
**Collaborative business relationship
management systems — Guidelines on
the implementation of ISO 44001**

*Systèmes de management collaboratif d'une relation d'affaire —
Lignes directrices pour l'implémentation de l'ISO 44001*

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Foreword

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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*.

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Introduction

0.1 General

This document provides guidance that supports the effective implementation of ISO 44001 in order to establish and improve collaborative business relationship management systems (CBRMSs) in organizations of all sizes. This document contains no additional requirements. It is aimed at readers who seek to gain in-depth knowledge and understanding about the requirements in ISO 44001, e.g. for the purpose of aiding an organization’s implementation process.

The case for the significant business value and benefits to be derived from collaborative working was made in ISO 44001.

This document has been developed using pan-industry best practice, including early adopters of ISO 44001. It is intended to help organizations understand why each element of ISO 44001 is important, and to recommend approaches to be taken for practical implementation. How to meet the requirements has to be individually evaluated and applied in the context of each organization.

In ISO 44001, the multi-dimensional nature of collaborative relationships was specified. Many of these relationships have an outward focus, emphasizing the importance of collaboration in managing different goals, objectives, expectations, cultures and behaviours between organizations.

Collaboration can also be used to focus on internal interfaces to optimize existing activities, consolidate internal changes or to speed up the process of integration during acquisitions and mergers. In these circumstances, the guidance in this document is also relevant. In a collaborative relationship, effective operation relies on specific mutually agreed joint objectives, structures, resources, processes, roles and responsibilities and can require specific variations to established processes. The structure of this document has been developed to align with ISO 44001, using the high level structure (HLS) for management systems standards (MSS). In developing a standard for collaborative business relationships, the detailed specific requirements for establishing, developing and managing third-party relationships utilizing the eight-stage life cycle model (see [Figure 1](#)) have been addressed within [Clause 8](#) (Operations). In a collaborative relationship, effective operation relies on specific mutually agreed joint interfaces, processes, roles and responsibilities and can require specific variations to established processes.

