

PARTNERING INTELLIGENCE

BY STEPHEN M. DENT

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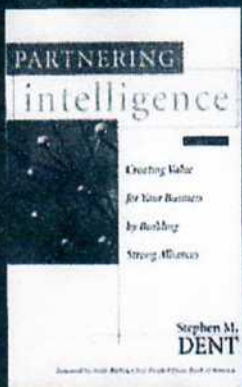
As surely as Burns and Allen, Lennon and McCarthy, and Jimmy and Timmy, the combination of elements is often of greater significance than the individuals. Partnering culture builder Dent has created such a sound conceptual framework for creating strategic alliances that even Cabinet officials would get it. Well, a few anyway.

Dent's ideas have been influential in such diverse settings as NASA, the Communication Workers of America, and the Girl Scouts, so we are led to believe that there is something universal at work here. Whatever it is had better be strong. Even in the more horizontal organizations that have emerged from the savagery of corporate change initiatives of the past 10 to 15 years, the silo mentality is alive and well. Companies may have become leaner, but that does not mean that mistrust, poorly managed goals, unfair compensation structures, and misplaced priorities have disappeared from the landscape.

There is hope, even in the new industrialized world. All we have to do is follow along quietly as Dent sings aloud the Partnership Continuum Model, which pops up in Part One of the book and has its full day in the sun in Part Three. In essence, it is a step-by-step guide through the maze of a successful partnership. To do it right, companies need to assess (figure out if you have the goods), explore (figure out with whom you'd have the most success), initiate (prepare your people and plan the action), and commit (make it formal).

Each step is described in the book with the painstaking detail worthy of the excellence of the author and publisher, which is to say that Mr. Dent has your back in theory and in practice. Don't go partnering without it.

Skip Corsini



*Speaking to the
Big Dogs*