

BS 11000

FAQs from Institute for Collaborative Working website

Why should my organisation consider BS 11000?

The business world is changing probably faster than ever before to meet these challenges organisations are more frequently looking to develop alliances both with customers and suppliers. As customers seek to evaluate potential partners and alliances the national standard provides a high level of confidence. BS 11000 is a neutral platform on which to create more effective engagement.

Can I benefit from BS 11000 without certification?

The benefits of collaboration will be organisation specific based on the business objectives and much of this can be realised without going down the certification route. The value of certification is that introduces a level of rigor to ensure internal processes are maintain and followed proving greater sustainability in relationships.

How do I get started?

The best approach is to identify a pilot programme which reflects a relationship that is currently working collaborative. By working through the standard against the current policies, procedures and approach you will be able to create a blue print that can be replicated across the organisation if appropriate.

What is it likely to cost to implement BS 11000?

The cost of implementation is reflective of the level of maturity in terms of collaborative working. An initial self assessment will enable organisations to gauge the current level of compliance and a facilitated GAP analysis will provide a definitive implementation programme.

How long will it take to reach certification?

Current experience working with reasonably mature client suggests that between 3-6 months allows for the necessary processes to be embedded in an organisation.

Who will undertake the assessment?

Whilst the BS 11000 Network partners can provide support during implementation the real value of the standard in the market place is that any assessment is totally independent therefore BSI will undertake the assessment

What do we mean by the term partnering?

Partnering is a commitment between two or more parties in a collaborative relationship to create value by striving to achieve shared competitive goals and operational benefit through a spirit of mutual trust and openness. It is important to recognize that not every relationship is a partnership but it can encompass the partnering ethos.

How do you start to develop a collaborative approach?

Every relationship is unique so there is no one-size-fits-all solution but, based on experience, the standard provides a route map that will enable organisations to consider the implications and benefits of collaborative working.

What are the most important considerations?

There are perhaps three key issues in any relationship. The first is to appreciate that in every relationship there are three sets of objectives Yours-Mine and Ours. A robust relationship must recognise all three and work towards satisfying them all. This must be supported by an effective dispute management process and finally the development of an exit strategy since once people understand the issues for disengagement it relieves the constraints for engagement.

Why are relationships important in business?

Organisations are made up of people and whilst systems, procedures and processes can direct performance it is the interaction between people that are the catalyst for success. Simply put 'companies make contracts but people make business'

What benefits can one get from collaborative working?

There are many different outcomes for collaborative relationships which depend on the objectives of the partners. The easy way to think about potential benefits is to consider improvements in delivery processes, which could be achieved by working with external organisations with complementary skills and resources. It very much depends on the strategic objectives of the organisations involved.

How do you measure effective relationships?

There has been a lot of emphasis on measuring performance through Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Service Level Agreements (SLAs), which are outcome based but very little done to consider how well organisations work with each other. The CRAFT range of tools developed to monitor and test the strength of the relationships, which drive these outcomes.

If partnering is about working well together why do I need a dispute procedure?

The more integrated the relationship and the greater the focus on innovative approaches the more likelihood of differing views. Strong relationships are built on the ability of the partners to resolve disputes effectively.

How important is the behaviour of individuals?

Organisations are about people who in turn are a kaleidoscope of traits and styles and whilst companies may have strong cultures success rides on the ability of people to work together and share knowledge. Critical behaviours of individuals can undermine even the strongest of relationships. The BS 11000 approach is structured to constantly reinforce collaborative behavioural patterns

Is partnering or collaboration always a good idea?

The simple answer is no. A partnering relationship takes time and effort and therefore in business there should always be a comparable return on investment. Considering partnering approaches should be linked to business strategic issues and developed where they bring maximum benefit. This is not to say that partnering attributes cannot be applied in all relationships.

Do I need executive support for partnering?

Collaborative relationships will likely cut across many internal boundaries and departments. It is important therefore to ensure that strategic partnering arrangements have support right from the top an organisation.

Everyone talks about trust but how do you get that in a contract?

The answer is you can't. Only by meeting promises and delivering performance can trust be created.

How do I protect intellectual property?

Collaboration is no different in these terms to any other contracting approach. The difference is that often the real benefits of working closely with a partner are to create new knowledge. Every agreement should clearly define who owns what and who will own any jointly created IP.

Can collaboration help with outsourcing contracts?

Absolutely, since in many cases these arrangements involve organisations sharing delivery processes and even placing outsourcing companies in direct line with your customers it is crucial to have a partner that shares your ethos and culture.

Is collaboration just about working without conflict?

In short we would suggest not. Collaborative relationships take effort and thus they should be focused on delivering value. In fact once an agreement has been put in place there should be regular programmes to stretch the value proposition as this will help to strengthen the relationship.

What is the downside to partnering?

In any relationship there has to be give and take so partnering relationships cannot be one sided. Often they involve commitments that restrict one side or the other. This has to be considered up front and addressed before putting the arrangement in place.

How do I know if my partner is competitive?

The selection process should consider the traditional competition environment and there should be provision in any agreement to test the market. This is ok in the majority of cases but for complex partnering programmes which involve for example joint marketing then at the outset it is important to lay down clear and agreed performance milestones to gauge the continued value of the relationship.

What sort of savings can I expect from a partnering relationship?

There are no absolutes since value objectives in every case will be different but cost should be seen as total cost. If the relationship is solely focused on delivering saving then the likelihood is it will fail relatively quickly unless there is a detailed risk and reward arrangement. Even so the pressure to retain savings will often create pressures. However many organisations suggest that integrated collaborative working can realise upwards of 30% reductions in total cost.

What sort of structure is needed to manage a partnering arrangement?

This can vary a lot, e.g. the size of the organisations concerned will have an input here. An Executive partnering board is recommended with sponsors from both partners. A joint management team should support this with shared responsibility for performance.

How do I know if my organisation is suitable to partner with others?

The BS 11000 self assessment should be the starting point for any development programme by understanding your own strengths and weaknesses you can start to create the right engagement strategy.

Is there a risk in collaboration?

There is risk in every aspect of business and collaboration is no different managing risk is what makes organisations successful. In many cases the risks that organisation already have can be mitigated by working closer with strategic partners and joint management.

How do customers react to partnering arrangements?

Partnerships and collaborative alliances are becoming more common in today's market and customers are likely to welcome them, providing organisations can demonstrate that they have robust approaches that are suitably managed. In many cases these collaborative approaches can be structured to meet customer demands.

Why do I need a relationship management framework?

The more global and diverse the market place the more important it is to have a clear process for developing the right relationship. BS 11000 has been created to establish a common and independent baseline that helps both sides understand how to move forward.

Can collaboration help develop CSR programmes?

It certainly can, working with other organisations and often making them part of the overall process often means they are becoming part of your operation. It is important to find partners that share your culture and approach so as to support your position in the market place.

How long should I allow for a collaborative arrangement to mature?

This depends on the specific circumstances but in general experience suggests it take 12 months to establish the relationship and further 6-12 months to deliver real value. This is why it is important to focus on building the right relationship appropriate to the business strategy and not trying to partner with everyone.

How do I know I am getting value for money?

The only answer is to ensure you have clear objectives up front and well defined measurements in place to monitor progress towards them.

Source: Institute for Collaborative Working website:

http://www.instituteforcollaborativeworking.com/servs_pkn_faq_ns.cfm

October 2013