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# Inter-Organizational Collaborative Capacity: A Conceptual Model and Measurement Tool

Hocevar, Susan Page

Monterey, California. Naval Postgraduate School

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# Inter-Organizational Collaborative Capacity: A Conceptual Model and Measurement Tool

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Georgetown University

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## Definition of Collaborative Capacity:

“The ability of organizations to enter into, develop, and sustain inter-organizational systems in pursuit of collective outcomes.”

Hocevar, Thomas & Jansen (2006)

# Action Research Questions

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- How are some agencies able to develop successful collaborative relationships while others struggle?
  - What factors contribute to or inhibit successful collaborations among organizations?
- How can leaders use survey results to:
  - Assess inter-organizational collaborative capacity?
  - Do action planning to develop the inter-organizational collaborative capacity of their individual organizations or a collective of homeland security organizations?

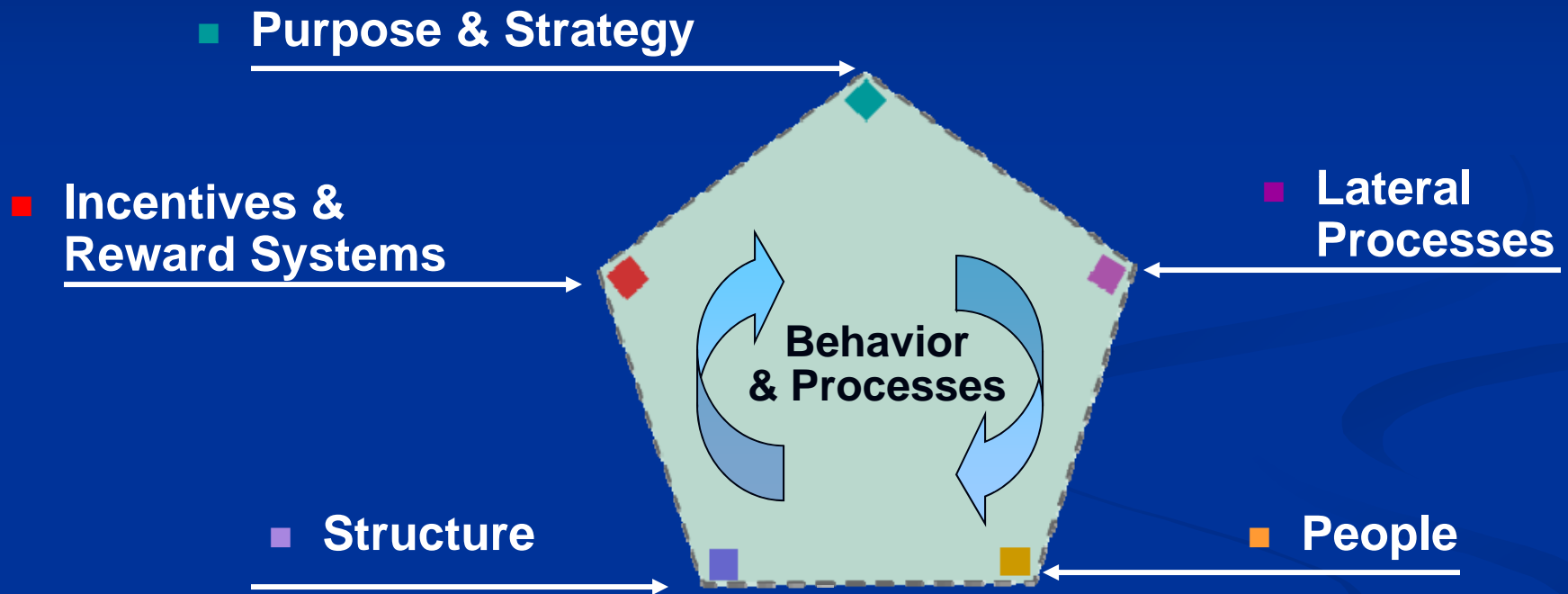
<b>Organizational Domain</b>	<b>Driving Forces for Collaboration</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “Felt need” to collaborate</li> <li>▪ Common goal</li> <li>▪ Willingness to address other agency’s interests or cross-agency goals versus local organizational goals</li> </ul>
<b>Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Formalized structure for coordination (e.g., liaison roles)</li> <li>▪ Formalized processes (meetings, deadlines, agendas)</li> <li>▪ Sufficient authority of participants</li> <li>▪ Role clarity</li> <li>▪ Dedicated assets (people, resources) for collaboration</li> </ul>
<b>Lateral Mechanisms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social Capital (i.e., interpersonal networks)</li> <li>▪ Effective communication and information exchange</li> <li>▪ Technical interoperability</li> <li>▪ Combined training events</li> </ul>
<b>Incentives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Collaboration as a prerequisite for funding or resources</li> </ul>
<b>People Practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Respect for other parties’ interests, expertise, roles, perspectives.</li> <li>▪ Perseverance/Commitment</li> </ul>

From Hocevar, Thomas & Jansen (2006). *Building Collaborative Capacity An Innovative Strategy for Homeland Security Preparedness*. (In M. Beyerlein [Ed.] *Innovation Through Collaboration*).

<b>Organization Domain</b>	<b>Restraining Forces of Collaboration</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Divergent goals</li> <li>▪ Focus on regional or local agency concerns</li> <li>▪ Lack of goal clarity</li> <li>▪ Not adaptable to interests of other organization</li> </ul>
<b>Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Impeding rules or policies</li> <li>▪ Inadequate authority of participants</li> <li>▪ Inadequate resources</li> <li>▪ Lack of accountability</li> <li>▪ Lack of formal roles or procedures for collaborating</li> </ul>
<b>Lateral Mechanisms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of familiarity with other organizations</li> <li>▪ Inadequate communication and information sharing</li> </ul>
<b>Incentives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Competition for resources</li> <li>▪ Territoriality</li> <li>▪ Org level distrust &amp; lack of mutual respect</li> </ul>
<b>People Practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of competency</li> <li>▪ Arrogance, hostility, animosity</li> </ul>

