To Collaborate or Not: That is the Question!

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Executive Consultant & Coach

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Who I Am

John Zorbini  Executive Coach & Consultant

John has spent his career helping organizations understand the strategic link between effectively managed human capital and successful business results. John’s unique background and experiences as a senior executive, professional speaker and certified leadership coach, combined with his collaborative and results-focused approach, makes him ideal to consult, coach and facilitate all levels of leadership.

John is also an Assistant Professor in the School of Business at Mount Mary University (Milwaukee) where he instructs accelerated adult courses in the University’s MBA Program.

For 30 years, John held various leadership roles for three of Wisconsin’s largest healthcare systems (Aurora Health Care, Froedtert & the Medical College, Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare), spending 25 of those years as the Chief Human Resources Officer.

John and his wife reside in Erin, WI (Home of the 2017 U.S. Open)

What We Deliver...

Leadership Development
- Leadership Training & Programs
- Executive Coaching & Onboarding
- Manager Development
- Executive Presence

Change Management
- Change Consultation & Training
- Change Strategy Development
- Culture Assessment & Integration
- Organizational Design & Alignment

Teaming Performance
- Team Assessment & Alignment
- Executive Team Development
- New Leader Team Assimilation
- Presentation & Orals Coaching

Change Management
- Change Consultation & Training
- Change Strategy Development
- Culture Assessment & Integration
- Organizational Design & Alignment

Talent Development
- Talent & Workforce Management
- Succession Planning
- Career Management
- LEAD NOW Certification
What is Collaboration...

**A willingness and ability to help others achieve a common goal**

**Focused Collaboration Model**

1. Identify Opportunities
2. Manage Barriers
3. Create Solutions

**Focused Collaboration Model**

1. Identify Opportunities
2. Manage Barriers
3. Create Solutions

- Newness
- Speed
- Impact
- Effort
Focused Collaboration Model

1. Identify Opportunities
   - Newness: Uncertain or unprecedented
   - Impact: Significant cost-savings, revenue or market share
   - Speed: Tight timeline or urgency ≠ NOT
   - Effort: High – distribute the load

2. Manage Barriers
   - Access: Easy access to information, systems, people
   - Ability: Have the right SKA
   - Incentives: Supportive team rewards helps alignment

3. Create Solutions


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Focused Collaboration Model

1. Identify Opportunities
2. Manage Barriers
3. Create Solutions

People
Timing
Goals

Focused Collaboration Model

3. Create Solutions
People: ID right people and leadership; clarify roles
Timing: Identify timetable and keep on time
Goals: Identify and agree upon common goals

The model ensures that collaboration is used the right way at the right time to achieve the right results.
Collaborative Behaviors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior: Important for Effective Collaboration</th>
<th>Do I Display This Behavior?</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I listen actively (I avoid thinking of what I’m going to say next; instead of listening, I don’t interrupt etc.)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I respond promptly to questions or comments addressed to me</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am constructive in any criticism or dissent</td>
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<tr>
<td>I compromise when reasonable differences exist</td>
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<td>I examine the different goals my organizational unit shares with the common work goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>I look for common points of agreement to resolve differences</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am sure to point being made by someone</td>
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<tr>
<td>I take differences of opinion personally</td>
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<tr>
<td>I give credit where credit is due</td>
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<tr>
<td>I maintain perspective and a sense of humor in difficult situations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I actively contribute ideas and resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am an active contributor (I find and share resources and ideas)</td>
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<tr>
<td>I seek alternative solutions where agreement cannot be reached on a proposed solution or idea</td>
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Case #1

A large insurance company developed a new suite of products to meet unique customer needs.

But as the products were rolled out, it became clear that the product development and marketing teams had not worked closely enough with the IT and customer service teams that were supposed to support these products.

These teams knew about the general product development strategy, but they were not included in the detailed planning and roll out decisions, so they were left scrambling to catch up by the time the products were launched.

As a result, customers experienced delays and errors in processing, the call centers were unprepared for questions, and the overall end-to-end cost of the new products ended up being much higher than planned.

Case #2

A global manufacturing firm wanted to customize a product component for one of its major customers.

Doing so required extensive design reconfiguration, with changes to electronics, cooling, power, weight, pricing, and product delivery.

Although every function agreed to take on the changes that affected them, they all worked on them independently and with different time frames.

What each function didn’t realize was that their changes triggered adjustments for other departments, and this led to a continual cycle of design changes.

As a consequence, the product manager was unable to finalize an integrated design and still couldn’t give the customer a firm quote or delivery schedule 18 months later.
Case #3
A global machining manufacturer was preparing to launch a new product to better compete with international competition.

Product management partnered with engineering, manufacturing, sales, and marketing throughout the initial design and proposal phases.

In preparation for the final presentation to the CEO, marketing refused to provide critical data to product management.

When confronted, marketing leadership indicated that their people had a poor relationship with product management and that is why the data had not been provided.

No additional assistance was provided and product management had to go through backchannels to get the information for the presentation to the CEO.

How is this example not collaborative? What could be done to make it collaborative?

Cooperation vs. Collaboration

- Pleasant, nice to each other
- Keep others in the loop and informed
- Helping out is usually short-term and not too intense
- Some overlap in goals
- One group at a time

- Partnering is essential—clear collaboration contract
- Reallocation of resources and workloads
- Make tough trade-offs amid competing priorities
- Aligned goals for the organization
- All meet at once

Source: There’s a Difference Between Cooperation and Collaboration, Ron Ashkenas, HBR, April 20, 2015.

