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?
- PERVERSIVE 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?
- OVERWHEMED – 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 – interpersonal, inter-organizationally, internally
- OVERWHEMED 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 …