

Designing Model For Best Practices Of Coopetition Strategy Case Study In "Pioneer Company" For Pharmaceutical Industry In Al- Sulaymaniyah City

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Abstract

This paper deals with a subject that has received a great attention of those who are interested in strategic management, it is "coopetition strategy" which highlights the cooperation between/among competing companies. Thus, depending on this strategy, the current study aims at designing a proposed eclectic model that adopts the best practices of such strategy to emulate the reality of local organizations on one hand, and to show the applicable practices of the afore-mentioned organizations on the other hand.

To achieve this, "Pioneer Company" for pharmaceutical industries in Sulaymaniyah (a city in Iraqi Kurdistan) is chosen as a sample field of the study. Moreover, the researchers apply a descriptive analytical approach that involves analyzing data collected from personal interviews and questionnaire by using SPSS program (version 10). The study comes up with a number of conclusions, the most important one is that the best practices of applying coopetition strategy involve six essential factors; they are: coordination, improvement, preparation, evaluation, support and implementation.

Keywords: Coopetition, Competition, Coopetition Strategy, Best Practices.

Introduction

Twenty first century field data introduced the reality that it is impossible for organizations to work alone. Consequently, there is a type of strategic cooperation among organizations. However, due to the existence of cooperation and competition simultaneously among those organizations, the perspective adopted here is a coopetition one. The latter refers to a type of adhesion which is regarded as a mutual

strategic depending among organizations in frame of constructing coopetition system that aims to create value through technical and creative diversity. One of the universal things in business environment claims that the inputs of organizations are resources and abilities. To reach such resources and abilities, a number of practices which describe the relationships among organizations are used. Moreover, they group those resources and abilities to create a new resources and abilities which may be increased with the development of the relationships among actors, and become more mutual and correlated. A matter which enhances the knowledge of actors about how to make use of the resources and abilities through interaction Business process with others. The coopetition perspective anyway may require introducing many practices that could contribute to the success of such a relation and lead to its continual development.

Section One: The Problem Framework

Researchers realized the sensitivity and complexity of coopetition relationships that can be seen in their and directing toward their goals. This sensitivity is well expressed via the use of the expression "the nature of complexity of the relationship"¹. Moreover, the total complex nature challenges and the contradicted logic of the coopetition relationship are obviously expressed in the titles of some researches and studies⁽¹⁾ which are conducted to discuss the base of the relationship and its implications. Achieving best results may require concentration on a number of controlling practices for the relationship among actors. Such practices can be regarded as the efforts of administration that look forward to plan, organize, direct and follow the common interaction to have positive and constructing behavior among actors in coopetition strategy.

This study focuses on the necessity of giving a clear picture for the best practices which may be adopted in applying the coopetition strategy, in addition to mentioning the importance of each of them. Studying those practices should be carried out in one frame following a sequential model to reach an obvious and comprehensive vision of the implications of (What are the best practices which may be adopted to ensure the success of organizations' cooperation with their competitors?).

Thus, those organizations that understand the nature of coopetition strategy and participate in it are often more able to undertake better moves and maneuvers that enable them to adopt the appropriate method to reach and maintain competitive advantage. In sum, the problem of the study is that it tries to answer the following question: What are the best practices of coopetition strategy into the studied organization? This question is divided in the following sub-questions:

- What are the best practices that coopetition strategy is based on?
- What is the availability of main practices for coopetition strategy?

¹The nature of complexity of the relationship: (Alves, 2013, 1) described it as "sleeping with ¹ : enemy", while (Goswami et al.) described it as "sleeping with wolves"; while (Guran & Lorsch, 2010, 2) refer to as "War and Peace".

²Titles of the researchs and studies: Title of "Schmiele & Sofka, 2007" study expresses it as "Dress for the dance with Devil", the title of (Liv et al., 2014) study describes the relationship as "No Rose without a Thorn".

- Do these practices have specific priority within the cooperation strategy?

Section Two: Theoretical Framework (Best Practices of Cooperation Strategy)

It is beneficial to know that the specification of best practices of cooperation strategy may require a rapid review to the results of the have studies which dealt with the different aspects of cooperation strategy. It is also important to concentrate on the studies and researches that have dealt with the aspects that correlate with cooperative business techniques with competitors.

