

# Partnership synergy framework

## A summary of

Lasker, R.D., Weiss, E.S., & Miller, R. (2001). Partnership Synergy: A Practical Framework for Studying and Strengthening the Collaborative Advantage. *Milbank Quarterly*, 79(2), 179-205.



National Collaborating Centre  
for Methods and Tools  
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## Categories:

Method, Partnership development and maintenance, Partnership evaluation, Leadership

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October 16, 2008

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## Method

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## Relevance For Public Health

The success of public health interventions, both in program implementation and the pooling of human and funding resources, is dependent on healthy organizational partnerships. Collaboration generates population-based strategies that allow individuals to obtain necessary clinical services while the community is working to address underlying problems that center on health promotion and disease prevention.

## Description

Collaboration is a process where individuals view problems differently and work together to achieve solutions collectively as a group (Lasker, Weiss, & Miller, 2001). This is essential in public health since key partnerships can aid in the promotion of health and the prevention of disease. A high functioning partnership is synergistic; it involves the effectiveness of leadership, administration and management, the efficiency of the partnership, and the sufficiency of the partnership's resources. Partnership is key in public health where multiple organizations work together to deliver complex population-based programming. Often, the effects of public health interventions are not seen within the population for many years. The success of these interventions relies on the commitment of many organizations and sectors.

The "[Partnership Synergy Framework](#)" (Lasker, et al., 2001; Lasker & Weiss, 2003; Weiss, Anderson, & Lasker, 2002) is a method developed for public health to combine individual-level clinical services with broader, population-based strategies. This method allows organizations to leverage their combined influence, resources, and connections. A synergistic partnership involves:

- recruiting a broad range of stakeholders to the group;
- motivating participants to work together by articulating common goals;
- empowering the group with a collaborative process to address problems; and
- encouraging group members to develop relationships with one another and engage in an ongoing discourse (Lasker & Weiss, 2003).

Promoting the availability of healthy foods in schools, making ingredients for healthy foods more affordable in local supermarkets, supporting physical activity education in school curriculum and developing safe environments for active play for children are tangible examples of how this framework can be used in public health (Lasker, et al., 2001).

## Implementing the Tool

### Who is Involved?

Application of the "Partnership Synergy Framework" would be variable. The method could be carried out by a group and the "Partnership Self-Assessment Tool" would then be used to assess various elements of the group including degree of synergy.

### Steps for Using Tool

Application of the "Partnership Synergy Framework" involves consideration of two questions:

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- 1) Is collaboration better than efforts by single agents in improving the capacity of communities to achieve health and health system goals?;
- 2) What can be done to realize the full advantage of collaboration?

Participants are asked to define features of partnership that contribute to achieving a collaborative advantage using the framework to support these discussions. Ideally, these questions are asked prior to developing a partnership with individuals, groups, and/or organizations. This method can be used to evaluate the partnership and utilize the “Partnership Self-Assessment Tool” (available on this Registry). This instrument is ideal for evaluating the current state of a partnership and communicating its degree of synergy.

### Conditions for Use

The Center for the Advancement of Collaborative Strategies in Health suggests that partnerships:

- 1) Exist for at least six months;
- 2) Be a group of people involved in organizations that work together to achieve goals;
- 3) Take action to implement plans;
- 4) Have at least five active partners

### Evaluation and Measurement Characteristics

#### Evaluation



Has been evaluated.

This framework was evaluated in the National Study of Partnership Functioning which recruited 66 partnerships in 28 US states. The framework was tested in conjunction with the Partnership Self-Assessment Tool.

#### Validity

Not applicable

#### Reliability

Not applicable

#### Methodological Rating



Not applicable

### Tool Development

#### Developers

New York Academy of Medicine  
Website: <https://nyam.org/>

#### Method of Development

This method addresses a gap in knowledge related to conceptualizing the functioning of health partnerships. Missing in the literature was an explanation of how partnership functioning influenced partnership effectiveness. The developers of this method defined the concept of “partnership synergy” and have studied its effect on the success of partnerships.

#### Release Date

2001

#### Contact Person

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## Resources

<b>Title of Primary Resource</b>	Partnership synergy: A practical framework for studying and strengthening the collaborative advantage.
<b>File Attachment</b>	None
<b>Web-link</b>	<a href="http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1468-0009.00203/abstract">http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1468-0009.00203/abstract</a>
<b>Reference</b>	Lasker, R.D., Weiss, E.S., & Miller, R. (2001). Partnership Synergy: A Practical Framework for Studying and Strengthening the Collaborative Advantage. <i>Milbank Quarterly</i> , 79(2), 179-205.
<b>Type of Material</b>	Method
<b>Format</b>	Periodical
<b>Cost to Access</b>	Cost to purchase article
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Conditions for Use</b>	Not specified

<b>Title of Supplementary Resource</b>	Promoting collaborations that improve health.
<b>File Attachment</b>	None
<b>Web-link</b>	<a href="http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14742015">http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14742015</a>
<b>Reference</b>	Lasker, R.D., Weiss, E.S., & Miller, R. (2001). Promoting collaborations that improve health. <i>Education for Health</i> , 14(2), 163-172.
<b>Type of Material</b>	Method
<b>Format</b>	Periodical
<b>Cost to Access</b>	Cost to purchase article
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<b>Conditions for Use</b>	