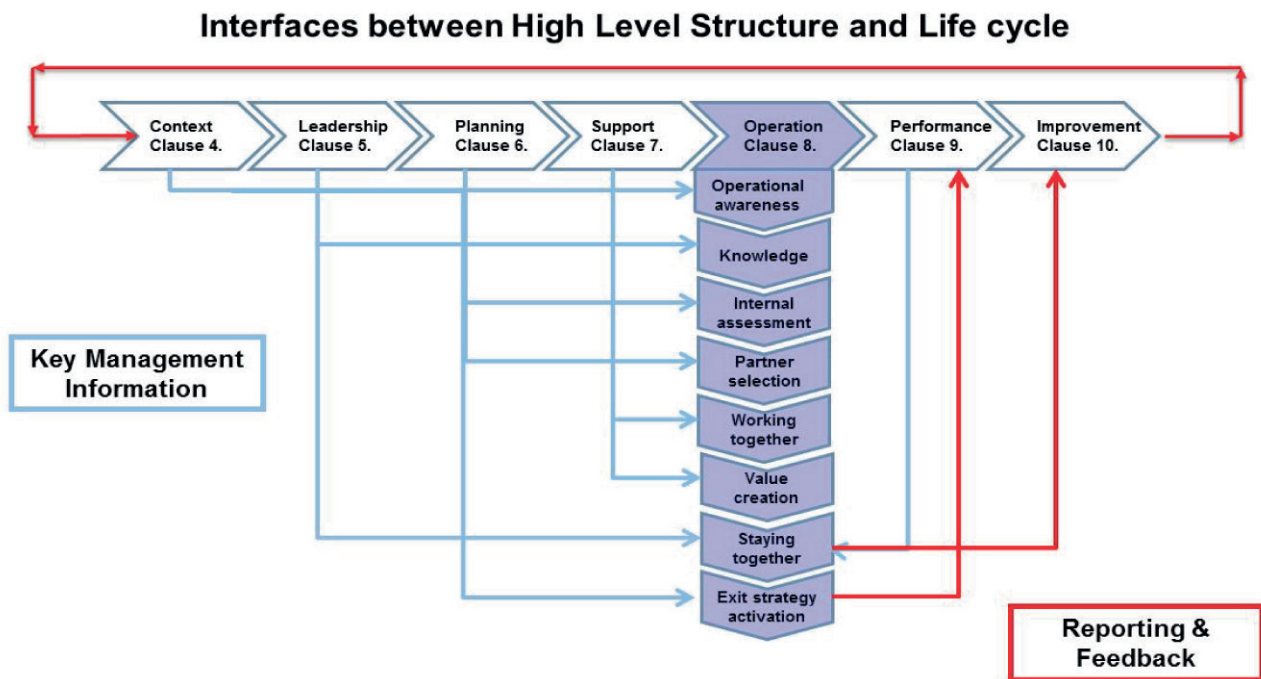


Figure 1 — Relationship between corporate and operational systems

0.2 How to use this guidance

This document has been structured so that the clause numbering mirrors those used for the corresponding clauses in ISO 44001.

The stages described in [Clause 8](#) are introduced by commentary that explains more about the purpose and aims of each stage. A flowchart is included to illustrate the path through the steps within each stage. Each box within the flowchart represents both the clauses contained in ISO 44001 and the supporting clauses in this document.

Each of the subclauses is structured in the same simple format as follows:

- a) first, a summary of the intent of the corresponding clause in ISO 44001;
- b) then, an explanation of the relevance and importance of supporting the development of effective collaborative working;
- c) finally, guidance on how to implement the matching clause in ISO 44001, e.g. suggested approaches and areas for consideration.

Where appropriate, the clauses are supported by tables, figures and models and methods that can be used in implementation.

For clarity and increased understanding, it is recommended that ISO 44001 and this document are read together. Further useful information is provided in the annexes to ISO 44001.

It could appear that certain requirements in ISO 44001 are duplicated. However, in these cases they are a reflection of the evolution of processes throughout the relationship life cycle. The HLS describes those requirements that occur at an organizational level, while the subclauses in [Clause 8](#) describe similar requirements that apply to a specific collaboration.

The guidance provided by this document enables the integration of the ISO 44001 framework into an organization's established operations, activities, processes and procedures to optimize the benefits of collaboration between organizations. In this context, the adoption of this collaborative approach enhances and does not detract from the obligations and responsibilities agreed between the parties and its application is commensurate to the size and complexity of the organizations involved.

The following additional considerations are included to support requirements and third-party engagements.

0.3 Common principles of relationship management

0.3.1 The life cycle framework

The life cycle framework addresses a number of themes that cascade from the high-level management system and vary within the context and maturity of a specific relationship life cycle. These evolving themes impact the behaviours and organizational culture of collaborating organizations to ensure they are effective, optimized and deliver enhanced benefit to the stakeholders through collaborative approaches (see [Figure 2](#)).

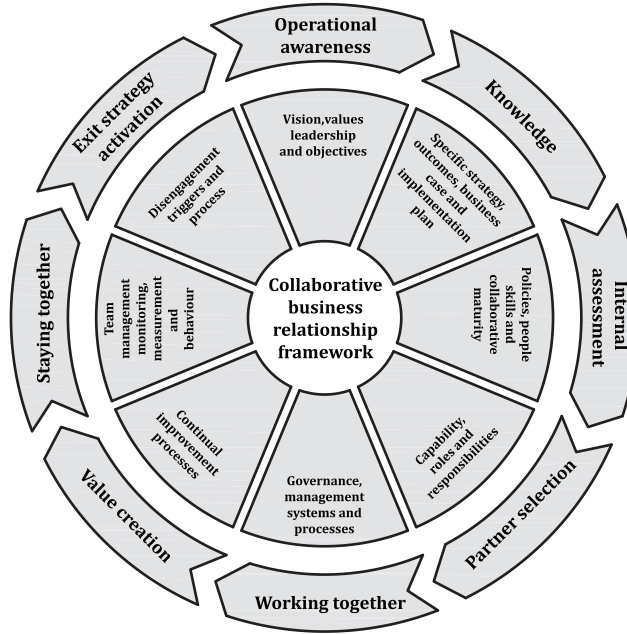


Figure 2 — Overview of the principal components of successful collaborative business relationships