By doing so, this study may participate in framing best practices at the theoretical level and fixing them at application level. However, it is worth to keep in mind the dissimilarity among different environments in which the studies are conducted and their reflections on the possibility of generalizing these results to other environment. Hence, it is very important to take into consideration only the common outlines of the results which do not depend on a specific society or environment. And consequently, a general main practices will be reached to and will be used in constructing the proposed eclectic model in a way that goes with the characteristics of the current environment in particular and with the overall outlines of the aims of the study.

Al-Maadhedee and Al-Sabaawe's study (2018) concludes that there are five techniques that ensure the success of cooperation strategy when the latter is taken into consideration as an operation which includes: reasons behind the adoption of the electronic lining, and techniques to ensure its successful application, and results that can be achieved through the electronic cooperation with the competitors. These practices include: adaptation, administering communications, coordination, balance and administration support. The main characteristics of cooperation strategy may be its possibility of participation in enhancing the implications of strategic management and organization theory, this is stressed by Dagnino and Padula (2002:2,13). The results of their study summarize the implications of cooperation strategy as follow:

- The mutual dependency among organizations and this includes the sharing of the sources of building value and capturing these sources.
- Depending on positive results of the mutual benefits game, regardless of equality of benefits. Equality cannot be achieved due to competitive pressure which governs cooperation relationship (cooperation and compete).
- Constructions of mutual dependency among organizations depend on comparable attention inside the jobs.

Kock et al. (2004: 15) conducted a study in which they focus on the affairs correlated with the strategic problem that faces organizations when they have to choose among cooperation, competition, or cooperation. In the results of this study, a list of factors are detected to be the defining element in choosing the best alternative(s), these factors are: size of the market, and its stage during life cycle because when the markets are small and in early stage, these factors do not encourage the emerging of cooperation behaviors and vice versa. The study of M'chirgui et al. (2010: 15) discusses the reasons behind the success of some practices of cooperation better than other practices in mode and criteria of cooperation relationship. The results of the mentioned study Stressed that the

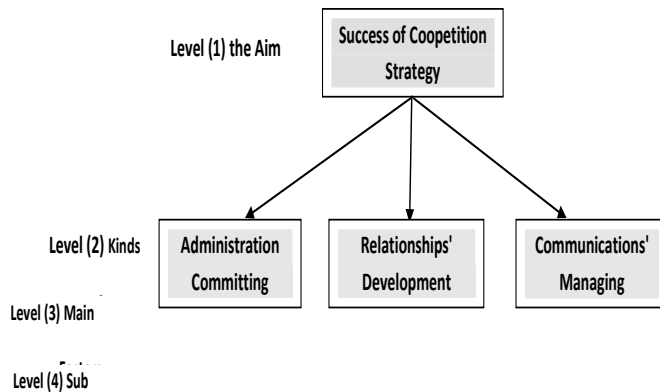
choice of coalitions which include actors comparable in using the electronic techniques, as well as to the availability of creative abilities, represents a basic inputs to choose an able group to compete with other coalitions. In the same vein, the results of the study of Bigliardi et al. (2011) stressed that the success of coopetition strategy appears in achieving the cooperation that affects the group of organizations which enhanced by organizational constructions that depend on (Centers of Excellence)² and tools of electronic cooperation adopted by participants Bigliardi et al., (2011). Ritala et al. (2012) state that those tools achieve many advantages in coopetition strategy through the growth of the market or the increase of the market size via sharing the costs and dangers and developing the common electronic platform on the net, as well as to the increasing of the competitive ability through the complement electronic services among actors (Ritala et al., 2012, 18-19). In the same context, Gnyawali and Park (2009) refer to cooperation of organizations with their competitors in the industries of high technology that presents unique and important abilities in different ways and that for two reasons: the first is the competitors have something in common in regard of the similarity of markets and resources which achieve a larger advantages to all actors in regard to developing the current resources and adapting with market, whereas the second reason is the actors face similar foreign pressure such as: technology changes, and high costs for research and development, then these challenges can be faced effectively in case of organizations work.

together through grouping the resources and cooperating (Gnyawali & Park, 2009, 323-324). This is also stressed by the study conducted by Osarenkhoe (2010) in summarizing best practices in two distinctive aspects, they are: sharing knowledge and collecting efficiencies; he regards those aspects as important factors which participate in enhancing the competitive advantage in regard of coopetition strategy (Osarenkhoe, 2010, 356).

