



9 tips to achieve business partnership failure - Guaranteed!

If you are thinking about establishing a business partnership or alliance, or if you have one already established, reading these tips will give you a head start in pin pointing what to do to guarantee partnership failure.

The beauty of these tips is that even by firmly sticking to only one of them you will guarantee the partnership to tremble, or fall over.

- 1. Don't get your own house in order before entering into a partnership.** It doesn't matter if your business is already having trouble to communicate between departments, or if the internal business processes are weak or non-existent, or if there is management infighting or a power struggle; the messier you are, the higher the chances you have to fail when partnering... Keep it going that way!
- 2. Set unrealistic and vague objectives for the partnership(s).** Setting the objectives for the partnership should be a quick process focused only on your own requirements. Remember, don't try and understand your partners' objectives or create shared objectives. In addition, dream big and set unreachable goals, thereby guaranteeing the partnership is going to fail. This way, no matter how good it performs it will never measure up against your objectives.
- 3. Please, don't waste time evaluating your options before partnering;** just go with the first one. Do not listen to the hundreds of articles that talk about carefully evaluating your options and the consequences for your organisation's structure and resources. Making mistakes is the best way to learn, right? This way, you will not have trouble making impromptu decisions that will certainly hurt your partnership.
- 4. Allocate resources for the partnership(s) as you go (no need to plan).** Some will say that you need to allow adequate time and resources for the partnership. Don't listen to them! Developing a partnership involves multiple stages including selection, negotiation, creation, maintenance/ monitoring and development. That proverb *failing to plan is planning to fail* must be wrong!
- 5. Within your business, share information on a strictly 'need-to-know' basis, and keep the partnership process a secret from internal groups and functions.** To achieve this you will need to keep communications ambiguous to breed suspicion and resentment to fuel personal agendas. Please, minimise the information sharing; if you keep the partnership or the possibility to partner to yourself, you'll guarantee that none of the stakeholders will either be ready or prepared to make it work, so failure is guaranteed!
- 6. Never trust your partner(s) nor allow trust to develop.** When have you heard that a successful partnership is about trust? {sic} To maximise the failure rate, make sure you don't meet promises or deliver reliably, always 'keep your guns next to you' and never allow your partner to feel comfortable when doing business with you. Finally, always swing power sharing, risk sharing and



control within the partnership strongly in your favour. To maximise your power and dominance, have your hands on all the ropes. At all times, you will have the loudest voice. Let your partner carry the risks and the potential cost associated with them. This will guarantee a win lose arrangement.

7. Leave the Partnership to manage it self. After the partnership has been formally established, forget about it. Ignore the fact that partnerships are a complex mix of individual behaviours, organisational cultures and systems, and contractual requirements. Avoid copying successful partnerships that have at their foundation a framework which identifies the right behaviours, the most efficient processes and the most effective governance structure needed at those points of interdependence which provides the clarity needed to function and the ability to navigate through the different situations that will be encountered throughout the life of the partnership. Additionally, if you can, avoid at all cost activities such as partnership reviews, or partnership audits. Because, contrary to the experts advice, deep inside you know they are useless as they might give you a reality check for the partnership, pinpointing what is going or might go wrong. After all who needs contingency planning?

8. Never measure the success/value of the partnership(s). Make sure you don't discuss what success looks like or how it will be measured at both a corporate and an individual level. Anyway if you diligently followed tip number three, the partnership achievements are never going to be good enough so, why bother to measure them!

9. Finally, avoid adapting and changing. If you do, it might help the partnership to succeed! Stick to your guns. Never mind if your partner has more efficient methods that might save you time and money, you know your business! Please always discourage discussion with your partner(s) about what could go wrong, and how you'll deal with it. Heaven forbid - you might end up with both parties having an exit strategy and a plan B.

If you have a partnership already in place and you can truthfully say that you have never followed most or any of the 9 tips mentioned...then congratulations; your partnership(s) must be thriving. Keep up the great work...you deserve to succeed.

On the other hand, if you are diligently practicing any of the tips above, you will join over 50% of alliances and partnerships in failure or delivering lower than expected results. Is that what you really want?

If you know what changes to make and how to do it, then go ahead and act now. If you're unsure and would value some assistance, visit www.affinitymaker.com and connect with partnership and alliance experts.



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