In the context of collaborative relationships, the life cycle model outlines the key steps to an effective management process from concept adoption to disengagement. The eight stages are:

- a) operational awareness: establishing the operation's propensity for collaboration;
- b) knowledge: evaluating specific collaborative benefits and business case;
- c) internal assessment: assessing the operation's capability to collaborate;
- d) partner selection: establishing an appropriate selection process;
- e) working together: establishing a joint governance model for collaboration;
- f) value creation: establishing a joint process for continual improvement;
- g) staying together: managing, monitoring and measuring the relationship over time;
- h) exit strategy activation: establishing a joint approach to disengagement and/or future.

0.3.2 The sequence of stages

While [Clause 8](#) follows an eight-stage process, it is recognized that the entry point for any specific collaborative relationship can vary.

Collaborative business relationship management systems — Guidelines on the implementation of ISO 44001

1 Scope

This document gives guidelines for organizations on implementing ISO 44001 (see [Figure 3](#)) in order to achieve successful collaborative business relationships, as well as helping organizations use and implement the framework specification effectively.

This document explains what is intended by each requirement of ISO 44001, why each is important, and recommends approaches to take for their practical implementation. How to meet the requirements is individually evaluated and applied in the context of each organization.

This document is applicable to any organization.

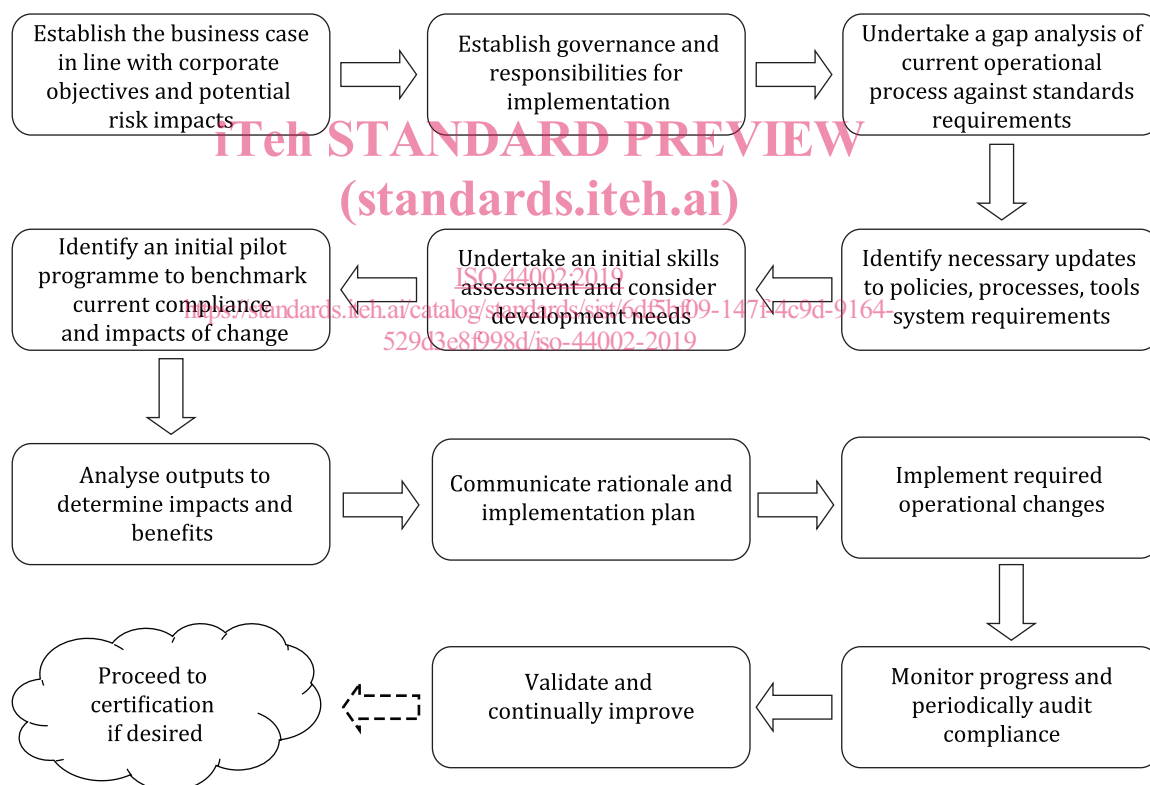


Figure 3 — High-level implementation flow for ISO 44001

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 44001:2017, *Collaborative business relationship management systems — Requirements and framework*

3 Terms, definitions and abbreviated terms

3.1 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 44001 apply.