The previous discussions refer to the sensitivity and difficulty of conducting the coopetition strategy, and then the difficulty in shaping best practices to a strategy that include the success keys to achieve the goals in regards of value building or to achieve the competitive advantages and/or enhance them. However, this fact drive the motivation for the researchers interested in such field to attempt to recognize the important factors for the success of coopetition strategy depending on a more comprehensive perspective to shed light on all vital factors on the level of main factors and their sub-dimensions. The study of Chin et al. (2008) defined the vital factors to ensure the success of coopetition strategy in a pyramid sequence. These priorities are as follow: administration committing, relationships development, communications managing. In addition, it includes all types of these main factors which in turn include sub factors that work as group in constructing a successful strategy (Chin et al., 2008,

²: Centers of excellence is an adopted center by Gamma & Beta companies as a device to interchange experiences and skills, this center specialized in a limited number of main resources to support efficiency and experts in a certain sector, specificity treats the main affairs correlated with knowledge interchange.

44). Diagram (1) describes the sequences of the pyramid model to manage the strategy of cooperation.



1. Supporting Information System	1. Trust Development	1. Managerial Leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data interchange • effective lining 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • common aim • mutual adoption for the organization culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • message & insight • policy & strategy • resources allocation
2. System of Managing Conflict and Resources	2. Knowledge Sharing	2. Long Term Committing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conflict solving process • making the conflict better 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowledge coincidence • sharing knowledge • sharing the affecting danger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adapting with alternative, strength & weakness • a long term agreement • periodical reviewing

Diagram (1): Pyramid Diagram to Manage the Cooperation Strategy

Source: Chin Kwai-Sang, L. Chan Boris & Lam Ping-Kit, 2008, Identifying and Prioritizing Critical Success Factors for Coopetition Strategy, **Emerald Industrial Management & Data Systems**, Vol. 108, No. 4, P. 442.

In the same vein, Chen & Liang (2011) stressed that the success of coopetition strategy according to network perspective, which aims to achieve value, tightly correlates with the existence of a number of important factors which participate in the success of coopetition relationship on one hand, and developing it on the other hand. This happens through the correlation of actors with the network of coopetition relationships the latter aims at achieving the common goals and the mutual benefit through interchanging information and participation in knowledge and technology as well as increasing effective concentration on value building (Chen & Liang, 2011: 26). Diagram (2) shows the developed network model.

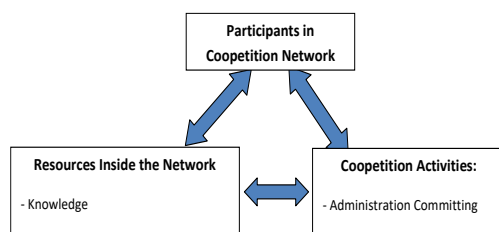


Diagram (2): Developed Network Model

Source: Chen Ruijun & Liang Zhiman, 2011, Coopetition Strategy Management in SMEs: Case Study of Nyhammars and Bäckströms Company, Master Thesis in Business Administration, **Faculty of Education and Economic Studies, University Of Gavle**, P. 26.

Administrative committing on the long term may represent one of the most important factors in the success of coopetition strategy. Almost, the administration concentration is on achieving temporary benefits and short term earnings (Chin et al., 2008: 451). Moreover, the success of coopetition process depends on developing the trust relationship among participants as an important factor in the process of transferring knowledge and technology, then achieving the pioneering of actors work in the net (Osarenkhoe, 2010: 346). Another point is that the good communications management makes the actor avoid the misunderstanding and conflicts among actors in the network (Chin & Liang, 2011: 27). Finally, organizing the resources and allocating them may participate in supporting creative abilities of actors in value building, regardless the type of the resources whether they were knowledge, human or technology resources for they are all factors participate in supporting the value presented from the organization (Alwis et al., 2003: 411).

The study of Swanson (2009) summarizes the important factors of success in coopetition strategy through four main stages, each stage implies sub-dimensions that include dimensions of: learning, environment, skill, goals, mission and process. Accordingly (2009: 37) these stages are:

The first stage/ **Realization and Partner Choosing:**

This stage includes showing the view and the expected benefits from the partnership. It requires wisdom and accurateness in choosing the expected partnerships in the frame of valuing the current and previous relationship of the expected partner. In this stage, there is no contractual relationship. requires wisdom and accurateness in choosing the expected partnerships in the frame of valuing the current and previous relationship of the expected partner. In this stage, there is no contractual relationship.

Second stage/**Discovering:**

This stage refers to the stage of interaction among organizations, as communication plays role in developing the directions of partnership and legal frame.

