



A free service, REACT's *Partnering Minute* is designed for leaders in the non-profit and business communities who are working in partnering efforts. The REACT Services team of specialists paints pictures of what is happening in the world of ministry collaboration through stories from the front lines, outlining best partnering practices, reviewing key current books, or highlighting case studies.

Please feel free to forward this Newsletter to anyone you think might benefit from this information.

## What a Network Needs for More Results

Many of the leaders we work with at REACT Services have had mixed results from their collaboration efforts in the past, especially when there have been multiple partners. They assumed that partnering just happens as a result of their talking together, and have been frustrated with success levels they achieved. Partly this could be because they just might not have known all the needed elements.

We normally encourage groups with multiple organizations NOT to focus on *partnership* (the noun) but on *partnering* (the verb), i.e., what we are actually going to DO together. Questions and issues related to structure come after that, but are still important and that's the focus of this month's *Partnering Minute*.

There are at least seven categories that a network needs to build its structure. A results-oriented partnering effort needs:

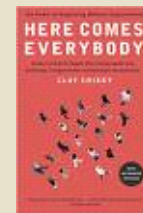
- 1) **"Facipulation."** The facilitation team (committee, group, or whatever it might be called) is the key to organizing a partnering effort because they define and guard the vision of what is trying to be accomplished. However, they need to **lead with specific direction** toward collaboration, which is why REACT created and uses the term **facipulation**, rather than pure facilitation. It is facilitating with a purpose in mind.
- 2) **Event Design and Coordination.** This is the piece of the partnering "dance" that few people really appreciate. How can we craft a process when we come together that doesn't force things, and also creates appropriate space for relational connections to happen? How can we be learn to be more flexible with time? How can we increase wider ownership of the vision?
- 3) **Communication.** This is the glue that holds things together, and in 21st century partnering it is absolutely essential. It can take many forms, from small group gatherings over coffee to well-designed newsletters to regular conference calls. The key is in making sure it happens and that it occurs regularly. Also critical to this process is bringing greater intentionality and effectiveness to virtual meetings.
- 4) **Database Management.** Someone, somewhere has to maintain the list of people who are at the various levels of participation. From those actively engaged to those at the outer edges of disenchantment, all should be identified.
- 5) **A Strategy Team.** This is, by far, one of the most overlooked aspects of partnering development. Who are the core leaders who can take the joint projects and collaborative efforts forward? Who are the champions thinking about the next thing? This team has more of a "blue sky" task than the organizing team above.
- 6) **Resource Development.** This is the area that many groups just avoid until they "have to." However, having guiding principles and strategy related to building upon the assets of a partnership is essential to results. What assets do we have on which we can build; what assets do we need? Who is God calling us to connect with for assistance?
- 7) **Advocacy.** Who is going to help raise the banner for the vision that this collaboration is seeking to address? In faith-based efforts, prayer is this

[REACT Services](#)

[What We Do](#)

[REACT Associates](#)

## January's Resource Recommendation



*"Here Comes Everybody,"*  
by Clay Shirky

In his 2005 presentation at a Ted conference called "Institutions vs. Collaboration," noted author and NYU professor, Clay Shirky posed a question, "How do groups get anything done?" More precisely, "How do you organize a group of individuals so that output of the group is something coherent and of lasting value instead of just being chaos."

As an organization committed to partnering and collaboration strategies, these questions grabbed us! We are always looking for ideas, thoughts and examples of how to help groups work together better.

Many would be familiar with [TED](#), an annual conference formed to find and disseminate "ideas worth spreading." Shirky offers some fairly well-know examples of companies, online support groups and blogs, to show how the power of online collaboration is approaching that of established institutions.

Shirky says:

*More recently, because the costs of letting groups communicate with each other has fallen through the floor, and communications costs are*

foundation. There is **always** a need for some greater public attention to the cause or vision (obviously, in some security sensitive areas, this needs to be done with care).

If these raise additional questions for you on collaboration, please let us know and we'd be happy to try and answer them.

*one of the big inputs to communication, there has been a second answer: to put the cooperation into the infrastructure. To design systems that coordinate the output of the group as a byproduct of the operating of the system without regard to institutional models*

To view the talk, [click here](#).

Although this presentation was given almost five years ago, his examples still hold true, and the final conclusion he reaches is still important.

Note: Shirky took the concepts from this talk and further developed them in the book: *Here Comes Everybody*. I actually found the TED presentation as good, if not better, than the book.

*Reviewed by Brian O'Connell,  
REACT Services President*

REACT Services  
2309 139th St SE, Mill Creek, WA 98012  
[info@reactservices.com](mailto:info@reactservices.com)

