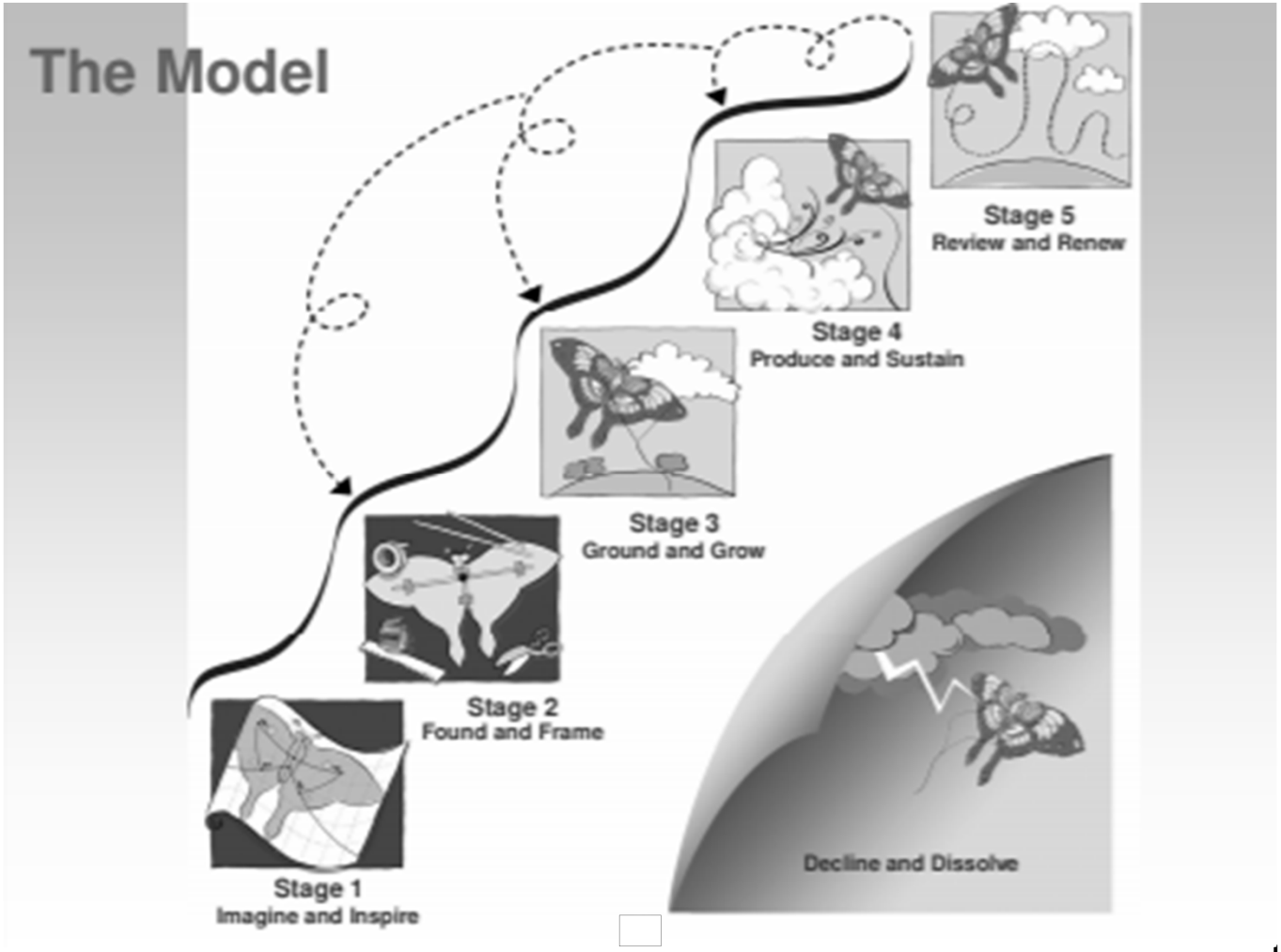
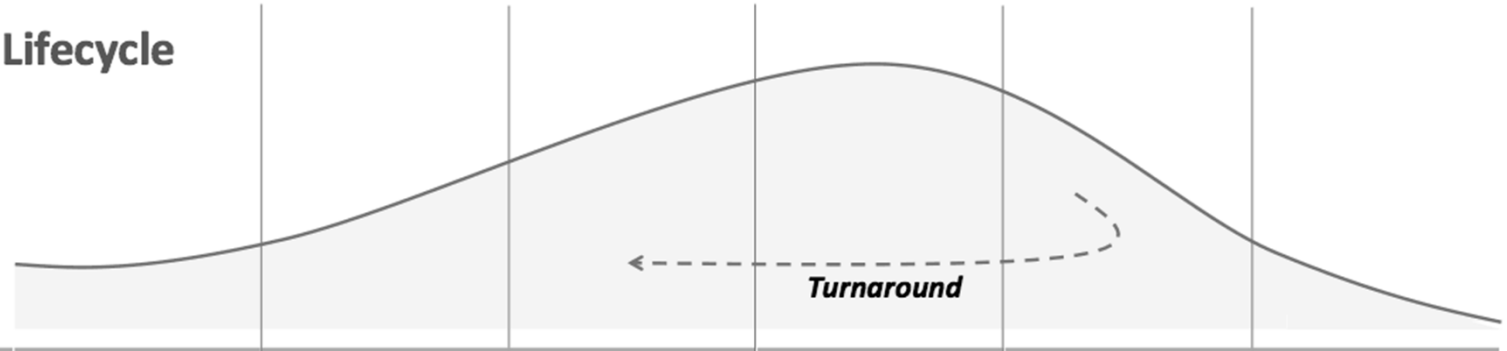


