

network enterprise europe

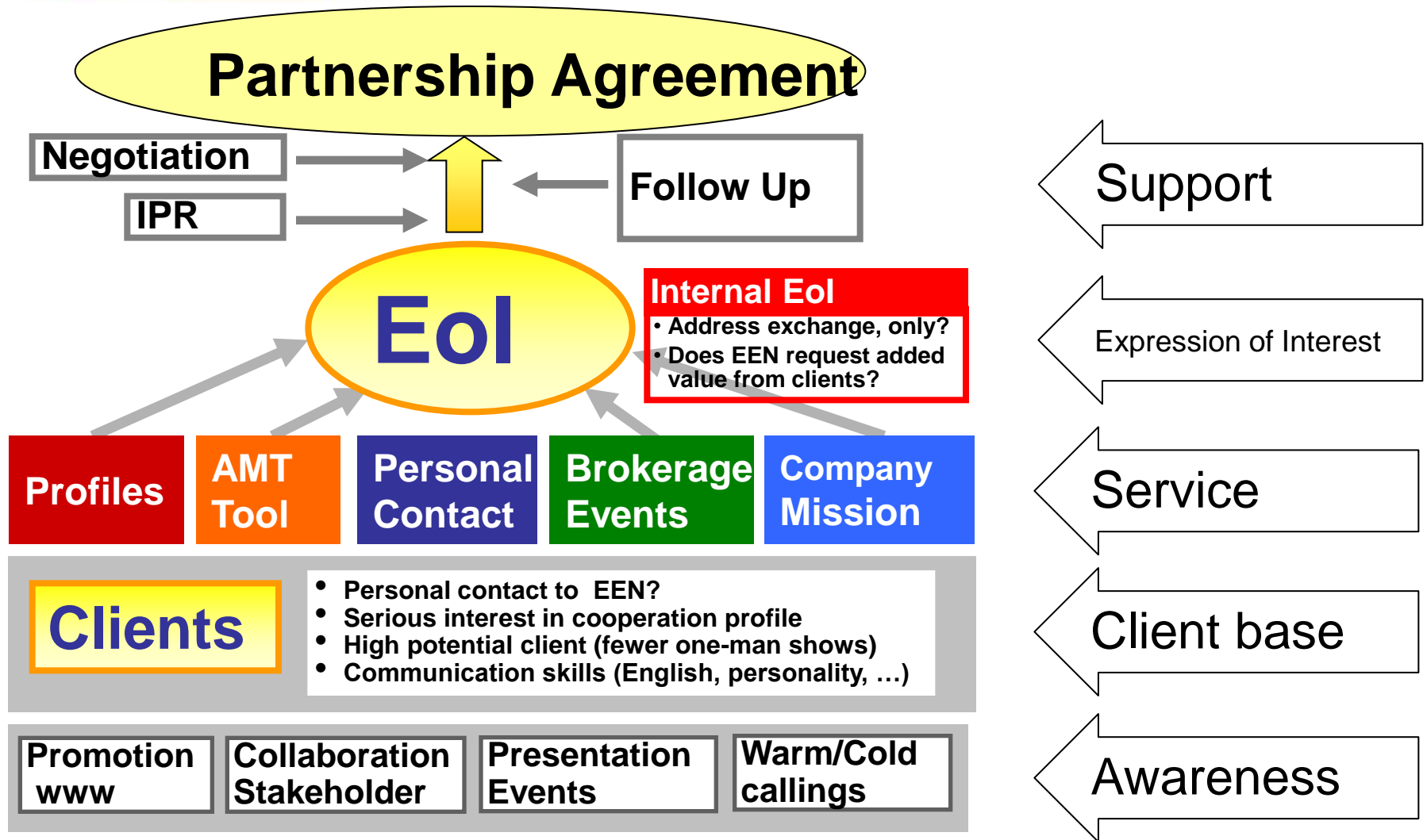


Business Support on Your Doorstep

Partnership Process + How to approach SMEs effectively



The Partnership Process



SMEs – Who are they?

