

Checklist: Announcing a partnership wrap up a firm and friendly way

Prepare yourself

- Decide if you are going to inform the key stakeholders one-by-one or in a meeting
- Make sure you do not have other points on the agenda. People need to blow off some steam and might not be in the mood to go back to business as usual
- Make sure you have all the details on when and why the support will end to this partnership
- If you feel nervous to bring the message, practice it out loud before the meeting

Announce the wrap-up

- Exchange 'short' pleasantries e.g., greetings, social comments ...etc (this is dependent on culture and your past interactions with the person /team)
- Show appreciation for creating time to attend the meeting. Then, present the agenda of the day.
- Bring the news direct at the start of the talk:
 - "I have some news you will probably not like: "the project team has decided to phase out the support to your partnership this year/next month"
- Explain the reasons for the decision in a short and concise way, for example: "The main reason for this decision is that the set goals and the agreements made in the partnership contract have not been achieved" or "The main reason is that our budgets has been reduced significantly and we cannot continue to support your partnership in a similar way as before."

Emphasize with the person

- Be silent and give space to the other to react
- Listening active on feelings "You are saying, it feels like you are left alone, right?"
- Express that you understand that this comes as a shock and is disappointing news
- When requested, you might repeat the reason for the decision. Be friendly but firm

Discuss next steps

- Often the other party needs some time to let the news sink in. Therefore, schedule another meeting to discuss and agree on the consequences and/or next steps. "I suggest that in three days we meet again and discuss what will be the next steps" or "I suggest meeting again after the weekend and brainstorm what we can still do within the remaining timeframe."
- Make sure you do this within a few days after the announcement
- You might consider discussing the next step in the same meeting, when the other asks "what does that mean in terms of your support?" "What is next?". Still, it is good to have a short break first, to let emotions calm down.