

# CDOT PARTNERING GUIDELINES



MAY 2006



# STATE OF COLORADO

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Office of the Chief Engineer

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May 19, 2006

RE: Partnering Guidelines

Dear Colleague;

CDOT and our industry partners take great pride in delivering quality projects that upgrade and improve Colorado's transportation projects. Together we strive to meet or exceed our customer's expectations.

Completing complex construction projects requires painstaking planning, careful execution, and a commitment to common goals. CDOT and Contractor personnel achieve success by forging relationships based upon mutual respect, trust, and shared commitment.

These Guidelines provide a roadmap for successful partnering on CDOT construction projects. By following the recommended steps, the project team will make good decisions, will mutually identify innovative solutions to problems, and will define clear paths for resolving issues and disputes.

In partnering we look for win-win solutions. This does not mean splitting the difference so that both parties share the pain. In fact, in a true win-win solution, both parties get all or most of what they need and their true interests in the outcome have been satisfied.

Structured partnering on CDOT projects will help us all build better transportation systems, will save CDOT and Contractors money, and will build positive relationships that will carry on for years to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Craig Siracusa".

Craig Siracusa, P.E.  
Chief Engineer



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## DEFINITION

Partnering is a process of collaborative, synergistic teamwork to achieve measurable results through agreements and productive working relationships.

Partnering focuses on working together to achieve common goals within the guidelines and parameters established by the Contract. Its aim is to develop a proactive effort and spirit of trust, respect, and cooperation among all key players (or stakeholders) in a project. Partnering is a process for developing that spirit of teamwork and cooperation through shared goals, defined issue resolution procedures, clear action plans and the monitoring of team performance to ensure the goals are achieved.

### *WHY SHOULD WE PARTNER?*

There are several reasons why CDOT and the Contractor should partner:

- Promote communication
- Maximize program delivery
- Provide a process for resolving project issues
- Increase work efficiency
- Minimize claims and lawsuits
- Enhance work processes, plans, and construction
- Provide services that exceed customer expectations
- Develop innovative products
- Build and strengthen relationships
- Improve quality of life: promote a fun and positive work environment

As projects become more demanding and deal with increasingly more complex and diverse issues and interests, the construction-partnering paradigm will be used to bring CDOT, the Contractor, sub-contractors, local entities and others together. Ideally, partnering results in mutually agreed goals and processes for completing the project and resolving disputes.

### *BENEFITS OF PARTNERING*

Significant benefits from partnering can include:

- Fewer claims for unexpected expenses
- Fewer lawsuits
- Faster project delivery
- Development of win-win solutions
- Higher quality projects
- Safer projects
- Increasing efficiency

Partnering can help us all build a better transportation system, save time and money, and get along better while we're doing it.

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## THE PRECONSTRUCTION PROCESS

CDOT invites and encourages the Contractor and its subcontractors and suppliers to participate in a voluntary partnering agreement by requiring the Partnering Standard Special Provision on all CDOT projects, however, the Contractor is not contractually obligated to participate.

STEP ONE

## PLANNING FOR PARTNERING ON THE PROJECT

A meeting between the Resident Engineer, the Project Engineer and the Contractor will be held to plan the partnering process and to discuss the logistics of a partnering workshop. The meeting should be scheduled at the time the agreement to partner is reached. The following critical issues will be covered at this meeting:

### *ENSURING MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT*

At this meeting, the CDOT and Contractor management teams should clarify for each other their commitment to the partnering process. They should also commit to ensuring that top management attends the partnering workshop and briefly presents its expectations for partnering.

It is important that all team members understand management's commitment. The Region's and the Contractor's project leaders should clearly communicate their position on partnering to all of the members of the project team. Ideally this will be done personally at the partnering workshop, but can be in the form of a letter or memo. Management should express support and encouragement for efforts to improve processes and communication through partnering.

Honoring this commitment may at first result in more work for all of the partnering team members. But in the long run, the benefit of the extra effort will certainly exceed the cost. For example, a formal issue resolution process may seem unnecessary and uncomfortable at first, but it can save a contractor significant money by reducing delays on the job. The Department may spend additional time and money tracking potential savings on the project, but any documentation of savings will enhance the reputation of CDOT with politicians and the traveling public, all positive outcomes in our day of voter approved budget increases.