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# Organizational System

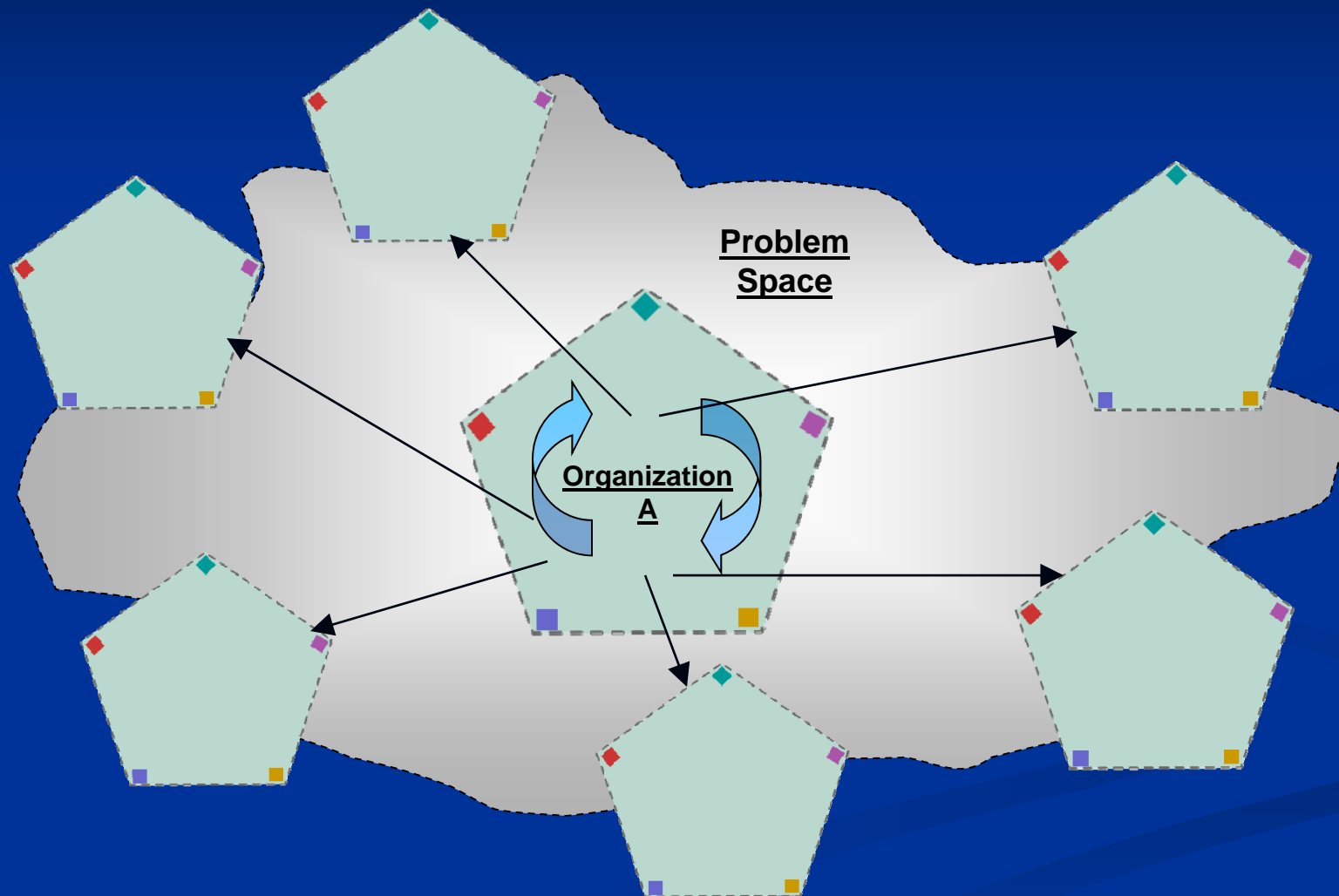


# Collaborative Capacity: The Diagnostic Survey



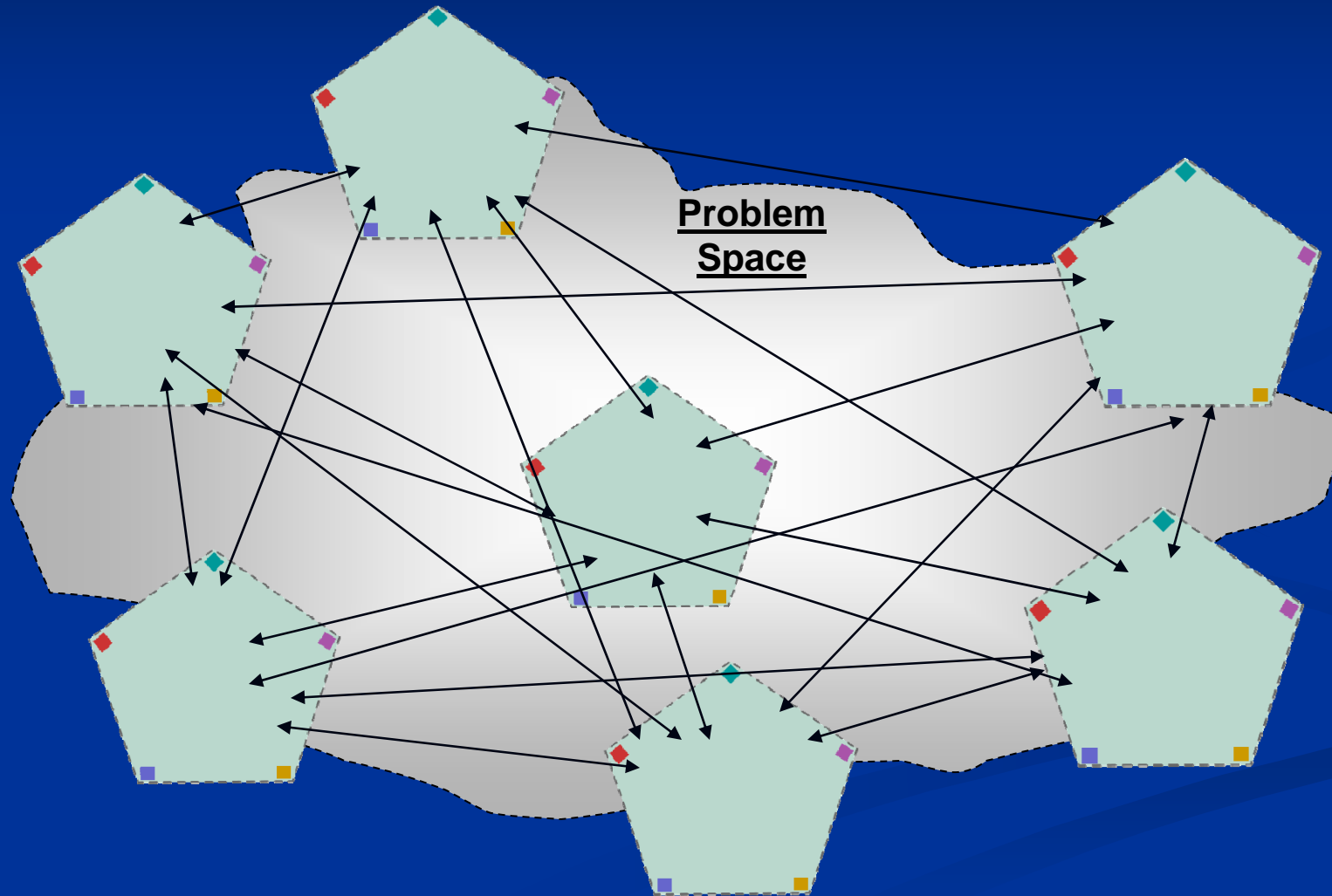
# Organization A's Collaborative Capacity in a Shared Problem Space

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# An Inter-Organizational *System's* Collaborative Capacity in a Shared Problem Space

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# Strategic Action for Collaboration

We have clearly established goals for inter-organizational collaboration.

The leaders of my organization emphasize the importance of inter-organizational collaboration.

My organization is willing to address inter-organizational goals even if it must compromise its own interests.

My organization's leaders regularly meet and confer with the leaders of other agencies about mutual collaboration.

My organization considers the interests of other organizations in its planning.

Leaders of my organization work productively with those of other organizations to improve our collaborations.

# Collaborative Learning

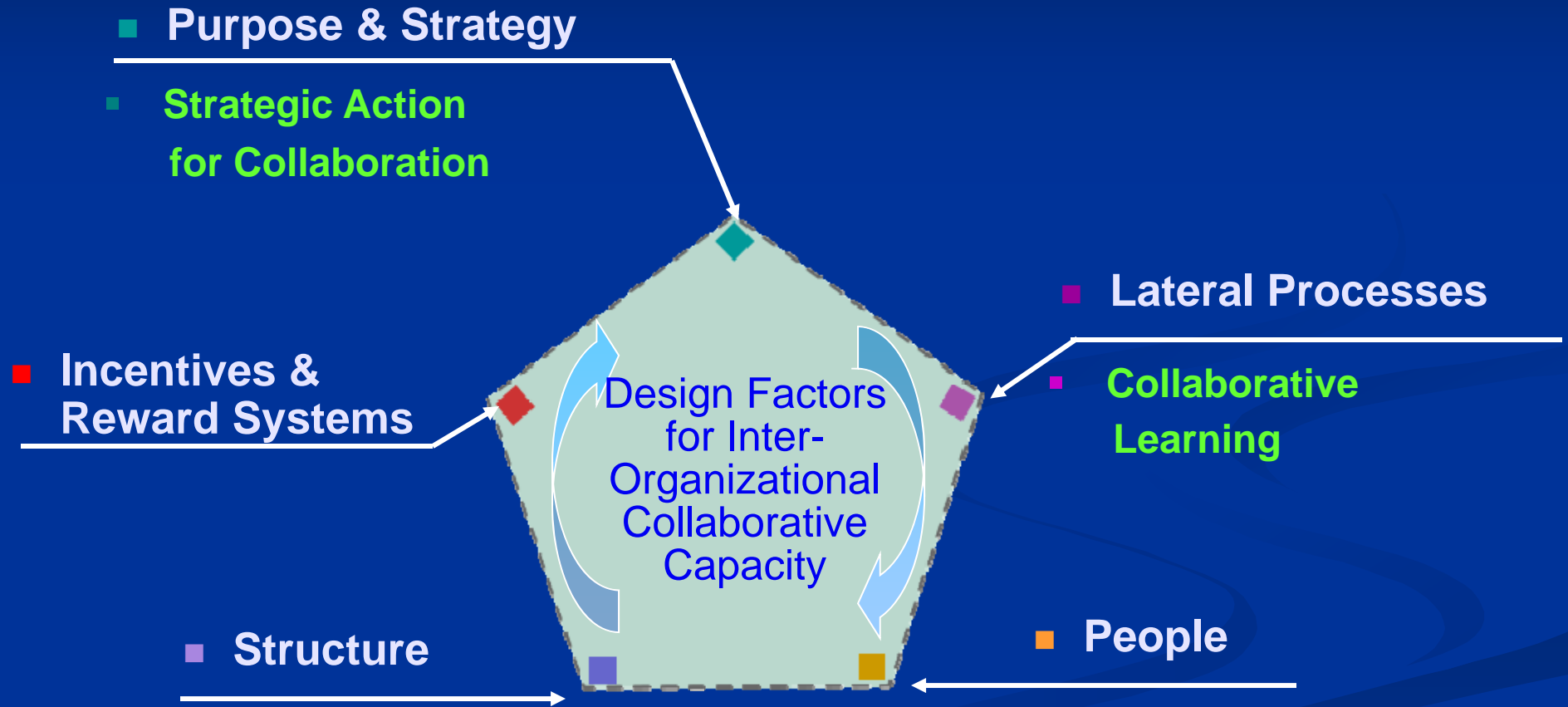
My organization commits adequate human and financial resources to training with other organizations.

My organization has strong values and norms for learning from others.

My organization understands how the other organizations we work with make decisions.

My organization works with other organizations to identify lessons learned for improved collaboration.

# Factors within Domains



# Organizational Domains & Factors

## ■ Purpose & Strategy

- Need to Collaborate
- Strategic Action for Collaboration
- Resource Investments

## ■ Incentives & Reward Systems

- Incentives & Reward Systems

## ■ Structure

- Structural Flexibility
- Support for Individual Collaborative Efforts
- Metrics

## ■ Lateral Processes

- Collaborative Learning
- Collaborative Tools & Technologies
- Social Capital
- Information Sharing

## ■ People

- Individual Collaborative Capacities



# Collaborative Capacity Survey Results with sample of Homeland Defense and Security Managers

# Using the Survey to Build Collaborative Capacity

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- Informs leaders and change agents of the strengths and weaknesses of the collaborative capacity factors for their organization or set of organizations.
- From resulting data, specific interventions can be identified and implemented.
- Improves organizational learning regarding inter-agency relationships.
- Provides a baseline for assessing improvements in collaborative capacity.
- Allows for comparison across organizations and groups within organizations.



## Factor Means & Standard Deviations (N~225)

	Mean	SD
"Felt" Need to Collaborate	4.9	0.9
Strategic Action for Collaboration	4.3	1.0
Resource Investment in Collaboration	3.9	1.2
Structural Flexibility	4.1	1.1
Support for Individual Collaboration Efforts	4.4	1.1
Metrics	2.7	1.2
Rewards and Incentives	3.4	1.3
Collaborative Tools and Technologies	3.6	1.2
Information Sharing	4.3	1.1
Collaborative Learning	3.7	1.1
Social Capital	4.5	1.1
Individual Collaborative Capacities	4.3	0.9