Third stage/ **Enlarging:**

This stage refers to enhancing communications to develop the relationship among partners through unofficial systems in order to enlarge the interaction zone by increasing levels of trust and willingness to share the risks.

Stage four/ **Committing in the relationship:**

The highest degrees of communications on the level of economic, communications and resources interface affairs are to be applied here.

Section Three: The Field Framework

First: Most Important Results of Factor Analysis for Best Practices of Coopetition Strategy

Factor analysis was adopted to define and determine the importance of variables that the research includes, and to present them in a least possible number of controllable factors. The following are the results of the field study that concentrates on defining the implications of best practices of the coopetition strategy. implications of best practices of the coopetition strategy.

They include a group of practices, procedures and activities which the organization adopts to organize the cooperation process with the competitors and to achieve the required coincidence to get best possible results from the coopetition strategy. Table (1) shows a group of indicators that refers to best practices of coopetition strategy, they include: lining, improvement, willingness, valuing and making adjustment, supporting and backing and application.

Factor's No. & Name	Rate of variable interpreting from total data		Variables		Quantity of Loading	Quantity of Diffuse
	Eigen value	Quantity of factor	No.	Kind		

		interpretin g to phenomen a				
1. Lining	5.38	26.93	4	X ₁	0.79	0.78
				X ₂	0.87	0.83
				X ₄	0.67	0.60
				X ₁₃	0.71	0.69
2. Improvement	2.344	11.72	3	X ₃	0.77	0.86
				X ₅	0.77	0.79
				X ₁₄	0.87	0.82
3. Willingness	2.101	10.5	4	X ₇	0.80	0.73
				X ₈	0.70	0.80
				X ₁₂	0.53	0.61
				X ₁₅	0.64	0.56
4. Valuing and Making adjustment	1.820	9.09	3	X ₁₀	0.86	0.84
				X ₁₁	0.79	0.78
				X ₁₆	0.62	0.81
5. Supporting and backing	1.668	8.34	3	X ₁₈	0.72	0.88
				X ₁₉	0.79	0.80
				X ₂₀	0.78	0.80
6. Applicatio	1.18	5.94	3	X ₉	0.79	0.87
				X ₁₇	0.87	0.90
				X ₆	0.62	0.66

Table (1): The final distribution of factors of best practices of coopetition strategy

Source: Prepared by the researchers depending on the results of the statistical program SPSS.

Table (1) shows that the results of factor analysis reflect a logical classification for a least possible number of best practices of coopetition strategy and these results give answers of basic questions that participate in describing the best practices which can be adopted to organize the relationship of partners within the strategy of coopetition. Results of grouping the factors express the logic of coopetition perspective according to the perspective of the studied organization.

Second: Procedures of designing the proposed model

Best practices model will be represented by a number of activities achieved by the administration of the organization in order to prepare the suitable environment to apply the coopetition strategy, and to save its main elements, and to support it through presenting support requirements. The results of the research, in the field of the study, recognized the best practices of coopetition strategy and the requirements of each one

to achieve the success of applying this strategy. Each of these practices includes a number of procedures and requirements. The researchers suggest adopting three main stages to be used as a guide which may participate in facilitating the understanding of best practices of coepetition strategy and applying it. The details of this suggestion are shown in the diagram (3).

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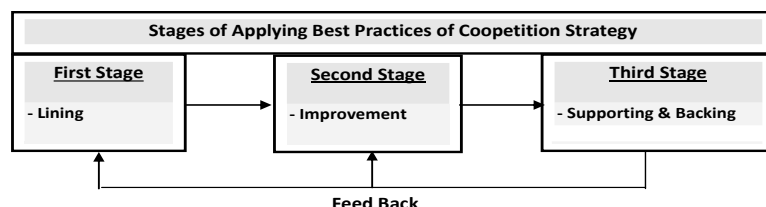


Diagram (3): Best Practices of Coepetition Strategy Model

Source: The diagram prepared by researchers depending on the results of statistical analysis.

Third: Techniques of Activating the proposed Model

First Stage

The studied organization in this stage must have a complete view to observe the current situation and define the expected effects, obstacles and problems. Also, it must adopt a comprehensive system in both cases organizational changes and preparation in order to construct a full picture to the strategy of coepetition and its practices with suitable requirements for competition environment on one hand, and cooperative work on the other hand; this requires following some sub-steps, as follow:

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- **Lining**

The organization here needs to apply reengineering of current work in order to prepare an obvious and right step. So, there must be a study of current situation in the organization and define the devices to cope with the new developments relating to the relationship with the competitors, in the frame of the following steps:

- Facilitating the organizational construction to suite the nature of business in the frame of the new roles which are imposed by coepetition practices, as the interaction and common business among organization units in duties for the sake of developing the effectiveness and speed both in performance and executing.
- Composing work team from experts and specialists in field of coepetition and common business. Here, foreign experts could be employed to support the team.

