



## DEFINITION

**Structure** describes (1) how the task force members are organized into leadership, membership, and working groups; and (2) how the task force configures its processes. A well-defined structure can maximize collaborative efforts, create stability, and facilitate coordination ([Roadmap](#), p. 17).

A **well-defined** structure...

- Is created based in part on need; form committees based on need
- Is based on shared vision/guiding principles, not to supersede the agency's internal policies
- Includes and sets clear expectations for participation
- Documents processes, including meetings, attendance, and membership

The **basic components** of structure are...

- Mission, vision, goals, and objectives statements
- Defined roles and responsibilities, including leadership, membership, and substructure (e.g., division of labor into committees, work groups)
- Key supports such as memoranda of understanding; regular meetings; and written policies, procedures, and protocols

## CHALLENGES

**There will always be challenges.** *This section lists predictable challenges for task force structure.*

### ESTABLISHING STRUCTURE

#### Getting Buy-In on Developing Structure/Processes:

- Facing resistance to establishing structure and/or changing existing structure
- Being territorial
- Finding the right balance of formal versus informal

#### Developing True Co-Leadership/Inclusive Structure and Substructure:

- Ensuring a balance of influence across partners in establishing structure/processes
- Ensuring decision-making equity
- Having a meaningful understanding of each other's roles

### MAINTAINING STRUCTURE

- Engaging and empowering members to be active participants with and within the setup
- Integrating the different fields and interests of members into a functional setup
- Avoiding undermining the structure
- Developing accountability and course correction when the structure is undermined

### EVOLVING STRUCTURE

- Growing and onboarding beyond the core leadership team
- Reconnecting after staff transition
- Allowing the purpose and goals to evolve
- Establishing sustainability in the face of constant change; ***a task force structure is constantly evolving***

### TROUBLESHOOTING STRUCTURE

- Developing a cohesive culture
- Managing personality conflicts
- Avoiding one person taking on too much (e.g., the temptation to just "do it yourself")
- Managing the ebb/flow of committee work
- Managing people who disregard the established structure

# BENEFITS

*A well-defined structure provides clarity on how task force work should occur and be organized.*

## BOLSTERS & AFFIRMS IDENTITY & A SHARED VISION

Structure **provides** reference points that...

- Document processes
- Create accountability/legitimacy
- Make directions clear when questions arise
- Enable consistency for staying on track and resolving challenges

## ENABLES ADOPTION/ ADAPTATION OF BEST PRACTICES

Structure **facilitates** collaboration and partnerships by...

- Outlining a process for participation and collaboration
- Making expectations clear
- Supporting specialization at the local level
- Providing a central hub for information sharing

# CONSIDERATIONS

*These questions are designed to help facilitate conversations about the growth and establishment of a task force structure throughout the development process. All task forces are different and develop at different paces, so some questions may or may not be relevant to a task force at any given time.*

## PURPOSE

1. What is the goal/purpose of this group/effort (e.g., task force, committee, meeting, protocol)?
  - a) What does the group want to accomplish?
  - b) What do members want to get out of this?
  - c) How does this serve the objectives, goals, and mission of the task force?

## STAKEHOLDERS AND MEMBERS

2. Who are the key stakeholders and members?
  - a) What is their role in general?
  - b) What is their role within the structure?
  - c) What are their strengths? Contributions?
  - d) What are their limits/boundaries (e.g., professional, ethical, agency, resources)?

## EXPECTATIONS

3. What are the expectations for involvement?
  - a) What is everyone's availability and commitment?
  - b) What are the limits and boundaries on their participation?

## LEADERSHIP

4. How is leadership, membership, and participation decided?
5. What are the parameters of holding a leadership role (e.g., authority, limits, required commitments)?

## GROWTH

6. How will the task force manage growth?
  - a) How do people/agencies become members?
  - b) How will new members be onboarded?
  - c) How will the task force ensure that its structure adapts to changing needs?

## CHALLENGES

7. How will the task force overcome challenges?
  - a) How will the task force hold stakeholders accountable to their commitments within the task force?
  - b) How will the task force mitigate undermining of the structure?