

DID YOU SAY... PARTNERSHIP?

Working together to train the next generation of teachers

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A DEFINITION

A partnership is a collaborative relationship between persons, associations, communities, or organizations, understood to be partners.

A partnership is considered “a process by which [a partner] associates himself with at least one [other partner], within the framework of a custom and evolving relationship, who agree to pursue a common goal, having compatible objectives, and who decide to pool their human, informational, financial, and material resources in order to obtain beneficial results, all the while respecting their own missions, mandates and objectives, and remaining independent outside of the partnership.” (Boisclair and Dallaire, 2008, p. 11).

In vocational education, workplace training and teaching practices are based on a partnership model. Universities and schools agree on a common goal: training the next generation of teachers! With this goal in mind, they pool their resources (human, environmental, informational, material, etc.) and share the responsibilities, always in the spirit of their respective missions: training teachers and training workers.

WHAT IS IT USED FOR?

Getting involved in a partnership requires effort, but it also brings benefits. Taking an active role in training the up and coming generation of teachers...

- Allows one to develop professionally.
- Increases one's feeling of self-efficacy at work.
- Fosters a culture of sharing between professionals within and between the school systems.
- Contributes to the training of personnel.
- Eases professional integration and retention.
- Increases motivation, engagement and satisfaction at work.
- Leads to the sharing of strategies and resources.
- Helps university students and students in vocational education to succeed.
- Leads to changes and improvements in professional practices.
- Encourages the engagement of other members of the community in the education system.

HOW ABOUT IF WE EXPLAINED IT IN SIMPLE TERMS...

Establishing a solid partnership between the university and vocational education centres is not necessarily self-evident; challenges await the partners.



As a partner, one must be able to establish a healthy relationship, based on equity, trust and mutual recognition of each other's expertise. It is a constant search between autonomy and reliance of the school system partners. Organizing work, sharing responsibilities and defining roles require negotiations that sometimes go on continually. Moreover, financial and human support, both the availability of dedicated persons and the financial resources to support the activities and objectives being pursued, remain at the heart of the challenges of a partnership. Therefore, it is a team effort in which those involved must not only engage in collectively, but individually as well.

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WHAT IF I WANTED TO INTEGRATE IT INTO MY PRACTICE...

To tackle challenges and support partnerships in teacher training, ten principles can guide our actions:

1. **Take on a global mission:** the primary concern is neither training student teachers nor training students, but to advance the teaching profession, to value education and the greater community.
2. **Develop a strong partnership culture:** Support and recognize the active engagement of others! This recognition is achieved not only by decision making bodies and vocational education centres and universities, but also through individual actions.
3. **Support ongoing professional and reciprocal development:** To work in a perspective of reciprocity (exchange), the partners must be able to voice their challenges, and to be rapidly offered adapted training.
4. **Encourage innovation:** Make innovative practices known, then think about possible improvements that can be made in the partners' milieus.
5. **Make progress and benefits widely known:** One of the partners' concerns must be to provide visibility for the partnership. In fact, the work done to receive the appreciation and the recognition due requires that the progress and benefits of the collaboration be made known in their respective circles, in the community, and to the general public.
6. **Define the roles and responsibilities:** Negotiation is an integral part of a partnership. Assuming that the partners know and recognize each other's expertise can undermine the collaboration from the outset. It is advised to devote enough time and energy to outline each partner's responsibilities and make them known at the beginning.
7. **Establish a governance structure:** Partners need a temporal and physical or virtual space for negotiation, mediation, reflection and collaboration. A management system, with dedicated persons, must be created to foster communication.
8. **Provide an institutional framework:** People involved in initial teacher training and teaching practicums have everything to gain by establishing a framework which defines their formal roles (particularly with student teachers) and takes into account the specifics of the different trades being taught.
9. **Free up resources and recognize investment:** To ensure the proper functioning and durability of a partnership, sharing resources is a crucial matter. Agreements must be made to ensure the presence and recognition of the available resources, whether they are human, financial, material or other. Be a visionary and plan for the medium to long term.
10. **Make the relationship aspect of the partnership a primary concern:** A partnership is founded on soft skills such as humility (even if a person is acting as an expert), reciprocity, and equity. Power relationships have no place here. Break down barriers that sometimes divide the milieus.

TO FIND OUT MORE

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