

# Sustaining the Relationship and Measuring Performance

*It is easy to put the commitments on paper, but it is more difficult to put them into action.*

– *Judy Hollis*

*President, Judith L. Hollis LLC*

*Former Senior Vice President, Wendy's International, Inc.*

***In order to achieve the desired outcomes made possible through partnership, it is critical to leave the partnership session with a jointly developed implementation plan and sustainable management routines that help ensure that the agreed upon goals are achieved.***

## Overview

The Partnership Model should be used only with a company's most important customers and suppliers. Successful partnerships with these customers and suppliers require trust and collaboration to work on joint value creation opportunities. In order to achieve the desired outcomes made possible through partnership, it is critical to leave the partnership session with a jointly developed implementation plan and sustainable management routines that help ensure that the agreed upon goals are achieved. In this chapter, we describe a partnership maintenance framework that can be used to sustain the relationship and monitor performance over time. The framework also provides direction regarding when the partnership should be reexamined due to driver achievement and/or a significant change in the environment surrounding the relationship.

## Partnership Development and Maintenance Framework

As we have described throughout this book, a partnership is a tailored business relationship based on mutual trust, openness, shared risk and shared rewards that results in business performance greater than would be achieved by two firms working together in the absence of partnership. This enhanced business performance can only be achieved if the partnership is managed appropriately within and across both organizations. Otherwise, an imbalance in the relationship will arise and one or both parties will become disenchanted with the partnership.

The Partnership Model is a tool that can be used to structure business relationships. What remains to be addressed is how to maintain these partnerships over time. While the Partnership Model provides a repeatable process for identifying the potential of a given relationship and helps calibrate the management components needed to pursue this potential, using it only requires a one and one-half day meeting. In order to sustain the momentum gained during the meeting over the days, months and years to follow, managers must continually measure progress, identify gaps in desired outcomes, address these gaps as well as