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European Regional Conference 2025

Collaborate to Create: The Power
of Strategic Alliances

Prof. Dr. Stefanie A. Schubert

Madrid, April 10, 2025



Agenda **Collaborate to Create: The Power of Strategic Alliances**



Strategic Alliances

Amplify your impact

Negotiation Mastery

Navigate opportunities

Influence with momentum

Actionable Insights

Why This Topic Matters:

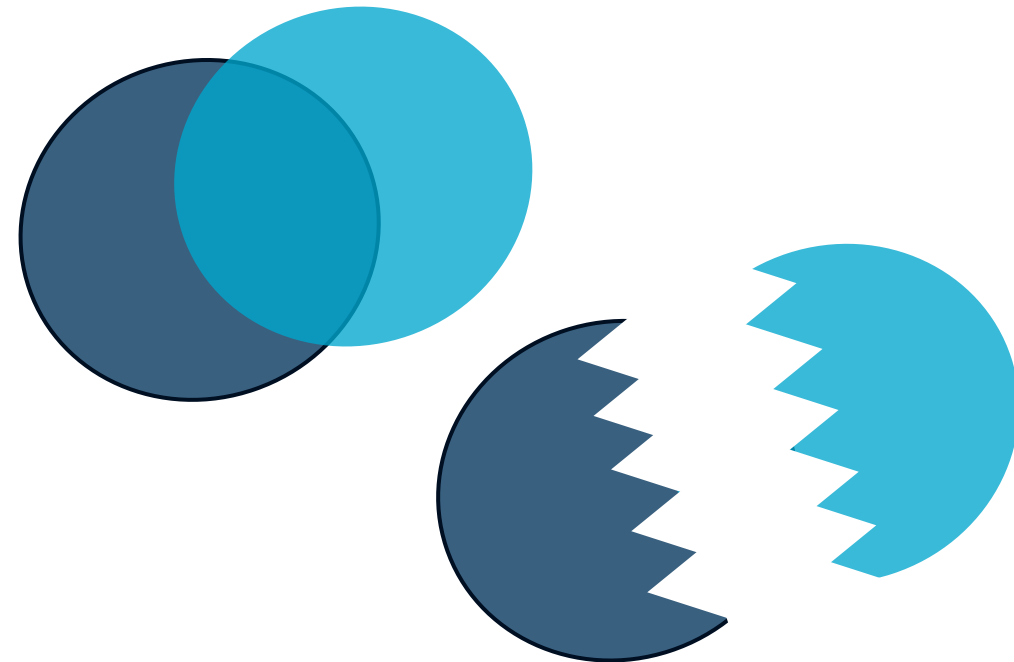
The Triumph of Strategic Accounting Alliances

- **LEA Global:** competitive advantage
- **PwC & Fragomen:** Expanding service offerings
- **KPMG & Microsoft:** cost savings & efficiency
- **BDO Alliance USA** - more than 900 independent alliance firm locations: geographic expansion
- **PwC Germany & Aleph Alpha:** compliance and risk management, Creance.ai (Joint Venture)



Motives for Alliances

- **Addressing challenges:** internal & external, geopolitical
- A **problem or opportunity** cannot be undertaken alone or **strategic reason** to partner
- Leveraging **synergies** or combining **complementarities**



Case Study BioNTech Pfizer

“Billion-dollar deal with a handshake”

- A genius **vision** to create value
- **How** to establish the collaboration?
- Strategic Alliances versus make or buy

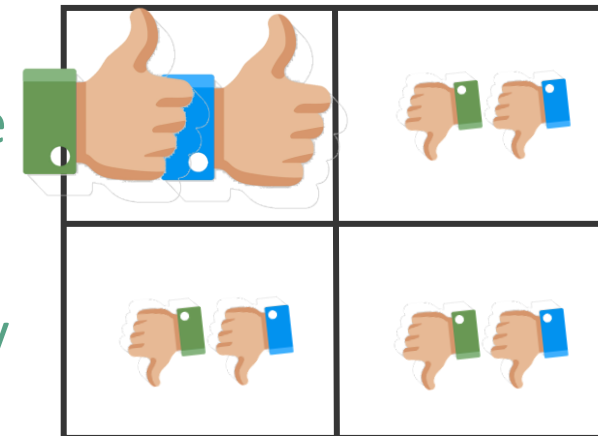


Alliance Make or Buy

BIONTECH

Alliance

Make or Buy



Why an example from Pharma?