Collaborative Leadership

Old Leadership Environment
The work environment is predictable and follows a fixed, commonly understood set of rules.

- Autocratic Leadership Approach:
  - Provide clear directives
  - Standardize all processes
  - Cascade information to the team

- Goal of Autocratic Leadership:
  - Individual performance through a focus on leader-owned resources and priorities
Collaborative Leadership

New Leadership Environment
The work environment is inherently unpredictable, order is spontaneous and self-organized.

Enterprise Leadership Approach:
- Balance direction and autonomy
- Create a collaborative team environment
- Ensure information flows across the team

Goal of Enterprise Leadership:
- Enterprise contribution through using and contributing value throughout the organization

Enterprise Leadership

Individual Leadership + Network Leadership = Enterprise Leadership

A leader’s effectiveness at meeting individual goals and leading their team to high individual performance.

A leader’s effectiveness at contributing to and using the performance of other teams, and leading their team to do the same.

A leader’s effectiveness at meeting their individual goals, contributing to and using the performance of other departments, and leading their team to do the same.

Source: CEB analysis

New Skills, Old Attitudes
New Skills, Old Attitudes

- Most leaders demonstrate sufficient effectiveness at common leadership competencies:

  ✓ **Leader's Effectiveness at Key Competencies = 67%**
  
  - Problem Solving = 81%
  - Agility = 71%
  - Collaboration = 58%
  - Resource Allocation = 74%
  - Talent Management = 69%
  - Innovation = 46%

- But, many have outdated beliefs about autonomy & control:
New Skills, Old Attitudes

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But, many have outdated beliefs about autonomy & control:

- **Leaders agreeing that autonomy and control are critical to their success as leaders = 66%**

Source: CEB 2013 Leadership & Development Survey

Thoughts From Clients

- **When is collaboration needed?**

Thoughts from Clients

- **When is collaboration NOT needed?**
Thoughts From Clients

What does collaboration look like?

What does collaboration NOT look like?

Collaboration Model from Recent Client

Objective: Lean on Each Other More

1. Identify topics that need to be collaborated on
   1. Topics that need brainstorming
   2. Topics that need buy-in but are already understood
   3. Topics that have pre-existing or potential for conflict
2. Identify a captain or leader for the topic
3. Identify key participants in the discussion
4. Ask how key participants want/need to be involved
5. Engage with the team with a clear purpose in mind
Careful Considerations

- Some organizations view teams as a sign of organizational success
- Too much teamwork can exhaust employees and sap productivity
- How much is too much:
  - Some organizations spend over 50% of employee time in collaborative activities (HBR Study)
- Don’t forget about those “meetings”
MEETINGS: Disguised Collaboration

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION:
- Average number of meetings per day?
- Amount of time per day in meetings?
- How many are truly productive?
- Describe your “best” meeting
- Describe your “not so best” meeting

Let’s Talk About MEETINGS

- Biggest killer of time in your company
- Biggest killer of productivity in your company

Let’s Talk About MEETINGS

- Biggest killer of time in your company
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- Biggest challenge for leaders (particularly new ones) in your company
Let’s Talk About MEETINGS

▪ Biggest killer of time in your company
▪ Biggest killer of productivity in your company
▪ Biggest challenge for leaders (particularly new ones) in your company
▪ Sometimes viewed as the “only” way to accomplish organizational strategies
▪ Critical to get your arms around it - NOW

The Tale of Two Companies

▪ Strategic Initiatives Approach Company #1:
  – Teams are not required, but encouraged
  – Interdisciplinary teams are not required
  – All team must “charter” and get approval
  – Team membership is limited to single digits and effective meeting management is required
  – Few complain about being on a team
  – Strategies are implemented and achieved on time

The Tale of Two Companies

▪ Strategic Initiatives Approach Company #2:
  – Teams are required
  – Interdisciplinary teams are HIGHLY encouraged
  – Team membership not limited to single digits
  – Effective meeting management is spotty at best
  – Numerous complaints about being on a team
  – Strategies are implemented, but not on time
  – Strategy achievement is questionable at best
And the Survey Says...

- 26 leaders from Company #2 offer the following on meetings:
  - Over 90% of my week is spent in meetings
  - I can’t get to my real work
  - They are terrible:
    - Start and end late
    - No agenda or supporting materials in advance
    - Everyone on their phones
    - No actionable items
    - A waste of my time and company money

How Do I Clean Up The Meeting Mess?

Three Key Questions:
- Do I need a meeting?
- Did I send the agenda & materials in advance?
How Do I Clean Up The Meeting Mess?

Three Key Questions:
• Do I need a meeting?
• Did I send the agenda & materials in advance?
• Did I develop “Rules of Engagement”?
  • Start and end on time
  • Detailed agenda
  • No cell phones or side conversations
  • No decisions without advanced materials

Clever Ideas
• “Meetingless Fridays
• Summer Vacation
• No agenda = No meeting
• University rules apply
• No action = Why meeting
• Interdisciplinary need not apply
• Another committee? Really?

Two Important Questions

Are you a collaborative team or group?
✓ People sharing a common goal, rewards, and responsibility for achievement

Are you ready for focused heavy lifting?
✓ Your work vs. Our work
✓ Maximum effort

Don’t waste time pretending it is a team when it is not. It leads to frustration and resentment.
The Collaboration Challenge

To collaborate well is to know when NOT to collaborate!

Good Luck!

Reach out anytime!
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