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Aligning Partnership Objectives is Key to Collaboration Success - GBPA Report Reveals

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LONDON--(BUSINESS WIRE)--October 04, 2007--

Misaligned objectives have been quoted as the No.1 root cause of many partnership issues - such as frustrated communication, contract disagreements and mismatched expectations. Yet many organisations fail to ensure objectives are aligned from the start, or fail to monitor alignment through the partnership's lifetime. This was the key issue tackled in a recent Discovery project by leading member organisation the Global Business Partnership Alliance (GBPA) www.gbpalette.com.

The Discovery Project, Aligning partnership objectives, highlights the key challenges facing partnering organisations in achieving and maintaining alignment on the partnership journey. GBPA studied organisations with both successful and unsuccessful partnerships to explore key points of similarity and difference, and identify to what extent alignment or misalignment of objectives contributed to success or failure of the relationship.

GBPA chief executive Amanda Crouch says: "It is clear from the research that alignment of objectives is essential to collaborative success. The key is to keep objectives aligned throughout the partnership, especially when one of the partners goes through a major change.

"Our research shows that many organisations set objectives at the outset of a partnership, but fail to revisit and review them as the relationship matures. This means organisations are often striving to achieve objectives which are no longer critical or relevant."

Using the Discovery findings, and relevant theories of collaboration and cooperation, GBPA has developed five key dimensions across which objectives should be aligned. These key dimensions - alignment of the overall goal, testing the balance, mindset of mutuality, matching the timing of pay-offs and keeping it relevant - form the basis of an assessment tool: the Partnership Objectives Alignment Diagnostic. This tool provides GBPA members with the means of exploring the different dimensions of alignment to understand the degree to which their partnership objectives are aligned or misaligned.

"Our aim, as with all GBPA Discovery work, was to provide members with a practical tool which will help improve their ability to partner with customers and suppliers, or even internally. In this case, we set out to help members surface and assess the relevance of their partnership objectives and highlight any alignment of objectives issues," states Amanda Crouch.

"Without a continued, relevant over-arching purpose and reason for existence - ie key objectives that both parties are fully committed to - any partnering relationship will lack drive and purpose, and will ultimately break down. Aligning partnership objectives is a continual journey; it is not easy and requires ongoing efforts from all parties."

About GBPA

The Global Business Partnership Alliance is a vibrant community of senior executives focused on internal and inter-company collaboration and business partnering. With corporate members from many major customer and supplier organisations, GBPA enables members to build more effective internal and external business relationships and discover ways to innovate, manage risks, reduce costs and improve profitability. www.gbpalette.com

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