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LITERATURE REVIEW
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this review is to examine the literature on partnerships thereby providing a foundation of knowledge for an emerging partnership framework at George Brown College. There is a pressing need for partnering at the community college level, as partnerships initiate resource sharing, creation of joint educational programs, technology enhancements, and workforce preparation for students (Amey, 2010). In the context of George Brown College’s mission, objectives and priorities, the college is committed to brokering, establishing and nurturing strategic and institutional partnerships, engaging with the local community and contributing to the industry sectors.

This paper will examine definitions and types of partnerships; existing partnerships models; the rationale for engaging in partnerships; the factors that contribute to and characteristics of effective and sustainable partnerships (best practices); common issues that arise within partnership formation and partnering; and lastly, metrics that are used in the evaluation and monitoring of partnership activity and outcomes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concepts and Definitions

Partnership has been defined in different ways in a variety of contexts. The Audit Commission (1998) refers to partnership as a “slippery concept” (p.16), as there is no universally accepted definition. The Health Board of Scotland (2001) defines partnership as two or more organizations that commit to working together, develop a shared purpose and agenda, and work collaboratively towards established goals. Skage (1996) describes a partnership as “an undertaking to do something together... a relationship that consists of shared and/or compatible objectives and an acknowledged distribution of specific roles and responsibilities among participants” (p. 24). Similarly, Waddell and Brown (1997) describe partnership as a wide range of inter-organizational collaborations where information and resources are shared and exchanged to produce outcomes that each partner would not achieve working alone. Partnerships depend on high levels of commitment, mutual trust, common goals, and equal ownership (Stern & Green, 2005).
The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) of Canada (2011) define a formal partnership as a two or more party collaboration agreement whereby partners commit to working toward shared goals for mutual benefit. According to SSHRC (2011), “evidence attesting to that commitment may include: an agreed-upon governance and/or management structure, a mutually determined methodological approach with established roles and responsibilities, a memorandum of understanding, or other sources of evidence endorsed by the partners”. Partners are actively involved in building trust and mutual respect, and contribute to the success of the partnership in a meaningful way.

The term partnership is often used interchangeably with terms such as collaboration, coordination, alliance, cooperation, and network (Huxham, 1996). Boydell (2007) describes collaboration as the “process of participation through which people, groups and organizations work together to achieve desired results” (p. 5). Huxman (1996) coined the term “Collaborative Advantage”, which refers to the creative synergy that is formed between partnering organizations. This collaborative synergy is formed in response to a problem, shared vision, desired outcome, or one of many other potential catalysts. Regardless of what the catalyst may be, it is critical that all partners clearly define their roles in the partnering relationship and that they commit to the shared risks, costs and benefits that may occur as a result of the collaboration.

Hamaoui (2004) explains that involving diverse stakeholders is necessary to realizing partnership goals. The most widely accepted definition of stakeholder, as presented by Freeman (1984, p. 46), is: “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization’s objectives”. In the case of partnering, stakeholders refer to those who can affect or are affected by two or more organizations with common objectives. Clarkson (1995) and Berman et al. (1999) divide stakeholders into two categories: primary/key and secondary. Primary stakeholders are those groups whose continuing participation is so integral to the operations of an operation that it cannot survive without them (e.g. employees, customers, suppliers, markets). Secondary stakeholders, on the other hand, are groups who do not engage in transactions and are not vital to the survival of an organization, but who influence or affect or are influenced or affected by it (Clarkson, 1995; Berman et al., 1999). Essentially, the stakeholder theory stresses the significance of building sound relationships with individuals who and organizations that are essential to the college. The significance of having a broad range of stakeholders will be further discussed in the section on best practices and successful partnerships.
It is important that all existing and potential partners have a shared vision and purpose, as these shared aims unite members in achieving common goals (Boydell, 2007). When vision and purpose are mutual, the organizations involved in partnering experience an increase in organizational capacity and therefore possess a competitive advantage. As a result, organizations increasingly rely on strategic alliances in various forms to stay ahead in today's global and local economy (Boydell, 2007).

**Types of Partnerships**

There are a range of types of partnerships and different ways of classifying them. For example, Powell and Glendinning (2002) classify partnerships based on the sectors that are involved. Partnerships are driven by a diversity of factors and have varying governance structures, operational challenges, and tasks (United Way Toronto, 2009). As a result, there are no exhaustive typologies for partnerships. The following literature provides an overview of the types of partnerships that are pertinent to George Brown College.