Make, Buy or Partner

Make

In-house development

Partner

Strategic Alliances

Buy

Outsourcing or purchasing

Setting up the Strategic Alliance

Best practices

- **Strategic futures:** align expectations
- Framework for **working together**
- Good **governance** und communications
- **3-D Fit:** Compatibility of culture, operations, strategy

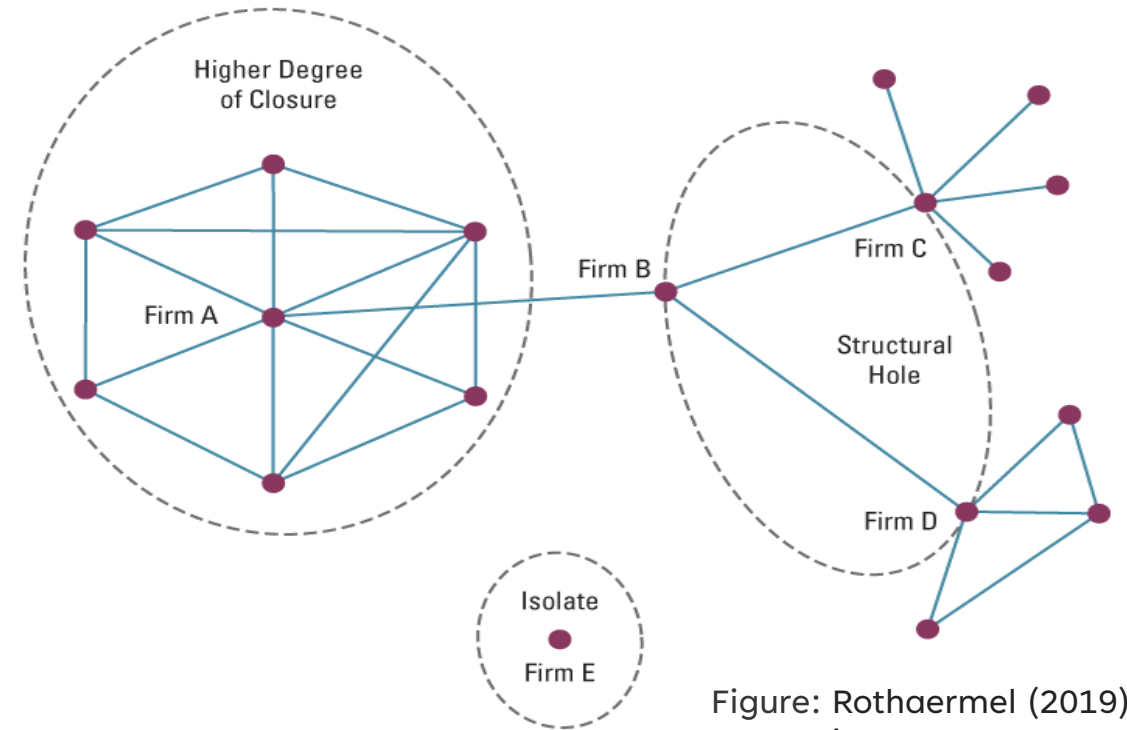
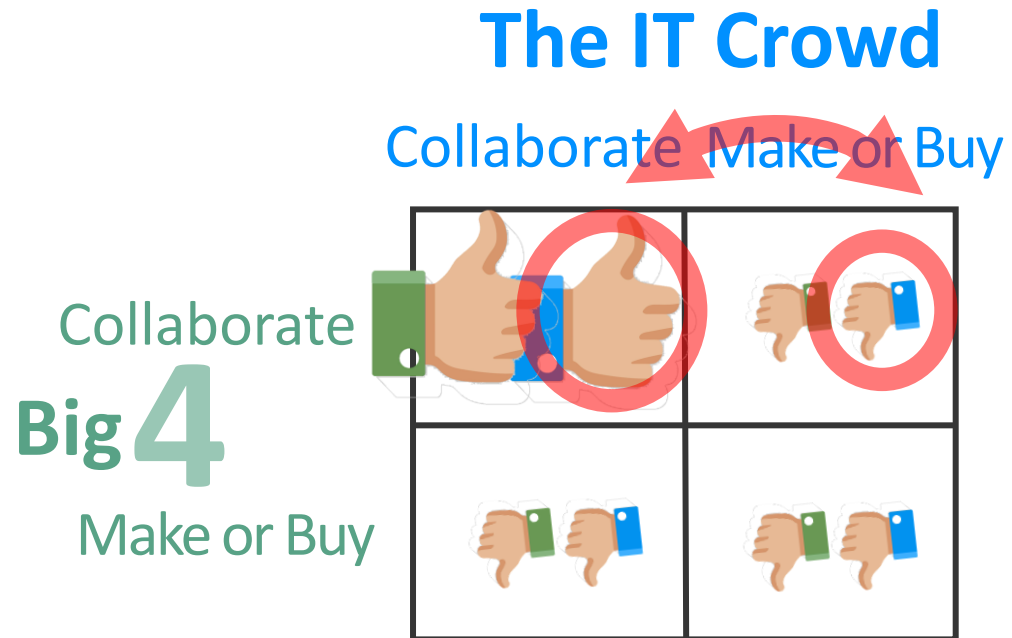