## *SELECTING A FACILITATOR*

The facilitator is normally an independent third party; however other options such as having the Contractor or CDOT personnel facilitate the partnering are available. Contact your Area Engineer for guidance.

The Contractor contracts with the partnering facilitator. The selection of the facilitator, however, shall be a joint decision made by the Contractor and the CDOT project management team. Project Development maintains a list of potential partnering facilitators. Go to the Project Development website to view the current list.

<https://www.codot.gov/business/designsupport/projectfirst>

The proposal should include a scope of work and cost breakdown so the project team can make comparisons, and decide what it wants to include in the workshop and what it doesn't. The following is a summary of factors for consideration:

- the facilitator's previous experience
- any experience the Department or the Contractor has had with the facilitator
- the facilitator's approach to Partnering (ie; team building emphasis vs. project specific issues)
- cost
- processes available for ongoing support
- follow up
- monitoring the presenter's qualifications
- flexibility of the facilitator to meet project team's specific needs

## *IDENTIFYING WORKSHOP ATTENDEES*

CDOT and the Contractor shall jointly decide who will attend the partnering workshop.

Mandatory attendees, at a minimum, are: the Program Engineer / Resident Engineer; Project Engineer; key CDOT project personnel; the Contractor's on-site project manager and key project supervision personnel / corporate; and each subcontractor's key project supervision personnel.

Some strongly recommended attendees (as appropriate) are:

### FHWA

- Operational Engineers: Especially on projects with FHWA oversight.

### CDOT

- Project Design Engineer: (CDOT / Consultant)
- CDOT Environmental Manager
- CDOT Specialty Units: (Bridge if there are major or complex structures on the project.)
- CDOT Public Relations: Highly visible projects and projects on which there are significant traffic impacts.
- CDOT Utility Personnel: Projects with utility conflicts.
- CDOT Maintenance: Where there are complex issues that will be handed over to maintenance at the end of the project.
- CDOT Regional Civil Rights Manager: Can be a valuable resource for the DBE program.

### CONTRACTOR

- The Contractor's Key Office Personnel: As determined by the Contractor.

- Key Subcontractors: Those performing major tasks in the project that are critical to the project schedule.
- Suppliers: Projects with items in which delivery will affect the critical path of the project. (Examples: girders, steel, traffic signals, poles and equipment etc...)

#### OTHER

- Railroad: Those projects with railroad implications.
- Utilities: Projects with utility conflicts.
- Key Local Government Personnel

#### *MANAGEMENT PARTICIPATION*

The larger and more complex the project, the more upper management participation there should be. This may include the RTD, Chief Engineer, and the Executive Director on CDOT's side and the Owner and Corporate Level Management from the Contractor's side.

Be aware that sometimes those who can most benefit from attending will be the most opposed to it. Work with your facilitator to help figure out the best strategy to involve reluctant players.

#### *SETTING A WORKSHOP AGENDA*

The CDOT Project Engineer or Resident Engineer and the Contractor's project manager should plan the workshop to cover the standard partnering concepts (see Understanding the Partnering Workshop, Appendix One and also reference the 2005 AASHTO Partnering Handbook) and any project specific issues such as night work, high risk or critical path operations, or special public or political issues. Be sure to tell the facilitator about the project specific issues you want discussed. Work with the facilitator to schedule adequate time to address these issues.

Now is the time to plan for outside agencies and utilities to attend. Ideally, they will attend the entire workshop, if not, schedule them for the beginning of the workshop when they can get a general orientation to the partnering concepts and will have an opportunity to express their concerns or issues.

Have the consultant send each participant an agenda for the workshop so that everyone will know what to expect before they attend.

### *SELECTING A WORKSHOP LOCATION AND LENGTH*

Depending on the size and length of the workshop, the Project Team may want to hold the workshop away from regular business offices. This helps reduce distractions, and helps to enhance the workshop atmosphere. When a workshop is held at a CDOT or Contractor facility, the people whose offices are located at that facility may have a tendency to get pulled back to their office rather than staying engaged with the workshop. A nearby hotel or conference room is usually adequate and is the typical meeting place, but any large meeting room can work.

Check with the facilitator to see what equipment will be needed for the workshop presentations. Typical equipment needs might include some of the following: several flip charts, overhead projector, computer projector, TV, or VCR.