Powell and Glendinning (2002) identify five different types of partnerships stemming from public institutions: Public-public; Public-private; Public-voluntary; Public-community; and Multi-sectoral partnerships, which involve more than two sectors (Powell and Glendinning, 2002). United Way Toronto (2009) describes four categories of partnering defined by partnership outcomes: Joint-production, in which organizations work collectively to accomplish a common goal; Exchange/swap, which refers to the exchange of goods or services between organizations; Relationship change, where organizations partner to alter/improve their existing processes; and lastly, Fundamental transformation, in which organizations partner in order to achieve fundamental changes in their core missions.

From an industry perspective, Kania and Kramer (2011) identify five types of partnerships: Funder collaborative; Public-private partnerships; Multi-stakeholder initiatives; Social sector networks; and Collective impact initiatives. Funder collaboratives are groups of funders (usually private sector organizations) who pool resources to support the same issue. Generally, funder collaborative partners provide financial support and do not engage much in partnership activities. Public-private partnerships are formed between public and private sector organizations to deliver specific services or benefits. Multi-stakeholder initiatives tend to be voluntary, involve stakeholders from different sectors, and therefore lack shared infrastructure or shared methods for determining impact. Social Sector Networks are groups of people who are connected through purposeful relationships, and who come together to share information for short-term gain (Kania & Kramer, 2011).
Collective impact initiatives, on the other hand, are long-term commitments for which shared infrastructures and measurement systems exist (Kania & Kramer, 2011). Similarly, Spevacek (2001) describes strategic alliances as collaborative partnerships in which the organizations involved bring to the table complementary strengths work together to maximize the effectiveness of each participant’s resources.

To simplify the literature, the umbrella terms “formal partnership” and “informal partnership” can be used to describe all partnership typologies. Formal partnership at the college denotes systematic partnering at the institutional-level, college-wide collaboration, and school/department level and faculty level collaborations. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (2011) describes formal partnerships as collaborations in which partners agree to commit and work together toward shared goals for mutual benefit. Although formal partnerships vary in structure and formality, they demonstrate commitment through agreed-upon governance structures, shared leadership, and trust and mutual respect.

Informal partnerships at the college arise out of more casual interactions regarding common academic and research interests, and do not require agreed-upon governance structures and shared leadership. Amey (2010) argues that partnerships, whether formal or informal, are process oriented. She states, “(it) is important to recognize the value of various aspects of the partnership as it develops, rather than only focusing on the outputs...partnerships are often more important for the relationships they facilitate, the values they symbolize, and the political alliances that can be banked for future use than for the measurable outputs they produce, especially in the short run.” (p. 15).

Evidently, there are a number of terms for describing the partnerships that apply to George Brown College. However, knowing the rhetoric of partnership is less important than understanding the dynamics of partnership and thereby the capacity to approach and evaluate the partnerships the college undertakes.

**Partnership Models and Organization**

Ultimately, college partnerships are sanctioned or initiated by college presidents. However, it is important to establish a common strategic model for managing partnerships, as personnel at all levels at the college may play leadership roles in partnering (Amey, 2010). Strategic partnerships can take many forms and involve two or many partners. They vary in structure, the diversity of stakeholders involved, complexity, duration, scope, and in their cost and benefit to the college. Waddell and Brown (1997) argue that the degree of difference among partners
(stakeholder diversity) will affect the amount of time and effort required to build and sustain a relationships. Inter-sectoral partnerships, for example, “require substantial effort because partners are quite different in terms of culture, goals, power, and history (Waddell & Brown, 1997, p. 3).

The objectives that are undertaken by the partnership determine the structure of organization required for success. For instance, general objectives such as information sharing can be achieved through a loosely organized partnership. On the contrary, partnerships that take on specific, complex goals require a more formal organization structure to thrive (Waddell & Brown, 1997).

**Linear Partnership Models**

A conceptual model for partnerships developed by Kingsley and O’Neil (2004) divides partnering into three stages. The first stage, Partnership Preconditions, considers two concepts: Embeddedness, which describes the number and types of relationships that organizations have with other organizations prior to developing formal partnerships; and Strategic Needs, which refers to the similarities among organizational resources and needs. Kingsley and O’Neil (2004) recommend that organizations partner with other groups with whom they have a previously existing relationship as well a common resources and needs.

