



CHALLENGES OF STRATEGIC ALLIANCE MANAGERS AND PARTNER MANAGERS

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http://spibr.org/what_alliance_mgrs_need.pdf

This document is based on over 16 years of experience as a value-creating strategic alliance manager, 6 years working with clients and informal research – deeply listening to strategic alliance/partner managers and others. This document's structure is based on the Customer Empathy Map in the book, *Business Model Generation*, by Alexander Osterwalder and Yves Pigneur.

What do Strategic Alliance/Partner Managers ...

See?

- **STRATEGIC DISCONNECT** – between business strategy and what's needed for a healthy relationship; between statements (e.g., purpose, mission, values) and behaviors
- **METRICS AND MEASUREMENTS** – how do we map long-term to near-term, intangible to tangibles (especially incremental sales revenue or increased cost savings)?
- **CHAOS AND LACK OF CLARITY** – too much too fast, lack of clear and consistent priorities
- **COMPLEXITIES** – legal/regulatory, finance, technical, process, people, sales, organization, ...
- **DYSFUNCTIONAL DRAMA** – “people issues,” mistrust, past behaviors, miscommunication, ...
- **FEW PEOPLE WHO “GET IT”** – business are so focused on near-term sales (value-extraction) that long-term value-creation suffers. People ask, “What is a strategic alliance/partnership?”

Hear?

- **PERVASIVE LACK OF TRUST** – low interpersonal and inter-organizational trust
- **COMPLAINTS** – from management, stakeholders and the alliance team
- **LACK OF APPRECIATION** – lots of “second guessers” about the relationship and my role

Think and Feel?

- **OVERWHELMED** – with complexity, lack of clarity and drama; insecure and frustrated
- **CONFUSED ABOUT THE JOB** – “Who am I?,” lack of clear identity, role ambiguity
- **LONELY** – “Few understand my world; I feel priority-less and maybe direction-less”
- **UNAPPRECIATED** – by the organization and by managers; self-doubt

Say and Do?

- **“I AM IN CHARGE”** – after making this public statement they often ask themselves “Really?”
- **“MORE”** – “Come on guys – more sales, more results, more ...”
- **“FASTER”** – “Faster, faster, faster – come on guys, faster!”
- **ACT LIKE A CHEERLEADER** – despite internal angst and doubt, and external disconnect and questioning, they have to present a positive, “can do” take charge attitude

What is Their Pain?

- **FEAR** – fear of failure and maybe even fear of success, fear of being found out, fear of losing job
- **LACK OF TRUST** – interpersonally, inter-organizationally, internally
- **OVERWHELMED WITH COMPLEXITY** – too much complexity
- **DISTRACTED BY DYSFUNCTIONAL DRAMA** – alliances/partnerships are ultimately based on people!
- **LACK** – lack of executive sponsorship, lack of personal buy-ins, lack of alignment and focus; a scarcity mindset surrounds them

What do They Hope to Gain?

- **EMPOWERMENT** – personally empowered, able to empower others; able to obtain personal buy-in and clear organizational alignment and focus
- **RESPECT** – from others, which ultimately comes from oneself
- **TRUST** – throughout the alliance/partnership a more trust-filled climate: the alliance is on-track to create value; executive-level and individual patience (long-term trust); neutralization of dysfunctional drama
- **CLARITY** – clear vision, next steps, priorities; clarity in removing value-impeding obstacles; a clear commitment to long-term value-creation; the power of/in simplicity
- **BEING A CREATOR** – be the value-creator of the alliance/partnership; “I love my work and work my love;” a more collaborative atmosphere, focused on long-term intangibles driving near-term tangible results

Go to http://spibr.org/value_proposition.pdf for more hope ...