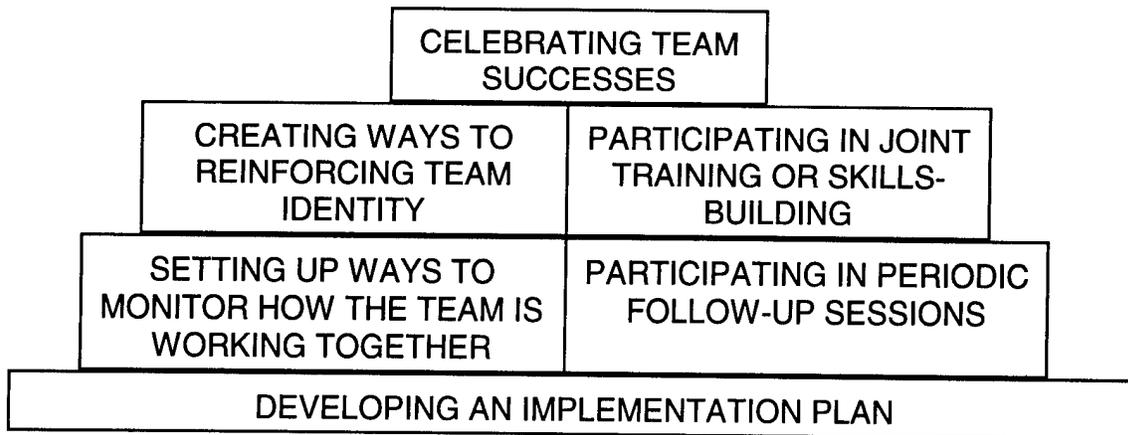


Figure 6
SUSTAINING THE TEAM
Stage 2 in the Partnering Process



Here are suggestions for how to implement each of these steps:

Developing a Partnering Implementation Plan

Organizational culture is usually learned by a kind of osmosis. People just assume that's the way "normal" people act. Because these expectations are unconscious, they're not even aware they exist. These expectations are like the "default settings" on your computer; they kick in automatically unless you make a conscious choice to change them.

Everybody on the partnering team brings these unconscious expectations to the partnering, based on his/her organization's assumptions about what constitutes normal behavior, and interprets other team members' behavior in light of those expectations. These expectations can lead to substantial misunderstandings and misinterpretations.

The only way to minimize these risks is to *substitute conscious expectations for unconscious ones*. This is why it is important for the Partnering team to talk about group norms, critique how it communicates, and agree on how it will handle disputes. Each of the new agreements replaces unconscious attitudes that can harm the effectiveness of the team.