



Strategically Strengthen How We Work Together

A Four-Part Training Series to Level Up Our Collective Work

The Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) is a complex network, engaging many agencies and partners to advance shared goals. Much like a networked forest, to thrive we must nourish communication pathways, share knowledge, and leverage resources. To increase the resiliency and responsiveness of the CBP, we're offering a four-part training series, open to anyone in the partnership, designed to:

- 1.) Build a common understanding of network theory and network leadership skills, practices and processes;
- 2.) Increase awareness, connection, engagement, and coordination across the Partnership;
- 3.) Boost Partnership efficiency and impact as we embark on implementing our vision beyond 2025.

To that end, participants will cultivate their own network leadership mindset and skills as we collectively analyze the CBP network and the critical connections, practices, and tools that can support us as we evolve.

Rooted in network theory and built for action, each session offers 1.) network theory/research and/or a case study, 2.) opportunities to connect, share stories, and learn from each other, 3.) opportunities to analyze the CBP network and try on solutions, 4.) practical tools, processes and practices, and 5.) fun and engaging group experiences! Each session will be recorded, documented, synthesized, and creatively packaged into a Playbook to support integration and implementation.

STRATEGICALLY STRENGTHEN is co-facilitated by Christy Gabbard and Sonia Keiner of Local Concepts LLC, who have network building experience with both the CBP Stewardship Workgroup and the Environmental Literacy Workgroup.

Additionally, Local Concepts will provide technical assistance for 3-5 groups as a supplement to the *Strategically Strengthen How We Work Together* training series. Technical assistance will offer more time for one-on-one consultation and coaching with smaller groups that are ready to take their training to the next level. For these sessions, we will take a deeper dive into network leadership, engagement, coordination, decision-making, and evaluation. We will also address emergent needs of each group.

Session Descriptions¹

REGISTER HERE: <http://bit.ly/4kdQQNd>

Session 1: Know the Network: Introduction to Networks and Our CBP Network Ecosystem

This module grounds participants in introductory network theory and the mindset shifts that cultivate a network approach to the Partnership. A case study will help participants envision how a network approach is already being used within the Partnership and their shifts, challenges, benefits, and outcomes over their five-year evolution. Participants will also locate themselves in a CBP system map and become more aware of the innovations and evolutions that are already happening in the partnership to enhance operations, efficacy and impact, as well as the potential gaps that might require bridging.

- Participants will walk away with:
 - A shared understanding of introductory concepts in network theory and the mindset shifts that support a network approach and construct.
 - A case study of a thriving network.
 - An understanding of how we use maps in social network analysis and an introduction to a CBP network map.
 - Stories and innovations across the CBP network.

Session 2: Weave The Network: Moving Towards Deeper Coordination and Communication (Part 1)

Because relationships are the crux of a thriving collaborative, this module centers participants in developing skills to increase trust among fellow CBP network members. Fostering trusting relationships ensures deeper connections that increase coordination and communication and ultimately ensure successful achievement of network goals. A “Critical Shifts” group analysis activity will help us to pinpoint critical connections, as well as potential shifts and interventions that support deeper connectivity, coordination and impact.

- Participants will walk away with:
 - A shared understanding of the anatomy of trust and practices for cultivating and repairing trust.
 - An understanding of why building trusting relationships is imperative to network success.
 - A group analysis of the critical connections, critical shifts, and potential interventions that could support deeper connectivity and CBP impact.

¹ Sessions may be adapted to address emergent needs of participants.

Session 3: Weave The Network: Moving Towards Deeper Coordination and Communication (Part 2)

This module will focus on generating engagement and participation through intentional network weaving and participatory processes. We will continue to explore the critical shifts and interventions that were uncovered during the last session, focusing on the priorities, gaps, and opportunities that are emerging to support more effective communication, connection and coordination.

- Participants will walk away with:
 - An understanding of the levels of engagement in networks and the conditions necessary for authentic engagement.
 - An understanding of priorities, gaps and opportunities to bridge and engage based on our critical shifts group analysis.
 - Tools and participatory practices for weaving the network and increasing collaborative engagement.

Session 4: Activate Your Network Leadership: Implementation and Integration

This module will illuminate how network leadership is unique from organizational leadership and will engage participants in an activity where they analyze and share their own network leadership gifts and skills. We will review the CBP STRATEGICALLY STRENGTHEN Playbook, compiled along the way with session materials, links to tools and resources, and more. Participants will reflect, share updates and ideas, and celebrate.

- Participants will walk away with:
 - An understanding of unique characteristics of different types of leadership.
 - An understanding of how participants can continue to deepen connection and coordination across the CBP network.
 - A CBP Playbook of the series containing modules, learnings, findings and the strategies, tools and practices they are interested in continuing to experiment with, including those that might require further exploration and experimentation.