

# OBSERVE

The Odgers Berndtson Global Magazine\_

No. 12  
Issue 03 2017

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# THE ART OF JOINED-UP ACTION

## INSIDE:

The psychology  
of collaboration

**Famous business  
partnerships**

Arts and culture

**Extreme collaboration**

And much more



ODGERS BERNDTSON

**Odgers Berndtson:**  
Collaboration  
in action  
See pages 25-32

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It might seem rather surprising that 'collaboration' is the theme for this issue of *Observe*.

It's hardly a new thing. Shouldn't collaboration be at the heart of everything we do? In work, at home and in our daily lives,

positive collaboration can be the difference between success or failure and between conflict or resolution. Yet, we still seem adept as a species at doing the things that go against the grain of collaboration. Why?

This issue of *Observe* takes a sweeping look at a wide array of collaboration-related topics and we hope offers some constructive and innovative ways in which collaboration can – and is – being integrated into different business arenas.

For example, we look at how industry and the academic world have joined forces, the fascinating 'psychology' of collaboration, famous – and infamous – business alliances, how arts and cultural organisations are forging new partnerships, and even the thorny subject of collaboration overload.

And, for the first time, we look inside Odgers Berndtson to give readers an insight into why collaboration is at the heart of everything we do.

Comments from some of the Odgers Berndtson leaders around the world demonstrate the lengths we are prepared to go to in order to ensure clients, candidates and our own people all feel part of a holistic entity wherein collaboration plays a fundamental role.

Leon Ayo  
CEO, Odgers Berndtson, Sub-Saharan Africa

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**Observe**  
To read any of the great content featured in *Observe* over the past three years, go to [odgersberndtson.com](http://odgersberndtson.com) and click on the 'Insights' tab



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### SCIENCE

#### TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

According to a recent article by Matt Hunckler in *Forbes*, “with thousands of artificial intelligence solutions available to apply to a myriad of business functions, the issue for enterprises seeking to innovate with AI is not that the market doesn’t have options – it’s that there are too many”. One company trying to address this is Veritone, a recent IPO based in California. *Forbes* says Veritone is “grasping the idea that many AI brains are better than one when used together to solve business problems. Their belief is that the future of AI lies in ‘orchestrated cognition’, the idea that multiple engines can act together in concert versus existing in silos.

“Veritone’s SaaS solution – the Veritone Platform – is putting this idea into practice ... by providing near-real-time, accurate analysis of audio and video data for its clients. They are able to unlock data from linear files, like radio and TV broadcasts, police bodycam footage and call-centre conversations.”

[forbes.com](http://forbes.com)

### SOFTWARE

#### GIVE ME THE TOOLS...

Everyone knows – or should know by now – that collaboration software can help individuals and businesses work smarter and more efficiently. *PC* magazine’s latest ranking of the top 10 collaboration software tools out there includes such well-known actors as Slack (which was its ‘Editor’s Choice’) as well as other, perhaps lesser-known players, such as Igloo, a pre-built company intranet; Workfront, which claims to go beyond project management to offer enterprise-level businesses a highly customisable work management platform; Atlassian Confluence, which is an online workspace that keeps track of a team’s discussions and decisions, integrates with Jira and supports Google Apps; and Quip, which is a team collaboration tool for both document editing and group communication. Like most of *PC* magazine’s top 10, it is quick to set up and easy to use, but “may not scale for fast-growing businesses”.

To see the full list, go to: [uk.pcmag.com](http://uk.pcmag.com)



“Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organisational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results”

Andrew Carnegie

### WORK

#### SMART COLLABORATION: HOW PROFESSIONALS AND THEIR FIRMS SUCCEED BY BREAKING DOWN SILOS

by Heidi K. Gardner.

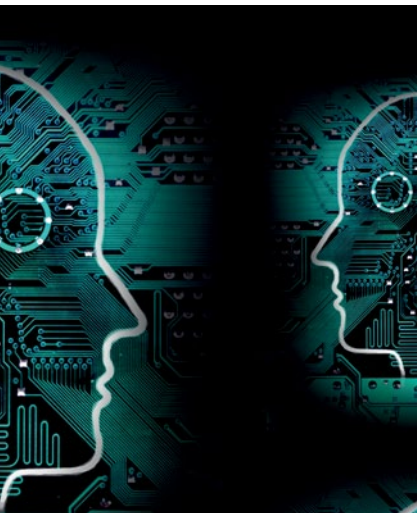
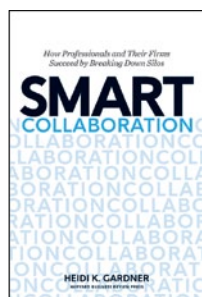
Available in hardback and as an e-book.

