

Case Study

Client Profile

Northeast Delta Dental, a dental insurance company

Establishing a Framework for Evaluating Partnering Opportunities

Business Issue

Northeast Delta Dental, a New Hampshire-based dental insurance company providing coverage to people in New Hampshire, Maine, and Vermont, had established a partnering relationship with Blue Cross/Blue Shield in Vermont and New Hampshire. Building on the momentum of this relationship and other successes, the firm decided to use a partnering strategy as a path to greater success.

In a June 2001 planning session, the firm retained the services of Partnership Continuum to help it look beyond its current successes to set up a framework for evaluating other partnering opportunities.

The Solution

Stephen Dent, founder of Partnership Continuum, led a group of the firm's employees in an overview of a template that outlines what a company should look for in potential partners.

The model enables a company to determine the right mix of partnerships, taking a huge number of partnering opportunities and narrowing it down to what fits the company's strategy and culture. "They set up a model for us of how the board and management should work together to look at strategic opportunities," explains Raffio. "Even though we've had a lot of success, we really should be proactive."

"They set out a model to help us see how we should look at the vision, values, and ethics of a potential partner. It underscores that a win/lose partnership won't work. We need win/win partnerships."

- Tom Raffio
CEO, Northeast Delta Dental

Results

The June conference helped Northeast Delta Dental's managers understand that the company could partner more effectively if they knew the organization's strengths better and had specific partnering objectives. "For example, one of our core values is service excellence," says Raffio. "So now we know that we need to ensure that another plan we might want to partner with has the same standards."

They also came to realize the importance of proactively nurturing relationships. The firm at the time had 90 percent of the area dentists under contract. The June planning session helped them understand that the dental community needs to feel there is value in the relationship with Northeast Delta Dental, and the firm began looking at ways to be a better partner with the area dentists.

In the twenty-first century, businesses that develop, sustain and profit from partnerships faster and better will attain organizational success. At the core of any successful business are people. After all, businesses don't partner; people do. Developing the partnering intelligence of your people is what we do.

Partnership Continuum, Inc. mobilizes your relationships with employees, customers, suppliers, and even competitors in surprising and rewarding ways. Our unique and innovative programs and products lead to higher productivity and stronger relationships enhancing your partnering capability through building trust, positive exchanges, respectful interactions, beneficial outcomes, future potential, and leadership excellence.

**Discover how Partnership Continuum can
impact your organization's effectiveness.**

612.375.0323