Stage two describes partnering activities, commencing with partnership formation. The formation of partnerships includes establishing common goals and visions, agreements, resource allocation and the responsibilities of each partner. Stage two is also inclusive of the actual behaviours in which the partners engage (communication, planning, etc.).

Finally, stage three represents partnership deliverables and the assessment of these outcomes.

**The Partnership Model**

The Institute for Public Health in Ireland uses a linear yet iterative model of partnership working (Boydell, 2007). The Partnership Model (Appendix A.1) shows that in the early phase partnership development, the main benefits will be connections and relationships formed. The second phase is characterized by the learning that occurs among partners, which may in turn “lead to changes in the capacity of individuals and organizations to act” (Boydell, 2007, p.11). After the individuals involved have a common foundation of knowledge, the partnership
typically enters a phase of action. It is during the last phase that partnership evaluation is undertaken.

It is important to note that although the model is presented in a linear fashion, the strength of the partnership relies on the benefits generated throughout its development. As Boydell (2007) states, “(b)ased on this model, it is anticipated that successful partnership will accrue benefit within each category of benefit of the model, as well as along the pathway of change” (p.7). The linear presentation of The Partnership Model emphasizes the importance of building a strong partnership foundation prior to taking on more complex objectives.

The Institute of Public Health in Ireland’s Partnership Evaluation Tool (PET), as presented in the section on evaluating partnerships, corresponds to this partnership model. Boydell (2007) recommends that the evaluation tool, which is designed to be relevant to both new and mature partnerships, is administered at regular intervals in order to track partnership progress.

Non Linear: The Constellation Model

The constellation model is a governance framework for multi-organizational collaboration that emerged in 2001 out of a need to support a partnership of 11 multi-sector organizations- the Canadian Partnership for Children’s Health and Environment (Surman & Surman, 2008). A constellation partnership can be understood as a dynamic, symbiotic network of groups with both individual and shared needs and opportunities. According to Surman (2006), the Constellation Model describes partnership efforts where groups collaborate to avoid duplication of efforts and competition for funding by working together and coordinating resource procurement strategies.

Partners come together based on their own needs, under the assumption that the collaboration will achieve individual and shared outcomes (Surman & Surman, 2008). The needs or opportunities that draw partners together are called “magnetic attractors”. Once a partnership group congregates a magnetic attractor, a stewardship group of representatives must be formed to coordinate the strategic direction of the partnership. The stewardship group ensures the constellations- small, self-organizing teams with different focuses that thread into the overall partnership- align with the partnership’s vision. Constellations can be committees that guide particular aspects of the partnership or they can be formal projects or initiatives. Either way, constellations are continually emerging, working within the overall strategic vision of the partnership whilst satisfying their own objectives.
The Rationale for Partnering

Partnering relies on the development of relationships between the parties involved. As Boydell (2007) explains, partners not only connect with one another, but also begin to connect one another to networks outside the partnership. These contacts are invaluable, as they inform and connect partners with other industry leads, which enable them to function more effectively within the partnership. In the same way, partnerships provide access to complementary expertise and the support and capacity to further organizational strength (Skage, 1996; Spigelman & Simces, 2001; Broadbent, Gray & Jackson, 2003; Cassidy & Paksima, 2007; United Way Toronto, 2009). Another benefit to partnering is the creation of innovative approaches to problem-solving and the opportunity for reevaluating institutional operations and practices.

Characteristics of high performing partners and partnerships: Best Practices

Rein and Stott (2008) recommend that organizations closely examine existing partnership processes prior to engaging in partnering themselves. There is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to partnership, as successful partnerships are tailored to the unique circumstances of the organizations involved (Rein & Stott, 2008). However, the literature on partnerships identifies a number of best practices that can be used as a guideline to partnering.

First and foremost, an institutional culture supportive of collaboration and commitment to partnership at senior level is essential (Evans & Killoran, 2000; Hardy et al., 2000; Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002). Specifically, partnering should be positioned as an institutionally supported strategic agenda. Asthana et al (2002), assert that the level of participation of senior staff can be a “visible signal of the strength or absence of support” (p.788).