The Department and the Contractor should discuss the length of the partnering workshop with the facilitator. Some of the factors to consider in determining the length of the workshop are:

- Size of the project
- Complexity of the project
- Number and complexity of anticipated project issues
- Number of people on the project team
- Project team prior partnering experience
- Prior relationship between the Department and Contractor teams

A partnering workshop can be as short as a few hours and as long as two days. For small, simple projects with experienced partnering teams, a short workshop in conjunction with the preconstruction conference might be feasible. For larger or more complex projects, the project team is typically larger, and a more formal workshop is typically warranted. When there are numerous or complex issues “rocks-in-the-road” anticipated on the project, additional time should be allowed to adequately address these issues without significant time pressures. For teams with poor relationships from previous projects, a workshop that includes teambuilding and opportunities to address

the relationship may be appropriate. This would most likely extend the workshop into a second day.

Some projects may warrant multiple follow-up sessions throughout the project's duration. For large projects, or projects with longer durations, a schedule for periodic follow-up sessions can be established during the workshop. Follow-up sessions might be scheduled quarterly, semi-annually, at the completion of project phases, or on any other schedule that the project team feels is appropriate. The facilitator should be used for the follow-up sessions.

### *DETERMINING FACILITATOR INVOLVEMENT DURING THE PROJECT*

It is important to understand that partnering is not just a workshop. It is an ongoing process which can affect decisions on a day-to-day basis. Part of that process may include a mid-project refresher to help keep the project team aware of and focused on the partnering objectives, tools, and techniques. The Department and the Contractor may want the workshop facilitator to help the project team by conducting a pre-partnering meeting prior to the workshop to discuss and prepare for the workshop. Also, the Department and the Contractor may want the workshop facilitator to help by conducting a mid-project meeting. If the Department and the Contractor feel they might need more frequent input from the facilitator, that can be arranged also.

A closeout meeting has been useful for several project teams. It helps to identify and reinforce the successes of the partnering effort. It can also point out the failures in the process. Both of these are helpful when you begin working on the next project.

## IMPLEMENTING AND UNDERSTANDING THE PARTNERING WORKSHOP

The partnering workshop should accomplish the following:

### *PROVIDE A GENERAL UNDERSTANDING OF PARTNERING CONCEPTS*

The workshop should present a clear, concise picture of what partnering is and how it is achieved. The basic ideas behind a mission statement or project charter, win-win negotiation, conflict resolution, problem solving, issue escalation, and goal setting should be presented. Attendees should leave the workshop with a working knowledge of how to apply these concepts on the job.

**The attendees should also fully understand that the Partnering Agreement does not change any Contract requirements.**

### *DEVELOP A PROJECT MISSION STATEMENT, OFTEN CALLED THE PROJECT CHARTER.*

The project charter is a jointly developed statement that communicates the project team's shared values and goals in a clear, concise statement. The values and goals of each team will vary from project to project, and the charter should be developed with the circumstances unique to that project in mind. The purpose of this statement is to create and continuously reinforce the concept of teamwork by identifying common goals everyone can work toward. The project charter should be posted on the project where both CDOT and Contractor personnel will see it frequently.

### *REACH CONSENSUS ON MEASURABLE PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND A SYSTEM FOR EVALUATING PROGRESS TOWARD THE PROJECT GOALS.*

Three objectives have been designated by the Department's management to be included on all partnered projects. They are to complete the project:

1. *safely,*
2. *on schedule,* and
3. *within budget.*

Many other types of objectives have been set by other project teams. In most instances, the Contractor has committed to make a good faith effort to achieve a project's DBE goal throughout the life of the Contract. The project workshop should result in identification of specific project issues to be addressed and goals to be achieved on the project. Goals must be specific and measurable. Prioritize the project team's goals in order of importance and establish a system to regularly measure and evaluate progress toward achieving your goals. Agree on the tools and processes to be used to measure progress.

### *IDENTIFY AND PROACTIVELY ADDRESS "ROCKS-IN-THE-ROAD".*

"Rocks-in-the-road" are the unique problems and concerns, from both the Department's and Contractor's viewpoints, that are associated with the specific project. Frequently these are the items that could cause the most trouble if problems are encountered. Examples of such issues may be: meeting a critical milestone, working out complex traffic phasing or scheduling, or the Contract requiring use of a new product, etc.