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

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

3.2 Abbreviated terms

CBRMS	collaborative business relationship management system
IPR	intellectual property right
KPI	key performance indicator
MAP	maturity assessment profile
OLA	operating level agreement
RMP	relationship management plan
SER	senior executive responsible
SLA	service level agreement

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4 Context of the organization

4.1 Understanding the organization and its context

NOTE Further information on the context of the organization can be found in ISO/TS 9002:2016, Clause 4.

4.1.1 What: summary of the intent

The organization should clearly establish the linkage between the activities, intended outcomes of the organization and the potential role for collaboration in supporting those outcomes.

4.1.2 Why: explanation of relevance

Collaboration might not be appropriate for all business relationships and the focus should be directed to where it a collaborative relationship can add value. Organizations may find that working in a collaborative relationship could introduce challenges to existing operating structures. It is therefore essential that internal stakeholders see that collaborative working approaches overall are seen to be beneficial.

4.1.3 How: implementation guidance

In many organizations the adoption of collaborative working initiatives requires a strategic decision by top management to ensure that, when appropriate, it is effectively integrated and supported throughout its functions and teams.

4.2 Understanding the needs and expectations of stakeholders

4.2.1 What: summary of the intent

The organization should identify its external stakeholders that can be affected by the adoption of collaborative working to ensure their needs and expectations are clearly understood.

4.2.2 Why: explanation of relevance

The successful adoption of collaborative approaches should be anchored in the ability of initiatives to deliver defined objectives and outcomes that are integrated with those of the organizations and stakeholders involved. These might not always be fully aligned but should be, as a minimum, complementary or neutral in terms of the key objectives. It is also important to ensure these objectives are reviewed at regular intervals to assess changes.

In some cases, a collaborative opportunity can be initiated by stakeholders or there can be a need to meet stakeholder requirements through specialized partners or suppliers. The stakeholder can be part of the collaboration. In fact, an important aspect in optimizing performance through collaboration is that partners can interact directly with stakeholders and develop better stakeholder relationships. It is also possible that the stakeholder's acceptance of collaboration or of specific collaborative partners can be a crucial factor in developing the right approach.

4.2.3 How: implementation guidance

The organization should identify all potential stakeholders, understand their needs and expectations and develop a plan to address them. Stakeholder mapping is an established tool used in many organizations, but this should extend beyond the traditional influencers and blockers to take into account all points of contact that can directly or indirectly influence collaborative initiatives and outcomes.

4.3 Determining the scope of the collaborative business relationship management system

4.3.1 What: summary of the intent

The organization should assess its strategic objectives and operational activities to identify where it is appropriate or beneficial to implement and deploy a systemic approach to collaborative working.

4.3.2 Why: explanation of relevance

An organization can have a wide variety of external relationships where the potential for harnessing the value of collaborative working can be determined in different ways. It may also require considerations related to the size and complexity of the organizations involved and outcomes.

4.3.3 How: implementation guidance

When considering a collaborative working approach, there has to be a balance between the required investment in time and resources together with the projected benefits to enhanced outcomes. Segmenting current operational approaches will help to ensure effective targeting of resources, while at the same time evaluating market drivers. Where possible, the aspects that could be influenced by the stakeholder should be identified. These can include:

- a) the stakeholder's attitude to collaboration;
- b) the stakeholder's preference for partners;
- c) the risk of working with multiple organizations;
- d) contracting processes and legal constraints;

- e) availability of suitable partners or suppliers;
- f) timeline.

