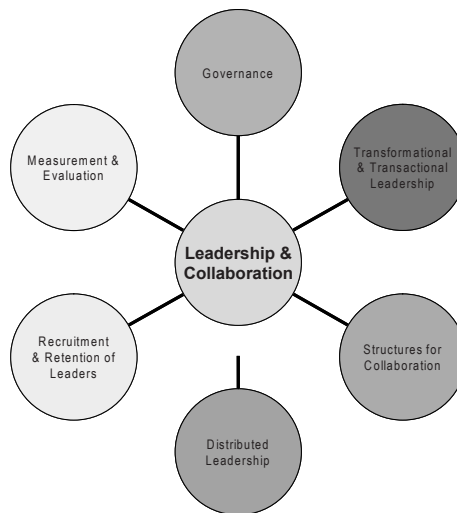


Chapter IX

Leadership and Collaboration



“While leadership is essential, the creation of an Intelligent Community is never a solo performance. Every successful one has been the result of a cross-fertilization among business, academia and government, usually beginning with informal partnerships that evolved into specific projects, programs or organisations. There is a clear opportunity for government to start and foster this cross-fertilization through persistent and consistent effort.” (ICF, 2007)

Overview: This chapter discusses several basic elements of leadership and collaboration in building networked communities. It includes:

- The context for collaborating, that is, the new economy imperative of digital competition;

- The continuum of goals in networked communities—from simple communication objectives to more complex economic development objectives;
- The structures needed to encourage the widest community collaboration;
- The leaders that are needed within organisations and across industries;
- The leadership style adapted to the formation and performance phases of networks;
- The recruitment and retention of leaders;
- Evaluation of the leadership and collaborative environment of the networked community.

ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE FOR COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP

The transformational change that networked communities envision employs the Internet to create innovations, and attract social and economic development. The idea is to make digital usage and Internet connectivity so pervasive that the constant development of products and services will become the normal state of affairs.

Leadership, project management and collaboration were found to be critical by Industry Canada (2003) and by ICF (2007) in the development of intelligent communities. To develop the broadband infrastructure and the complementary innovations and applications, the collaboration of many individuals and organisations takes place in support of a common vision.

Because communities and regions are aware of the competitive advantage of connecting to broadband telecommunications, they generate demand for faster high-speed digital networks. At this early phase, strong leadership is needed to recognise internal and external trends that will affect the future of the community, and to build the collaborative environment needed to ensure a sustainable infrastructure. The networked community is a top-down and bottom-up approach that starts with a commitment to use ICT in each organisation, business and home within the community, and expands by building ICT networks that will promote growth, efficiency and quality of life. Leaders must come from many sectors within the community to create both supply and demand of broadband capability. Each sector will have its unique challenges best resolved by leaders who understand its environment, and each organisation will have its own political setting that calls for individuals with the power to convince stakeholders to take action. Each community will have opinion leaders, transformational leaders, charismatic leaders and influential individuals who can help make or break a project.

Communities that come together open the door to improved resource management, creating an environment of trust and collaboration that allows local organisa-

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