
**Collaborative business relationship
management — Guidelines for micro,
small and medium-sized enterprises
on the implementation of the
fundamental principles**

*Management collaboratif d'une relation d'affaire — Lignes
directrices pour les micro-, petites et moyennes entreprises pour
l'implémentation des principes fondamentaux*



STANDARDSISO.COM : Click to view the full PDF of ISO 44003:2021



COPYRIGHT PROTECTED DOCUMENT

© ISO 2021

All rights reserved. Unless otherwise specified, or required in the context of its implementation, no part of this publication may be reproduced or utilized otherwise in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, or posting on the internet or an intranet, without prior written permission. Permission can be requested from either ISO at the address below or ISO's member body in the country of the requester.

ISO copyright office
CP 401 • Ch. de Blandonnet 8
CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva
Phone: +41 22 749 01 11
Email: copyright@iso.org
Website: www.iso.org

Published in Switzerland

Contents

	Page
Foreword	v
Introduction	vi
1 Scope	1
2 Normative references	1
3 Terms and definitions	1
4 Structure of this document	1
5 Implementation of the principles of collaborative business relationships management	2
5.1 Relationship management	2
5.1.1 What: summary of the intent	2
5.1.2 Why: explanation of relevance	2
5.1.3 How: implementation guidance	2
5.2 Visions and values	3
5.2.1 What: summary of the intent	3
5.2.2 Why: explanation of relevance	3
5.2.3 How: implementation guidance	3
5.3 Business objectives	4
5.3.1 What: summary of the intent	4
5.3.2 Why: explanation of relevance	4
5.3.3 How: implementation guidance	4
5.4 Collaborative leadership	5
5.4.1 What: summary of the intent	5
5.4.2 Why: explanation of relevance	5
5.4.3 How: implementation guidance	5
5.5 Governance and processes	6
5.5.1 What: summary of the intent	6
5.5.2 Why: explanation of relevance	6
5.5.3 How: implementation guidance	6
5.6 Collaborative competence and behaviour	7
5.6.1 What: summary of the intent	7
5.6.2 Why: explanation of relevance	7
5.6.3 How: implementation guidance	7
5.7 Trust and commitment to mutual benefit	8
5.7.1 What: summary of the intent	8
5.7.2 Why: explanation of relevance	8
5.7.3 How: implementation guidance	8
5.8 Value creation	8
5.8.1 What: summary of the intent	8
5.8.2 Why: explanation of relevance	8
5.8.3 How: implementation guidance	8
5.9 Information and knowledge sharing	9
5.9.1 What: summary of the intent	9
5.9.2 Why: explanation of relevance	9
5.9.3 How: implementation guidance	9
5.10 Risk management	9
5.10.1 What: summary of the intent	9
5.10.2 Why: explanation of relevance	9
5.10.3 How: implementation guidance	10
5.11 Relationship measurement and optimization	10
5.11.1 What: summary of the intent	10
5.11.2 Why: explanation of relevance	10
5.11.3 How: implementation guidance	11
5.12 Exit strategy	11

5.12.1	What: summary of the intent	11
5.12.2	Why: explanation of the relevance	11
5.12.3	How: implementation guidance	11
Annex A (informative) Key elements of relationship management plans		13
Annex B (informative) Competencies and collaborative behaviour		15
Bibliography		17

STANDARDSISO.COM : Click to view the full PDF of ISO 44003:2021

Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 286, *Collaborative business relationship management*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

Using the principles given in ISO/TR 44000, these guidelines address how collaborative working initiatives by micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), together or in networks, can develop mutually beneficial engagements.

This document can assist the MSME to gain advantages through, for example:

- quick access to complementary resources, markets and new customers;
- innovation, research and development;
- economies of scale;
- sharing risk, costs and resources;
- accessing knowledge, expertise and competences;
- efficiency and stability.

The guidelines within this document can support any number of MSMEs collaborating with any number of larger organizations or each other.

Examples of possible collaborative working models include:

- collaborating one to one, where MSMEs develop collaborations with other MSMEs;
- groups of MSMEs, where MSMEs build collaborative networks;
- MSMEs or groups of MSMEs collaborating with larger organizations.