The capacity to work across organizational and sector boundaries, both at individual and organizational levels, is also important. In other words, individuals involved in driving collaboration need to possess strong skills in communication, networking, negotiating, conflict resolution, and coping with uncertainty and risk (Asthana et al., 2002; Williams, 2002). While the roles that these leaders play are critical to the strength of a partnership, it is important that a diversity of individuals-representative of the organizations’ stakeholders- are also perceived as assets in the partnership (Crosby & Bryson).

Successful partnerships tend to have a broad range of stakeholders with common objectives (United Way Toronto, 2009). Malena (2004) argues that a strong sense of shared purpose among stakeholders is one of the driving forces of valuable partnerships. This can be
achieved, Malena (2004) explains, through stakeholder analysis, which identifies all potential stakeholders in a partnership as well as which stakeholders should be involved in decision-making roles. Blickstead, Lester, and Shapcott echo these sentiments, arguing that having multiple stakeholders enables the collaboration to receive widespread support and to benefit from the power of collective action through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.

**Governance**

Successful partnerships tend to have effective governance structures in place (United Way Toronto, 2009). Governance, as defined by Rhodes (1997), is “self-organizing, inter-organizational networks characterized by interdependence and resource exchange” (p.15). Governance structure mediated through clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and accountabilities, influences the effectiveness of a partnership and the success of its desired outcomes.

In addition to effectively supporting the process of defining potentially ambiguous roles and responsibilities, governance structure is related to the trust that emerges within partnerships. Blickstead, Lester and Shapcott (2009) believe this is because mutual and clearly defined roles and responsibilities set expectations and a foundation for partner relationships. An effective partnership governance structure supports collaboration by allowing stakeholders the time to invest in each other and in their collective aims rather than directing their energy toward administrative components of the partnership. Partnership leaders play key roles in guiding the development of and building upon governance structures that will best support the partnership.

**Relationship Building and Leadership**

Building “win-win” relationships is fundamental to the success of partnerships (Boydell, 2007). These relationships are characterized by continuous communication, and clearly defined roles and responsibilities (Boydell, 2003; Kania & Kramer, 2011). Trusting relationships between partners tend to promote continuous communication and information sharing, and transparency among partners (Centre for Technology in Government, 2004). Trust, which is defined as “the adoption of a belief by one party in a relationship that the other party will not act against his or her interest” (Tompkins, 2001, p.12) is essential for maintaining successful partnerships. Similarly, Dawes and Eglene (2003) state that trust is the glue that holds projects together. Trust is enabled by effective and on-going communication, a shared sense of purpose
and value, and by having the support of established leaders (Skage, 1996; Dawes & Eglene, 2003; United Way Toronto, 2009).

A sense of equality, shared responsibility, and trust are all important, but strong leadership is vital to partnership development (Skage, 1996; Torjam, 1998). Strong leaders are key actors in maintaining good relationships between partners, acknowledging and balancing power imbalances, and directing partnerships toward success (Wadell & Brown, 1997). Boydell (2007) argues that many individuals involved in a partnership will need to play leadership roles: from managers who are leading the initiatives, to partners who represent particular groups or issues. One of the most important roles of partnership leaders is to make decisions on the behalf of all stakeholders and therefore act objectively to benefit all parties involved in the collaboration (Kania & Kramer, 2011). In the same way, partnership leaders are expected to be seasoned in conflict mediation.

Common Goals and Objectives

A top down approach to partnering often results in a failure to produce intended deliverables (United Way Toronto, 2009). Brandstetter et al (2006) explain that when partners feel their ideas have been overlooked they often fail to identify with the goals and objectives of the project. On the contrary, identification with common objectives and a sense of shared understanding among partners provides a firm foundation upon which the partnership can build. Having a common agenda means that all participants have a shared understanding of the partnership’s primary objectives and a joint approach to working toward these priorities (United Way Toronto, 2009). Dotterweich (2006) suggests that some of the strongest partnerships build on previously existing coalitions and networks. She explains that existing working relationships and organizational structures often lead to a positive culture and clear rational for partnering.