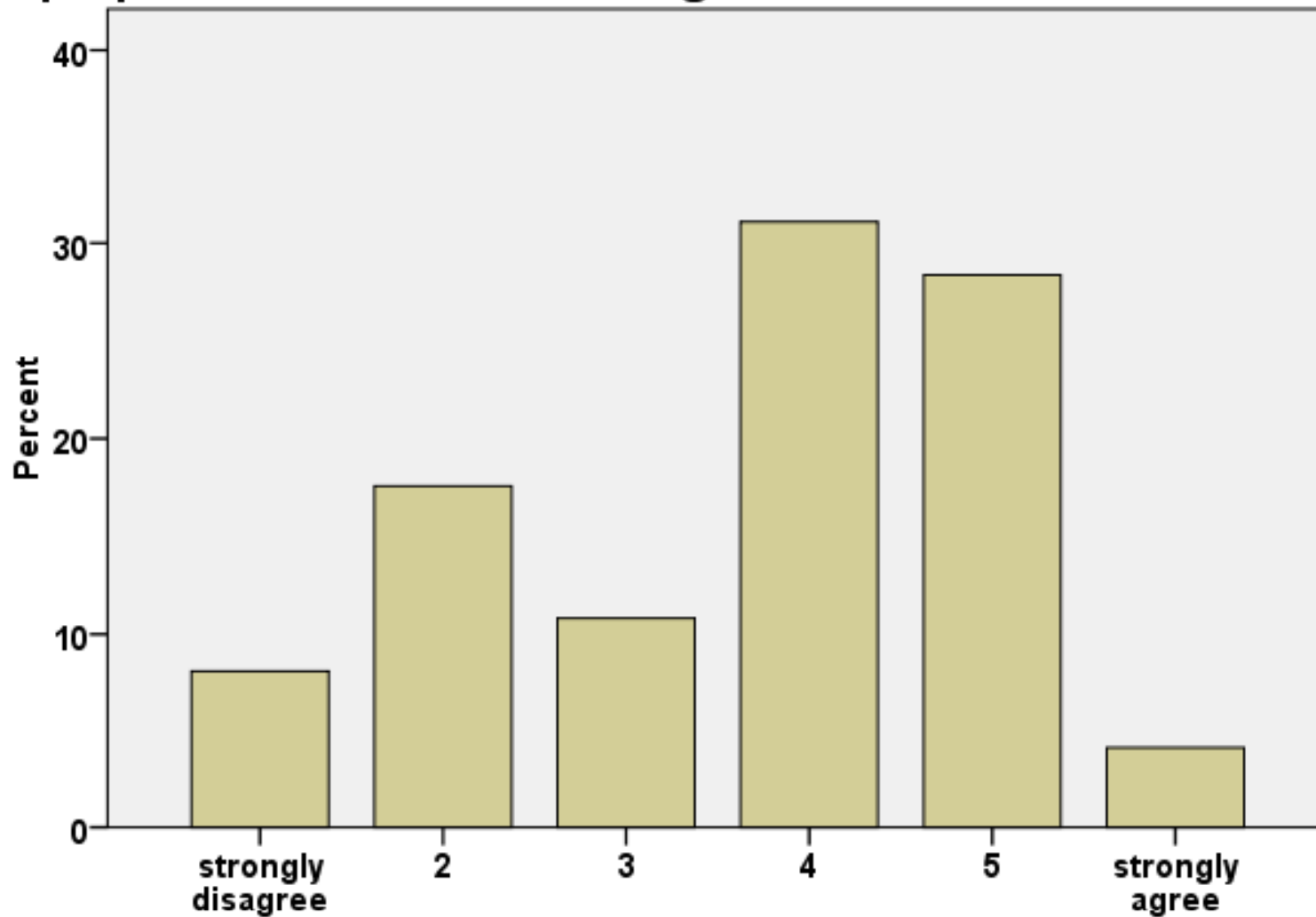
## Factor Means & Standard Deviations (Ranked)

	Mean	SD
"Felt" Need to Collaborate	4.9	0.9
Social Capital	4.5	1.1
Support for Individual Collaboration Efforts	4.4	1.1
Strategic Action for Collaboration	4.3	1.0
Information Sharing	4.3	1.1
Individual collaborative Capacities	4.3	0.9
Structural Flexibility	4.1	1.1
Resource Investment in Collaboration	3.9	1.2
Collaborative Learning	3.7	1.1
Collaborative Tools and Technologies	3.6	1.2
Rewards and Incentives	3.4	1.3
Metrics	2.7	1.2

## “Felt” Need to Collaborate (mean = 4.9)

Inter-organizational collaboration is a high priority for my organization.	5.2 (1.1)
My organization recognizes the importance of working with other organizations to achieve its mission.	5.2 (1.1)
Members of my organization understand the benefits of collaborating with other organizations	4.8 (1.1)
There is agreement within my organizations about the purpose and value of inter-organizational collaboration.	3.7 (1.4)

**There is agreement within my organization about the purpose and value of inter-organizational collaboration.**

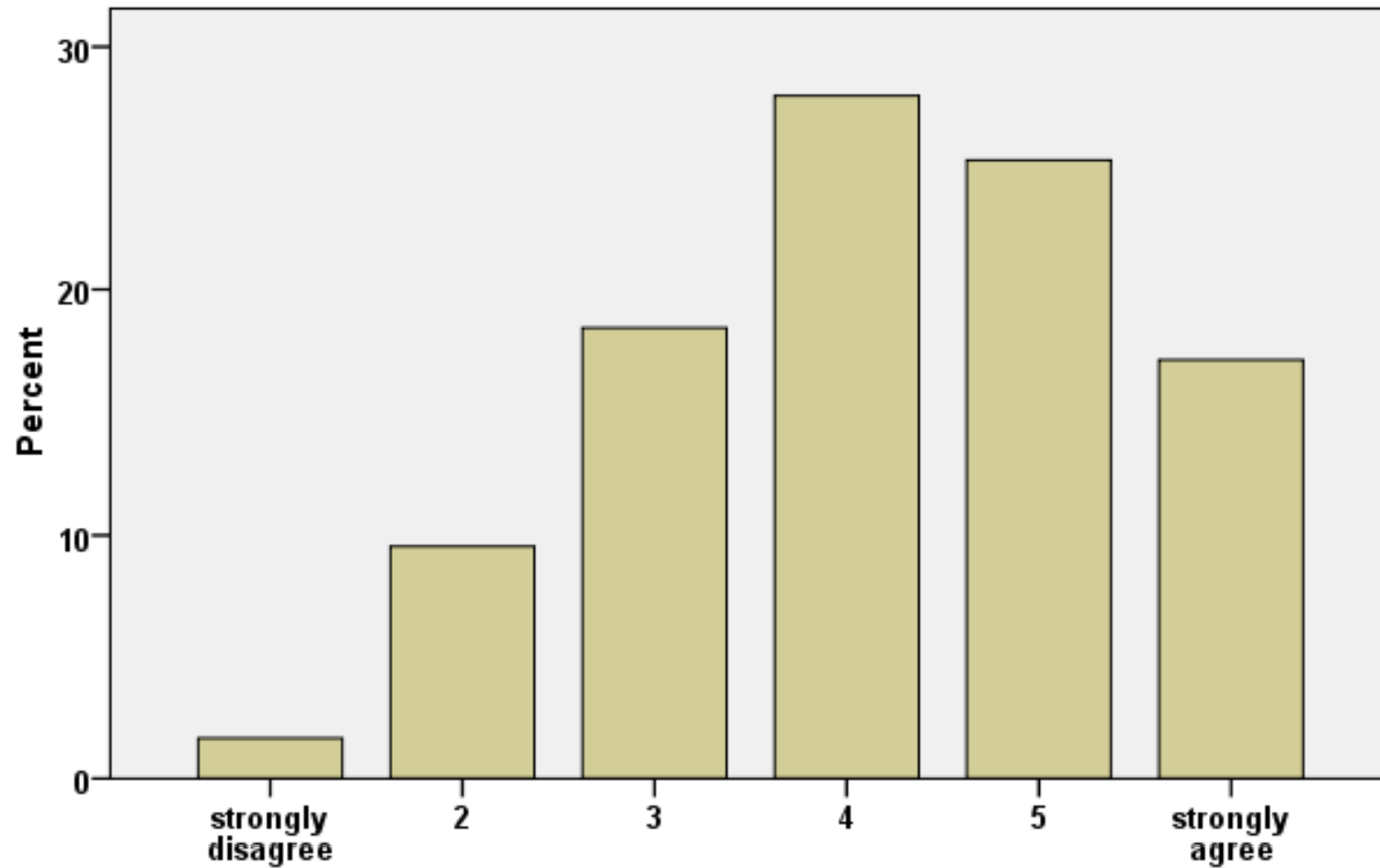


# Strategic Action for Collaboration

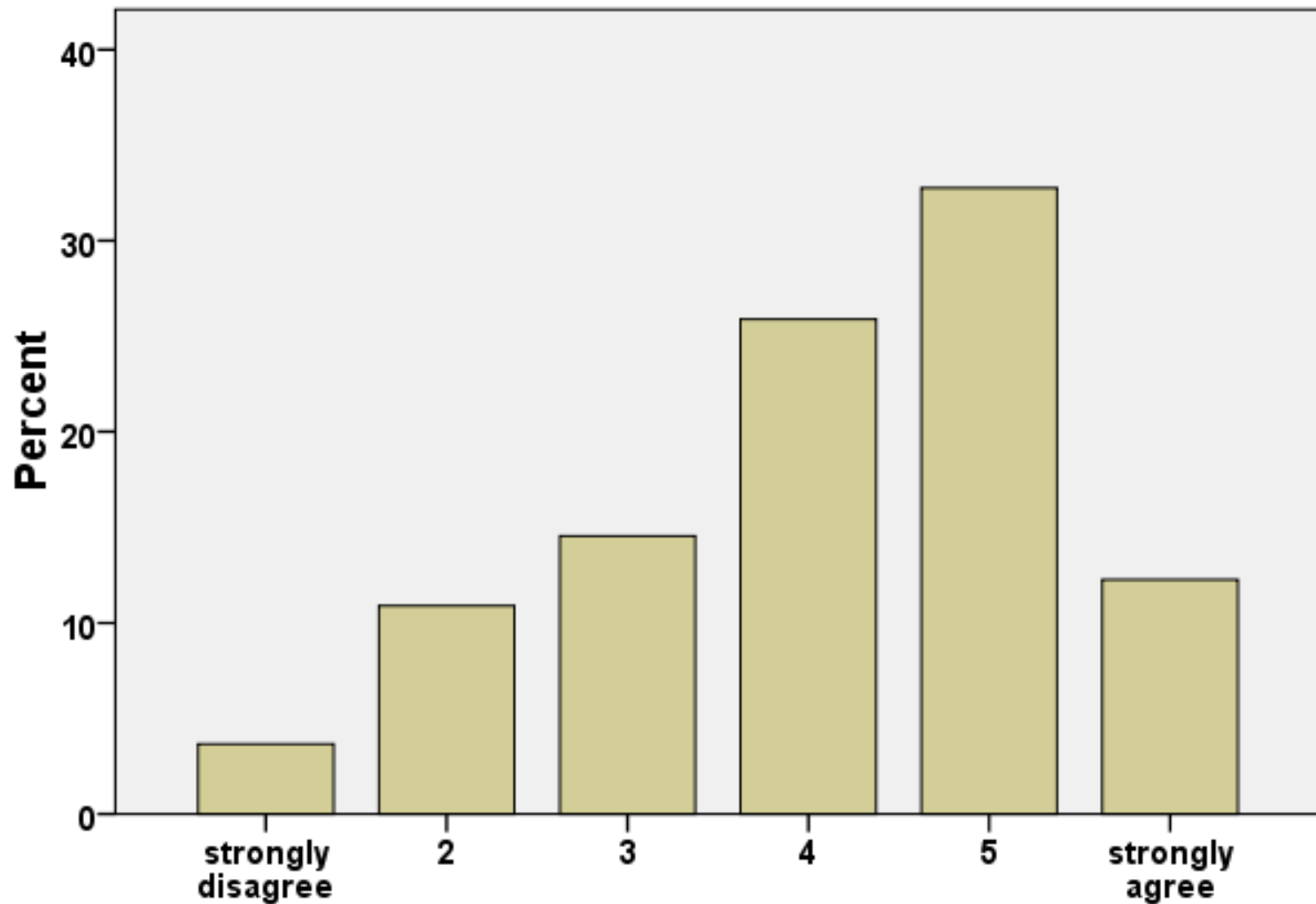
(mean=4.3)