Figure: Rothaermel (2019)
Strategic management, p.256

- Role in **strategic networks**
E.g. value a communication network:
 $N \times (N-1) = N^2 - N$

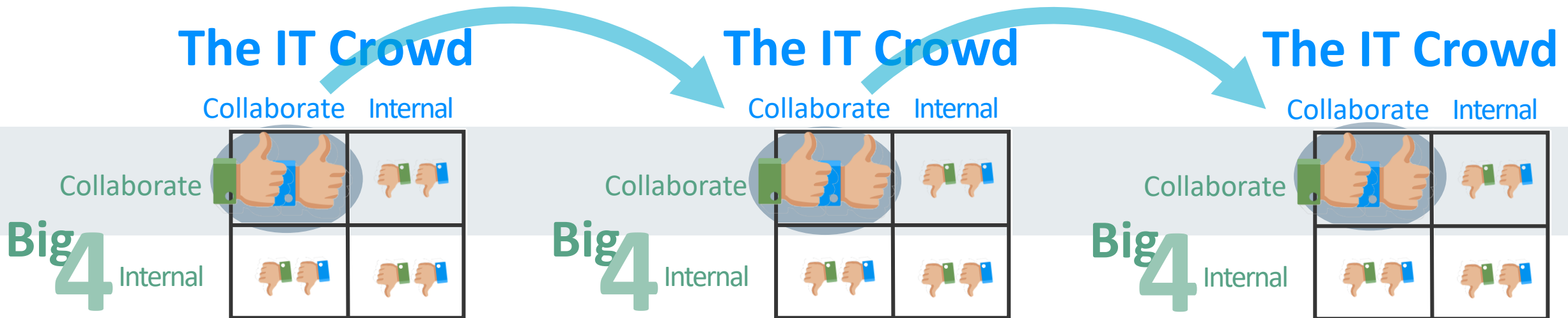
How Alliances Succeed

- **Value Creation**
(value inflection points)
- Balance cooperation and **competition**
- The alliance must be the **best choice** for both partners