Furthermore, the presence of broadly shared goals and objectives coupled with trust and open communication can foster a culture of independent work among cooperators. This ensures that each partner is maximizing their potential as an autonomous collaborator whilst working toward a common vision as defined by both partners. How partnerships are presented by its collaborators on and off campus, affects how they are perceived by others (Eddy, 2003; Amey, Eddy & Ozaki, 2007; Amey, 2010).
Sustainability

Creating sustainable relationships not only benefits existing partnerships but also supports the development of future partnerships. Accordingly, sustainable relationships are more cost efficient and require less staff time in order to benefit from the relationships (Rae, 2009). Cassidy and Paksima (2007) argue that sustained partnerships are essential for the long-term success of initiatives, as collaboration in the future is dependent on how well current initiatives and partnerships are managed. Davidge (2002) asserts that sustained relationships can be fostered through openness to growing and changing relationships with sponsors and donors, communication with partners and potential collaborators, openness to feedback new ways of doing, the ability to realize deliverables, and lastly, by recognizing those who are involved in the partnership.

Blank, Rollins and Ignacio (2003) state that sustainable partnerships require the momentum to continually evaluate partnership visions and development, and the drive to both broaden and deepen the focus of the initiative by expanding partnerships over time. According to Dotterweich (2006), ensuring stakeholders are involved and informed about successes helps maintain partnership momentum.

More Best Practices

The literature on partnerships identifies a number of additional best practices for partnering. Taylor et al (2004) suggest partnering with different sectors to create a diverse network with the potential for new opportunities. Accountability is another key component for partnership success (United Way Toronto, 2009). Kania and Kramer (2011) point out the time and financial investments participating organizations must dedicate to successful initiatives. They also refer to the need for a “backbone support organization” to plan, manage, and support the initiative with data collection, reporting, conflict mediation, and logistical and administrative details. However, no other literature suggests working with an unbiased third party to navigate these processes.

Lastly, shared evaluation schemes and measurement systems are needed to evaluate collective impact. As Boydell (2007) states, “agreement on a common agenda is illusory without agreement on the ways success will be measured and reported” (p.2). Partnership evaluation tools contribute to the accountability of each partner’s successes and they ensure that efforts remain aligned.
Partnership Evaluation Tools

Evaluating partnership activities involves data collection, data interpretation, and a solid understanding of the partnership’s objectives from its inception. According to Skage (1996), the process of evaluation enables partners to acknowledge successes and improve upon less successful outcomes, determining whether objectives and expectations set by the partnership have been met. A good measure of performance should lead to improvement in performance over time (Boydell, 2007). Spevacek (2001) argues that routine partnership evaluation is essential, as it is otherwise difficult to measure the outcomes of a partnership. Partnership evaluation is also an important component of transparency, and partners need to be able to regularly reflect on performance and report results (Rae, 2009). However, Rein and Stott (2009) explain that very few partnership evaluation schemes exist and those that do tend to evaluate partnership projects rather the impact of the partnership working itself (Boydell, 2007).

Furthermore, most current approaches to partnership evaluation measure tangible outcomes thus focusing on the successes and failures of past activity. Boydell (2007) argues that by redirecting focus to intangible assets we can better understand the potential for future performance. The greatest value of intangible assets is their capacity to generate future value (Boydell, 2007). Intangible assets, Sveiby (1997) explains, include internal structures (processes, models, relationships among collaborators), external structures (reputation, image, relationships with non-partnering stakeholders), and employee competence (development of tacit knowledge). It is the intangible value added that is often overlooked by funders (Boydell, 2007), however, the literature on partnerships points to the limitations of evaluating exclusively tangible assets (Gray, 2004; Boydell, 2007).

The Partnership Evaluation Tool (PET)

As discussed in the section on best practices for successful partnering, a strong relationship between partners is one of the prerequisites of any successful collaboration. The Partnership Evaluation Tool (PET), as developed by the Institute of Public Health in Ireland (Boydell, 2007), monitors partnership development, assesses emerging benefits to partners and stakeholders, and identifies areas that require further support and development. The Partnership Evaluation Tool was developed to assess multi-sectoral partnerships in a public health context however its framework is relevant to other sectors.

The Partnership Evaluation Tool (PET) is based on the premise that each partnership is unique and has distinct approaches to partnering and objectives. The PET is an online survey
that collects partnership data from partnership stakeholders. The evaluation consists of two components: Part 1 (http://www.partnershiptool.ie/uploadedfiles/Q1.pdf), which assesses the significance partners place on the indicators for their participation in the partnership; and Part 2 (http://www.partnershiptool.ie/uploadedfiles/Q2.pdf), which asks stakeholders to rate (on a six-point likert scale from 0 to 6), a series of statements regarding their experience participating in the partnership. In other words, part 1 asks stakeholders to indicate the most important participation outcomes from their involvement in the partnership, and part 2 invites the stakeholders to specify their experience with the outcomes they deem most important. The PET attempts to assess whether the partnership is achieving what its stakeholders feel it should achieve.

