
**Collaborative business relationship
management — Guidelines for large
organizations seeking collaboration
with micro, small and medium-sized
enterprises (MSMEs)**

*Management collaboratif des relations d'affaires — Lignes directrices
pour les organisations cherchant à collaborer avec des micro, petites
et moyennes entreprises (MPME)*



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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 286, *Collaborative business relationship management*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

The aim of this document is to establish guidelines for how large organizations can adjust their approach when collaborating with MSMEs. It is based on the principles for successful collaborative business relationship management described in ISO/TR 44000. A similar document, ISO 44003, provides guidelines to MSMEs on how to adopt the same principles. When read in conjunction, ISO/TR 44004 and ISO 44003 facilitate an understanding of how to apply the principles for successful collaboration from both a large company working with MSMEs and an MSME perspective.

Collaborative business relationship management — Guidelines for large organizations seeking collaboration with micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs)

1 Scope

This document gives guidance for large organizations seeking to engage micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) within their collaborative relationship programmes.

It uses the 12 collaborative relationship management principles given in ISO 44001.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

No terms and definitions are listed in this document.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

4 Context

The recommendations in this document are based on the premise and experience that many large organizations tend to have evolved requirements, processes, templates and systems in place that are optimized to work within their own business while working primarily for and together with other large organizations. In some cases, these processes and systems give rise to an increased focus on internal requirements, causing the organization to be perceived as self-centred on compliance rather than interested in identifying and paying attention to the needs of partners, especially MSMEs, which are smaller and tend to have less need for complex governance structures.

MSMEs typically bring more agility and flexibility to a collaborative relationship. They are also likely to have more limited resources and structures when it comes to management processes. They are often overwhelmed by the requirements imposed through the processes and systems of larger organizations.

Large organizations are likely to have processes and tools for collaboration, but they are not designed to bring out the best performance of MSMEs in collaborative relationships. Often where large organizations have taken the lead in the process and governance of collaboration initiatives with MSMEs, one-size-fits-all processes and requirements have weighed down their smaller partners, who have tried to conform to a way of working that is unnatural to them. When this mismatch occurs, all parties miss out on the intended and expected value return of the collaboration, and real financial, resourcing and efficiency barriers occur for the MSMEs.

Large organizations experiencing some or all of the issues described above are likely to benefit from learning to pragmatically adjust their way of working to more MSME-friendly terms and to achieve better alignment, in line with the recommendations in this document. Consequently, this leads to greater value from the relationship and a more positive experience for the MSME when working with the large organization.