When Conflict Occurs
Guidelines for the "No Blame Review™"

**Purpose:** Joint review of alliance status by alliance managers

**Who Should Attend:** key alliance managers and sponsors only
(no consultants, advisors, staff etc.)

**When:** Held at key stages (not routine), any time a significant change occurs or as unanticipated problems arise

**Where:** Neutral location. Plan time for social and business interaction

**Before the Meeting:** Think about:
- your company’s objectives in forming the alliance
- agreed upon goals and strategies for the alliance
- progress toward alliance goals and milestones
- shortfalls or failures
- significant changes in partner companies, the competitive environment, technology, that might affect the alliance
- unanticipated opportunities or obstacles
- changes in key personnel
- issues that concern you about the alliance
- what changes you would like to make

**The Ground Rules:**
- establish an atmosphere of confidentiality
- accept that there is "no blame" here
- simple, direct, objective conversations
- lay the cards on the table face up
- share concerns, doubts, perceived hidden agendas
- listen without judgment
- identify open issues
- work to minimize parent company politics
- acknowledge & celebrate successes

**Possible Outcomes:**
- validate or adjust alliance strategy
- terminate the alliance
- agree on how the relationship should work
- recommit to business goals and objectives

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?? recommit to relationship goals and objectives
?? identify important milestones