

Collaborating on Collaboration

Co-Presenters:

Deanna McMurray and Jyoti Razdan



Collaboration – Best DNA to achieve mission

Mission – To grow a healthy plant

You, the seed, soil, water, sunlight collaborate

Mission – Raise a Child to be a successful adult

You, your partner, your child, teachers, coaches collaborate

Mission – Our mission is to provide information technology leadership, services and innovative solutions to promote the research, education and community service goals of the university

You, your team, other OIT Teams, client, management collaborate

Why did I choose this value of Collaboration?

- As part of commodity Team, recognize need other Team's collaboration and efforts to reach our goals.
- My past history has shown me that to be successful, a project usually requires input of many teams and many perspectives. No one person knows it all!
- Collaboration is not the actual goal but is a means to achieve a goal.
- More difficult and takes longer than planning in isolation but results can be more successful, sustainable, and even fun!
- Collaborative Teams need to learn skills and strategies for reaching group decision so no one feels like a “winner” or a “loser” and so everyone's voice is heard.
- If done right, enthusiasm for achieving project goals builds over time.

Collaboration: Case Study for Admissions and DBA

- Mission Critical MySQL Database Servers—required upgrade and migration to new VM servers with more resources and addition of database mirroring to Central Plant VMs for data preservation.
- Part of larger ESMS Resiliency and Recovery Project (PRJxxxxxx)
- Strict Timeline as Admissions production database servers can only have downtime on weekends during July and August.
- Collaboration included Admissions, PMO, DBA, Data Center, EUS, Network, Security, and Disaster Recovery team members.
- PMO added value by leading extensive in-depth planning beginning in Spring setting target dates
- Project included test migration strategy both in-place and side-by-side to determine which would work most effectively, have the lowest risk and have the least downtime. Another collaboration point.
- Side-by-Side migrations were the strategy chosen for one dev and all four production admissions database servers as it significantly lowered the risk if something went wrong and provided fallback pathway.

Collaboration Case Study for Admissions: It's Showtime!

- EUS and Data Center helped create new servers and DBA Team installed MySQL and configured monitoring/alerting. Collaborated on sizing for optimal performance.
- Extensive testing involved DBA and Admissions Teams before and during migrations and Admissions coordinated downtime with their business users.
- Migration of largest dev server was completed as a proof of concept for steps to migrate production and to determine downtime required for prod
- Migration Day: Admissions setup MS Teams Group to facilitate communication for production migrations and to give real-time feedback on results of each step. Participants included: Admissions, DBA, EUS, DCI, Network
- Migration was completed successfully over 4 weekends for production database servers with no unexpected downtime
- Required coordination during migration of Network Teams and EUS for DNS changes and changes were made by Data Center Team to VM hostnames
- Database Resiliency (mirroring) testing was completed on 9/22.

Collaboration Case Study for Admissions: Benefits

- Latest security patches installed on both OS and database software
- Improved database mirroring on MySQL 8 and better alerting in place.
- Database mirroring gives data preservation if loss of servers in OITDC occurs (due to fire/flood or ?) and reduces data loss to less than 1-2 minutes from up 24 hrs
- Daily backups for Admissions database servers are running from Central Plant servers and removes load from primary server, resulting in improved performance.
- Lessons learned: Provide more frequent check-ins with other teams during migration activities to adjust timeline if finish steps earlier than expected. Parallel export was used to expedite the completion of the database exports/imports, resulted in completion of migration before expected time.
- Thanks to all OIT Teams involved for a very successful project!

Zoom Poll

**1. What do you think are your biggest barriers to collaboration?
Select one or more (Multiple choice)**

- Lack of Time
- Different Mindsets
- Knowledge Deficits
- Lack of alignment around goals
- Organizational Silos/Information Hoarding
- Lack of Trust
- None- I don't see any barrier to collaboration

Barriers and Enablers

❖Lack of Time

- ❖ Use of software development tools that support collaboration – low code, Agile
- ❖ Use of cloud technologies like Google Drive, Smart Sheets, PowerApps

❖Lack of alignment around goals

- ❖ Project Charter – Sponsors and Stakeholders on same page
- ❖ “You can’t mandate what matters” - Shared understanding and shared Vision

❖Different Mindsets – Over-customization versus sustainable code

- ❖ Add a section for IT Sustainability in the Requirements Document
- ❖ Add a section in the Project Charter

❖Knowledge Deficit

- ❖ Webinars, Techno Expo, Udemy

❖Physical Separation

- ❖ Teams, Zoom, Slack

❖Lack of Trust – age, race, gender, ethnicity differences

- ❖ Transparency, social events, trainings like on Implicit Bias

FINAL ENABLER

It is the **emotional connection** to the mission that ultimately gives happiness and purpose to all that we do and helps break the barriers



COLLABORATION

We work well as a team, effectively communicating and interacting with stakeholders and other groups inside and outside OIT toward productive outcomes.

DO

- Be present and focused
- Communicate clearly and consistently
- Involve key stakeholders early in the process
- Clarify roles and expectations
- Keep an open mind when hearing a different perspective
- Maximize mutual benefit (win/win)

DON'T

- Allow conflict to fester
- Propagate destructive messages
- Impose your decision or solution on others

References

Home Depot and Zappos

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AYVUDw_DMKE

Hype Cycle for Unified Communications and Collaboration 2020

<https://www.gartner.com/document/3988316?ref=TypeAheadSearch>

Effective collaboration techniques

<https://www.slideserve.com/desmond/effective-collaborative-leadership-and-teaming-strategies-barbara-j-smith-ph-d-university-of-colorado-denver-septe>

Contact Us

We would love to hear back from you !!
Please send comments and questions to:

Deanna McMurray – dlmcmurr@uci.edu

Jyoti Razdan – jrazdan@uci.edu

For general questions and comments on culture send
email to:

OIT Culture Workgroup - oitculture-workgroup@uci.edu

Thank you