Collaborative business relationship management — Guidelines for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises on the implementation of the fundamental principles

1 Scope

This document gives guidelines for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to use the twelve principles of collaborative business relationships given in ISO/TR 44000 to improve their collaborative capability.

This document is applicable to MSMEs regardless of what they do, where they are, their operating environment, culture, social capital and objectives.

NOTE The definition of an MSME varies widely. This document is intended for the use of any organization that identifies or is identified as an MSME.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 44001, *Collaborative business relationship management systems — Requirements and framework*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 44001 apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

4 Structure of this document

This document is based on the twelve principles of collaborative business relationships given in ISO/TR 44000.

For each principle, there are three main subclauses:

- What: a summary of the intent of the principle;
- Why: an explanation of its relevance to the MSME;
- How: guidance on its implementation.

5 Implementation of the principles of collaborative business relationships management

5.1 Relationship management

5.1.1 What: summary of the intent

Relationship management is important to managing and sustaining collaborative relationships and underpins their success. This does not need to be a complex process but should be one which can be easily understood and communicated across the organization and to external parties.

5.1.2 Why: explanation of relevance

To be sustainable and deliver value over time, a collaborative relationship needs to have a continued focus on effective relationship management. Collaborative relationships that are based solely on personal relationships, although important, are vulnerable where personnel can change over time. A documented approach enables consistency and improvement over time. Furthermore, those joining the relationship have a clear perspective on the way it is to be managed and the expectations of the parties involved.

5.1.3 How: implementation guidance

5.1.3.1 Establishment of the relationship management plan (RMP)

The owners and/or managers need to understand their market, their business environment and the expectations of their stakeholders. They should identify those areas of the external and internal environment in which the business seeks to achieve its objectives.

The starting point should be an identification and internal assessment of the current relationships within which the organization is engaged. This is likely to include customers, any external partners, key suppliers and, on occasions where there is a split responsibility across the organization (e.g. products and services), internal coordination.

If it is decided that the collaborative approach is appropriate, the owners and/or managers should establish an RMP which captures the desired business approach to collaboration (see [Annex A](#) for a list of key elements of relationship management plans). Developing an RMP can be an iterative process.

The RMP should consider:

- roles and responsibilities;
- resources;
- objectives and benefits;
- initial risks.

5.1.3.2 Relationship segmentation

The MSME evaluates the relative importance of external relationships, including current, future and those approaching the company. In developing an approach, it is necessary to understand where collaboration can be an advantage and where a structured approach to building a sustainable relationship and promoting the appropriate behaviours would occur. Each business opportunity will be different in terms of the context and the parties involved and whether this is an existing or new activity.

5.1.3.3 Developing and managing the relationship

The collaborative partners should establish the right environment to support collaborative working, including contractual frameworks or agreements, roles and responsibilities. They should establish a joint management team.

Each collaborative partner should identify the senior executive responsible (SER), or their appointed representative, to support the joint programme and define his or her role, responsibility and authority to act as a joint management team.

The joint management team should:

- a) review the joint objectives, including continual value creation;
- b) establish effective measurements that are monitored through an agreed reporting process;
- c) identify any additional objectives that can mutually benefit the collaboration;
- d) define the primary roles and responsibilities for the team members;
- e) identify what information is required to meet the objectives together with any known interdependencies;
- f) identify what resources, equipment, property and assets will be used from each;
- g) ensure, in accordance with objectives and governance, ongoing management of activities, including:
 - 1) maintaining alignment and engagement;
 - 2) overseeing initiatives;
 - 3) issue monitoring and resolution;
 - 4) risk monitoring and mitigation;
 - 5) negotiation and management of change.

NOTE The collaborative partners can benefit from the establishment of a joint RMP incorporating the above.

5.2 Visions and values

5.2.1 What: summary of the intent

The degree of alignment of vision and values provides guidance to stakeholders on the future direction, culture, ethics and behaviours to support effective collaboration.

