

FOREWARD

In 1989, I was involved in a study at a large hospital related to a computer staffing program for nurses. I had just finished my master's degree in nursing and was teaching in a university-based nursing program. As naïve as I was about university structure and politics, I knew the university rewarded publications and research. Presenting and publishing the findings of the staffing study was an expectation. Disseminating these findings was my first experience in author partnering. Fortunately, my partner was generous in sharing what he knew, and the experience was positive. Next, I wrote research reports with a nursing team of faculty studying spiritual care in nursing. Producing publications was difficult for the team because we did not establish the ground rules before we started. The last six years I have been writing research textbooks with established authors who have had the patience to guide me through the processes of contracts, marketing, and splitting royalties. What you can conclude is that I have been writing with others for almost 30 years. Some experiences were positive and some not so positive. Many painful lessons could have been avoided if this book had been available.

The *A, B, & Cs of Author Partnering* begins with **Alignment** of the members of the partnership, a critical step in determining the compatibility of the partners in important areas such as trust and expected outcomes. **Balance** is described in Chapter 2 as making time to write the product for which the partnership was established as well as making time for relaxation, employment, family, and other necessary components of life. Baker and Goodman provide a visual model of the overlap of professional, interpersonal relationships, work, and personal care. Using questions included in the narrative, the partners can identify their core values, then share and discuss them with one another. Understanding the motivations, values, and competing priorities provides a foundation for the partners to support and encourage each other through the life of the project. It also helps the partners to consider what matters most to them and create realistic deadlines.

The first C in the book is **Commitment**, Chapter 3. A logical outcome of understanding the values, motivation, and obligations of the members of the partnership is being able to make an informed commitment to the project and

each other. Baker and Goodman recommend drafting a formal statement of commitment that specifies details of the partnership, including the responsibilities of each member. Ideally, the strengths of the partnership members are in different areas. When that is the case, the partnership creates synergy that results in a product beyond what the individuals could produce separately.

Chapter 4, **Contracts**, describes the importance of having a contract for the partnership. Some contracts will include external entities such as agents or publishers. Again, the authors have provided an exercise that elicits discussion among the partners to ensure that all important aspects of the relationship are addressed in a contract. The best contract, however, will be worth little unless the partners can communicate with each other, especially when they disagree.

Communication is the topic of Chapter 5. Four personality types are described along with their preferred styles of communication. Knowing your own type and the types of your partners gives insight into the effectiveness of the communication patterns being used by the partners. Suggestions are provided on how to improve communication. Different tools of communication, such as face-to-face conversation and email messages, can be selected based on the recipient's personality type, the information to be communicated, and time available for a response.

Continuing with the Cs, Chapter 6 addresses **Conflict Management**. The authors organize the conflict management strategies according to the leadership styles of partners. As an example, a task-oriented leader is more likely to use a domination/competition strategy to resolve conflicts. For me, this chapter provided insight into my conflict management strategies and an opportunity to reflect on the conflicts that I had experienced in partnerships.

Commerce, Chapter 7, considers the realities of marketing the product of the partnership. The product, place, promotion, and price comprise the 4Ps of marketing. Considering these factors prior to finalizing the product's purpose and structure is important. How difficult to invest time and energy into producing a book or article, only to find out that the market is saturated with similar products. The partnership needs to consider the types and numbers of products the target readers already have available to them, how their product will be made available to target readers, and how these potential customers will learn about the product.

Chapter 8, **Creativity**, counters the business considerations of the previous chapter with the playfulness involved in writing creatively. Partners may have different perspectives on balancing fun and work. To avoid the pitfall of creativity without an out- come, Baker and Goodman provide the ADDIE model to help a writing project move forward creatively.

The strategies described in the first eight chapters will never result in a product without action. Chapter 9, **Call to Action**, reviews the chapters with a Partnership Task Checklist followed by the directive to write, write, and write. Throughout the book, the authors provided questions and prompts to engage the readers with the material. These same questions and prompts are provided as a workbook at the end of the text. The workbook is designed with adequate space to record your answers, logically structure the partnership, and create an effective plan for writing the product.

There is something here for anyone who is an author, no matter the amount of experience. I find this book provides insights that will guide a novice author as well as new information and thought-provoking questions to refresh the thinking of a more experienced author. The authors have struck the perfect balance between theories and application to the real world by allowing theories and models to structure relevant questions and strategies for building a partnership.

Don't take my word for it, however. Read it for yourself!

Jennifer Gray, RN, PhD, FAAN

Associate Dean,

College of Natural and Health Sciences Oklahoma Christian University
Professor Emeritus

The University of Texas at Arlington