### *DEVELOP AN ISSUE RESOLUTION/ESCALATION PROCESS.*

The workshop participants must discuss decision making authority for the Department, the Contractor, and subcontractors to create a clear issue resolution process. This is a clearly defined process which will be followed when disagreement occurs on the project. This process is intended to force issue resolution at the earliest stage and lowest level of the organization. It must be in writing and list names and deadlines for decisions or action for each organization participating in the partnering process.

### *DEVELOP AN IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION PLAN.*

Finally, there must be a general partnering implementation and evaluation plan. This is the written plan for continuing the partnering process on the job and evaluating its effectiveness. It will describe the meetings to be held to discuss progress on the partnering mission and goals, the use of the issue resolution process and the evaluation of the partnering efforts. Partnering evaluation sheets should be available from the facilitator to monitor everyone's satisfaction with the progress of the project and the role of partnering in achieving a successful project.

## MONITORING

To make partnering successful, the team must monitor and report its progress towards achieving the goals and objectives during the project. A useful tool to monitor partnering is the CDOT Partnering Rating Form that is attached in the appendix. These measures help to set useful monitoring, control, evaluation, and correction of variations and improvements.

## CONCLUSION

### *WHY PARTNER?*

There are several reasons why we should partner:

- Enhance work processes, plans, and functions
- Provide a process for resolving project issues
- Improve Quality of life: promote a fun and positive work environment
- Minimize claims
- Promote communication
- Maximize program delivery
- Build and strengthen relationships
- Provide services that exceed customer expectations
- Increase work efficiency
- Improve project development and delivery process
- Develop innovative products

Partnering is an opportunity to do several positive things. It's an opportunity to reduce non-construction related project expenses. It's an opportunity to increase the feelings of success and accomplishment that come from doing a good job and working as a team. It's also an opportunity to reduce confrontation and hard feelings.

Partnering can help us all build a better transportation system, save money and get along better while we're doing it.

# APPENDIX

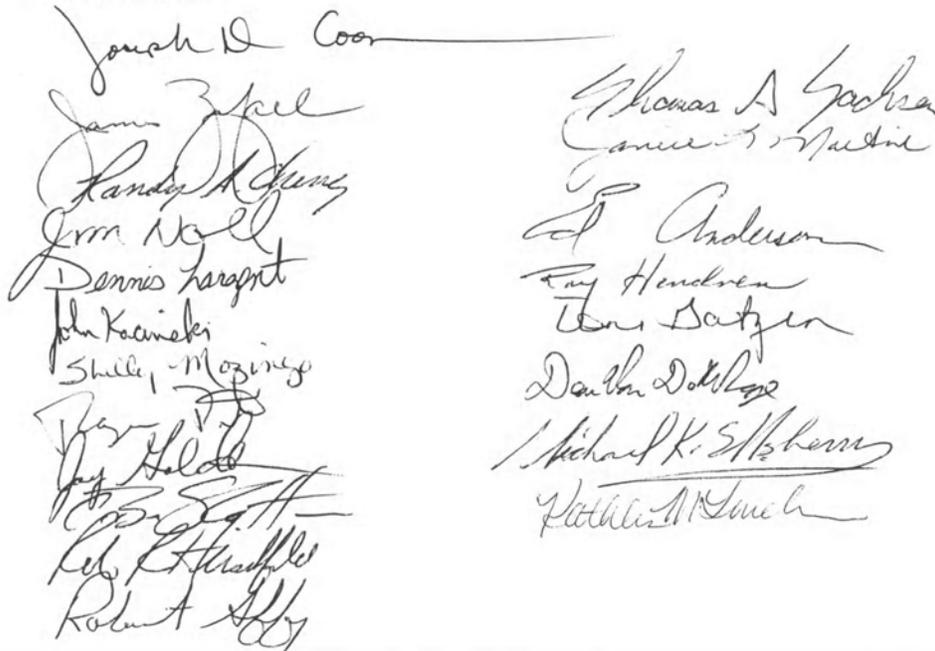
## PARTNERING CHARTER

### US 285 / GODDARD RANCH CT - NORTH PROJECT PARTNERING CHARTER

We the team members of the US 285 / Goddard Ranch Ct - North Project commit to construct a high quality project and to continually improve relationships and mutual respect among all stakeholders through the following objectives:

- Emphasize worker and public safety
- Complete the project on time and in budget
- Minimize adverse impacts to the public
- Resolve disputes in a timely manner before they become claims
- Create an enjoyable working environment
- Incorporate innovative ideas
- Minimize environmental impacts

We agree to honestly and openly communicate and cooperate as stakeholders in a partnership to create a project in which we can all take pride.