5.2.2 Why: explanation of relevance

As each party considers the value of a collaborative relationship, the profile of the organization and potential compatibility with partners will be a factor in establishing and aligning their capabilities and joint performance.

5.2.3 How: implementation guidance

5.2.3.1 Defining what is important to your organization

The owners and/or managers of MSMEs need to have clarity and alignment on their vision and values when engaging with others. The nature of the relationship between partner organizations will be influenced by each party's perceptions of the other in terms of the level of effective engagement, perceived risks and opportunities created through a more integrated relationship. This in turn is likely to have a direct impact on the behaviours of the individuals.

5.2.3.2 Assessing and maintaining alignment

The vision and values of an organization will be a factor in developing alignment and the behaviours to work together effectively.

In a collaborative model, there should be consideration as to the ability of two or more organizations to work together and the behaviours necessary to facilitate success. When working together, it is often the case that day-to-day pressures will challenge what is important to each partner. As such, it is important to regularly ensure that the values of each partner are not being compromised. As particular engagements reach their conclusion, it is important to assess whether the way in which each party's values have been respected lays the foundation for further engagement.

5.3 Business objectives

5.3.1 What: summary of the intent

Objectives that are clear and commonly understood across the organization help engender a more efficient focus at all levels, ensuring that the collaboration's objectives can be achieved through the relationship to support continued effective engagement at all levels and sustained mutual benefit.

5.3.2 Why: explanation of relevance

Chances of success are improved when drivers for collaboration support the business objectives of each organization. Such approaches will require effort and resources to achieve the desired goals and outcomes.

5.3.3 How: implementation guidance

5.3.3.1 Establishing objectives

The owners and/or managers should identify the objectives of each specific collaborative business relationship. For each of them, they should define and prioritize the desired outcomes and evaluate the significant benefits and the risks that can arise. Defining the objectives for the operation and ensuring these are communicated across the organization is crucial, particularly where it can be advantageous to adopt a collaborative approach to achieve them.

5.3.3.2 Define a business case

Having defined what are the opportunities to be developed, the owners and/or managers should create a strategy and business case for each of them. This document should clearly identify the opportunity, objectives, value, risks, resources and partners for the potential collaborative relationship. The main results of this assessment for any specific opportunity should be incorporated into the RMP.

5.3.3.3 Aligning objectives for specific relationships

During the engagement process, it is important to address the objectives of each party and ensure that while these can be different, they are aligned and not in conflict. Ensuring that each partner's objectives can be achieved through the relationship will support continued effective engagement at both organizational and individual levels to sustain mutual benefit.

5.3.3.4 Engagement process

5.3.3.5 Identification of operational objectives and value

The owners and/or managers should assess their overall business objectives and the added value that a collaborative approach can support. A value analysis approach will help to focus development and

resources towards areas which can deliver maximum value. See [Annex A](#) for some examples of benefits to be gained from collaborative working.

5.3.3.6 Assessment of joint objectives

The owners and/or managers should identify where collaborative working can deliver shared benefits and should understand which of each partner's objectives overlap and where common goals can be achieved. The parties should jointly follow these steps:

- each party should identify their own objectives;
- the rationale behind them should be explained to the other party;
- joint objectives should be established;
- it should be ensured that other individual objectives are compatible.

5.3.3.7 Managing the objectives

Ensuring that each partner's objectives are being achieved through the relationship will support the right behaviours and continued effective engagement at both organizational and individual levels to sustain mutual benefit. Throughout the relationship, regular reviews should assess the performance and behaviours.

5.4 Collaborative leadership

5.4.1 What: summary of the intent

Appointing a senior person who is empowered and with the appropriate skills responsible for collaborative business relationships ensures support for the collaboration.

5.4.2 Why: explanation of relevance

A clear commitment to the collaborative business relationship from the owners/managers, leading by example and forging alignment to a shared vision, is essential to successful implementation. Visible participation by a senior person provides both focus and confidence for those directly involved in any collaboration, which in turn fosters the appropriate behaviours.

