

Partnerships are made by people, not organizations!

Community efforts work best when they are built on a foundation of community partnerships. Partnerships help you:

- Stretch you capacity – help you do more than you could do by yourself
- Use your limited resources more effectively
- Create new ways of doing things
- Build more responsive services
- Promote inclusiveness and encourage everyone to participate
- Strengthen your voice on issues, strengthen your presence in the community

Partnerships take a lot of time to develop and maintain. It takes time to develop trust and strong working relationships with “outsiders”. It is important to remember that people, not organizations, make partnerships. Organizations, and governments, create a supportive or non-supportive environment for the development of partnerships by virtue of their working policies and procedures. Partnerships are about shared power, however that power is rarely equal.

Principles of Partnerships

- Mutual commitment to a shared goal
- Recognition of each partner’s strengths and acceptance of shared contributions
- Shared responsibility and decision making
- Realization that partnerships take time, energy and effort to develop and maintain
- Mutual benefit to all partners

Who are the partners in your community?

- Voluntary sector: service clubs, volunteer groups, churches
- Government sector: municipal, provincial/territorial, federal
- Corporate sector: employers of all sizes (start with where your participant’s work)
- Community sector: parents, grandparents, youth, media, community leaders
- Public sector: colleges, universities, agencies, hospitals, doctor’s dentists

Types of Partners

There are two types of partnerships in the community: formal partnerships and casual partnerships. Formal partnerships are partners who will work with you on shared goals, sharing in the development of solutions and taking responsibility for actions along the way. These partnerships take a lot of patience and time to establish. Casual partners are those people who provide a specific service or need to your group on a one time or occasional basis without formally participating in a process. Usually casual partners are developed through a handshake, a personal conversation or perhaps a letter of request instead of more formal partnership building processes. Casual partners include the business that donates a door prize for your event or the church that agrees to hold your public meeting in their basement. They are not necessarily interested in building long-term relationships, but it is important for you to recognize their contributions, however small.

Partner or stakeholder?

The CARS process is built from the community up rather than the government down, with a focus on community partnerships. It is built with community participation from many sectors and through partnerships with all levels of government. The concept of partnerships is often confused with the concept of community input or stakeholder participation. Ensuring the broader community, or at least the people affected by your actions are part of the decision making process is a vital component of developing and maintaining community driven, responsive services. You can provide this opportunity however, without entering into formal working partnerships with every group or sector in the community. Given the amount of energy, time, trust and commitment needed to maintain good working partnerships, groups are encouraged to choose their working partners wisely.

What can partners contribute? Be as imaginative as possible!

Gifts in Kind

- Products
- Service/labour
- Facilities
- Employee volunteer programs
- Advice/counsel
- Bulk ordering
- Use of partner's name

Cash Donations

- One time
- Annual renewable support
- Employee donations
- Matching gifts
- Loans
- Event marketing/sponsorship
- Cause related marketing

6. How do you maintain partnerships?

PLAN YOUR APPROACH BUT BALANCE IT WITH ACTION

ALWAYS COMMUNICATE EXPECTATIONS

REMAIN GOAL ORIENTATED

TAKE A CONSENSUS APPROACH TO DECISION MAKING

NEVER REFUSE INTEREST, EVERYONE CAN CONTRIBUTE IN SOME WAY

EMPOWER ALL PARTNERS

RESOLVE PROBLEMS IMMEDIATELY, COMMUNICATION IS ESSENTIAL

STAY AWAY FROM TERRITORIALISM

HONOUR YOUR COMMITMENTS

IDENTIFY RESOURCES/GIFTS OF EACH PARTNER

PUBLICALLY ACKNOWLEDGE SUCCESSES.....CELEBRATE!

SAY THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF THE SOLUTION



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