  
 The signatures are arranged in two columns. The left column contains approximately 12 signatures, and the right column contains approximately 7 signatures. The signatures are written in various styles of cursive and script.

APPENDIX

# PARTNERING AGREEMENT

March 29, 1993

We, the partners of the Dos Rios Water Project Team, are committed to work together to construct a quality water system for the citizens in the project area, through the fulfillment of the following goals and objectives:

1. Construct a Quality Project
  - a. Implement common sense quality control
  - b. Compliance with plans and specs intent-No non-compliance letters
  - c. Do it right the first time!
  - d. Have approved submittals on the job for reference.
  - e. Utilize locally available construction products
2. Complete Project on or Ahead of Schedule - Sept. 1, 1994
  - a. Meet short-term schedule --be there when you say you will!
  - b. Work in a logical manner and complete work before you leave it
  - c. Resolve conflicts in a timely manner
  - d. Communicate problems with partners that may impact the project
  - e. Minimize change orders and expedite
  - f. Punch List current and on-going
3. Gain Support of the Public
  - a. Minimize inconvenience to the public
  - b. Respond promptly to public concerns
  - c. Minimize areas of disturbance
  - d. Deal with the public in a professional, courteous manner
  - e. Educate and communicate realist expectations to the public
  - f. Good video documentation of existing conditions
4. Have a Safe and Enjoyable Project
  - a. No lost time accidents
  - b. No public hazards
  - c. No environmental violations
5. Build Project Within or Under Budget
 

Maintain Profitability for All Contractors

  - a. Fair change order pricing and credits for value engineering
  - b. No unresolved claims
  - c. Timely payments to all contractors
6. Commitment to Partnering
  - a. Resolve problems at the lowest possible level
  - b. Honest and open communication
  - c. Re-evaluate the Partnership
  - d. Build teamwork between the partners
  - e. Partners open to viable alternatives and new ideas

Gunnison County, Colorado

**Rothberg  
Tamburini  
Winsor**

**Tierdael Construction Company**  
General Contractors

*Southwest Contracting Inc.*

**Spallone Construction**

**NORTH STAR  
SURVEYING**

We agree to work together through mutual trust and respect, in all matters which affect the project, in a manner which promotes and enhances a spirit of cooperation, teamwork and profitability, to ensure successful completion of the project.

*David Brown*      *Jeff U. Kaden*      *Eric Peterson*  
*O. Blid Frazer*      *Mark Soller*  
*Joe O'Neil*      *John Pisenhauer*  
*Mark [unclear]*      *Wendy Ray*      *Mark Tompkins*  
*James A. Grand*      *Devi Weber*      *SAP*  
*Frank D. N. D. I*      *Mark [unclear]*

**SAMPLE ISSUE RESOLUTION LADDER**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Contractor</b>	<b>Sub</b>	<b>CDOT</b>	<b>Escalation Time</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Regional Manager</b>	<b>Regional Manager</b>	<b>Program Engineer</b>	<b>Decision</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Project Manager</b>	<b>Project Manager</b>	<b>Resident Engineer</b>	<b>1 Week</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Superintendent</b>	<b>Superintendent</b>	<b>Project Engineer</b>	<b>1 Day</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Foreman</b>	<b>Foreman</b>	<b>Inspectors</b>	<b>1 Hour</b>

**Key factors to Issue Resolution Ladder:**

- 1. Inaction is not an alternative**
- 2. Problems are escalated together**
- 3. Responses at each level of escalation should be forthcoming with the time limit.**
- 4. etc**
- 5. etc...**

## DECISION MATRIX --- ORGANIZATION

OWNER                      PRIME                      SUB  
 (                      ) (                      ) (                      )

CORE			

LEVEL I			

LEVEL II			

**When to pass on an issue:**

INVOLVES MORE THAN ONE CONTRACTOR OR AREA

HAS GONE UNRESOLVED FOR 24 HOURS

HIGH DOLLAR VALUE

SCHEDULE DRIVING IMMEDIATE DECISION

# **PARTNERING WORKSHOP GROUND RULES**

- 1. No rank**
- 2. Everyone participates**
- 3. Listen**
- 4. Keep an open mind**
- 5. Agree if it makes sense**
- 6. Disagree, or ask questions if it doesn't make sense**
- 7. Have fun**
- 8. Don't speak when others are speaking**
- 9. Select a scribe**
- 10. Turn off cell phones and blackberrys**