5.4.3 How: implementation guidance

5.4.3.1 SER role

The SER role is to ensure that the operating processes are effective and practically applied. They provide high level support in terms of oversight management and resource allocation. Their visible participation provides both focus and confidence for those directly involved in any collaboration, which in turn fosters the appropriate behaviours at all levels. The owners and/or managers should appoint an SER to drive the collaborative processes and establish their role, responsibility and authority. In a small company, the SER can be the owner himself/herself. See [5.6.3](#) for guidance on the experience, skills and competencies that can be appropriate to this role.

5.4.3.2 Establishing resource requirements

The owners and/or managers, with the SER, should allocate sufficient resources to manage a collaborative business relationship. The allocation should consider, for example:

- investment in the people, structures, processes and systems;
- personnel with capability, capacity and competence.

5.4.3.3 Joint management of the relationship

During the life of the collaborative relationship, it is important that the senior management of the parties regularly meet to ensure the relationship stays on track. They should monitor progress and intervene when necessary to overcome internal conflicts and resolves issue which are not handled effectively at the working level.

5.5 Governance and processes

5.5.1 What: summary of the intent

Relationships between organizations require appropriate governance that supports the collaboration.

5.5.2 Why: explanation of relevance

Effective governance of collaborative business relationships will ensure that those involved will be directed and managed through a consistent operating approach. The creation of a joint management approach provides clarity for the individuals involved where collaborative working can require changes to existing working practices and responsibilities, particularly where staff can be new to collaborative working. If these are not addressed, they can impact behaviour, confidence, performance and subsequently the level of engagement.

5.5.3 How: implementation guidance

5.5.3.1 Adapting internal practices

Management practices and accountabilities need to adapt to ensure that collaborative working is effective both internally and across joint activities. It is important to assess not only the performance aspects of each collaborative partner but also to evaluate the way in which two or more organizations can work together with a more integrated approach for mutual benefit.

5.5.3.2 Agreeing on a joint operational approach

Understanding how things will be managed is important from the beginning. Reviewing which processes and systems will be used is crucial. At the same time, it should be agreed which deliverables each needs to achieve and how these will be measured.

5.5.3.3 Overall governance model

The joint management team should establish the scope of and implement a governance model which, as a minimum, addresses the following elements:

- roles and responsibilities of the governance team;
- deliverables;
- frequency of interaction;
- joint operational plan;
- performance measurement.

5.5.3.4 Adoption of a joint issue resolution process

The joint management team should adopt and maintain a process for issue resolution that identifies and resolves issues at the earliest practicable opportunity at the appropriate level.

5.5.3.5 Communications procedures

The joint management team should implement effective communication across the collaborative working relationship. This can include both formal and informal approaches, e.g. staff briefings, newsletters, intranet, social media and shared working environments.

5.5.3.6 Agreements or contractual arrangements

The collaborative partners should jointly establish the appropriate agreements which support the collaboration. This can include risk and reward models, issue management, exit strategy, knowledge transfer and sustainability.

All performance requirements and measurement methods should be mutually agreed to ensure clarity.

5.6 Collaborative competence and behaviour

5.6.1 What: summary of the intent

Fundamental to successful collaboration is the assignment of personnel with the appropriate competence, skills and behaviours for collaborative working and, where necessary, the promotion and development of these attributes.

5.6.2 Why: explanation of relevance

Collaborative working can be a new approach in many organizations and can significantly challenge many individuals. As such, all personnel need to be aware of the requirements, implications and advantages of collaboration. Otherwise, they may not fully engage, or fail to understand the importance of their contribution and their responsibilities.

5.6.3 How: implementation guidance

5.6.3.1 Identification of key individuals' competence and behaviour

The owners and/or managers should identify the experience, skills and competencies of individuals that are involved in any collaborative initiative. People should be chosen with the appropriate skills and experience and, if necessary, operational roles and responsibilities of some of them can be redefined in order to maintain an effective collaborative relationship.

The owners and/or managers should establish the competencies, skills and behaviours that are required. This can include behavioural assessment, training, qualification, individual certification and experience (see [Annex B](#) for a guide to the competencies and collaborative behaviour of individuals that support collaborative working).

