2.1a Initial Plan Development

Team Agreements/Norms

Teams function more efficiently when members of the team recognize and follow certain agreed-upon behaviors. These standards or norms form a basis for making decisions, for encouraging participation, for taking risks, and for rewarding behaviors that facilitate cooperation and management of conflict.

Norms are not intended to restrict the abilities of team members in achieving their objectives, but are to be established for the purpose of helping the individual and team function more effectively.

Some norms for effective group functioning might be:

- All movement towards the goal will be acknowledged and celebrated.
- Before evaluating a member’s contribution, others check their assumptions to ensure they have properly understood.
- Each person speaks on his or her own behalf and lets others speak for him or herself.
- When the group is not working well together it devotes time to finding out why and makes the necessary adjustments.
- Conflict is considered normal and will be managed and dealt with positively.

The important thing is to have a discussion about ground rules/norms early on. Establish norms that everyone on the team can live with, then post them where they are easily seen during team meetings.