In *Smart Collaboration*, Gardner shows that firms earn higher margins, inspire greater client loyalty, attract and retain the best talent, and gain a competitive edge when specialists collaborate across functional boundaries. Gardner’s research demonstrates

convincingly that collaboration pays, for both professionals and their firms.

She also offers powerful prescriptions for how leaders can foster collaboration, move to higher-margin work, increase client satisfaction, improve lateral hiring, decrease enterprise risk, engage workers to contribute their utmost, break down silos, and boost their bottom line.

With case studies and real-world insights, *Smart Collaboration* delivers an authoritative case for the value of collaboration to today’s professionals, their firms and their clients, and shows you exactly how to achieve it.



“Great things in business are never done by one person; they’re done by a team of people”

Steve Jobs

## MEDICINE

### A GLOBAL ALLIANCE

Elsewhere in this issue of *Observe* we cover both medicine (see p20) and business collaborations (see p54). Combining the two, AstraZeneca and Merck & Co. Inc. (known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada) announced in July that it had entered a global

strategic oncology collaboration to co-develop and co-commercialise AstraZeneca’s LYNPARZA for multiple cancer types. LYNPARZA is an “innovative, first-in-class oral poly ADP ribose polymerase (PARP) inhibitor currently approved for BRCA-mutated ovarian cancer in multiple lines of treatment”.

As part of the agreement, Merck will pay AstraZeneca up to US\$8.5 billion in total consideration, including US\$1.6 billion upfront, US\$750 million for certain licence options and up to an additional US\$6.15 billion contingent upon successful achievement of future regulatory and sales milestones.

Meanwhile Bayer continues (at the time of writing) to thrash out the detail of its proposed US\$66 billion takeover of US agrochemicals group Monsanto, which is subject to EU Commission approval.

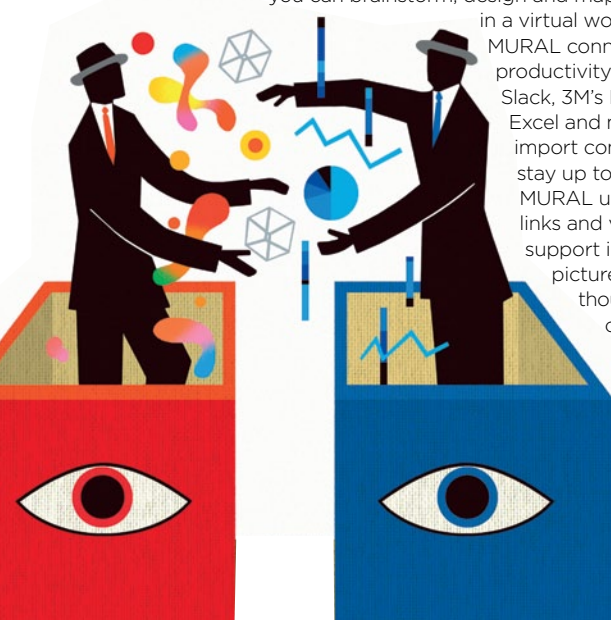


## DIGITAL

### DRAWING ON EXPERIENCE

With so much pressure on leaders and their teams to produce more and more written material, it is refreshing to see an app come along that emphasises the visual. MURAL, which defines itself as “visual collaboration”, is designed to “improve your team’s productivity with digital whiteboards. MURAL lets you visually organise your ideas and collaborate with others remotely. So no matter where you and your team or clients are located, you can brainstorm, design and map content in a virtual workspace.”

MURAL connects other productivity tools like Slack, 3M’s Post-it Plus, Excel and more to import content and stay up to date. MURAL uses images, links and videos to support ideas. “A picture is worth a thousand words,” claim the creators of MURAL.



## PEOPLE

### RISE OF THE CCO?

Writing in the *Irish News*, Dr Nicola Millard, head of customer insight and futures at BT’s Global Innovation team, said: “Collaboration is very much in vogue and often talked about in meetings as the must-have function in modern business. We would go so far as to say that every firm should consider having a Chief Collaboration Officer to tackle the collaboration conundrum.

