How to Build a Change Team

In recruiting/selecting members consider such criteria as:

- Diversity in rank, role, sub-discipline and demographic characteristics
- Knowledge about local issues and people
- Skill in working with others
- Commitment to the change effort
  ...this is not the time/place to include any opposition
  ...but it is the time/place for diverse views about how to proceed
- Reputation and respect from colleagues
  ...as fair-minded and smart
  ...as caring about the unit and the people
  ...as not working from narrow self-interest or personal grudges
  ...and thereby as having access to and influence with varied colleagues
- Linkage to local centers of power and influence (e.g., Chairs, Key players, Deans)
- Available time and energy
- And tradeoffs that may have to be made among these multiple criteria

In developing the change team as a “team”:

- Share excitement about what might be possible
- Generate and gain commitment to a shared vision
  ...but perhaps with different notions of projects and strategies
- Encourage open exchange about the personal and organizational resources each member brings to the effort
- Encourage open exchange about the personal and career risks/vulnerabilities that work on the change effort may create for each member (barriers)
- Establish guidelines about the confidentiality of team discussions as well as transparency with colleagues
- Establish agreements about team leadership
  ...who, degree of sharing/rotation
  ...how decisions will be made
- Discuss who will do what tasks, when and with what forms of accountability
  ...with timelines for completion of varied tasks
- Attend to how team members relate and work with one another and approach tasks and action steps
  ...check “group dynamics”
  ...including race/ethnic and gender dynamics
- Watch for signs of overload, fatigue and exhaustion
- Take time to relax and play/have fun with one another
  ...recognize and respond to the emotional realities of change work
- Think about whether you need additional/different change team members