- Training the team and preparing it to do its jobs through serious participation in effective trainings which concentrate on facilitating the procedures to cope with the requirements of cooptation. This may participate in reducing the severity of resistance to change which appear more obvious in the team work.
- Defining the enough financial needs to cover the costs of developing of needed technical and operational resources to achieve the process of change.

The success of the first stage is regarded the base of the success of other steps in practices of cooptation, so the teamwork must present a detailed report to the top management at the end of this step, and this report must include all the results which reflect the range of success in this stage, and include:

- Range of the availability of enough organizational and administrative requirements which insure the success of development process toward practices of cooptation, and the needed suggestions to support these requirements and developing them.
- Results of the training plan of the teamwork, as well as to the suggested training plans to other managerial levels in the organization.
- Presenting suggestions about techniques which can be adopted in managerial change to adjust with practices of cooperation.
- Defining the needs concerning the aid of experts outside the organization.

Presenting the suggestions about choosing the teams that will achieve the jobs of later step.

2. Preparation and Willingness

In this stage, the organization must concentrate on strong leadership and ensure the long term committing in shaping, developing and executing the strategy of cooptation . It also must present support to all kinds and in all the levels of the organization. Moreover, there must be a concentration in this stage on the existence of strategic vision for the transferring process which can be represented by diffusing the culture of cooperation with competitors and expressing its importance in field of presenting services and tasking execution and in the other domains that distinguish this modern managerial style. The preparation and willingness stage includes the following steps:

- Existence of a defining program which is in charge of making the process of intellectual preparation and explaining the full picture of the real goals in order to shift them in work from the traditional frames to cooptation practices frames.
- The necessity of the existence of continuant, strong and definite desires to develop through work on change management and dealing with change resistance in order to stop it completely.
- Explaining the extent of cooptation strategy, and benefits that can be achieved on all levels: community, organization and individuals. Those benefits can be received through increasing and improving the abilities in dealing with the knowledge and technology developments resulted from working with competitors.

Second Stage

This stage includes a list of steps that are needed to get the main elements for applying strategy of cooperation, this stage includes two sub-steps, they are:

1. Improvement

Improving technical and managerial elements of the strategy of cooperation requires directing the efforts of the management to specify strength points which the studied organization depends upon when it starts applying the strategy of cooperation, as well as to define the weakness points and attempt to develop them in order to see the proportion convenience level between the ambitions and current reality, in addition to work to improve weakness points and to raise them to desired level.

2. Application

The concentration here is on developing the technical and managerial sides and making them suitable to achieve integration in order to achieve the required interaction between partners in the strategy of cooperation, and then calculating the expected benefits. It is also important to check if there is required information which have not been sent, as well as to uncover any difficulties and problems that may face the process of application. In addition to that, to test the effectiveness application process, the following points must be taken into consideration:

- The range of accurateness and speed of information transferred among partners, as well as testing the accuracy and speed as far as knowledge sharing is concerned, and analyzing the effects of cost and time in improving the performance of the studied organization.
- Range of abilities or loyalty of the workers to work under the requirements of cooperation strategy, and the range of real benefit which work with competitors presents.
- Range of cooperation strategy participation in changing the shape of the relationship between the studied organization and organizations that share common interest in general, and with customers in particular.

After the test of application process, notes and suggestions on this stage and the previous stages are registered, and attempt to make the needed adjustments in a way that makes each stage takes its right shape and place in the whole system, in order to move or shift to the application in a contemporary frame that coincides with the mission and main goals of the organization.