- Very **heterogeneous** group
 - Size
 - Sector
 - Resources
 - Experience
 - Future plans
 -

SMEs – Some characteristics

- Little time
- No or little experience in international affairs
- Little knowledge about support programmes
- Tight resources
- Doubts, prejudices
-



“What is in it for **ME**? How can **YOU** support **ME**”?

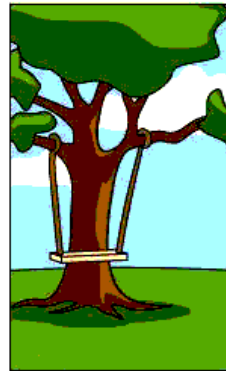
It's a jungle of support services out there!



Communication can be tricky!



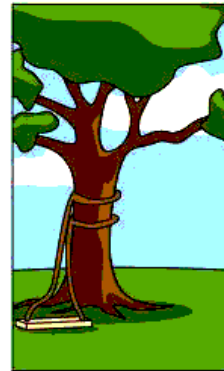
How the customer explained it



How the Project Leader understood it



How the Analyst designed it



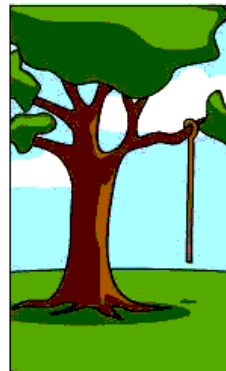
How the Programmer wrote it



How the Business Consultant described it



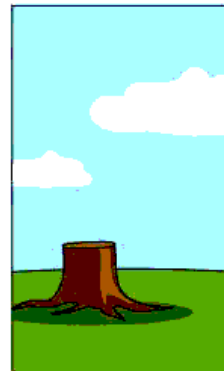
How the project was documented



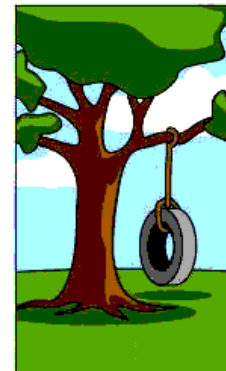
What operations installed



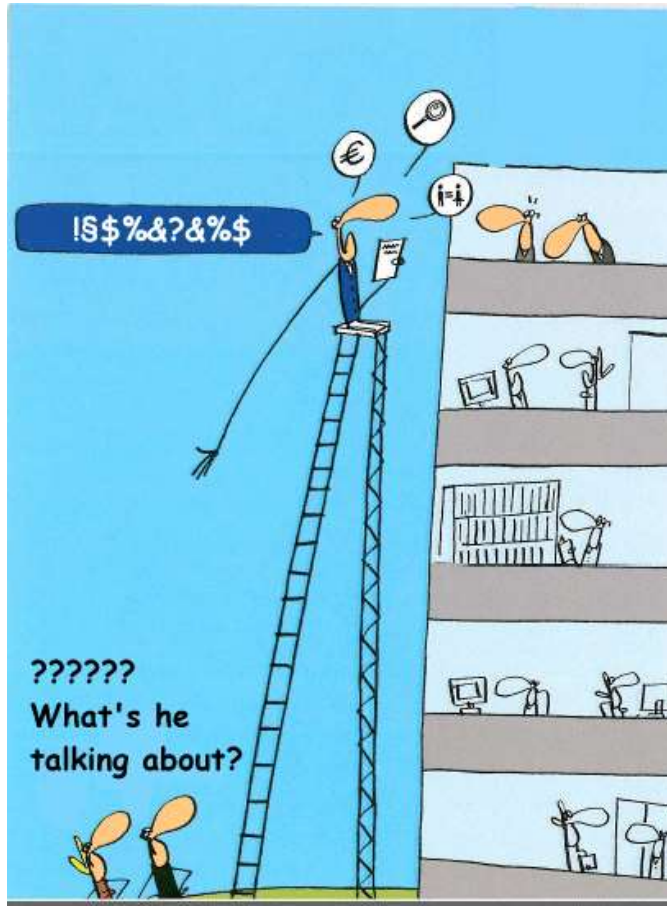
How the customer was billed



How it was supported

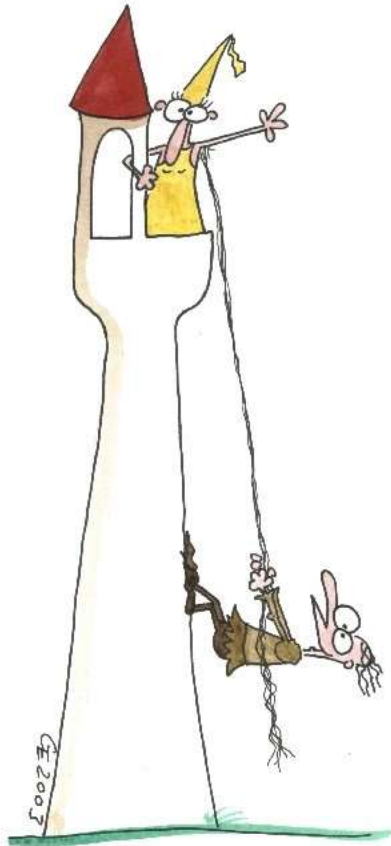


What the customer really needed



Speak to them in **THEIR** language!

Keep it short & simple!



© www.toonsup.com/eckicartoon

SMEs – What do they need?

- Ask **THEM!**
- Ask your colleagues in the host organisation!
- Ask EEN!
- Ask other stakeholders!

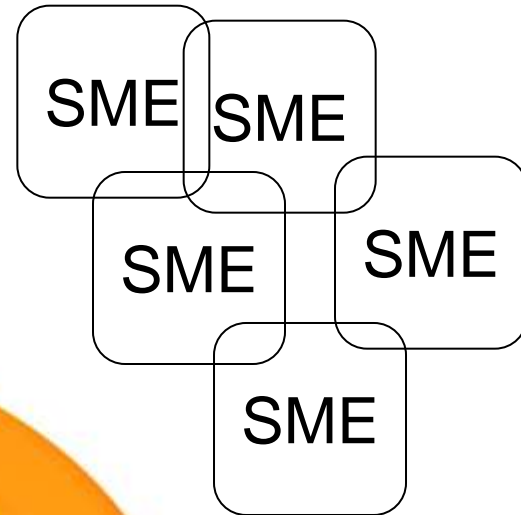
You are in a **NETWORK** – Make use of it!

SMEs – What do they need?

- Financial support 
- Access to markets
- Advise on IPR
- Advise on (EU) legislation
- Support in export/import (advice, finances,...)
