The representative has been hand-picked by the County Commissioner because of past working relationships.</p> <p><i>Beyond wanting to ensure some forms of burning are still allowed the representative has no preconceived notions relating to the committee.</i></p>	Making sure limited forms of burning are still allowed.	County Commissioner; Sheriff; Health Commissioner

**Once you have the network mapped out, using the details in the table above, answer the following discussion questions.**

- 1) Is the network “appropriately” connected?
- 2) Has the network cultivated important external relationships?
- 3) Are value-added collaborations occurring in the network?
- 4) Do underlying relationship qualities yield effective collaboration at the point of need?
- 5) Does organizational context support collaboration and momentum?

**[Stop reading here and complete the first four steps of the simulation now.]**

### **Step 5: Management Dilemma**

The Emerson County Solid Waste Authority insists that if leaf burning is going to be banned than a composting program should be offered to local residents as an alternative. The County Commissioner concurs and agrees to add a representative from the solid waste authority to the committee. This representative currently has regular interactions with the county commissioner and the health department commissioner but no real interactions with the other agencies or citizen groups. *This unexpected addition has implications for the network as a whole, but also each individual organization. Rebuild the committee’s network based on this new addition. After you have mapped out this revised network, discuss the management dilemma below:*

- 1) What happened to your network?
- 2) How is each organization affected by this new configuration?
- 3) What changes can you recommend to the collaborative to strengthen the network?
- 4) Do you believe all organizations will remain in the collaborative, given the changes presented in the *management challenge*, or will they decide to try to solve this dilemma on their own?

## **SCENARIO 3: RED CLOUD AIRPORT WANTS A NEW RUNWAY**

### **Defining the Scenario**

Red Cloud, the state capital of the State of Confusion, has a growing population and an airport that has not kept pace with this growth. The airport authority wants to build an additional runway to meet current and future travel demands. Their current runway is old and both does not meet current levels of demand and also does not even meet current federal safety standards (it was “grandfathered in” at the old standard).

**Who Are the Stakeholders?** – Last year Red Cloud Airport completed an Environmental Impact Study regarding a new runway. However, before they could even announce their preferred alternative, surrounding land owners took the airport to court to prevent the expansion. The problem is the horse farms. Three horse farms surround the airport on three sides and all three are opposed to a new runway. The Federal Judge has appointed an arbitrator to see if an out-of-court settlement can be reached. In addition, the Federal Judge has granted Quick Freight a seat at the arbitration table. Quick Freight has a hub at the airport and sees the runway expansion as key to the future growth of their business.

The table below provides further information on all of these players in the arbitration. In the first column, the formal name of each player is listed. The second column lists the assets each player brings to the arbitration, their existing relationships, and their vision for the arbitration. The third column details each player’s interest in participating in the arbitration. The final column identifies the network connections that each player has to others.

Read through the table below and using the information provided, put together a visual of this coalition (using the “Connections” column to identify who is connected to whom). Then answer the questions below.

### Introducing the Players

<b>Players</b>	<b>Assets /Relationships / Network Vision</b>	<b>Interests</b>	<b>Connections</b>
Court Appointed Arbitrator	The Arbitrator has a mandate from the court and an unbiased relationship with each of the other actors. <i>Will work as hard as humanly possible to get these actors to collaborate with one another.</i>	A binding, out-of-court, settlement.	All
Red Cloud Airport	The airport authority sees their BATNA* as eminent domain to acquire the land required for the new runway, however they would prefer a settlement that does not require this drastic step. If not always friendly, the Airport certainly has ties with all actors in this arbitration. <i>Will work within reason with the other actors, but will go to court and proceed with eminent domain if the airport feels the others are not negotiating in good faith.</i>	A binding, out-of-court, settlement that includes a new runway.	All
Three Hills Horse Farm	The horse farm to the east of the airport. All the horse farms are connected through friendship ties. <i>Sees this arbitration as a “fight” and will go to court if the arbitration does not lead to a settlement to their satisfaction.</i>	A binding, out-of-court, settlement, but they will go to court if necessary.	Court Appointed Arbitrator; Red Cloud Airport; Horse Farms
Thunder Clap Horse Farm	The horse farm to the south of the airport. All the horse farms are connected through friendship ties. <i>Sees this arbitration as a “fight” and will go to court if the arbitration does not lead to a settlement to their satisfaction.</i>	A binding, out-of-court, settlement, but they will go to court if necessary.	Court Appointed Arbitrator; Red Cloud Airport; Horse Farms
Four Leaf Clover Horse Farm	The horse farm to the west of the airport. All the horse farms are connected through friendship ties. <i>Although they have not shared this with the other two horse farms, Four Leaf has already decided they will not “fight” the airport into the courts. Therefore they view this arbitration as the critical point where they can indeed influence the airport’s ultimate decision.</i>	A binding, out-of-court, settlement.	Court Appointed Arbitrator; Red Cloud Airport; Horse Farms