Third Stage

This stage comes after the end of testing cooperation strategy in the organization. It is applied through providing support to the mentioned strategy, valuing and improving it continually. It is worth doing so in order to ensure the success of strategic transferring on one hand, and cope with the continuous development in field of common business on the other hand. This can be achieved by following the following steps:

1. Supporting and Backing (Requirements of External Environment)

The success of coopetition strategy requires preparing the suitable external environment, which supports the direction toward coopetition work. In this stage, the government has to pay attention to some sides in preparing the suitable climate for these practices. This is represented by concentrating attention on and supporting the following aspects:

- Shaping the legal and legislative frames, through issuing laws and legislations which organize the coopetition treatments and activities, and fulfilling continuous modification for these laws according to the new events.
- Diffusing the social realization of coopetition culture and its advantages in order to encourage companies to accept and apply the coopetition strategy.
- Preparing the individuals who have experience and skills in the field of coopetition strategy, through the coordination with universities and learning foundations that are specialized in preparing their outputs in a way coincides with the real needs which the current and future stages require to the practices of coopetition strategy.

2. Valuing and Making Adjustments (Requirements of Internal Environment)

Here, the studied organization needs to conduct the following up and valuing process to the results achieved due to applying the coopetition strategy continuously. In this stage, it is the responsibility of the administration to compare what is really achieved with what is planned, and to work to define weakness points that reduce range of the success of coopetition strategy in order to take the corrective procedures to treat them, as well as to conduct continuous improvements according to the needs of current stage and future stages.

This stage includes evaluation process for the following points:

- Range of realization of the importance of coopetition strategy.
- Range of suitability of applying the coopetition strategy to the different needs of the organization.
- Valuing the range of the adherence of the organization to using coopetition strategy, and the range of the ability of managers and staff in dealing with the new roles when they have a common work with the competitors.
- Range of flexibility of practices of coopetition strategy to implement future improvements.\

Results of valuing process in this stage are regarded as a guide which the top management follows in conducting continuous improvement to the practices of coopetition strategy inside the organization in order to achieve its goals in improving work styles. It is worth mentioning here that improvement needs paying attention to the negative side that may appear. In addition, it is important to present support in order to get the advantages which can be achieved through these practices.

This stage, along with the previous stages, may participate in shaping a full picture to best practices of coopetition strategy, and improving the level of communication among partners in the strategy of coopetition on different levels, and then improving the speed level for achieving goals. .

Section Four: Conclusions & Recommendations

First: Conclusions

- We have presented the concept of electrical best practices cooperation as a result to the discussions and deductive analysis. This concept reflects the reality of the work of contemporary organizations. It also reflects the results of content analysis of several studies and related research efforts in this field. This is achieved by shifting dealing with the strategy of cooperation from regarding it as a group of contradictions which are difficult to manage to a tool that can achieve results which are difficult to reach through better understanding to practices and applying them.
- Factors analysis reflects a logical classification of the minimum number of the factors of best practices of the cooperation strategy. These results explain the practices which can be adopted in organizing the relationship among partners within the cooperation strategy. It also defines the ration of the interpretation of each factor in accordance with other dimension factors in the questionnaire, the results are as follow:
- The relative importance of best practices of cooperation strategy differs and ranges from one factor to another in the studied organization. This result reflects the bases of the studied organization in defining priorities and preferences according to relationship type among all the factors and dimensions of the practices of cooperation, for they are dealt with as a correlated and sequenced chain in moving from one step to another depending on their importance..

Second: Recommendations

According to the above mentioned conclusions, the researchers recommend the following points:

1. It seems necessary to promote the dissemination of the concepts , bases and requirements of cooperation perspective in order to have its own special place in the modern competitive strategies in general and in field of the business of the studied organization in particular because all the basics of cooperation process are available, a matter which can be regarded as an appropriate opportunity to adopt innovative styles of work that are in line with the aspiration of the studied organization.
2. It is also important to be continuously aware of, in addition to using, the international experience that have achieved a great success in this area.
3. It is important to take into account some points because the first use of cooperation strategy is difficult in general as it requires building a chain of procedures and practices accepted by the partners. However, the later projects became easier. The points that the organization should take into consideration are the following:
 - Enhancing the relational dimensions among organization workers working in the same sector. This enhancing should be done on different administrative and technical levels whether official or/and unofficial. Also, it is important to support the communication relations among them in order to reduce the level

of sensitivity among organizations and preparing the way to achieve the first official communication for the cooperation with competitor.

- The management of organization has to work to diffuse the spirit of cooperation within work practices and/or principles of common use of resources and solutions to enhance the contents of group work among participants and to enhance the psychological aptitude for positive behaviors.
- Attempting to achieve collaborative initiatives, and it is preferable to be within simple levels - in the first stage - and away from the field which is concerned with the customers to avoid the implications of competition, and to achieve initial contact among participators to support the contents of mutual trust in the first position, and to verify the benefit of the cooperation with competitor in the second position.

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