



Forming “Smart” Teams

Team building for a “Smart” Team isn’t really different than building any other type of project team. Turning a group of individuals with their own agendas and goals into a strong and organized group working towards the common goal of building a Smart Community is the most important part of creating a Smart Team. Your team should follow a few simple rules:

1. Have a very clear goal

This may seem obvious, but all team members must understand and buy in to the overall goal. Each team member is likely to have his or her own personal and corporate reasons for being part of the team. The goal of a Smart Team has to be community-driven and benefit all team members, directly or indirectly, with the overarching outcome of building a Smart Community.

2. Get the correct people

Again, this appears obvious, but is not always easy to do. Team members should not only be technically competent but also have the necessary skills to work well with a diverse group of people from both the public and private sectors, as well as people with different areas of expertise. Don’t forget team members will need to present findings and conclusions and gain consensus from community officials and the general public. Decision makers and those able to commit resources to implementation and operations are highly desired, as is a champion to keep the team moving.

3. Distribute the roles and responsibilities

As soon as the team is formed, the responsibilities of each team member should be assigned and clarified. Having team members perform outside of their area of expertise is not realistic nor helpful to the team. Having team members who do not perform is not an option. If a team member is unable or unwilling to perform, let them go.

4. Communication is key

The effectiveness of the team is dependent on consistent and continuous communication. The team should be interconnected and aware of any changes in technology, data, data management, systems, procedures, etc. The ability of the team to understand and communicate information between members and their respective organizations enables them to work together collaboratively.

5. Team change

Remember, over time members will rotate in and out of the team depending on the development stage of the Smart Community. As projects are implemented and technology evolves, so should the team. At different times during this journey of becoming a Smart Community, different skill sets and different team members will be needed to make the community smart.

How ITE Can Help

The first step for ITE members is to join the Smart Communities page on ITE Community: <http://bit.ly/2zooOMm>. Additionally, members with experience or insight into transportation and forming Smart Teams can play a role in furthering the conversation on this topic and volunteering to help develop resources for your peers.

If you have questions or would like more information on the ITE Smart Communities initiative, please contact the ITE Smart Communities Task Force (SCoTF) at smartcommunities@ite.org.