5.6.3.2 Managing the relationship

Over time, internal or external influences can introduce factors which can impact behaviours.

Examples of good collaborative behaviour include the following:

- communicating effectively, consistently, openly, honestly and in a responsive manner;
- appreciating and respecting differences in cultures, being proactive to resolve potential difficulties and overcome barriers;
- understanding and supporting others (internal and external stakeholders) in the achievement of their individual goals.

5.7 Trust and commitment to mutual benefit

5.7.1 What: summary of the intent

For collaborative working to be sustainable over time, organizations need to ensure that trust and commitment to mutual benefit is developed and maintained through both organizational and personal relationships.

5.7.2 Why: explanation of relevance

It should be recognized that developing trust is based on performance and the behaviours of those both directly and indirectly associated with the relationship. Trust in the personal relationships among the individuals working in the collaborative relationship enables them to overcome conflict and adversity. This in turn builds sustainable relationships at an organizational level. Confidence that each organization is focused on supporting the interests of their partner(s) builds and sustains trust in the relationship.

5.7.3 How: implementation guidance

5.7.3.1 Managing trust and mutual benefit within the relationship

The owners and/or managers, through the SER, need to consider how their current practices can require adjustment in order to set the stage for a more relationship-based approach. In a collaborative venture, the initial approaches between organizations can often set the tone for the future.

It is essential that trust and commitment to mutual benefit is recognized by the potential partners from the early stages of engagement if the full potential of collaborative business relationships are to be delivered. Throughout the engagement, the parties should regularly assess their behaviours and perceptions of trust, ensuring that transparency and openness remain a constant consideration.

5.8 Value creation

5.8.1 What: summary of the intent

Value creation is at the core of any collaboration and seeking additional benefits beyond the initial purpose enables a more effective and sustainable collaborative relationship.

5.8.2 Why: explanation of relevance

A focus on continual improvement is required to ensure the collaborative organization benefits from and adapts to change. Working with partners brings added insight and as trust builds, so does the opportunity to enhance working practices. A robust integrated approach, which creates new value, supports the engagement of individuals and enhances behaviours. A significant benefit from working closely with other organizations is the ability to share ideas and develop new opportunities. Collaborations should harness their joint capabilities and knowledge to build additional value.

5.8.3 How: implementation guidance

5.8.3.1 Defining value

As a first step, organizations should identify what value means in the context of their business. Value is not intended to mean just financial gain, it can have different meanings for different organizations. This can include, for example, social, environmental, reputational or other benefits.

5.8.3.2 Managing value creation

The joint management team should implement an approach to identify potential constraints and areas for improvement that is open to contributions from collaborative partners. The adoption of a robust joint value creation approach has the extra benefit of encouraging cross-organizational interaction in addition to original agreements and supports individuals' engagement, which enhances their behaviours. Creating new value is a clear indication that the relationship is robust and maturing.

5.9 Information and knowledge sharing

5.9.1 What: summary of the intent

It is fundamental within an effective collaboration that the parties acknowledge that they will share more information and knowledge than would otherwise have been the case in order to add value.

5.9.2 Why: explanation of relevance

Openness between individuals across organizational boundaries and clarity of access removes potential areas of conflict, builds trust, enhances speed of operation, facilitates appropriate behaviours and enables the creation of new value.

5.9.3 How: implementation guidance

5.9.3.1 Knowledge management

The owners and/or managers should establish an approach for managing knowledge within and between organizations, which should cover capture, creation, storage and sharing. This should include controls and designated responsibilities for how and when knowledge is recorded and how and what can be shared. A factor that often challenges organizations of all sizes is the perception that they will lose control of knowledge, intellectual property and skills by working closely with other organizations. It is important that organizations identify areas of concern in this respect before engaging with external parties, as these can vary depending on specific potential circumstances and relationships.

5.9.3.2 Joint knowledge management process

The joint management team should establish and maintain an approach which identifies the information that is required to meet the objectives together with any known interdependencies. They should also define the information which cannot be shared, e.g. intellectual property rights (IPR), proprietary data.

