



# CMAssociates

## Relationship Management

All organisations rely on the quality of its relationships whether they are customer, partner, supplier, internal or indeed competitor.

For many organisations, they will have to continually manage and balance the relationships across all of these communities at the same time. There are a number of common needs but also disparate ones. It is essential that the organisation understands these differences and has the appropriate plans, actions, information and skills in place to optimise its performance in managing complex relationships. In a constantly changing environment it is essential that an organisation has the embedded ability to quickly react to the needs of each relationship.

CMA can assist in this and help an organisation **deliver sustainable results** through both the identification of specific relationship management needs, creation of solutions and the balancing of potentially competing requirements.

- Customer management
  - An organisation must clearly understand its customer communities and needs
  - It needs to have a plan to meet those specific needs, as defined by the customer or community group
  - People must have the customer culture, skills, information and tools to deliver the products, services and customer service required
  - Customer communication need to be consistent, clear and responsive to changing requirements
  - Effective and efficient customer management measured through the performance management system
- Partner management
  - Identification of any partnering needs through the performance management system
  - Identifying the right partner for a specific need is vital
  - Whatever the need for a partner relationship, it must be carefully managed if success is to be achieved
  - Objectives need to be aligned, ownership of activities established, people have the right partner management skills and communications effectively managed – both internally and externally to all stakeholders
  - Success measured through the performance management system



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- Supplier management
  - Effective and efficient management of suppliers is a cornerstone of cost management
  - They may be a strategic partner or a goods and services tactical supplier
  - Likely to be few strategic partners but many tactical suppliers
  - Each requires different handling
  - Knowledge sharing a key component in strategic supplier management
  - Increasing use of technology to optimise cost of supplier management
  - Increasing need for alternative sourcing options, identified through the performance management system and assessed through a business case process
  
- Internal people management
  - As organisations become more fluid, to meet flexible resourcing needs, it is vital that a different approach is taken in managing people
  - A rigid command & control management system will no longer suffice if creativity and innovation is to be released and performance managed across organisational boundaries
  - The need to form and reform to meet specific challenges and resolve operational issues requires a different type of people management approach
  - Focus being on getting the right people to address issues and provide solutions on a project basis
  - Places considerable strain on traditional management styles
  - Sustainable outcomes will rely upon the combination of clarity of purpose, effective management skills and comprehensive communications.
  - Managed through the performance management system



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- Competitor
  - If a competitor is also a customer, supplier or partner ( or a combination of all ) an organisation needs to be clear what interaction it has, when and for what purpose
  - People need to be clear about what can be divulged or shared under specific circumstances
  - Appropriate safeguards on sensitive information needs to be put in place
  - However, ethical competitive behaviour is becoming even more important in customer eyes and codes of practice put in place
  - Risk management is particularly important here

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