There is also space provided for specific comments or examples next to each indicator in part 2, and this is where respondents can elaborate on their reasoning behind their survey responses. Boydell (2007) explains that the space for comments encourages partners to provide examples of positive and negative experiences, which enriches the evaluation and brings emerging issues to the forefront.

The Partnership Evaluation tool uses four broad categories of indicators to evaluate partnership success. The Connections indicators include the relationships and networks partners form with other partners (Appendix A.2). Learning indicators include the ways in which partners are learning and developing personally and professional from the partnership (Appendix A.2). Action indicators describe a myriad of ways the partnership leads to improvements in individual and organizational capacity and change (Appendix A.2). Lastly, impact indicators are both short and long term ways in which the partnership achieves its shared goals and strengthens the community it intends to serve (Appendix A.2).

The Balanced Scorecard

A second category of partnership evaluation- key performance indicators- are valuable measures of an organization’s performance in key area of its operational life (Zhao, 2002). They reflect what is important to the success of an organization (Tovery, 2001), and are directly linked to organizational strategic goals (Zhao, 2002). The well-recognized Balanced Scorecard (Kaplan & Norton, 1992) is an example of a key performance indicator that uses financial and nonfinancial information to measure performance (Appendix A.3). Financial data reports on current successes, whereas nonfinancial information- customer satisfaction, internal processes, and innovation- are drivers of future financial success and therefore indicative of the potential of the organization. The balanced Scorecard was developed as a corporate performance
measurement tool but can be applied to inter-organizational collaborations, especially with industry partners.

Kaplan and Norton (1992) recommend evaluating the organization (partnership) from four perspectives: the customer/stakeholder perspective; an internal perspective; an innovation and learning perspectives; and the financial perspective. Managers then determine three to five goals for each perspective and develop specific measures to support each objective. Using the partners organizational strategies as a guide, the balanced score card approach should help clarify the vision for the partnership and to translate that vision into measurable outcomes.

Developing a balanced scorecard begins with the partnerships overall strategy or vision followed by defining the strategic objectives that will lead the partnership toward that vision (Hafner, 1998). It is important that these objectives represent the strategic objectives of the partnership in general, rather than a list of goals that are specific to each party or group involved. By collaborating with all stakeholders in the development of collaborative objectives, the partnership gains momentum and support at all levels. Key performance indicators are then determined for each partnership objective.

Data for the performance measurement is collected and analyzed, enabling the organization to identify its strengths as well as areas for potential improvement. The process of data collection and analysis is facilitated by the accessibility of Balanced Scorecard software.

**Alternative Key Performance Indicators**

The Balanced Scorecard is only one approach to evaluating partnerships through key performance indicators. Zhao (2002) presents a more informal approach to developing key performance indicators. He states that the complexity of each inter-organizational partnership necessitates evaluation methods that are unique to each partnership. Zhao (2002) believes in a balanced approach to evaluating partnership, arguing that akin to the Balanced Scorecard approach, key performance indicators should include both financial and operational measures.

However, Zhao (2002) asserts that partnership key performance indicators should focus on mutuality, which is crucial to their success. Therefore, “performance measures for partnerships should highlight the key point of mutuality, such as mutual understanding through communications, mutual trust, mutual benefits, mutual evaluation and sharing” (Zhao, 2002, p.
5). *Table A* below provides an index of key performance indicators for inter-organizational partnerships.