“More employees are choosing to work from home or from dispersed offices, a movement that throws up new problems for company bosses. Some organisations are bringing workers back into the office, but that approach can lose valuable talent who don’t want to be tied to a specific geography, and constant travel and longer commutes can create grumpy and exhausted people.

“Leaders need to realise it is not possible to beat collaboration into their organisation. Instead, they need to create, recognise and encourage collaborative behaviour and to understand the dynamics of their teams, while avoiding ‘collaboration overload’.

“Collaboration needs buy-in from everyone, but there’s no doubt it is good not just for employees, but for the bottom line.”

[irishnews.com/business](http://irishnews.com/business)

Collaboration isn't achieved by organisations, it's achieved by individuals. But just what makes a 'good collaborator'? MATT HIGH investigates

# KNOWING ME,

**A**s a leader you likely consider yourself a skilled collaborator. It is, after all, your role to foster communication and use your skills to influence others to achieve the collective goals of your organisation.

But what would you say if you were told that often – consciously or subconsciously – we can be guilty of overestimating our contribution to collaboration? Or that the 'Abilene Paradox'\* sees collaborators collectively decide on an action that is counter to the preferential desired outcome because they feel their objections aren't valuable enough and they subconsciously fear breaking group harmony?

The truth is that there is no one 'good collaborator'. We are complex beings. How we trust in and empathise with others, our egos and our aspirations, and our vulnerabilities can all affect how we collaborate.

Collaboration is underpinned by complex social psychology, defined as the study of how people's thoughts, feelings and behaviours are influenced by the real, imagined or implied presence of other individuals.

## **Nature versus nurture**

"Humans are, by their nature, collaborative," says David Hawkins, Operations Director at the Institute for Collaborative



Working. "We are innately drawn towards tribes or teams and enjoy rewarding relationships – they breed innovation, opportunity and satisfaction."

Elizabeth Stewart is Head of Executive Assessment & Development at Odgers

Berndtson's London practice. "Innately, we want to belong," she adds. "In some cases, the workplace replaces the 'family' – the first unit that tests collaboration."

When it comes to organisational collaboration,

however, can nature be improved by nurture? According to Stewart, collaboration is an important aspect of leadership development programmes, and a key leadership competency in some of her work at Odgers Berndtson. Naturally, there are key 'learned' skills that aid collaboration, but Hawkins believes that a propensity for organisational processes and rules can in fact stifle our natural collaborative tendencies.

"Organisational structures, leadership styles, systems, processes and incentives – both positive and negative – can significantly influence our behaviours. In effect, collaboration is a trait that, if not fostered in the right way, can become suppressed."

How then, do leaders become better collaborators? "Some individuals are natural



# KNOWING YOU

“

Collaboration is a trait that, if not fostered in the right way, can become suppressed

”

collaborators," says Stewart. "Educating average players on what 'good' looks like and tips on how to become better can help. Individuals that are learning agile – highly self-aware and committed to changing and growing – will build more capability in this area."

#### **What makes a good collaborator?**

At ICW, Hawkins has been involved in a 2017 research project into the psychology of workplace collaboration to build a portfolio of character traits and 'identify specific attributes

key to collaborative aptitude'.

"There is no magic formula or psychometric model specific to a collaborator," he explains. "However, one very strong key characteristic was strategic thinking: specifically, the ability to think beyond a given task and to consider the impact on others. Being open-minded, innovative, adaptable, communicative, open to sharing and empathetic are skills of a good collaborator, →



but strategic thinking provides a platform for those attributes to flourish.”

Interestingly, leadership appeared lower than the aforementioned in ICW’s psychology traits. It included an ability to engage, respect others’ views, avoid micromanagement and be the voice of reason.

“Confident, strong leaders are authentically able to make themselves vulnerable,” says Stewart. “Egocentric leaders are divorced from their true selves and find it more difficult to do so. At Odgers we use the trust equation. It states that the level of trust between you and others is defined by the sum of your credibility, reliability and intimacy, divided by your self-orientation. To improve trust we must increase the first three and avoid being too self-orientated. It helps us identify to colleagues what traits are more important, and identify where they need to change.”

### Bad collaborator

If, indeed, our collaborative personality is innate, it stands to reason that there are attributes that constrain individuals from being effective collaborators

too. “A bad collaborator may be self-orientated, short-sighted, and not open to change,” says Stewart. “Similarly, those that are overly competitive, arrogant or egocentric, passive-aggressive or victim-type personalities may find collaboration difficult.

