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The 5 Stages of a GSI Relationship That Actually Scales

GSI partnerships are full of great expectations. Most go unmet. Here is the five-stage model that separates the ones that deliver from the ones that do not.

> **Trust is an exceptionally good place to start.**

Stage 1:
Define the Driver

What are we really in this for?

Before anything else, get honest about the purpose behind the relationship, for both sides. Skip this and you are building on hope, not a foundation.

Stage 2:
Align

You may need to work together. You may not want to. You may want to work together. You may not need to.

Momentum only starts when need and desire line up. That alignment is where trust gets built.

Stage 3:
Turn *Strategy* into Accountable *Tactics*

A great idea means nothing without an owner.

Every tactic needs a clear answer: who receives it, who acts on it, and who is accountable for what happens next. This is where most partnerships will fail.

Stage 4:
Scale with the *Right Voices*

One relationship, one team, is not enough.

Bring in subject matter experts across product, marketing and sales to echo the message to market. Go beyond the alliance manager to the full stakeholder map on both sides.

Stage 5:
Celebrate, Then *Reinvest*

Do not just celebrate the win. Nurture it.

Wins breed wins, but only if you use the visibility of success to build momentum into the next one, rather than moving straight on to the next deal.

Signing the contract is the beginning, not the finish.
Hear the full conversation on Ice Blue Sky's Soapbox podcast: The Truth About Activating GSI Partnerships.

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