Providing clarity and transparency in what needs to be shared and what cannot be shared is essential to achieving the objectives of the relationship and adds value and builds trust between the partners. Failure to define this can lead to a reluctance of individuals to fully engage.

5.10 Risk management

5.10.1 What: summary of the intent

Effective collaboration depends on both the behaviours of organizations and on the individuals involved and their attitude to risk. Risk management is a critical aspect of collaborative relationships because the way threats and opportunities are managed influences behaviours, relationships and outcomes.

5.10.2 Why: explanation of relevance

Collaboration can help to mitigate some risk and drive opportunities, while at the same time it can introduce risk, such as through interdependence. Transparency of risk allows it to be managed and addressed. It has the additional benefit of providing clarity for individuals, which in turn enhances their confidence and behaviours and subsequently their level of participation.

5.10.3 How: implementation guidance

5.10.3.1 Identifying potential areas of risk

Risk management is often well established in organizations, but a collaboration can add further dimensions of risk that can need to be managed.

The owners and/or managers should carry out an initial risk assessment to identify the specific risks associated with the collaborative business relationship and potential impacts.

Risk management processes should address relationship risk, in addition to facilitating joint management of risk, by ensuring threats and opportunities are managed by those best placed to do so.

5.10.3.2 Internal risk management

The owners and/or managers should review their existing risk management approach to ensure the risks from collaborative working are recognized. There are many aspects of risk and each aspect should be identified, analysed, evaluated and treated with partners in the business relationship. In addition to the risk assessment, the owners and/or managers should develop an initial exit strategy.

5.10.3.3 Joint risk management

A joint approach to risk management ensures that, as far as is practical, all business risk is identified, assigned and managed effectively, using the resources and capabilities of the each of the participating organizations. A common failing of the risk management process is a high focus on risk transfer. A joint approach to risk effectively uses the resources and capabilities of the partner organizations.

The joint management team should create a joint risk register, which should be readily accessible to all team members and reflect the risk issues of the joint approach, in addition to those of the individual partners. The risk register should clearly define ownership for managing each identified risk and, where possible, the potential impact and mitigation approach to be taken.

5.10.3.4 Managing risk

Proactive review of the joint risk register ensures that the partners work together on all risks, whether these are common issues or those which can impact only one partner. There should equally be a focus towards harnessing those opportunities that have been identified. As risk is a key consideration, regular assessment of the risk register provides a common focus on constraints and opportunities within the collaboration while at the same time providing an indication as to the maturity and health of the relationship.

5.11 Relationship measurement and optimization

5.11.1 What: summary of the intent

Measuring the health of a collaborative working relationship by evaluating relationship and value criteria is crucial to continually improving its performance and capacity to create value and deliver on current and future business objectives.

5.11.2 Why: explanation of relevance

Measuring and monitoring the performance of relationships will provide MSMEs with early insights for themselves and their partners to proactively and collaboratively address performance issues and ensure the achievement of the joint objectives.

There are likely to be continual challenges placed on the relationship which can impact performance, such as changes to the business circumstances of any of the partners, including organizational changes,

changes in personnel, together with day-to-day operational issues. Measuring and monitoring on a periodic basis will help uncover areas for improvement to optimize performance and avoid complacency.

5.11.3 How: implementation guidance

5.11.3.1 Implementation of monitoring of behaviour and trust indicators

The joint management team should establish and implement a process to monitor, measure and review the performance of the collaboration using agreed criteria. These can include:

- performance against objectives;
- strength of the relationship;
- value creation.

During the engagement, the partners should agree on a range of monitors, both quantitative and qualitative, which would provide a basis for joint management reviews to assess ongoing performance through the appropriate meetings. Reporting and exchanges of information include a focus on managing the joint relationship.

5.12 Exit strategy

5.12.1 What: summary of the intent

Most business relationships will eventually reach an end, either on the planned completion of an activity or beforehand for any reason. Defining the exit strategy for any collaboration is crucial before venturing into such an arrangement.