“A lack of intellectual capacity affects ability to work through more complex variables and absorb very different perspectives at pace. Lacking intellectual flexibility constrains strategic capabilities, and lack of critical reasoning means you may miss critical issues in decision-making.”

Rather than focus on innate characteristics, Hawkins points to external pressures hindering collaboration. “Factors like individual or collective risk, career drivers, management and performance measures can cloud our attitudes to collaboration. There’s also what I refer to as ‘unconscious bias’, driven by preconditioning that the only way to succeed is through domination and fostered by the performance measures and incentives organisations have.”

### Leaders are the key

To Hawkins there is little doubt that, while our core collaborative skills are innate, the organisational culture in which we operate must allow them the freedom to collaborate. “Leaders are the key,” he says. “If supportive, they will have recognised the benefits and created an environment where people can develop.

“They should adopt

processes and incentives that foster collaboration, but they must also ensure that the right behaviours are acknowledged and poor behaviours are not tolerated. Too often bad behaviour is accepted if it delivers the bottom line.”

Stewart indicates that, while leaders must facilitate collaboration, each individual must be accountable for their role in that work. She says that it “moves each collaborator into an adult-to-adult relationship and requires each to contribute fully, irrespective of whether they are introvert or extrovert. Each has to step up to the plate, including calling it out when someone is dominating or someone is holding back for whatever reason.”

As Hawkins indicated, there is no magic formula that makes an effective collaborator. You are, in some parts, driven by nature – whether you are an introvert or an extrovert. As a leader, it is your role to foster collaboration in your organisation. It may be, however, that in order to do that you first need to understand yourself. ■

\*The term was first introduced by management expert Jerry B Harvey in his 1974 article *The Abilene Paradox: The Management of Agreement*.



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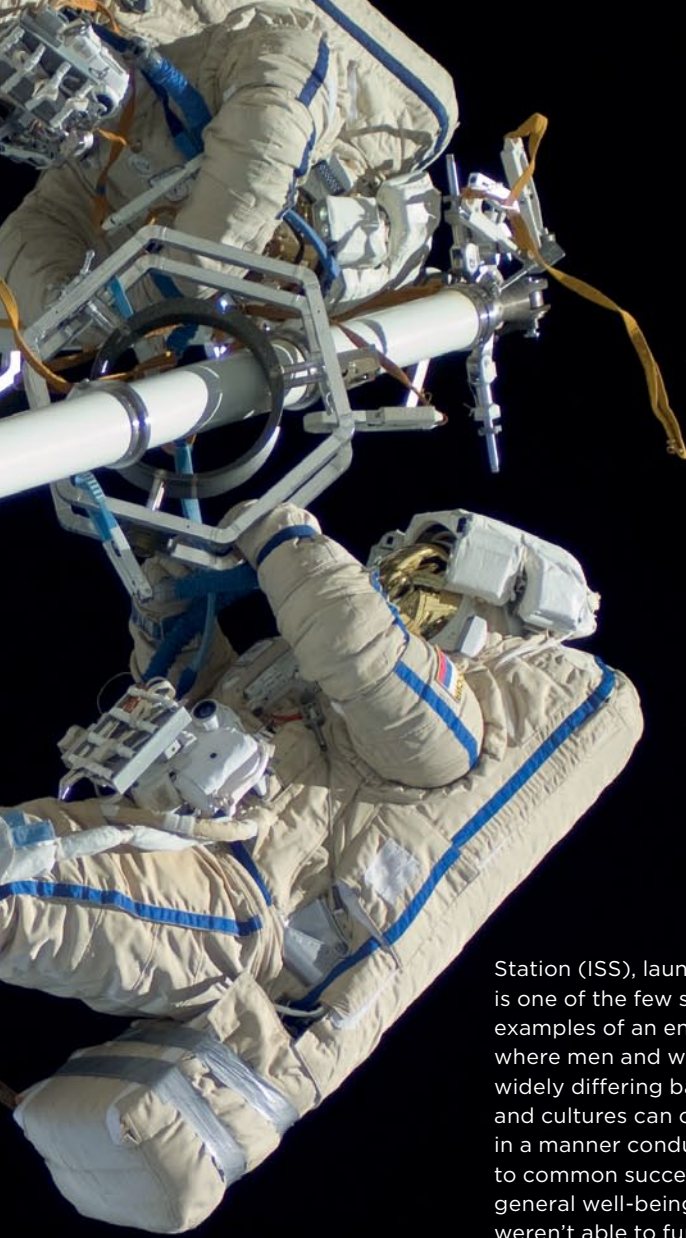


# Zero- gravity collaboration

The International Space Station brings together astronauts from different cultures and backgrounds. So how do they collaborate effectively in such extreme conditions?

