



essential[®]
PARTNERS

5 STAGES OF CULTURE CHANGE

WORKING WITH ESSENTIAL PARTNERS





Our goal is to help you embed the skills of constructive dialogue into the fabric of your culture.

Collaborations with Essential Partners that are intended to change the culture of an organization or community can take a significant amount of time. Key stakeholders may receive multiple training sessions over the course of months or years, depending on the particular challenges and goals. Along the way, a collaboration with EP will be integrated into your everyday life and/or work so these newly-gained skills and tools can have an immediate positive impact.



STAGE 1

Planning and Preparation

We customize each project to meet the specific needs, goals, and cultures of each partner. Collaborating with stakeholders from across an organization or community, we map out what's working and what isn't. We identify strengths and sticky spots, points of contention and growth edges, as well as short- and long-term goals.

DELIVERABLES

Leadership interviews

Focus groups and surveys

Stakeholder and systems mapping

Exploratory dialogues

Report with themes and recommendations



STAGE 2

Stakeholder Training and Skill-Building

We develop the communication skills of all the relevant stakeholders.

This might include C-suite executives and employees, teachers and students, civic leaders and residents. By empowering this broad cross-section, we foster relational dynamics grounded in belonging, creativity, curiosity, and collaboration—leading to a sustained transformation in the larger culture.

DELIVERABLES

In-person and virtual training

Small-group webinars

One-on-one leadership coaching

Affinity groups and peer learning



STAGE 3

Customized Intervention Design

To shift the communication patterns in your organization, school, or community, we need to interrupt the systems, processes, and interpersonal dynamics at play. Drawing from what we learned in our collaborative planning and mapping, we design interventions, trainings, new communication norms, meeting structures, and decision-making processes that will disrupt and replace patterns that aren't working.

DELIVERABLES

- Interventions to address acute challenges or dysfunctions
- Intentional, co-created norms, processes, and meeting designs
- Working groups and leadership conversations
- Facilitated planning sessions



STAGE 4

Sustainability and Long-Term Impact

Sustainability is the goal of all our collaborations. To embed our trademark skills and tools into the heart of your culture, we provide additional, in-depth training to a core group of stakeholders so they can design future engagements, facilitate tough conversations, and incorporate the values of dialogue into your whole culture.

DELIVERABLES

- Develop a small team to lead in-house trainings
- Model dialogue programs and scripts
- Small-group and individual coaching
- Co-designed stakeholder engagement programs



STAGE 5

Your Essential Partners

A collaboration with EP gains lifetime access to our global Community of Practice for your community, organization, or school, and for all training participants. Through out Community of Practice, we offer skill-building, peer learning, and coaching opportunities as well as thought partnership around new initiatives, retreats, and strategic planning processes.

DELIVERABLES

- Office hours, coaching, and consultation
- Peer learning opportunities
- Resources, scripts, and guides
- Webinars and asynchronous skill-building



Take the First Step

If your school, company, community, foundation, or nonprofit is ready to implement real, tangible change to its organizational culture, contact us today for a free phone consultation.

[WHATISESSENTIAL.ORG/CONSULTATION](https://www.whatisessential.org/consultation)

Selected Partners

Corporations & Nonprofits

Christian Science Monitor
Cortico / MIT Media Lab
Facebook
The Food Project
Gannett Company, Inc
John Hope Franklin Center
Lahey Behavioral Health Clinic
Museum of Science, Boston
On Being
Roundabout Theater Company
StoryCorps
Union of Concerned Scientists
Western NC Health Network
Winthrop Rockefeller Institute

Foundations

Charles Koch Institute
Colburn Foundation
Fieldstone Foundation
The Poynter Institute
Rockefeller Brothers Foundation
The Wexner Foundation

Colleges & Universities

University of Arkansas
Boston College
Bridgewater College (VA)
Brown University
College of the Holy Cross
University of Colorado, Boulder
Hartford Seminary
Harvard University
Heterodox Academy
Illinois College
Miami Dade Community College
Middlebury College
North Central College (IL)
Providence College
Rutgers University
University of Sarajevo
University of Scranton
Shenandoah University
Southern Methodist University
Tufts University
Valdosta State University (GA)

Secondary Schools

Cary Academy (NC)
The Carrol School (MA)
Cody High School (WY)
Gloucester High School (MA)
King School (CT)
Lawrence Academy (MA)
Newburyport High School (MA)

Civic & Municipal

Benjamin Franklin Circles
City of Boston, MA
Braver Angels
City of Cambridge, MA
Edward M. Kennedy Institute
Fresno County, CA
League of Women Voters
Mediators Without Borders
City of Plano, Texas
United Nations
U.S. Dept. of Health
& Human Services
Winchester Multicultural Network

Essential Partners' training should be mandatory in every legislature.
I think it should be a requirement.

VERONIQUE CAVAILLIER, COUNCIL OF STATE LEGISLATURES

Dialogue gets more results. It makes decision-making easier. It makes creating participation easier ... our greatest organizational impact has been more contributions as well as more effective and efficient meetings.

BETH MENDOZA, MORAIN PARK TECHNICAL COLLEGE

When there's an element of conflict, oftentimes we gravitate toward debate as a way of contending toward some decision or outcome. Dialogue is a much different proposition. The emphasis of dialogue is in understanding the other person's perspective, making sure they have the opportunity to feel heard.

LUKE ZUBROD, CHATHAM FINANCIAL

The learning we received from Essential Partners has helped us open up space for people to have difficult conversations in a different way. The more we do this, the more we realize that dialogue has to be a part of all our work.

JANET HARRIS, WINTHROP ROCKEFELLER INSTITUTE



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OUR MISSION & VISION

Founded in 1989, Essential Partners is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that equips people to live and work better together in community by building trust and understanding across differences. We envision a world of thriving communities strengthened by difference, connected by trust.

WHATISESSENTIAL.ORG