

well connected



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How to Read This Book

A one-page guide to where to start and what sections of the books might be most helpful to you—now.

Acknowledgements

Introduction

My story—from the tough, competitive world of broadcast network journalism to disillusionment with Christian non-profits and back to hope as I began to see that God’s people really could work together—with extraordinary results and personal joy.

PART ONE: THE BIG PICTURE

1. Quickstart: Partnership Principles and Benefits

Want the really quick read? Here it is in one chapter! Not much on how to do it, but you’ll see some of the huge benefits that flow from Kingdom collaboration and why knowing what you’re doing is important.

2. Why Partnership: What’s the Motivation?

You mean there really is a difference in results when God’s people work together? You mean it’s just not guilt and “ought to” that motivates collaboration? Check it out. God’s designed us for this, business proves it every day, and the verdict is now in from Christian initiatives around the world.

3. Partnership: So Many Ideas, So Many Definitions!

Networks, partnerships, strategic alliances. Is it all really just mumbo jumbo?! What’s the difference, and is one better than the other? Learn how each form of collaboration has its own place, special role, and unique power.

PART TWO: THE GOD DESIGN

4. The God Design—Relationships: Wholeness, Unity and Diversity

The big splits—man with God and man with man. All people are unique, but we were originally intended to work *together*. In Eden, that was the design—partnerships and networks help us reclaim it.

5. The God Design—Spiritual Change: A Process Not an Event

Everybody wants quick results. Most folks want to invest in Christian work that yields clearly visible spiritual fruit—the “reaping” that Jesus talked about. Partnerships address the *whole process* of the spiritual journey and empower *everyone* to be a strategic part—and know it!

6. The God Design—Understanding Life Change Decisions

All of life’s important decisions are a process, some acknowledged in a specific moment, but the result of dozens if not hundreds of influences. This is a critical realization if we want to encourage friends and neighbors to consider Jesus! This chapter unpacks how working together can change everything—for the good!

PART THREE: BEHIND THE SCENES

7. Vision: Partnership’s Driving Force

If we’re on a journey, how do we know when we’ve arrived? The destination is the vision that drives us on. Big ideas, even in small communities, can have huge consequences. The chances of realizing the big vision are immeasurably greater when we join hands and work together.

8. Prayer: Often Overlooked, Never Overdone

The real eternal game is not one of guns and money. Ultimately, all real change is empowered by the Holy Spirit. But how do we connect the power of prayer to the daily reality of trying to help God’s people work together? Here’s the story.

9. On the Move: Partnership Is A Process, Not An Event

History proves the quickest way to kill a potential partnership or strategic network is to call a meeting! Get an idea, call a few people together, hope/expect that they’ll understand and “buy” your idea? Unlikely! Here are the most basic keys to success.

PART FOUR: ON THE WAY

10. On the Way—Part One: Exploration

Someone’s got to know the big picture and most of the key players. Partnership takes time, is driven by vision, and is sustained by commitment. These pages guide you through this “R&D” stage step by step, show you how to avoid putting your foot in the wrong place, and explain how to get the outcomes you pray for.

11. On the Way—Part Two: Formation

It's called "looking over the brink." All your vision, hard work, and relationship building brings you to this big moment. Will they or won't they? Now is the time to see if people really are ready to work together. The key is to be a great facilitator, not a manipulator.

12. On the Move: Key Elements of Successful Partnership Meetings

Establishing your agenda, planning and running your first meeting, and ensuring the participation and genuine "buy in" that you want—in these pages you get the "how tos" that help you sustain success.

13. On The Way—Part Three: Operation

Turning the dream into reality. From the euphoria of the first meeting's success to sustaining the vision and partnership effectiveness, here are some insights on what you'll face and how to deal with the challenges that will most certainly come your way!

PART FIVE: WORKING IT OUT

14. The Partnership Facilitator: The Vision-Powered Servant Leader

Who makes the best partnership or network facilitator? You may be surprised! Check out the qualities of those men and women, at home and abroad, who have helped God's people produce the most significant spiritual changes. Plus, a check list of key things you'll need to do and main outcomes to look for.

15. Building Hope: Meeting Expectations and Sharing Credit

Who are the people who are critical to your partnership or network—but whom you don't see? Why have some people who seemed enthusiastic in the early stages quietly stopped participating? Why do some people feel like the collaborative effort really isn't "theirs"? Keeping hope, anticipation, and a sense of accomplishment alive in your partnership.

16. Form Follows Function: Effective Partnership Structures

Are you building a lemonade stand or a skyscraper? Trying to get neighbors together to reach the kids in your neighborhood or twenty ministries to reach a major people group? Do you need a constitution, memo of agreement, or simple consensus? Do you need dues or membership fees, or can you realize the dream on voluntary contributions? This chapter helps you take the simplest and most direct route—which is usually the most effective.

PART SIX: SPECIAL CASES, SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES

17. Networks: International, Functional, and Geographic

We live in an increasingly global, interconnected world. Communication is being revolutionized and teams from around the world connect to complete a single task. These developments coincide with the globalization of the Church. Linking Christians who are spread over vast distances but bound by a common vision is not only possible, but essential. What are the trends, special opportunities, and unique challenges of this new world order?

18. Partnership: The Special Challenge of Cities

The modern city may be the greatest challenge the Church faces today. Complex, fragmented, full of special interests, and competitive in spirit—it's not easy to work together here. Often lonely—sometimes brutal. Get insights on how to analyze your city, define specific objectives, gather others around a common vision, and move forward, *together*.

19. Partnership: Implications for Business and the Marketplace

All truth is God's truth. The central, lasting values of effective partnerships and networks are relevant everywhere: in business, service clubs, law enforcement, social work, science, education, or the arts. See how the Kingdom values and partnership principles in this book are relevant, no matter where God has placed you.

20. The Future of Partnership

The future is in collaboration. Going it alone won't work any more. Those in God's company must undergo profound changes in order to experience his blessing. The journey will be marked by wonder, faith, and probably tears, but, most certainly, by great new experiences of power and hope!

Appendix

- Internet Based Resources
- Our Ministry—Are We Good Partnership Material?
- Partnership/Network Evaluation
- Being Well Connected: 15 Critical Principles
- Selected Bibliography: Partnerships and Networks

Roles of Partnership and network Facilitator

Notes



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