JONATHAN ARNOLD finds out





Station (ISS), launched in 1998, is one of the few successful examples of an environment where men and women from widely differing backgrounds and cultures can collaborate in a manner conducive both to common success and to general well-being. If they weren't able to function collaboratively together, then the result could be catastrophic.

Of course, unlike workers on Earth, who can go home at the end of the day and discuss their woes with a spouse or friend, crew members on the ISS have no such luxury. The ISS serves as home, office and recreation room for astronauts who share

It is, perhaps, the ultimate collaborative experience. While we are anchored on planet Earth, considering how to work effectively with our colleagues in familiar surroundings, up above us a group of multinational spacemen and women are trying to do the same, but in conditions that are about as extreme as they come.

The International Space

this confined space with crew members for as long as six months or more at a time.

Almost 20 years on, the ISS continues to be assembled in orbit and has been visited by astronauts from 18 countries – and that number continues to grow. NASA declares, rather self-evidently, that “maintaining individual well-being and crew harmony is important for the crew and mission success”.

So how do they all get along, given that every day they are working in zero gravity and in the most claustrophobic and challenging of conditions?

NASA says that “astronaut candidates begin working with international partners from the time they arrive for duty.

Indeed, the latest tranche of astronaut candidates, who reported for duty in August of this year, were joined by the two new Canadian astronauts during all their training. Throughout training, they will visit our partners and their facilities around the world.”

The programme's greatest accomplishment, says NASA, “is as much a human achievement as it is a technological one – how best to plan, co-ordinate, and monitor the varied activities of the programme's many organisations.

“An international partnership of space agencies provides and operates the elements of the ISS. The principals are the space agencies of the United States, Russia, Europe, Japan, and Canada. The ISS has been →