## Guide to Determining the Length of the Workshop

		<b>SCORE</b>
<b>Number of Attendees</b> for 5-10 for 11-20 for more than 20	score 1 score 2 score 3	
<b>Number of Key Organizations</b> for 3 or less for 4-6 for more than 6	score 1 score 2 score 3	
<b>Size of Project</b> if small if medium if large	score 1 score 2 score 3	
<b>Complexity of Project</b> if not complex if complex if very complex	score 1 score 2 score 3	
<b>Difficulty of Project</b> if routine to challenging if difficult if very difficult	score 1 score 2 score 3	
<b>Relationships/Reputations</b> if good if unknown-to-poor if poor-to-bad	score 1 score 2 score 3	
<b>Partnering Experience</b> if experienced if some experience if new to partnering	score 1 score 2 score 3	

Low scores (1s) indicate that a ½-day session is most appropriate, or perhaps an expanded preconstruction meeting including the expanded agenda discussed in the following section. Middle scores (2s) suggest that a one-day session is appropriate. High scores (3s) indicate that a two-day workshop or a series of workshops over the duration of the project is appropriate. Use this assessment as an indicator – your good judgement and common sense should always prevail.

## CDOT PARTNERING RATING FORM

**Pre-Project Evaluation**\_\_\_\_\_

**Post-Project Evaluation**\_\_\_\_\_

**Project Description**\_\_\_\_\_

**Subaccount Number**\_\_\_\_\_

**Resident Engineer**\_\_\_\_\_

**Project Engineer**\_\_\_\_\_

**Contractor**\_\_\_\_\_

**Partnering Facilitator**\_\_\_\_\_

	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent
Quality	1	2	3	4	5
Safety	1	2	3	4	5
Communications	1	2	3	4	5
Trust	1	2	3	4	5
Teamwork	1	2	3	4	5
Issue Resolution	1	2	3	4	5
Value Engineering	1	2	3	4	5
Budget	1	2	3	4	5
Administration	1	2	3	4	5
Community Relations	1	2	3	4	5

**Comments and suggestions for Improvements:**

## **WORKSHOP DEBRIEFING**

**How are you feeling about what we accomplished?**

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**How do you feel the team worked together?**

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**What did anybody do that was helpful to make this a good meeting?**

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**What could we improve on next time?**

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**Feedback: How useful was the meeting to the success of the project?**

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## Sample Workshop Agenda ( 1 Day)

Your facilitator is responsible for designing your partnering workshop agenda. The agenda should be developed to meet the specific needs of your project.

### Sample One-Day Partnering Workshop Agenda

7:30am	Continental Breakfast
8:00am	Welcome Introductions and Project Organizations Partnering Overview Project Overviews (RE and PM) Vision/Mission Statement Potential Project Issues Key Issues for Success
noon	Lunch
	Creative Problem Solving/Commitments for Key Issues Development of a Dispute Resolution Process Evaluation Process Signing of the Partnering Agreement Closing Remarks and Thanks
4:00pm	End of Session

## Sample Workshop Agenda ( 2 Day)

Your facilitator is responsible for designing your partnering workshop agenda. The agenda should be developed to meet the specific needs of your project.

### Sample Two-Day Partnering Workshop Agenda

#### Day 1

7:30am Continental Breakfast

8:00am Welcome  
 Introductions and Project Organizations  
 Expectations/Rules  
 Partnering Overview  
 Team Building Activity

Noon Lunch

Team Building (continued)  
 Partnering Lessons Learned/Paradigms  
 Vision/Mission  
 Homework Assignment: My job requirements and Most Valuable Experience

4:30pm End of Day One

5:30pm Group Dinner

#### Day 2

7:30am Continental Breakfast

8:00am Recap of Day One  
 Homework Assignment Sharing of job requirements  
 Sharing of Most Valuable Experience  
 Project Overview  
 Potential Project Issues  
 Key Issues  
 Creative Problem Solving for Key Issues  
 Problem Finding  
 Fact Finding  
 Solution Finding  
 Goal Setting and Action Planning

Noon

Lunch

Creative Problem Solving (continued)  
Development of a Dispute Resolution Process  
Signing of the Partnering Agreement  
Closing Remarks and Thanks

4:00pm

Session Ends