

**Transformative Learning Initiatives** (TLI) has developed a unique employer engagement approach that utilizes experiential and commonsensical methods, and is based on the business world concept of Strategic Account Management. This proven process focuses the entire organization on building productive and sustainable partnerships. It is adapted for use by educators through the use of our ***Education-to-Business Networking***© program.

It is important to note that the ***Education-to-Business Networking***© process is designed for two broad sets of users and related applications:

- 1) those institutions that are just beginning their education – business partnership efforts;
- 2) those organizations that have already engaged in their partnership initiatives and are looking to recalibrate their efforts.

## Spider-On-The Mirror

The TLI ***Education-to-Business Networking***© process utilizes a number of modified approaches from the business world. One is the importance of an organizational-to-organizational structure that is sometimes referred to as the ***"Spider-On-The Mirror"*** approach to relationship management.

In short, key players on each side of the partnership equation are lined up with each other based on their analogous functions and responsibilities. For example, a school District Superintendent or College President would have an agreed upon appropriate relationship with the partner company CEO, his/her logical counterpart.

Other “vertical and horizontal” relationships would be established on both sides of the partner organizations. Arguably the most involved day-to-day relationships would take place with the partner point person/project manager from each of the two organizations.

Two important objectives are achieved with this type of partner organizational structure;

- 1) Because the partnership has more than a one-on-one structure, the departure of one individual does not destroy the entire partnership;
- 2) Multiple points of critical important contacts up and down the organizational ladder ensure that the partnership will indeed be organization-to-organization (not just one-to-one in nature).