<b>Players</b>	<b>Assets /Relationships / Network Vision</b>	<b>Interests</b>	<b>Connections</b>
Quick Freight	Of all the actors, Quick Freight appears to have the deepest financial pockets yet ultimately they have no decision-making authority in this matter. <i>Wants the other actors to “get along” but is not viewed by the horse farms as an unbiased agent—seen as “on the side” of the airport.</i>	Business opportunity.	Court Appointed Arbitrator; Red Cloud Airport
BATNA: “Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement” (See Fisher, Ury, and Patton <i>Getting to Yes</i> for a further discussion.)			

**Once you have the network mapped out, using the details in the table above, answer the following discussion questions.**

- 1) Is the network “appropriately” connected?
- 2) Has the network cultivated important external relationships?
- 3) Are value-added collaborations occurring in the network?
- 4) Do underlying relationship qualities yield effective collaboration at the point of need?
- 5) Does organizational context support collaboration and momentum?

**[Stop reading here and complete the first four steps of the simulation now.]**

### **Step 5: Management Dilemma**

After a series of very poor business decisions, the stock price of Quick Freight tanks. The Board of Directors takes the drastic step of declaring Chapter 7 bankruptcy, liquidates the company, and closes its doors forever. In addition to this action withdrawing Quick Freight from the arbitration it has the additional consequence of dramatically altering Red Cloud Airports future demand projections. *This withdrawal has implications for the network as a whole, but also each individual organization. Rebuild your network based on this new challenge. After you have mapped out this revised network, discuss the management dilemma questions below:*

- 1) What happened to your network?
- 2) How is each organization affected by this new configuration?
- 3) What changes can you recommend to the collaborative to strengthen the network?
- 4) Do you believe all organizations will remain in the collaborative, given the changes presented in the *management challenge*, or will they decide to try to solve this dilemma on their own?

## **SCENARIO 4: RED CLOUD TACKLES HOMELESSNESS**

### **Defining the Scenario**

Red Cloud, the state capital of the State of Confusion, has decided it simple must further address the problem of homelessness. Clearly meeting the definition of a “wicked problem” the City of Red Cloud decides to approach the issue via collaboration rather than command-and-control. The City forms the Homelessness Prevention Task Force. While membership in the committee is open-ended (anyone interested may join) the Task Force has an Executive Committee made up of representatives from various groups.

**Who Are the Stakeholders?** - At this time the Executive Committee has six designated representatives: (1) The Mayor’s liaison, (2) The homeless shelters and soup kitchens liaison, (3) the faith-based community liaison, (4) the business community representative, (5) the Public

Health Commissioner, and (6) the drug and alcohol prevention representative. The table below provides further information on all of these players in the committee. In the first column, the formal name of each player is listed. The second column lists the assets each player brings to the committee, their existing relationships, and their vision for the committee. The third column details each player’s interest in participating in the committee. The final column identifies the network connections that each player has to others. Read through the table below and using the information provided, put together a visual of this committee (using the “Connections” column to identify who is connected to whom). Then answer the questions below.