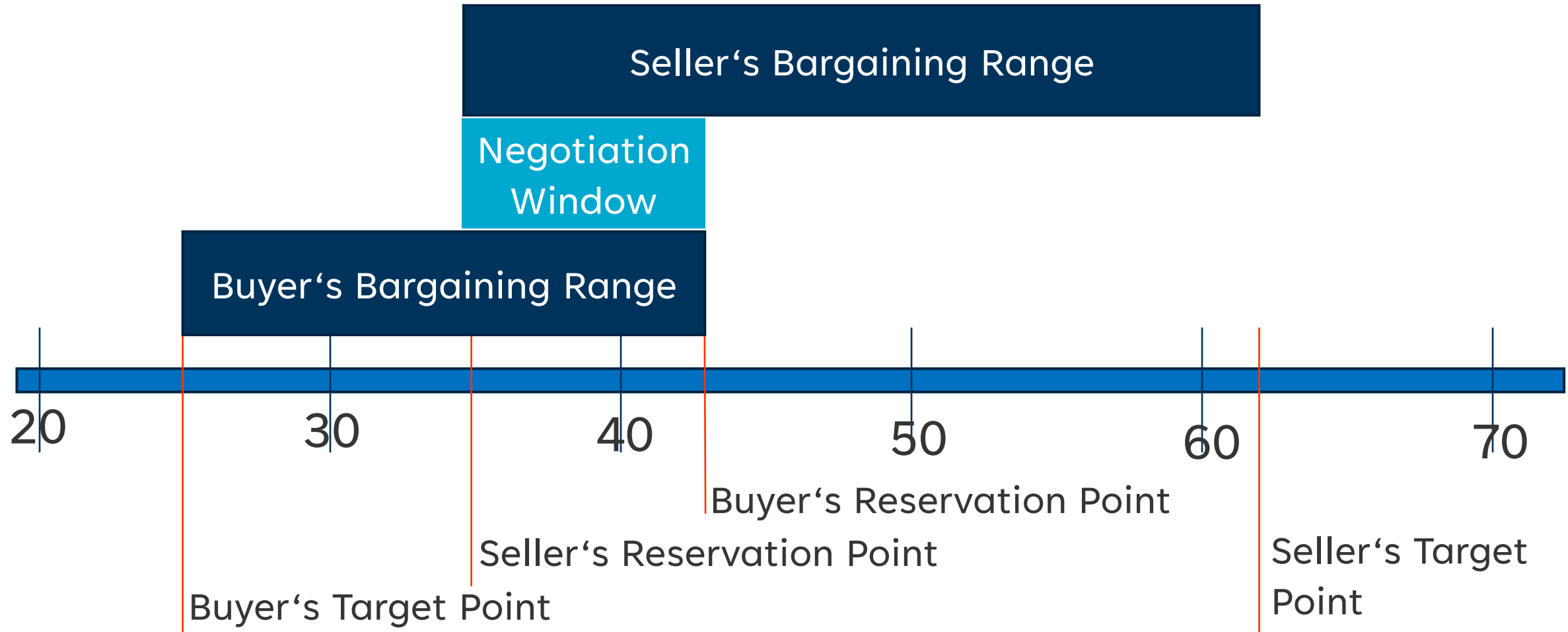


How Alliances Succeed over Time

- Execution: **Dedicated Alliance Management**
- **Trust and credibility** (dynamic strategies)



The Deal



Alignment for Value Creation

- Focus on alignment on **long-term** vision
- **Co-developing** unique competitive advantages
- Find the **right rationale**
- Establish strong **internal alignment**



Lose-Lose or Win-Win?

What is the counterfactual scenario?

EXAMPLE renegotiation for better terms

- Perceived as **Lose-Lose** scenario
- Under which conditions can it be perceived as a **Win-Win**?



A Multitude of Reasons to Negotiate

- To close the **deal** (formal)



Foto: andibreit, Pixaby

Informal negotiation as a means to

- Select the **right partner**
- Gather information and **shape** the deal
- Build **trust**

Negotiation Strategies

If your plans do not work out well – change the conditions

Strategic moves

- will elevate you to a more powerful position
- require commitment and credibility
- deserve strategic thinking

EXAMPLE Disney to embrace Pixar's creativity

- Countering negotiation strategies of the partner

Negotiation Tactics

At the negotiation table (examples)

- **Active listening:** understanding what was not said
- **Body language:** be consistent in delivering your message
- **Use silence:** force the counterpart to act
- **Authenticity:** use humor and other individual skills to drive negotiations

Hands- on Tipps for Value Creation

Best practices that „**change the game**“ and decision making foundations (examples)

- Use **framing and priming** to influence importance of an option
- **First mover advantage**: capitalize on timing
- **Performance approach goals** are more motivating than performance avoidance goal
- Prioritize to Advance: **simplification strategies** help to coordinate

Cognitive Distortions

Examples

- **Jumping to conclusions:** coming to conclusions with little evidence
- **Confirmation bias:** evidence is collected to support a decision that was already made
- **Loss aversion:** losses have a stronger effect than gains
(Kahneman, Tversky, 1979)

Micro Alignment

- Getting to **know people** – addressing biases
- Getting to **know yourself** – account for misinterpretation and normative conclusions
- Develop your own “**business authenticity**”
- Higher ambiguity tolerance helps to **embrace differences** and to turn them into business strategy

Key Take-Aways

- **Dedicated Alliance Management** promotes interorganizational success
- Shape **alliance success** already during the negotiation phase
- Effective **negotiation tactics** enhance negotiation outcomes
- **Influencing strategies** and preparation gives you leverage
- Build on **collaborative dynamics** and trust

Roundtable Topics

- **The Strategy Table:** Creating value together implies that both partners are equally important. But it doesn't mean that the partners need to contribute on a 50/50 basis. What mechanisms or criteria would you apply to make sure that profit sharing accounts for unequal contributions?
 - **The Visionary Table:** What problems would you like to have solved in the industry? If you assume the ideal partner existed, what characteristics does it offer? Prioritize the potential partners' capabilities (must-have or nice-to-have).
 - **The Alliance Capability Table:** What alliances have you been involved in? What factors were associated with the success or failure of the strategic alliance project? Formulate best practices to establish (long-term) alliance capabilities.
 - **The CFO* Table:** What metrics are helpful in measuring alliance success, trust and the level of engagement? Build on Strategic Alliances you have been involved. What metrics have been used or would have been helpful?
- *Engage in the discussion if you have a genuine interest in the subject – irrespective of your job function
- **The Human-Centered Table:** Focusing on the human factor, what aspects would be important in the partner search phase? How do you build and maintain trust and at the same time represent your company's values and goals?

Roundtable Instructions

- 9:15am** Introduction to Roundtable Topics. Attendees will break into small groups
- 9:20am** Roundtable Discussions. Each table will nominate a Table Captain and select 1-2 key insights or solutions to share with the room
- 9:40am** Insights Sharing (Table Captains)
- 9:55am** Conclusion & Wrap-Up (Stefanie A. Schubert)
- 10:00am** Walk away with actionable takeaways to apply in your role. Enjoy your coffee break!