5.12.2 Why: explanation of the relevance

An agreed exit strategy improves understanding, removes uncertainty and thus enhances joint engagement. The exit strategy will vary depending on the business objectives and the nature of the partners involved. Understanding the rules and parameters for controlled disengagement will provide clarity and confidence to engage appropriately.

5.12.3 How: implementation guidance

5.12.3.1 Defining an exit strategy

The owners/managers, with the SER, should define the key elements of the exit strategy for their organization. The exit strategy should not be viewed in a negative way. The intent is to use the exit process to reinforce the relationship and its possible future evolution. Defining an exit strategy will highlight factors which can need addressing through the engagement process and into operations. The behaviours of individuals within partner organizations will, to some extent, be influenced by how they perceive the end of any given engagement.

Some key items for exit strategy consideration are:

- business objectives (short and long term);
- resources, capacity, capability and continuity;
- customers and other stakeholders;
- financial impact.

5.12.3.2 Establishment of a joint exit strategy

The joint management team should jointly agree and regularly review all aspects of their relationship, objectives and contractual obligations, together with any implications that can compromise or constrain engagement through lack of clarity, should disengagement be appropriate.

Some key items for exit strategy consideration are:

- information, e.g. knowledge transfer and data protection;
- assets, e.g. IPR, licences, equipment and facilities;
- resources, e.g. financial, human and technological;
- customers and other stakeholders, e.g. security, safety, business continuity;
- disengagement plan.

5.12.3.3 Disengagement and future opportunities

At the point of disengagement, the partners should ensure that they have addressed all aspects of the exit strategy and evaluate the relationship both jointly and from their individual perspective with consideration of future opportunities. This would in most cases involve a workshop on lessons learned and, where appropriate, updating of the joint RMP for possible future use.

STANDARDSISO.COM : Click to view the full PDF of ISO 44003:2021

Annex A (informative)

Key elements of relationship management plans

In order to assist in developing RMPs, the elements in [Table A.1](#) should be considered in relation to each of the twelve principles.

Table A.1 — Key elements of a relationship management plan (RMP)

Relationship management	
1	Identify within your organization who will have overall responsibility for the management of collaborative relationships to act as the senior executive responsible (SER).
2	Establish a defined approach to managing collaborative relationships and incorporate it within an RMP, which can be a basis for a joint RMP.
3	Identify those external relationships and their level of importance in terms of your business objectives where a collaborative approach can be an advantage.
Visions and values	
1	Define within your organization the visions and values. These can include areas of social impact, environmental issues and ethical considerations, which can impact external relationships.
2	Ensure these issues are communicated to your management and staff.
3	When engaging with other organizations, ensure your visions and values are considered and aligned with external organizations.
Business objectives	
1	Define the overall business objectives for your organization and communicate them effectively to all your staff.
2	For each business opportunity where collaborative working is to be a success factor, ensure the approach is supported by an adequate defined business case.
3	When engaging with external parties, ensure that consideration is given to identifying both the joint and individual objectives of each party.
Collaborative leadership	
1	In appointing the SER, ensure he/she has the appropriate skills and experience to undertake the role with the appropriate authority, and to oversee and manage the processes required for effective collaborative working.
2	Ensure that adequate resources are allocated with the necessary skills to undertake a collaborative engagement.
3	Where necessary, ensure that suitable people development and training is considered and available.
Governance and process	
1	Review, where necessary, all internal processes, systems and operating requirements to ensure they are compatible and support collaborative working. Where necessary, the SER should make recommendations for improvements.
2	When creating a collaborative approach with external parties, undertake a joint review to identify any potential conflicts resulting from individual operating practices, and adapt where appropriate and agreed.
3	Implement a joint management team governance model that ensures transparency and accountabilities.
Collaborative competence and behaviour	
1	Assess and identify the capabilities, skills, experience and behaviours of staff to working within collaborative approach and, where necessary, provide support and development.
2	When engaging with external parties, evaluate their culture, reputation and behaviours to ensure they have the appropriate and aligned skills.