We have clearly established goals for inter-organizational collaboration.	4.2 (1.3)
The leaders of my organization emphasize the importance of inter-organizational collaboration.	4.9 (1.3)
My organization is willing to address inter-organizational goals even if it must compromise its own interests.	3.5 (1.2)
My organization's leaders regularly meet and confer with the leaders of other agencies about mutual collaboration.	4.6 (1.3)
My organization considers the interests of other organizations in its planning.	4.1 (1.3)
Leaders of my organization work productively with those of other organizations to improve our collaborations.	4.4 (1.3)

## We have clearly established goals for inter-organizational collaboration.



**My organization considers the interests of other organizations  
in its planning.**

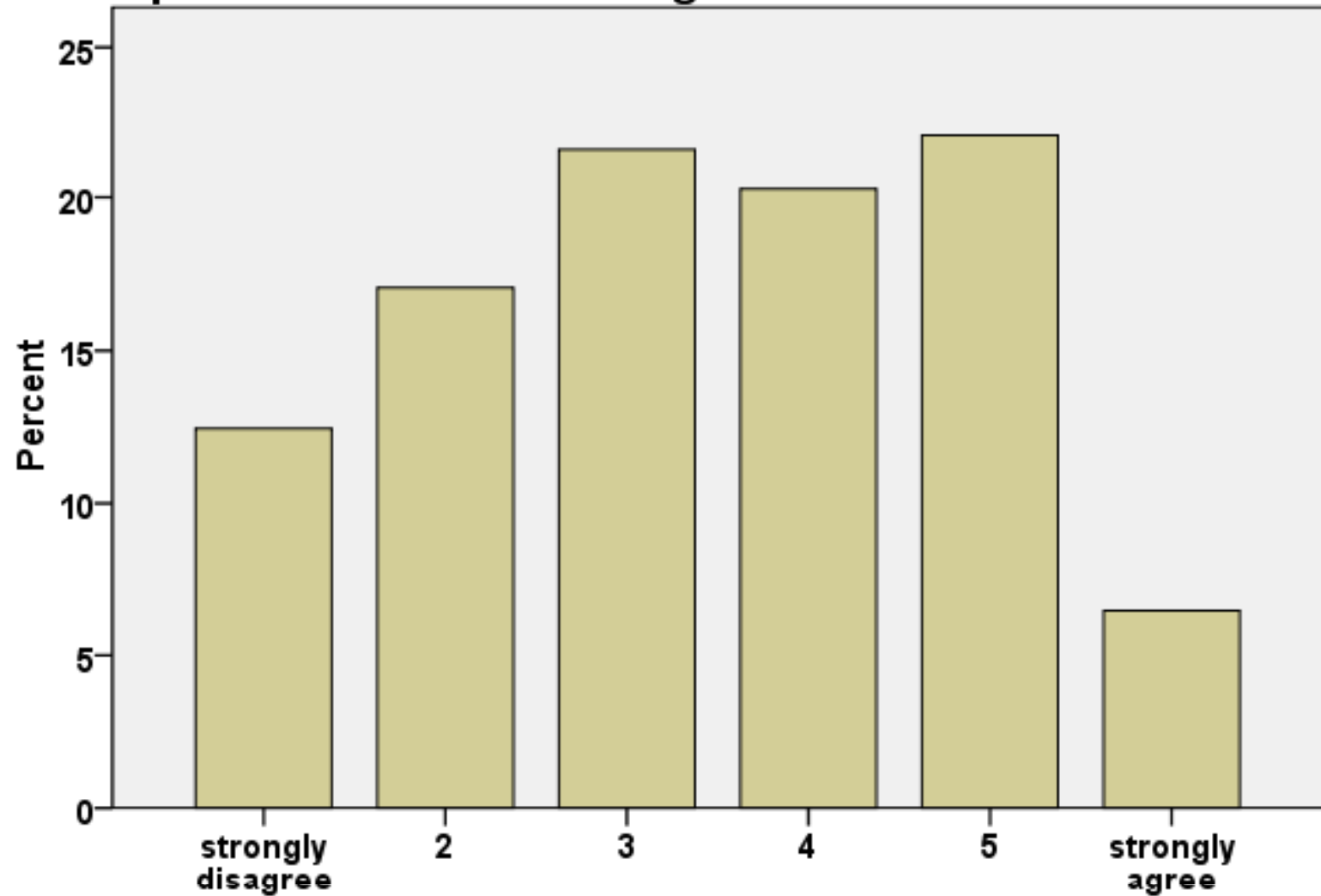


## Resource Investments (mean=3.9)

My organization has committed adequate budget & resources to inter-organizational collaboration.	4.0 (1.3)
My organization is willing to invest resources to accomplish inter-organizational goals.	4.4 (1.3)
My organization has assigned adequate personnel to the work required for effective inter-organizational collaboration.	3.4 (1.5)



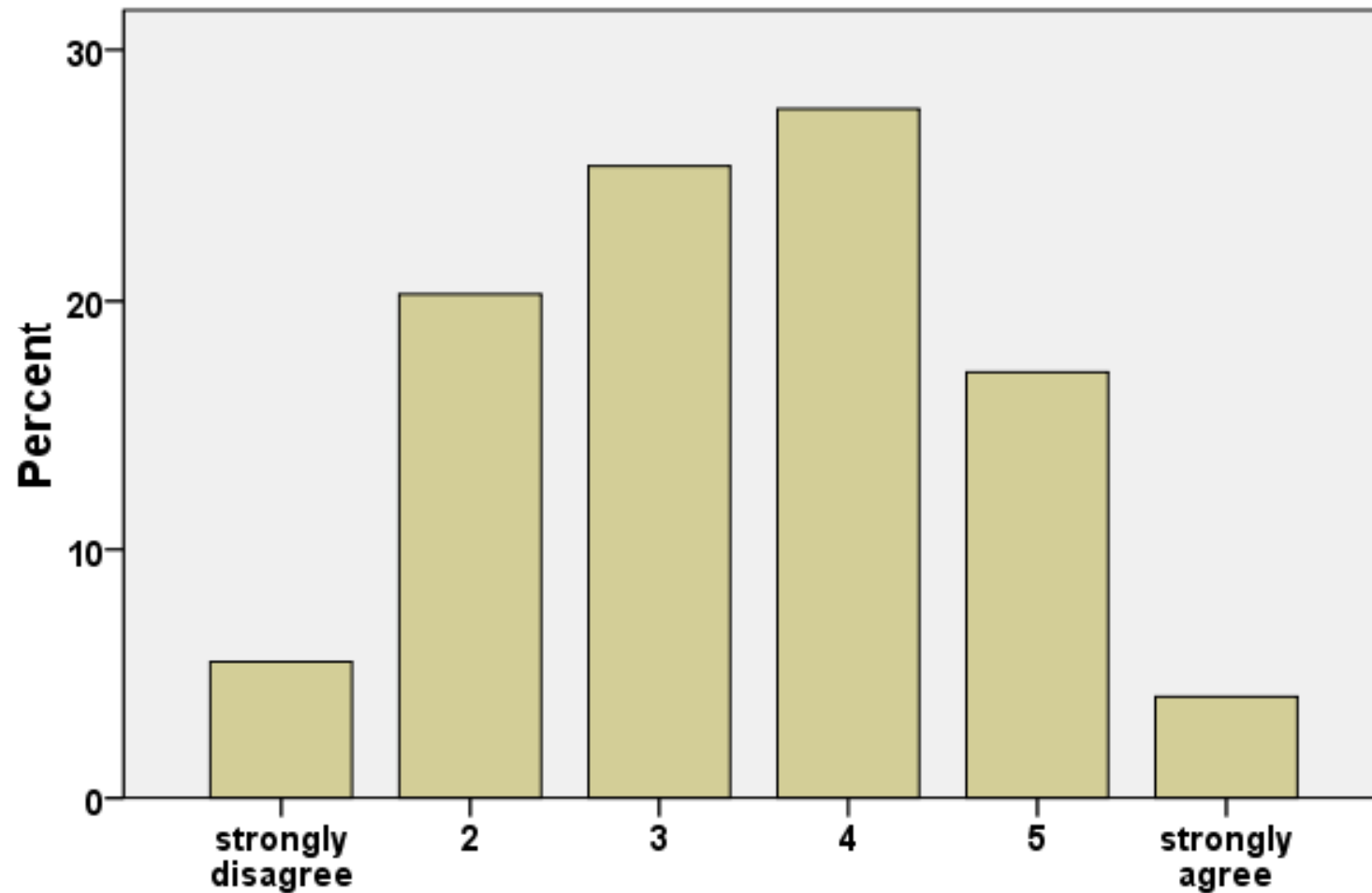
**My organization has assigned adequate personnel to the work required for effective interorganizational collaboration.**



## Structural Flexibility (mean = 4.1)

My organization can quickly form or modify partnerships as requirements change.	4.6 (1.3)
My organization is flexible in adapting its procedures to better fit with other organizations.	4.1 (1.3)
My organization invests appropriate time and energy to deconflict existing policies and processes that impede collaboration.	3.4 (1.3)
My organization's procedures are flexible and responsive to the requirements of other organizations.	4.2 (1.2)

**My organization invests appropriate time and energy to deconflict existing policies and processes that impede collaboration.**