Judith Sharken Simon

Nonprofit Lifecycle



	Idea	Start-up	Growth	Maturity	Decline	Crisis
Programs	Informal; need established & programs are started	Simple programmatic approach; strong commitment to service delivery	Established in marketplace; more consistent & focused delivery	Programs are well developed; focused on results & relevancy	Losing relevance in marketplace; market saturation or duplication	Demand for services is near zero; competition is fierce or has moved on to other needed services
Human Resources	Entrepreneurial founder	Flat organization; decisions are likely made by founder	Increased division of labor & accountability; executive director is key decision maker with Board guidance	Clear division of labor & accountability; leadership is often second or third generation from founder	Increasing turnover; decreased ability to attract top talent; decreased transparency	High contention & division between staff; mistrust of leadership; inability to fill key roles
Board	Not yet developed	Formal governance in place; homogeneous group	Board expansion – more outsiders; more focus on planning & oversight	Board is more policy & strategy focused; delegates management to executive director	Board membership is waning; awareness of operational issues is low	Board not fulfilling fiduciary responsibilities
Financials	Most are in-kind	Limited financial resources; hand-to-mouth	Established relationships with funders, but still unpredictable	Established relationships with multiple funders; higher degree of predictability	Funders are not renewing contracts; donor retention & loyalty decreasing	Cash-on-hand insufficient to cover operating expenses; current donors tapped out
Marketing	Not utilized	Limited communications & PR – most is word-of-mouth	First official PR materials; primary method of marketing is still word-of-mouth	Increased sophistication in marketing & communications using multiple channels	Decreased public interest	Unable to attract media or public attention; messaging does not resonate with public

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PARTNERSHIP CONTINUUM

Cooperation	Coordination	Collaboration
Lower Intensity → → → → *Higher Intensity*		
Shorter-term, informal relationships	Longer-term effort around specific project or task	More durable and pervasive relationships
Shared information	Some planning and division of roles	New structure with a commitment to common goals
Separate goals, resources, and structures	Some shared resources, rewards, and risks	All partners contribute resources and share rewards, leadership, and risks

Source: Winer and Ray 1994.

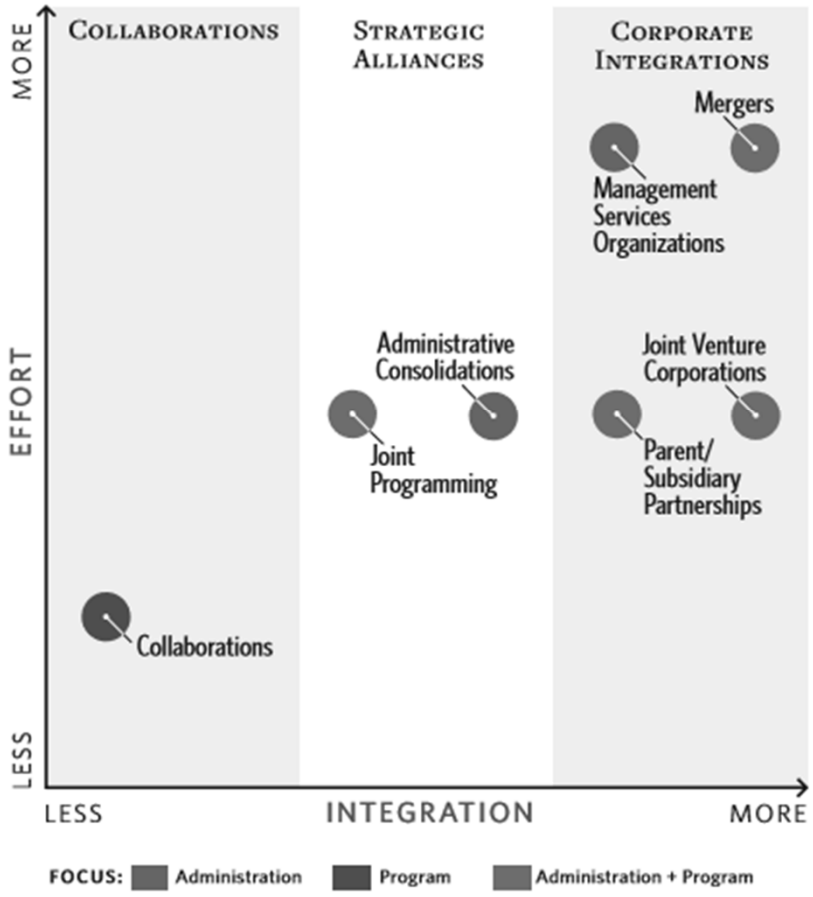
Spectrum of collaboration

Associations (Includes coalitions, collaboratives, communities of practice)	Joint Programming	Shared Services	Merger (Includes affiliate and subsidiary structures)
Definition: A group of organizations that voluntarily combine forces to accomplish a purpose over time	Definition: Contractual programmatic undertaking of two or more entities without actual legal incorporation	Definition: Jointly hiring a third party or agreeing to share an existing resource to provide services such as accounting, marketing, IT or office space to consolidate administrative functions	Definition: A combining of two organizations into one. This can be accomplished through legal affiliate or subsidiary structures, integrating one organization into another or the creation of a new entity.

Less ← Level of integration → More

The Bridgespan Group

The Partnership Matrix



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