Leading by Convening
Coalescing Around Issues

Four Simple Questions

Persistent problems of implementation remain challenging because they require crossing many boundaries to ensure progress in practice. Issues are complex, interconnected and can look different from the perspective of various implementers.

In these situations, we encourage leaders to use four simple questions.

Four Simple Questions (continued)

1. Who cares about this issue and why?

Answering this question permits leaders to think beyond their personal and/or professional role to develop a big picture of the issue in practice.

Who cares? [List by role, organization, position, name, etc.]	Why do they care? [Note their connection to the issue.]

Continued

Four Simple Questions (continued)

2. What work is already underway separately?

Recognizing the work of others is critical to developing allies. Respecting the history that others have on an issue is critical to engagement.

Organization or Group [Note name of organization or group.]	Initiative, Location, Document or Tool [Note title of initiative, location, document or tool.]	Unique Vocabulary or Difference in Perspective [Note any unique identifiers relative to this group.]	Value to Our Common Interest [Note value this group brings to the table.]

Continued

idea PARTNERSHIP

Four Simple Questions (continued)

3. What shared work could unite us?

Relationship building takes time! Shared activities make a start and lead to bigger opportunities.

Activities that Might Have Value [Select from below and/or add others.]	For All Groups?	If Not for All Groups, List Specific Groups
Defining a Shared Problem		
Information Exchanges		
Productive Inquiries		
Joint Events		
Mapping Resources		
Developing Shared Messages		
Other (Specify)		

Continued

Four Simple Questions (continued)

4. How can we deepen our connections?

A single outreach won't yield much when we want to change practice; interactions must be ongoing. *Remember*: If a group is important to our outcomes it isn't any less important because it doesn't accept our invitations. Keep inviting!

Group [List identified groups.]	How can we support and connect to this group's work on this issue? [Note activity(ies) most likely to be effective.]	How can this group support and connect to our work on this issue? [Note activity(ies) most likely to be effective.]