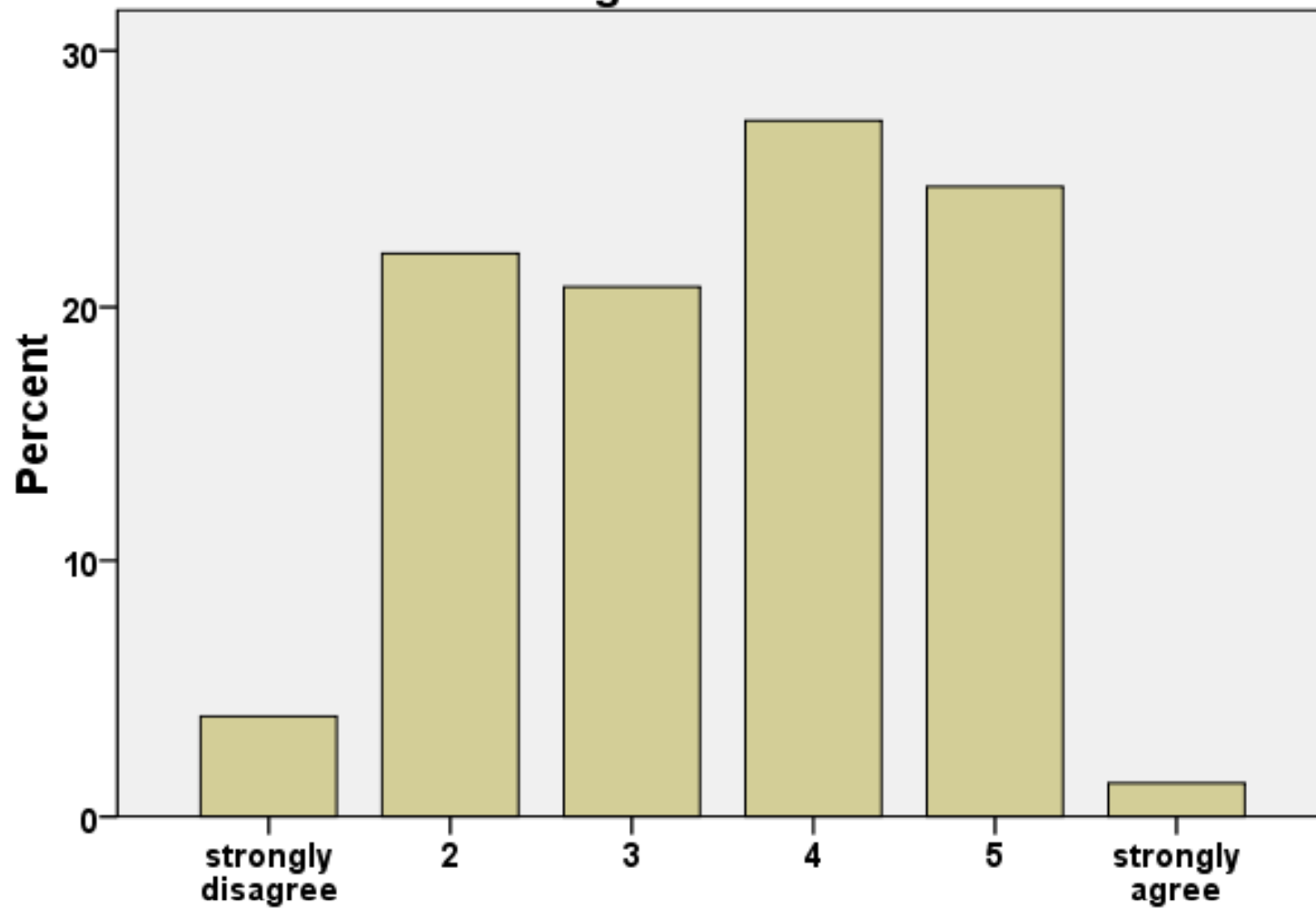


# Support for Individual Collaboration Efforts

(mean = 4.4)

Leadership listens to input from subordinates regarding ways to improve collaboration.	4.4 (1.3)
My organization gives members appropriate authority to collaborate with other organizations.	4.6 (1.2)
My organization follows through on recommendations from our representatives on inter-organizational task forces.	4.4 (1.1)
People are given clear guidance on goals and constraints for their inter-organizational work.	3.5 (1.2)

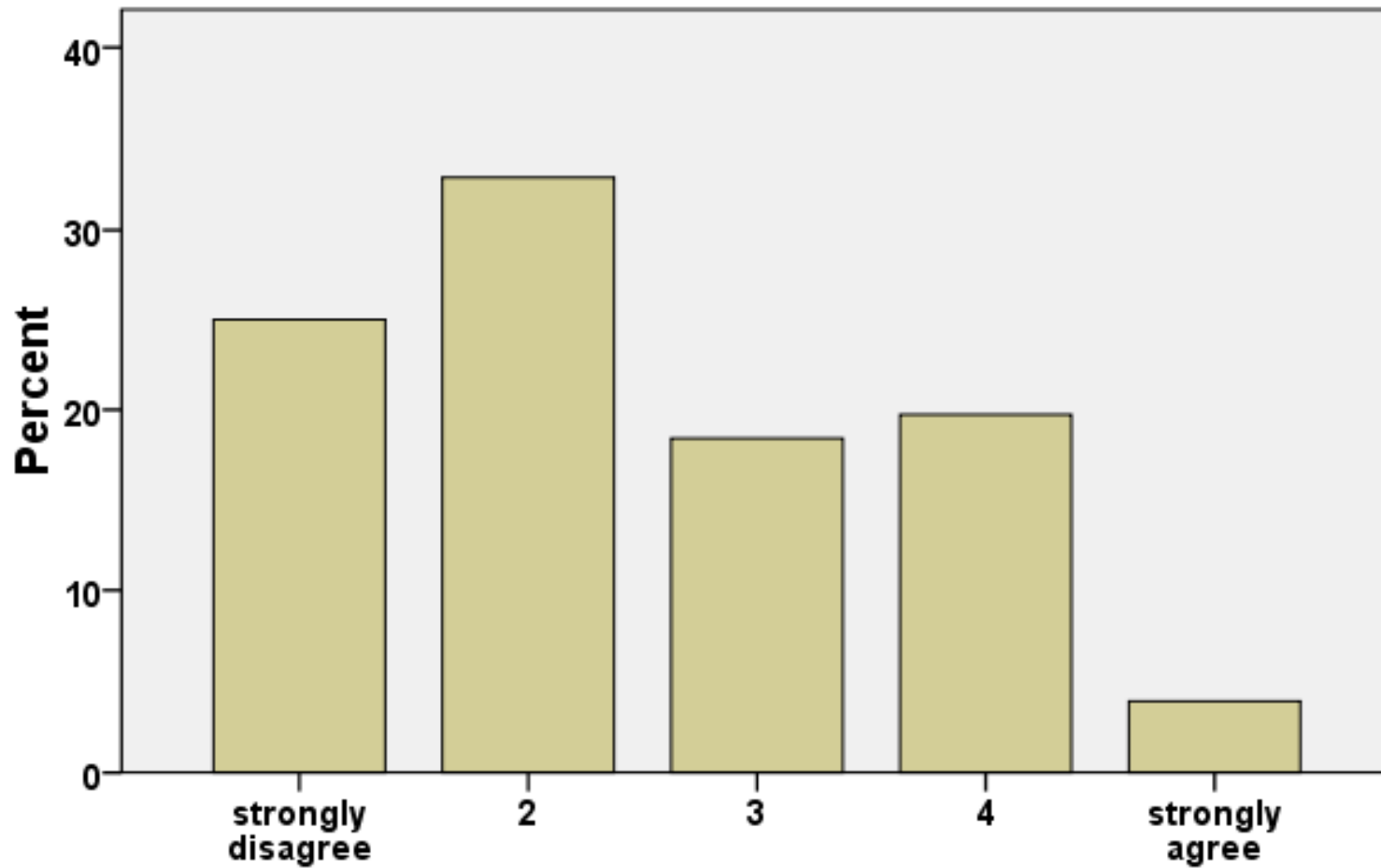
### People are given clear guidance on goals and constraints for their inter-organizational work.



## Metrics for Collaboration (mean = 2.7)

My organization has measurement criteria to evaluate inter-organizational collaboration efforts.	2.6 (1.3)
My organization has clear performance standards regarding inter-organizational work.	2.9 (1.3)
My organization has measurement criteria to evaluate the outcomes of inter-organizational collaboration.	2.5 (1.2)