4.4 Collaborative business relationship management system

4.4.1 What: summary of the intent

The organization should ensure that a CBRMS is established to support and sustain the scope of the organization's collaborative requirements and is effectively communicated, fully documented and integrated with other management systems deployed by the organization.

4.4.2 Why: explanation of relevance

Where collaborative relationships have been identified as key factors in achieving business objectives, it is critical that the established collaborative management system and high-level processes are maintained within the organization's existing operating systems. The failure of potential beneficial external collaborations can be traced back to these activities conflicting within established policies, processes and practices.

4.4.3 How: implementation guidance

A defined and documented portfolio of collaborative systems and processes that are aligned with existing management systems within the organization should be established. The portfolio should be able to accommodate specific adaptations and changes when appropriate, including the ability to effectively accommodate third-party processes.

4.5 Creation of value

4.5.1 What: summary of the intent

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The organization should assess where collaborative working can add value to ensure the appropriate focus for investment and deployment of resources to achieve maximum benefit. Collaborative working can involve additional or specialized resources to achieve the desired objectives and to ensure a clear focus on balancing investment and outcomes.

4.5.2 Why: explanation of relevance

There are many types of relationships and their potential to add value may be assessed in different ways depending on the desired outcomes, size and complexity of the organization. Value can also be defined in many different ways, as is frequently the case for potential collaborative partners. It is crucial that organizations are able to evaluate and articulate their projected value proposition and be able to align it with partners.

4.5.3 How: implementation guidance

As a starting point, the organization may consider assessing the expected value of all existing and potential relationships based on the overall organizational objectives and an assessment of where a collaborative approach is likely to deliver benefits (e.g. see [Figure 4](#)).

Value can be different in a number of similar cases or relationships. Identifying these ensures that collaborative initiatives are appropriately configured. These may include alternative priorities to improve competitiveness, for example:

- enhancing the capability to respond to market demands;
- accessing new markets;

- building alternative enhanced value propositions;
- driving innovation;
- augmenting resources;
- driving speed to market;
- improving risk profiles;
- cost reduction.

There may be multiple or singular drivers for any potential relationship, but these should be understood so as to ensure that the engagement and management processes deployed remain focused on the strategic outcomes and are not deflected.

NOTE A range of relationships is explained in ISO 44001:2017, Annex F.

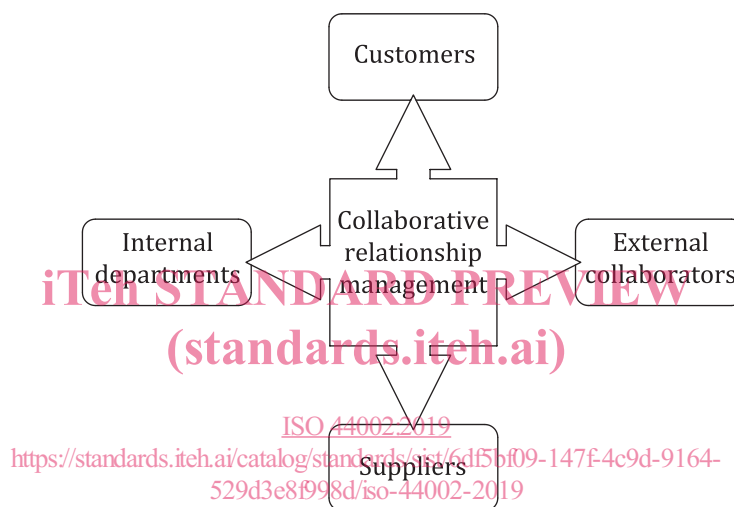


Figure 4 — Potential areas of collaboration and sources of potential value applications for collaboration

5 Leadership

5.1 Leadership and commitment

5.1.1 What: summary of the intent

The organization should ensure that there is clear and documented high-level support for the deployment of collaboration, when appropriate.

5.1.2 Why: explanation of relevance

The commitment, authority, influence and oversight of top management is essential for the overall success of collaborative working. Collaborative working can require additional resourcing or can affect current operational processes, responsibilities and stakeholder management.

5.1.3 How: implementation guidance

The organization should formally appoint a senior executive responsible (SER) for collaborative working, with top management authority to provide high-level oversight for all associated activities.