- Solutions for technological needs

....just about **EVERY** service you can think of!

But how to get the message to the SMEs?



BUT how to catch them?



Take the initiative – Call them!

- **Warm** Calling
 - Contacts via host organisation
 - Events
 - ...
- **Cold** Calling
 - Press
 - Innovation awards
 -



Be informed and prepare a text! You have got **a few seconds** to catch their attention!

Get out of the office – Meet them!

- Local events
 - Organise your own
 - Trainings, brokerage events, information days
 - Get invited to do a presentation on other's events
 - Host organisation, stakeholders
 - Visit events
 - Innovation awards, Business talks
 - Visit fairs
 -

Make the first step - Get them to know you!

Challenges at the initial contact!

- Client does **NOT understand** what this is all about
- Client does **NOT see the benefit**
- **No trust** in “public support”
 - (highly bureaucratic, complicated, inefficient)
- **Expectations** are **too high**
 - Clients expect the solution of all their problems

How to meet the challenges?

Be informed!

- Get information about the SME
 - Website
 - Via host organisation
- Get the right contact person of the company
 - Responsible for research/new technologies
 - Internationalisation

How to meet these challenges?

- Awake Interest
- Create trust
- **WHAT** does the client need?
 - Services of the EEN, signposting
- Is the client **ready** for the EEN?
 - English
 - Resources
 - ...

Make an appointment for a first or further personal meeting!



And now....