**My organization has measurement criteria to evaluate the outcomes of inter-organizational collaboration.**

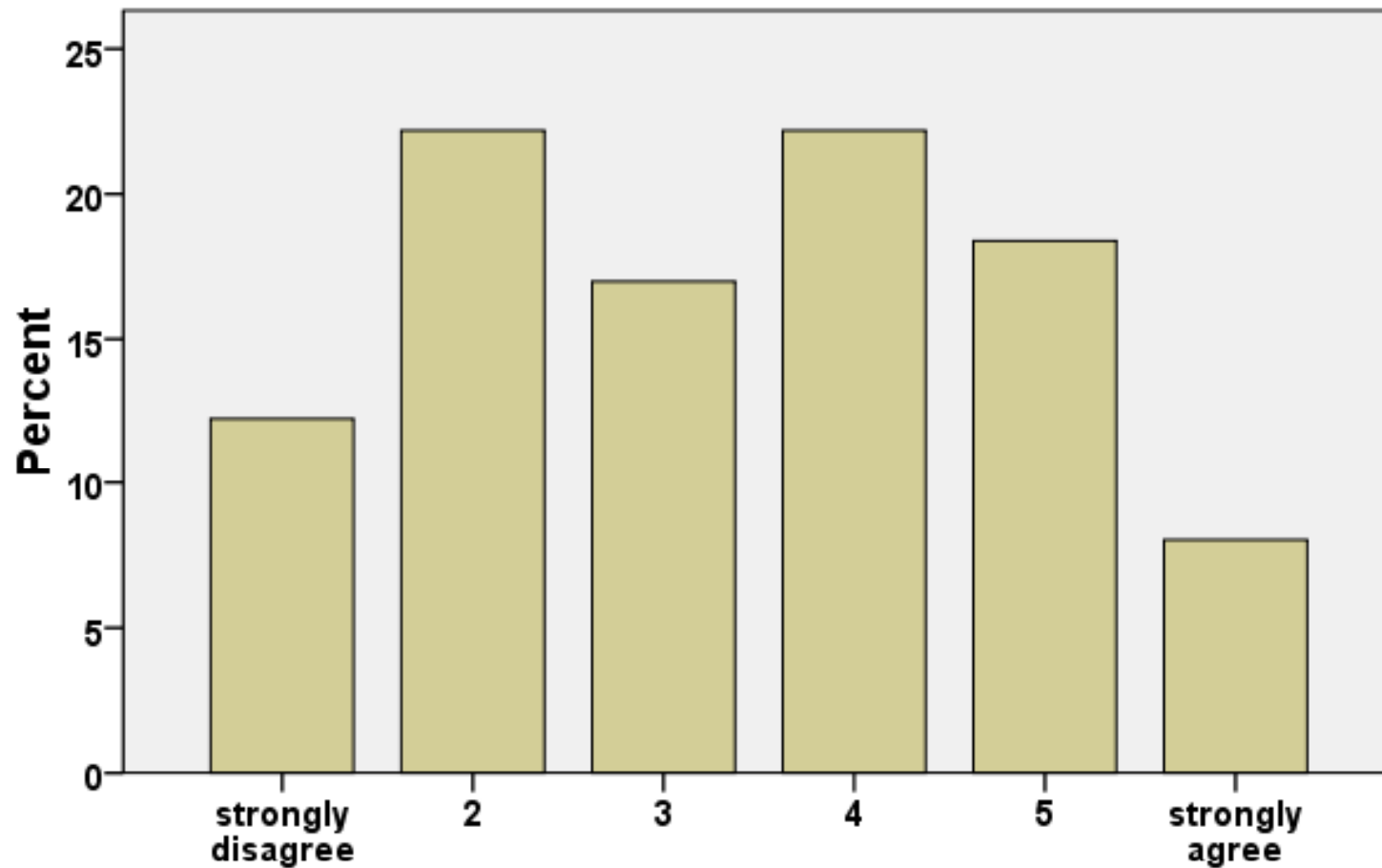


## Incentives & Rewards (mean = 3.4)

My organization rewards employees for investing time and energy to build collaborative relationships.	3.4 (1.5)
My organization rewards members for their successful inter-organizational collaborations.	3.4 (1.4)
Collaborative talents and achievements are considered when people are reviewed for promotion.	3.4 (1.5)



**Collaborative talents and achievements are considered when people are reviewed for promotion.**



# ICC Factors Compared by Federal vs. State vs. Municipal Organizations

	Federal (N=82)	State (N=32)	Munic. (N=45)	Sig
<b>Collaborative Learning Systems</b>	3.6	3.8	3.2	**
<b>Information Sharing</b>	4.2	4.8	4.4	*
<b>Social Capital</b>	4.4	5.1	4.6	*
<b>Individual Collaborative Capabilities</b>	4.1	4.7	4.4	*
<b>ANOVA was N.S. for other 8 factors</b>				
* p<.05				
** p<.01				

# ICC Factors Compared by Whether Collaboration is Formally Mandated

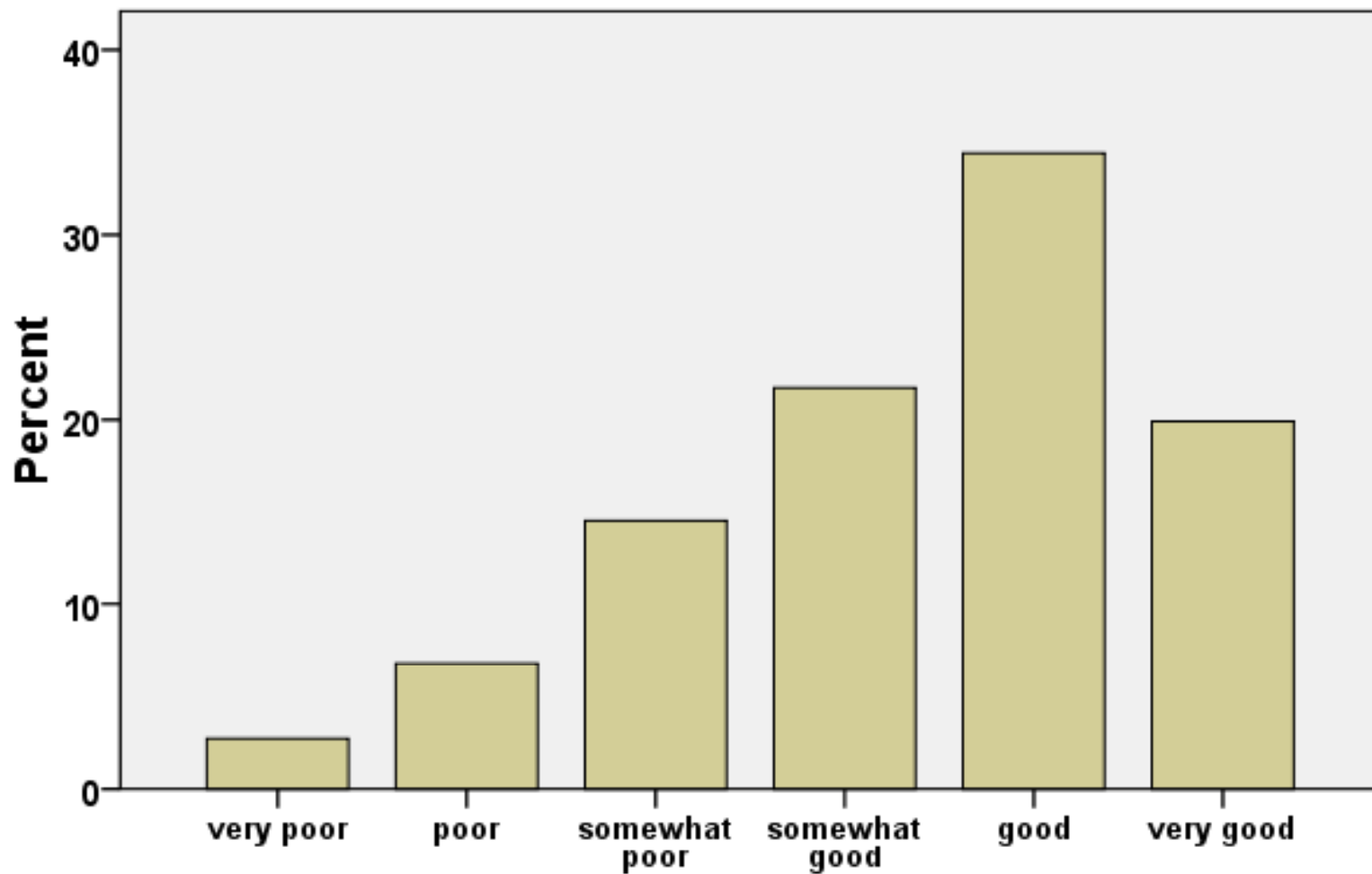
	Yes (N=136)	No (N=55)	Sig
<b>Felt Need</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>*</b>
<b>Strategic Action for Collaboration</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>**</b>
<b>Resource Investments</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>*</b>
<b>Individual Collaborative Capabilities</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>**</b>
<b>All other factor mean differences non-significant</b>			
* p<.05			
** p<.01			

# ICC Factors Compared by Whether Collaboration is Required for Funding

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- Question asked: My organization is participating in inter-organizational collaboration as part of requirements for funding:
  - N=88 responded 1-3 (strongly to mildly disagree)
  - N=109 responded 4-6 (strongly to mildly agree)
- All 12 collaborative capacity factors are significantly different ( $p < .01$ ) with those collaborating due to funding requirements having higher collaborative capacity ratings.

## How would you rate the overall success of your organization in collaborating with other organizations?



# ICC Factors Relationship with Successful Collaborations

- All 12 factors have significant zero-order correlation with dependent variable ( $p < .05$ ).
  - Highest correlations ( $r > .6$ )
    - Strategic Action, Information Sharing, Individual Collaborative Capabilities, Structural Flexibility
  - Lowest correlation ( $r = .27$ ): Tools & Technologies
- Simultaneous regression results:
  - R-squared = .56
  - Two ICC factors have significant Beta coefficients
    - Individual Collaborative Capabilities ( $p < .01$ )
    - Information Sharing ( $p < .05$ )

# Summary of ICC Findings

- “Felt Need” rated highest followed by:
  - Social Capital
  - Support for Individual Collaboration Efforts
  - Strategic Action for Collaboration
  - Information Sharing
  - Individual Collaborative Capabilities
- Weakest capacities include:
  - Collaborative Tools & Technologies
  - Rewards and Incentives
  - Metrics
- Item-level statistics useful to guide action for improving collaborative capacity.

# Summary of ICC Findings (cont'd)

- Funding requiring collaboration shows greater collaborative capabilities on **all** ICC factors.
- Formal Mandate to collaborate shows impact on 4 ICC factors:
  - Felt Need
  - Resource Investments
  - Strategic Action for Collaboration
  - Individual Collaborative Capacities
- Four ICC factors show significant differences across Federal, State and Municipal organizations (State highest)
  - Collaborative Learning Systems
  - Information Sharing
  - Social Capital
  - Individual Collaborative Capacities



# Summary of ICC Findings (cont'd)

- All 12 factors are significantly correlated with ratings of collaboration success.
- But, the ICC factors most unique contribution to predicting successful collaborations are:
  - Individual Collaborative Capabilities \*
  - Information Sharing \*