**Introducing the Players**

<b>Players</b>	<b>Assets /Relationships / Network Vision</b>	<b>Interests</b>	<b>Connections</b>
Mayor’s Liaison	Has the backing of the mayor as a major asset and has existing relationships with all members of the task force. <i>While the de facto leader of the task force, the Mayor’s Liaison views his role as a facilitator among peers and works hard never to appear biased or leading the discussion in a particular direction. With that said he keeps the meetings running smoothly and maintains proper decorum.</i>	Reaching collaborative solutions	All members
Homeless Shelters and Soup Kitchens Liaison	High in sweat equity and low in financial endowment. This liaison represents the organizations with the most direct connection to the homeless community, but like the homeless themselves, these very agencies struggle for survival. <i>Envisions these organizations playing a central role in this network—both to better help the homeless and to better ensure the survival of these organizations.</i>	Helping the homeless via ensuring survival of this representative’s organizations—they are always struggling financially	Faith-Based Community Liaison; Mayor’s Liaison
Faith-based Community Liaison	Backing of member churches and extensive previous interaction with the homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and drug and alcohol prevention agencies. <i>This liaison envisions the faith-based organizations playing a central role in this network.</i>	Helping the homeless	Homeless Shelters & Soup Kitchens; Drug and Alcohol Prevention; Mayor’s Liaison
Business Community Representative	Willing to help but no real previous interaction with other members of the Executive Committee, only real “tie” is to the Mayor’s Liaison. <i>They have no idea how to tackle the problem and are turning to the task force for ideas.</i>	Helping the homeless	Mayor’s Liaison
Public Health Commissioner	The Health Department has a dedicated staff member for homelessness issues. Always approaches the problem from a health perspective. The Commissioner has an existing partnership with the Drug and Alcohol Prevention Representative. <i>No preconceived notions relating to the Task Force or the Executive Committee.</i>	Maximizing public health benefits	Drug and Alcohol Prevention; Mayor’s Liaison

<b>Players</b>	<b>Assets /Relationships / Network Vision</b>	<b>Interests</b>	<b>Connections</b>
Drug and Alcohol Prevention Representative	This program has a dedicated staff member for homelessness issues. <i>This representative does not share the faith-based representative's vision as the central node. They instead feel the Homeless Shelters and Soup Kitchens are the best able to fill this role as central node and that these organizations represent the best "honest broker" of the group.</i>	Preventing homelessness, alcoholism, and drug abuse.	Public Health Commission; Mayor's Liaison

**Once you have the network mapped out, using the details in the table above, answer the following discussion questions.**

- 1) Is the network "appropriately" connected?
- 2) Has the network cultivated important external relationships?
- 3) Are value-added collaborations occurring in the network?
- 4) Do underlying relationship qualities yield effective collaboration at the point of need?
- 5) Does organizational context support collaboration and momentum?

**[Stop reading here and complete the first four steps of the simulation now.]**

### **Step 5: Management Dilemma**

Advocates for the homeless have been giving the new Homelessness Prevention Task Force's Executive Committee a black eye in the press. They claim the Task Force is "condescending and patronizing" because the Executive Committee does not itself have a member of the homeless community represented. The Mayor puts her foot down on the matter and promptly announces the additions of a "Homeless Liaison" to the Executive Committee. The person named is a formerly homeless man who used to be a soup kitchen and homeless shelter "regular". With help from the Drug and Alcohol Prevention agency he has recently gotten off drugs, gotten a job, and now has a one-bedroom apartment to call home. *This unexpected addition has implications for the network as a whole, but also each individual organization. Rebuild the task force's executive committee network based on this new addition. After you have mapped out this revised network, discuss the management dilemma questions below:*

- 1) What happened to your network?
- 2) How is each organization affected by this new configuration?
- 3) What changes can you recommend to the collaborative to strengthen the network?
- 4) Do you believe all organizations will remain in the collaborative, given the changes presented in the *management challenge*, or will they decide to try to solve this dilemma on their own?



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