



Making Your Partnership Work

A Guide for Group Discussion
Daniel Rickett



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This discussion guide can be used by group leaders or individuals. The questions are designed for application to a specific partnership. Before launching into discussion invite the group to identify a current or potential partner. Write the name of the church or organization where everyone can see it. Work through the discussion questions with that one partner in mind. Don't spend a lot of time defining assumptions about the partner before getting started. The discussion questions will draw out important considerations.

In addition to the book Making Your Partnership Work by Daniel Rickett, and this discussion guide, you will need a Bible for the exercise in Chapter 5.

We would appreciate your feedback regarding the discussion guide and the book. Forms are included in the back of this guide.



Questions for discussion:

1. What might be a good reason to partner with (name of partner)?

2. What could you achieve together that you could not achieve alone?

3. Whose lives would change and in what tangible ways?

4. What would you gain from collaboration with (name of partner)?

5. What would (name of partner) gain from collaboration with you?

Questions for discussion:

1. How compatible are your theological positions? Affirmation of a doctrinal statement is one thing, but would you invite them to teach in your church (or ministry)? Would you invite one of their members to a position of leadership in your church?

2. How compatible are your strategic ambitions? For instance, are you equally committed to evangelism? Do you share a commitment to alleviating poverty, promoting health, and/or upholding justice? Are you dedicated to crossing spiritual frontiers or strengthening the existing church?

3. How compatible are your operational values? Do you value disclosing information, including financial information? Do you have a history of creating trust and resolving conflicts? Are you willing to adapt and accommodate one another? How acceptable is mutual dependence?

4. How compatible are your respective capabilities, resources, and opportunities? Does (name of partner) possess the capabilities and skills you lack? Does (name of partner) have access to resources you need?

Questions for discussion:

1. What are the areas in which ground rules are typically needed?

2. In what areas would you need ground rules for your partnership with (name of partner)?

3. Select one area of ground rules that would be important to your partnership. How would you go about creating ground rules that make sense to both parties?

4. What special challenges, if any, would members of your organization face as they applied the ground rules? How would you overcome these challenges?

Questions for discussion:

1. What would an alliance champion do for your partnership?

2. What kind of person is best suited to be an alliance champion?

3. What do you think would be his or her toughest challenges in your partnership with (name of partner)?

4. What support would he or she need from you? From your organization? From (name of partner)?

Questions for discussion:

1. Why is it important to understand cultural differences?

2. What are five strategies for learning culture?

3. How do you build understanding and acceptance? A nearly 2,000 year old pastoral letter tells us how. Using the book of James in the Bible answer the following questions:

What advice does James give that would help a person create understanding and avoid or remedy harmful behavior?

Work in pairs or small groups. Identify as many ideas as possible. (The author found 22 ideas.) Set a time limit. Be prepared to share your findings with the whole group.

Questions for discussion:

1. To what extent do you think trust is needed in a partnership?

2. What, according to the author, are four ways to build trust?

3. Is it possible to trust others too much in a collaborative relationship?

4. What are the limits of trust?

Questions for discussion:

1. What comes to mind when you hear the word **results**?

2. How does the author define results?

3. What results or outcomes do you want from partnering with (name of partner)? Here are a few examples of what churches want to have as a result of working together:

- People take steps toward faith
- People believe in Jesus
- People with HIV/AIDS and their families receive home-based care
- Children in orphan households receive physical and spiritual care
- Families benefit from higher income
- New believers participate in local churches
- Leaders are equipped to teach

4. How would you know whether you are measuring real impact or merely activities?

5. What results do you think (name of partner) wants from the relationship?

Questions for discussion:

1. Why, according to the author, is it important to keep records?

2. When does record keeping become a waste of time?

3. Which documents described by the author would be appropriate to your partnership? Why?

4. How difficult would it be in your situation to put things in writing? What would make it easier?

Questions for discussion:

1. What do partners need to learn?

2. How can partners learn without sending people to seminars and training programs?

3. How would you make use of process disciplines in your partnership with (name of partner)?

4. How would you foster an environment in which learning is valued and intentional?

Further Reading

Cross-Cultural Partnerships

- [Building Strategic Relationships: A practical guide to partnering with non-Western missions.](#)
Daniel Rickett. Minneapolis: STEM Press, 3rd ed. 2008.
- [Making Your Partnership Work. \(eBook\)](#)
Daniel Rickett. Smashwords Edition. 2014
- [Shared Strength: Exploring Cross-Cultural Christian Partnerships.](#)
Edited by Beth Birmingham and Scott Todd. Colorado Springs, CO: Compassion International. 2010.
- [Well Connected: Releasing power, restoring hope through kingdom partnerships.](#)
Phill Butler. Colorado Springs: Authentic. 2006.

Cross-Cultural Ministry

- [Cross-Cultural Conflict: Building relationships for effective ministry.](#)
Duane Elmer. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press Academic. 1994.
- [Cross-Cultural Servanthood: Serving the world in Christlike humility.](#)
Duane Elmer. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. 2006.
- [Cultural Intelligence: A guide to working with people from other cultures.](#)
Brooks Peterson. Boston: MA. Intercultural Press. 2004.

Development

- [Compassion, Justice and the Christian Life: Rethinking ministry to the poor.](#)
Robert D Lupton. Ventura, CA: Regal Books. 2007.
- [Walking with the Poor: Principles and practices of transformational development.](#)
Bryant I Myers. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 1999.
- [When Helping Hurts: How to alleviate poverty without hurting the poor . . . and yourself.](#)
Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert. Chicago: Moody Publishers. 2009.

Missions and Money

- [Cross-Cultural Partnerships: Navigating the complexities of money and mission.](#)
Mary Lederleitner. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. 2010.
- [Missions and Money: Affluence as a missionary problem...revisited.](#)
Jonathan Bonk. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books. 2006.
- [Neither Poverty Nor Riches: A biblical theology of possessions.](#)
Craig Blomberg. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. 2001.
- [To Give or Not to Give? Rethinking dependency, restoring generosity, & redefining sustainability.](#)
John Rowell. Colorado Springs: Authentic Publishing. 2007.

Feedback Form

Please comment on and make suggestions for improving the discussion guide.

1. What parts of the discussion guide did you find most useful?

2. What parts of the discussion guide did you find least useful?

3. What changes would you make to improve the discussion guide?

4. Please add any other comments you would like to make about any aspect of *Making Your Partnership Work: A Guide for Group Discussion*.

Please return this form to:

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