\* $p < .05$

# Inter-organizational Collaboration



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# Extra Slides

# Restraining Forces for Inter-organizational Collaboration

- Divergent goals
- Focus on regional or local agency concerns
- Lack of goal clarity
- Not adaptable to interests of other organization
- Impeding rules or policies
- Inadequate authority of participants
- Inadequate resources
- Lack of accountability
- Lack of formal roles or procedures for collaborating
- Lack of familiarity with other organizations
- Inadequate communication and information sharing
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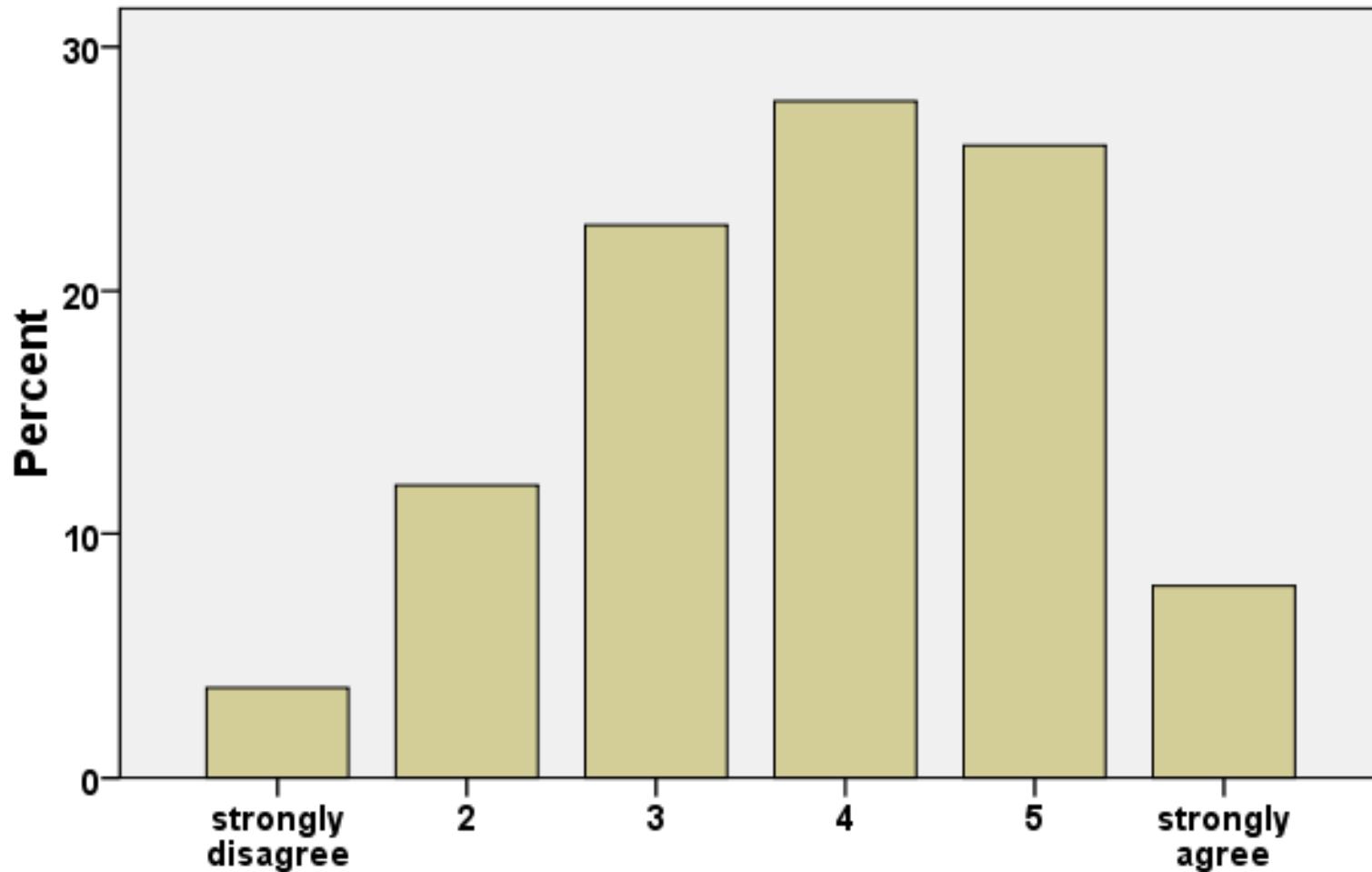
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Rewards and Incentives	3.4	1.3
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Information Sharing	4.3	1.1
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## Collaborative Learning Systems (mean = 3.7)

My organization commits adequate human and financial resources to training with other organizations.	3.7 (1.4)
My organization has strong values and norms for learning from others.	3.9 (1.4)
My organization understands how the other organizations we work with make decisions.	3.6 (1.3)
My organization works with other organizations to identify lessons learned for improved collaboration.	3.8 (1.3)

**My organization works with other organizations to identify lessons learned for improved collaboration.**



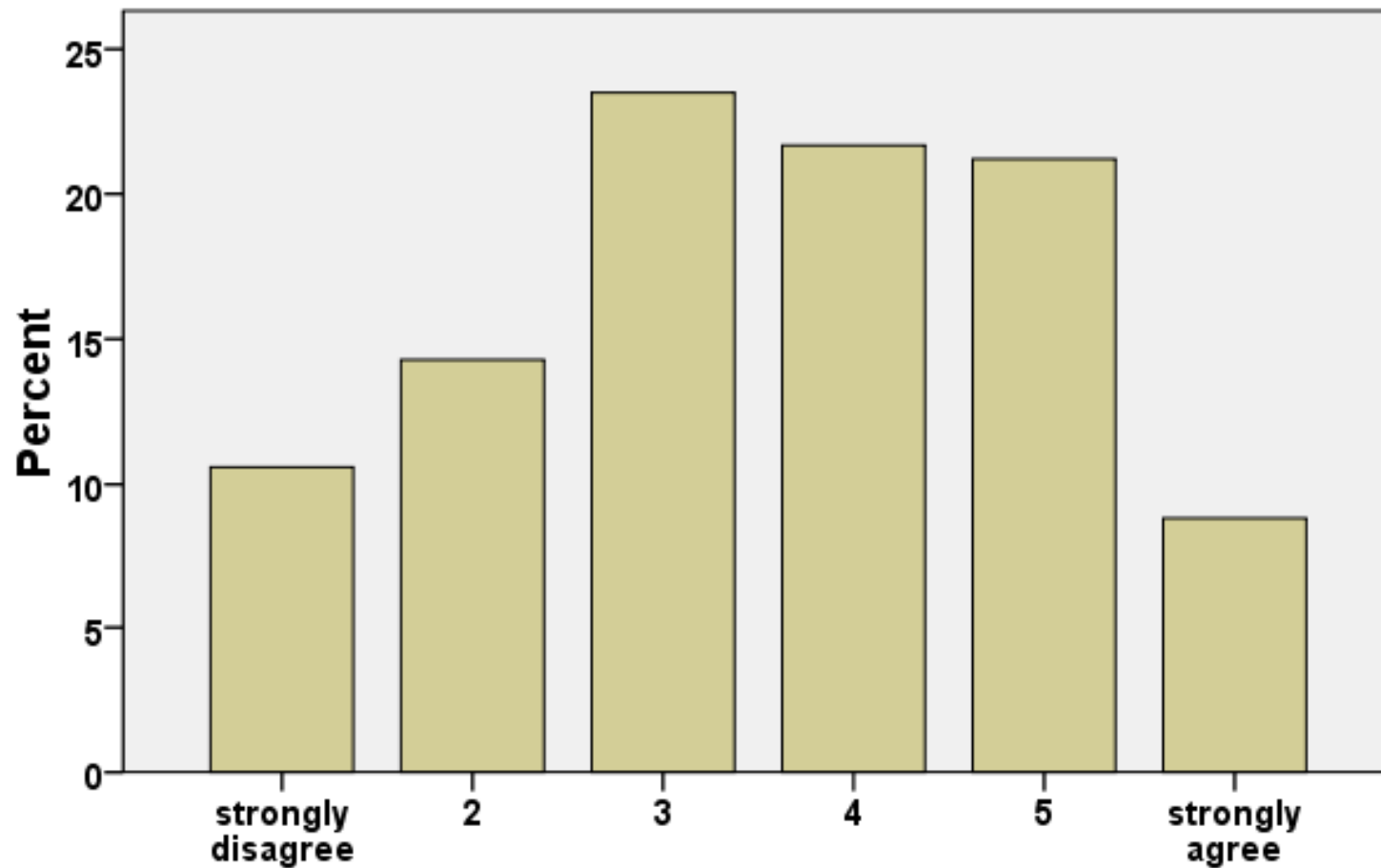
# Tools & Technologies for Collaboration

(mean =3.6)

Our inter-organizational collaborations are effectively supported by collaborative planning tools and technologies.	3.6 (1.2)
My organization has the technical interoperability (e.g., information systems, accounting systems) to enable effective inter-organizational collaboration.	3.6 (1.5)



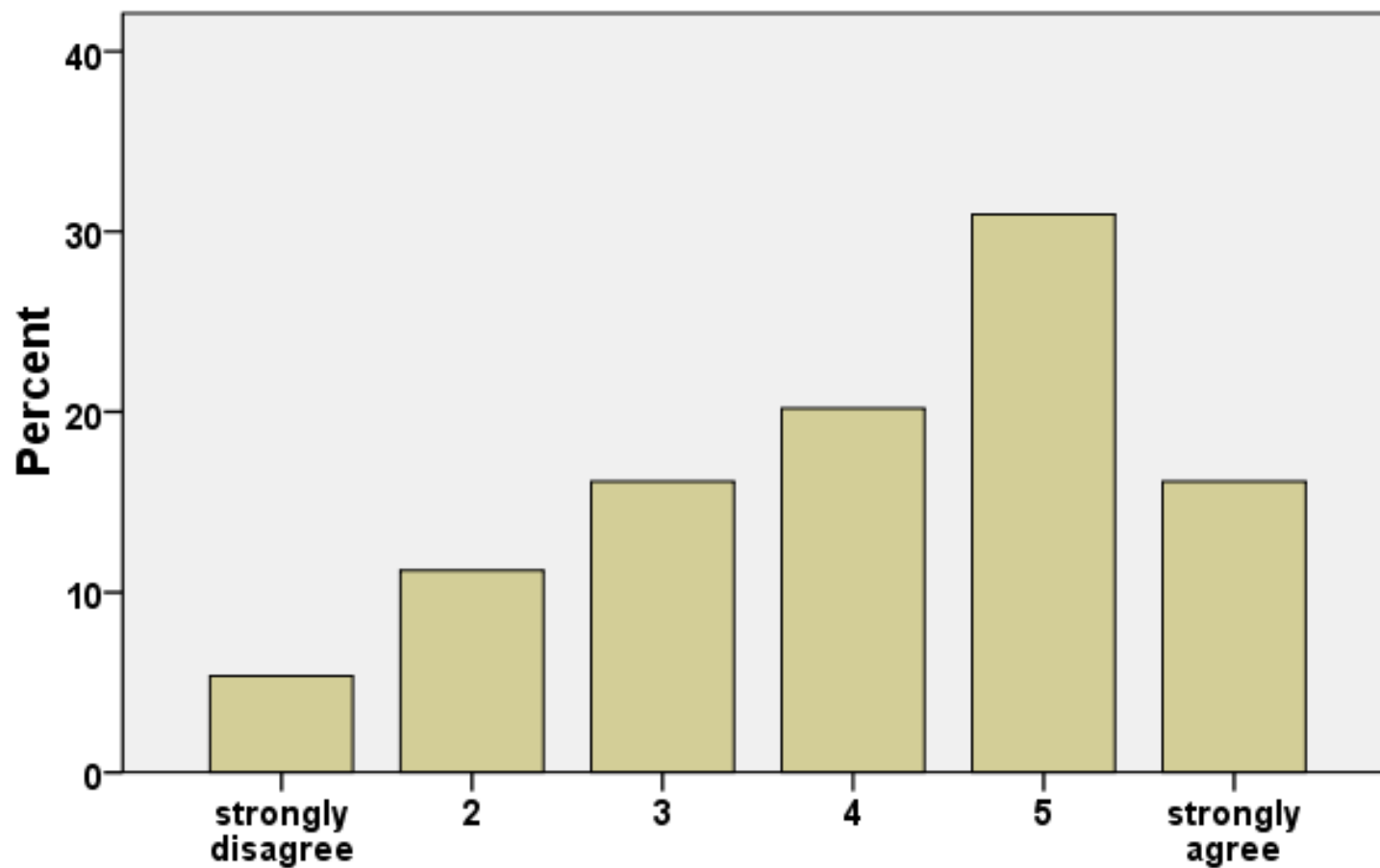
**My organization has the technical interoperability (e.g., information systems, accounting systems) to enable effective inter-organizational collaboration.**