**Table A: Partnership Key Performance Indicators (Zhao, 2002, p.5)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Success Factor</th>
<th>KPIs (Example)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Time and nature of contribution by partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Frequency, mode and nature of communication between partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharing</td>
<td>Frequency/amount and type of info/data exchanges between partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Frequency of meeting one’s expectation about another party’s behavior and/or having confidence in another party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profitability</td>
<td>Profit margins realized from collaborative projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Productivity</td>
<td>Number/percentage of collaborative projects finished within time and budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market share</td>
<td>Percentage of market share obtained through partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate social responsibility</td>
<td>Speed and nature of responsiveness to environmental issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee attitude</td>
<td>Employee turnover rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation and improvement</td>
<td>Number of new initiatives for improvement introduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer satisfaction</td>
<td>Customer satisfaction rate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In her dissertation, Thompson (2007) presents a tri-measure rubric to assess the success of partnerships between college and university nursing programs. Using four case studies, Thompson (2007) asked collaborators to report on the partnership activity during eight stages of collaborative development (Appendix A.4), and the partnership activity in the nine areas in which most successful partnerships thrive (Appendix A.4). In addition, collaborators were asked to report on partnership activity levels for eight common challenges to partnering (Appendix A.4). Responses were scored from 0 to 5 (0 being no evidence of activity to 5, representing extensive activity) and scores then tallied for each of the three areas. High scores during partnership development and in the nine areas of successful partnerships are indicative of a strong partnership. In contrast, high scores (activity) for the eight predictive problems (challenges) to partnering signify less successful partnerships.
Conclusion

This paper has explored the current state of knowledge of partnership literature as it related to George Brown College and other Higher Education Institutions. A central finding is that various literatures surround partnership, but there is no single approach to defining partnership and evaluating the outcomes of partnership activity. The literature review has identified a number of best practices for partnership, including: strong leadership, a broad range of stakeholders, effective governance structures, open and frequent communication, common goals and objectives, and balanced, sustainable relationships. While it is challenging to implement all of these best practices, they should be used to guide the development of successful partnerships at the college.

REFERENCES

Canadian Partnership for Children’s Health and Environment. CPCHE www.healthyenvironmentforkids.ca/


APPENDIX A.1: A MODEL FOR PARTNERSHIP (BOYDELL, 2007)
APPENDIX A.2: THE PARTNERSHIP EVALUATION (PET)
INDICATOR CATEGORIES (BOYDELL, RUGKASA, HOGGETT, & CUMMINS, 2003)

CONNECTIONS:
Through partnerships people make new connections and form relationships with partners and connect to other partners' networks. Indicators for how well partners connect and build relationships include how they are:

- developing relationships to all sectors
- developing credibility
- getting support in their work role
- able to contact senior staff in the statutory sector
- able to access a range of organisations and people
- developing trust in partnership members
- participating in open dialogue at meetings

LEARNING:
As relationships develop, people begin to learn from each other and about each others' roles and organisations as well as about local communities. Indicators for ways in which partners are learning include:

- getting access to information
- gaining a better understanding of community needs
- gaining a better understanding of what impacts on health and health inequalities
- raising awareness of health issues
- understanding the constraints of others' organisations
- better understanding of the partnership's agenda
- personal and professional development
- developing new perspectives

ACTION:
As a result of the relationships and learning, partners and the organisations they represent may start to act differently. Indicators for changes in ways of acting include:

- being better able to do one's job
- the organisation meeting its objectives
• increase in capacity to respond to emerging issues
• work leading to organisations redirecting funding
• work with partners in other contexts
• others in organisation getting involved
• partnership objectives incorporated into those of organisations
• improved targeting of organisation's services
• sharing of resources
• change in the way partners work and innovation

**IMPACTS:**
As a result of the connections, learning and actions, partnerships can develop projects and programmes, improve services and strengthen community infrastructure. Impacts of partnership working on health inequalities will take many years to manifest themselves, and there is a growing evidence base concerned with this. Indicators to assess the immediate and short term impact of the partnership for the purpose of this research include:

• development and sustainability of projects
• mainstreaming of learning derived from projects
• shared leadership of projects and programmes
• development of new services or changes to existing services
• communities getting stronger
Fishbaugh’s (1997) Eight Stages of Collaboration Development
1. Goal setting
2. Data collection
3. Problem identification
4. Alternate solutions
5. Action plan development
6. Action implementation
7. Evaluation
8. Redesign

Houck, Cohn, & Cohn’s (2004) Nine Elements of Success
1. Common goals developed together
2. Mutual trust and respect
3. Development time to strengthen all relationships
4. Quality and commitment
5. Constant interaction at all levels
6. Flexibility with institutional policies and processes
7. Formative evaluation
8. Shared responsibility and accountability
9. Crisp and inclusive communication

Trubowitz and Longo’s (1997) Comparison of Predictive Problems
1. Institutional difference
2. Leadership changes
3. Different values and practices
4. Lack of unified educational philosophy
5. Unrealistic expectations and misconceptions
6. Poor lines of communication
7. External directives or agreement that limit collaboration
8. Fallacy of a quick fix