Partnerships Clinic

Warning signs and how to deal with them
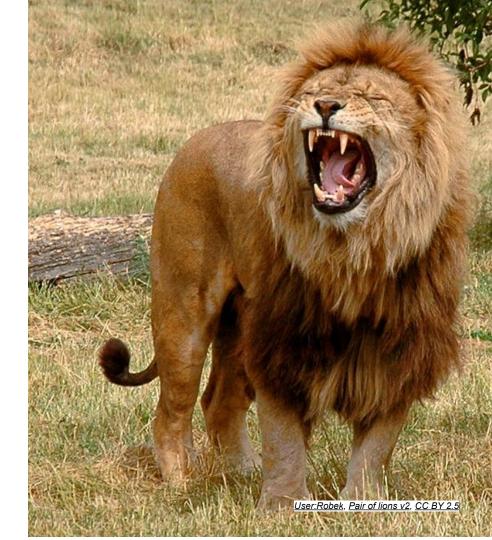
Wikimedia Conference 2017, Anna Torres & Jorge Vargas

Aaaaaah!
Is there something wrong with this partnership??

(3-5 min)

Instructions time...

Pay attention! :)

You should be thinking of partnerships that went wrong…

A partner didn't give you what you asked for? Did

(12-15 min)

Partnerships gone wrong:
1) Initial
2) Critical
3) Terminate

(12-15 min)

Red flags!!!

(2 min)

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Instructions time...

Pay attention! :)

You're identifying red flags... (5 min)

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Now let's solve the problem

Instructions time...

Pay attention! :)

WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

Brainstorm solutions for each of the 3 phases, based on the problems you identified before.

(15 min)

Applied on the problems you found:

How can you solve it....

If it's just starting (initial), ongoing (critical),
way too bad (terminate).
Classify solutions in 3 categories.

(15 min)

Now...
LET'S APPLY THIS TO A CURRENT CASE!
(5 min)

Instructions time...

Pay attention! :)

Wikipedia
The Free Encyclopedia

Individually, write down in a post it an actual case you've had back home. Think of the 3 last parts of the workshops:

1) What is the problem and how critical it is (just starting, critical,terminate)?
2) What red flags or alert signs?
3) How are you planning to solve it?
(5 min)

Let's
Share
stories!!!

Don't stop here... keep the conversation going!!
i) office hours ii) Meta resources

Documentation part
(digitized flipchart notes)

Group 1

Problems

- Cascadia: Staff changes within GLAM partners [1]
- Srpska: Lost contact with archive [3]
- Georgia: Partner disappeared [3]
- Greece: Failed communication relationship building / ext. Sabotage [1]
- Germany: project mission creep [2]
- Greece: Partner school needed formal organization [3]

Red flags

- Announcement of staff change
- Loss of contact within partners
- Political changes
- Lack of coordination / consultation
- Bad gut feeling

Solutions

[1] Initial phase
Awareness of risks
Having a plan B, C, D
Use problem / solution tree
Knowing your partner
Constant communication
Contract!

[2] Critical phase
Straightforward, solution-oriented conversation
Reach out first to new staff
Refer to contract
→ Continuity for the partner to know it's happening
→ understand fear, use NVC, speak from the heart

[3] Terminate the partnership
Be polite
Know how to accept failure
Communicate clearly

Group 2

Problems

- Ghana: National Archives, management change [1]
- Brazil/India: Wikipedia Education Program-Catalyst, concept did not fit local context [3]
- Jordan: Educational WP involvement in refugee camp, too many points of contact [2]
- India: National museum Delhi, uneven distribution of work [2]
- Cameroon: Partner could not deliver resource [1]
- India: Education partnerships, Partner does not understand WP [1]
- Kenya: WMF funding partnership, partner lack knowledge about proper financial accounting, lack of inward reflection/enough mutual support

Solutions

[1] Initial phase:

- Escalate communication to director
- Scale down projects to pilot – reimagination
- Do better research about partner
- Provide enough information about you to the partner
- Manage expectation – formal/informal agreement
- Clarify roles

[2] Critical phase

- Re-define/enforce division of roles
- Renegotiating terms of agreement
- Analyse / re-think resource commitment

[3] Terminate the partnership

- Do not burn bridges – do not talk badly about the partner in public
- Share your learnings
- Document what went wrong

THANK YOU

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