

Finding Common Ground Playbook

A one-page guide for advancing public health modernization and interoperability work

 Play 1: Purpose and Scope	 Play 2: Roles and Responsibilities	 Play 3: Communication
Overview: When group work stalls, it's often because teams are solving different problems without realizing it. This play anchors everyone in a shared purpose and defined scope.	Overview: Unclear roles create friction, slow progress, and erode trust. This play helps teams surface assumptions and establish clear ownership.	Overview: All teams struggle without purposeful communication. This play focuses on how teams stay connected, surface issues early, and maintain trust over time.
Questions to align on: - What is our shared goal? - How does this advance modernization and interoperability? - What problem are we solving now? - What is in scope and out of scope? - How will we define and measure success?	Questions to align on: - Do we have the right people at the table? - Who owns decisions, deliverables, and dependencies? - Where do roles overlap or leave gaps? - How do policy, technical, and operational roles align? - How will the team use AI to streamline work?	Questions to align on: - What needs to be shared, with whom, and how often? - How will we raise risks and concerns early? - How do we keep technical and non-technical perspectives aligned? - What channels and norms will we use?
Common challenges this play addresses: - Competing priorities or definitions of “success” - Misaligned expectations about outcomes or timelines - Scope creep that dilutes focus	Common challenges this play addresses: - Unclear decision authority and ownership across functions - Duplication of effort across teams and workflows - Gaps and breakdowns in handoffs between roles	Common challenges this play addresses: - Information silos across teams - Misinterpretation of technical or policy constraints - Unspoken assumptions that create tension - Misunderstanding of intent
Practical strategies: - Define a brief and memorable shared purpose everyone can repeat - Clarify in-scope and out-of-scope work early and revisit often - Connect this effort to broader modernization goals - Define project norms and expectations for team members to meaningfully contribute	Practical strategies: - Define decision-makers, contributors, and advisors clearly - Map dependencies across teams and organizations - Revisit roles and responsibilities as the work evolves - Understand work styles and approaches to help the project team customize communication and be inclusive.	Practical strategies: - Establish regular touchpoints focused on alignment, not just status - Use plain language across policy, technical, and operational teams - Surface and revisit areas of tension early and often - Focus on level and type of information needed per audience - Practice meeting hygiene – scheduling, advanced agenda notice, follow-up
Toolkit: Project Charter, Project Plan and Schedule, Logic Model, Requirements Matrix	Toolkit: Responsibilities Matrix (RACI), CRM tools (Salesforce), Ticketing and task tracking systems (Jira, Trello)	Toolkit: Shared repositories (SharePoint, Confluence, Box), Decision Log, Risk Register, Generative AI to support meeting notes and action-item identification and assignment
Outcome: A shared foundation that keeps teams aligned when decisions get tough.	Outcome: Faster decisions, clearer accountability, and fewer surprises.	Outcome: Stronger trust, fewer misunderstandings, and sustained momentum.

When coordination breaks down, pause and revisit the shared purpose. Remember, you are working on this project for a reason – to advance the health of your populations and support your staff in their public health work. For additional information or for assistance applying this playbook to your work, please contact us at ainq.com.