## Information Sharing (mean = 4.3)

My organization has strong values and norms that encourage sharing information with other organizations.	4.1 (1.4)
My organization provides other agencies adequate access to information we have that is relevant to their work.	4.3 (1.3)
Members of my organization willingly share information with other organizations.	4.6 (1.1)

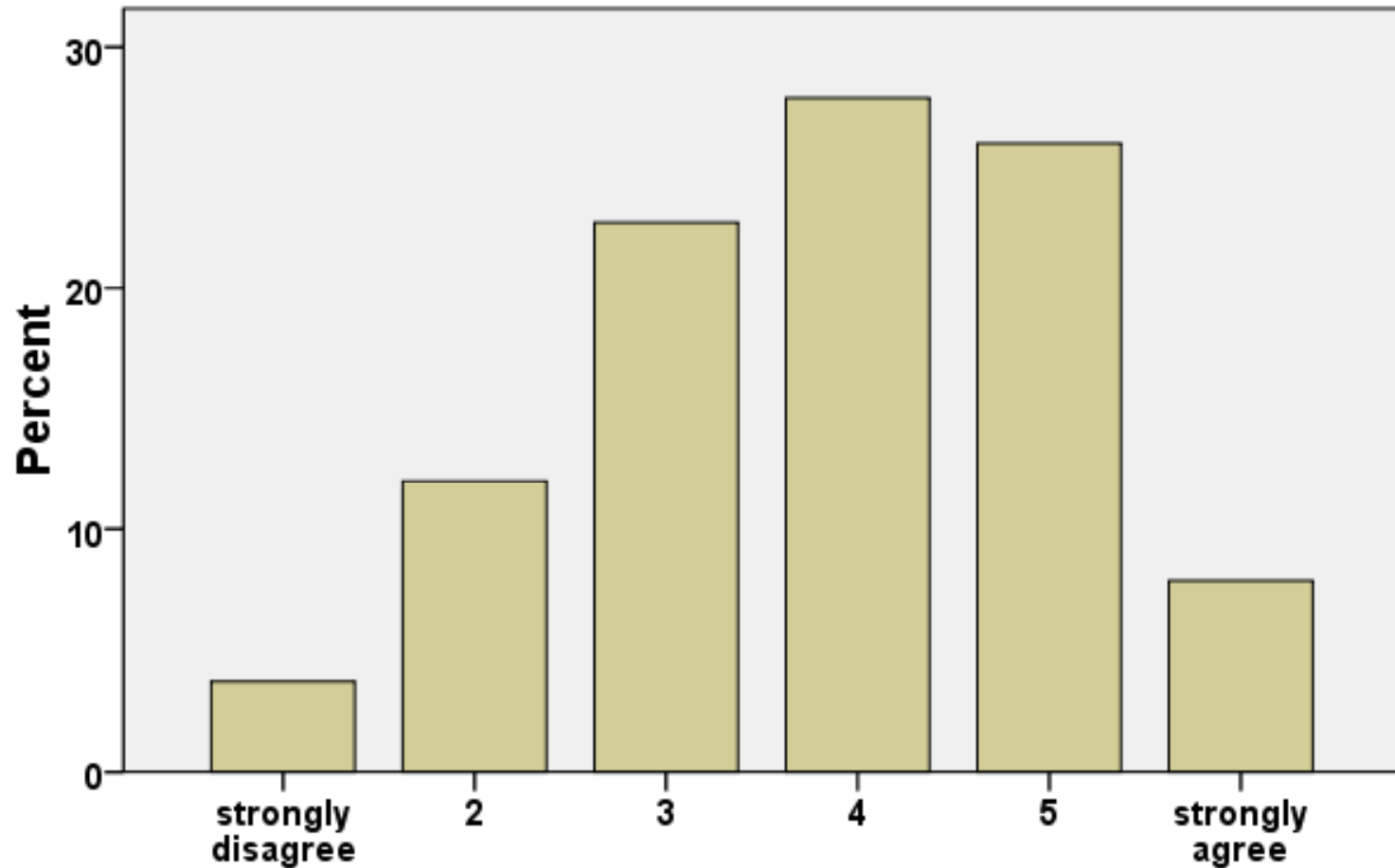
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**My organization works with other organizations to identify lessons learned for improved collaboration.**



## Social Capital (mean = 4.5)

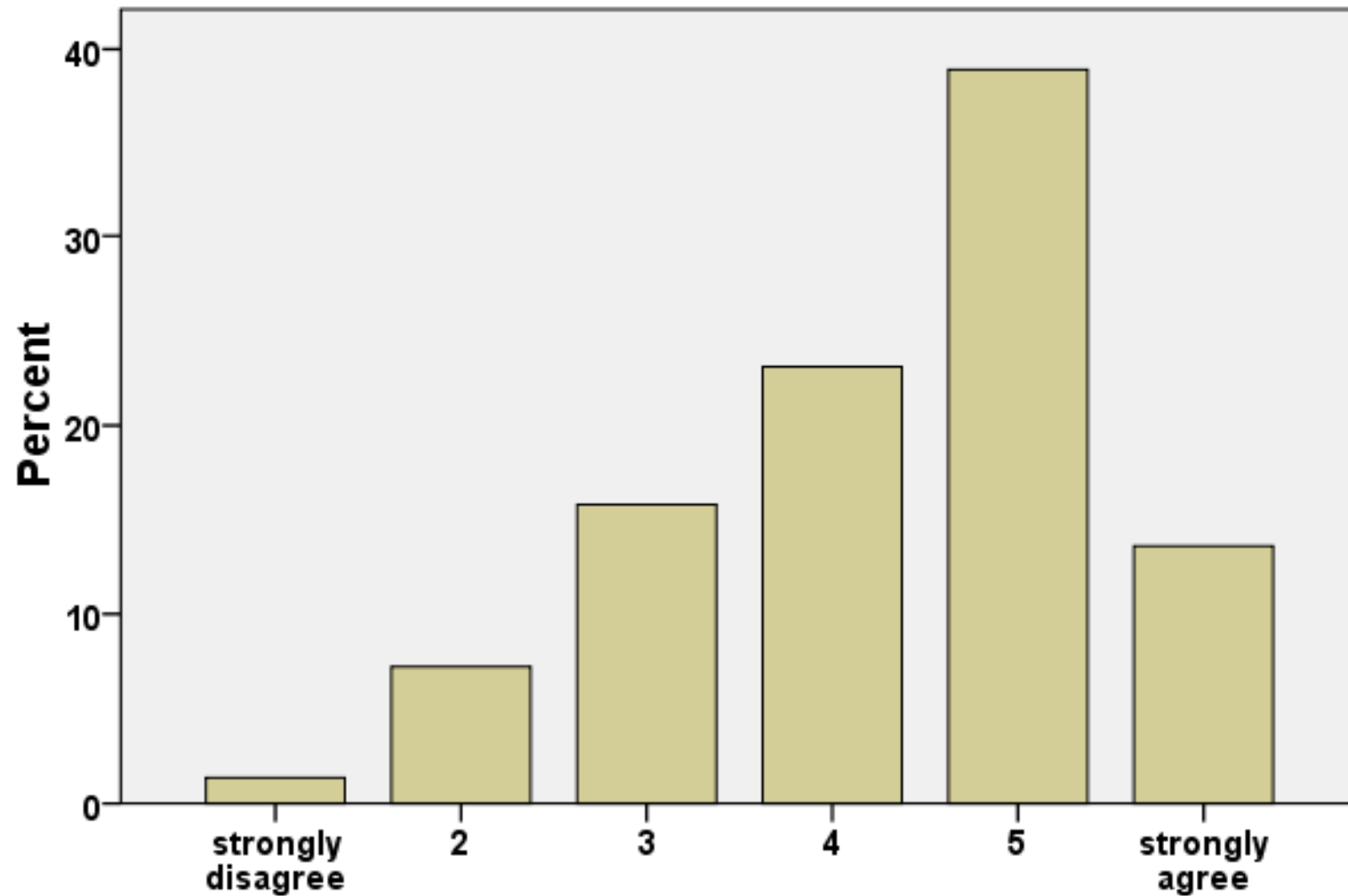
Members of my organization know who to contact in other organizations for information or decisions.	4.4 (1.3)
Members of my organization take the initiative to build relationships with their counterparts in other organizations.	4.7 (1.2)

# Individual Collaborative Capabilities

(mean = 4.3)

Members of my organization have the collaborative skills (e.g., conflict management, team process skills) needed to work effectively with other organizations.	4.1 (1.2)
Members of my organization are aware of the capabilities of other organizations with which we have to work.	4.1 (1.2)
Members of my organization respect the expertise of those in other organizations with whom we work.	4.6 (1.2)
Members of my org. understand how our work relates to the work of other organizations with whom we need to collaborate.	4.4 (1.2)
Members of my organization are able to appreciate another organization's perspective on a problem or course of action.	4.1 (1.1)
Members of my organization are willing to engage in a shared decision making process with other organizations.	4.3 (1.2)
People in my organization seek input from other orgs.	4.1 (1.2)

**Members of my organization are willing to engage in a shared decision making process with other organizations.**





**Members of my organization are aware of the capabilities of other organizations with which we have to work.**