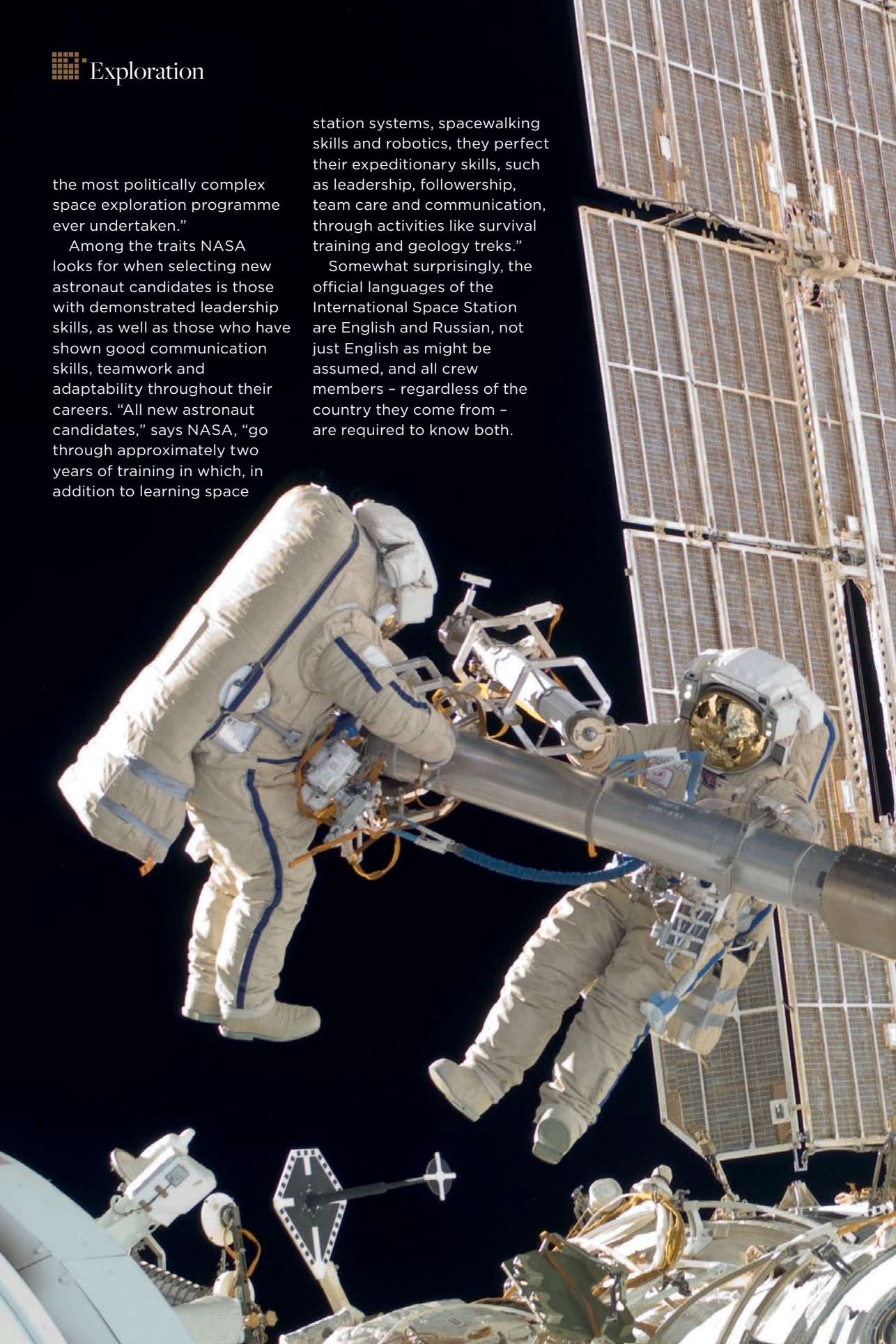


the most politically complex space exploration programme ever undertaken."

Among the traits NASA looks for when selecting new astronaut candidates is those with demonstrated leadership skills, as well as those who have shown good communication skills, teamwork and adaptability throughout their careers. "All new astronaut candidates," says NASA, "go through approximately two years of training in which, in addition to learning space

station systems, spacewalking skills and robotics, they perfect their expeditionary skills, such as leadership, followership, team care and communication, through activities like survival training and geology treks."

Somewhat surprisingly, the official languages of the International Space Station are English and Russian, not just English as might be assumed, and all crew members – regardless of the country they come from – are required to know both.





NASA astronaut candidates start learning Russian at the beginning of their training. They train on this skill every week, as their schedule allows.

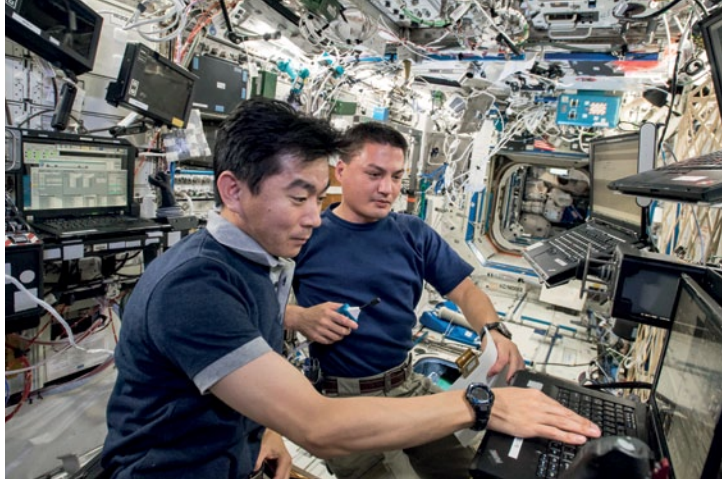
Once an astronaut is assigned to a mission, they spend approximately two years training with their fellow crew members in advance of their launch to space.

Key to ensuring the best collaborative fit is NASA's 'Culture, Values, and Environmental Adaptation in Space' investigation sponsored by the Canadian Space Agency. This enterprise looks at changes in perceptions about 'home in space' and the ways a unique culture may develop aboard the station during a mission.

Participants answer a series of questionnaires before, during and after flight, enabling researchers to see whether perceptions and the relative importance of values change over the course of a mission. Questions explore individual and culturally related differences, family functioning and relationships, personal values and coping with stress.

"This is the first study to look at the extent to which a unique, shared space culture develops, whether crews develop customs and celebrations that are part of being on the station and different from what they would do on Earth," says Phyllis Johnson, principal investigator, Department of Sociology at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada.

Researchers expect to see a relationship between creation of a space culture and how crew members respond to



different situations. "They might be more of a team because of that culture and it might be a way to decrease stress," Johnson said.

The investigation also takes the first look at how crew members adapt their living quarters to make them feel like home. Historically, astronauts have taken into space personal items such as photographs, children's drawings and hobby activities. But no one has asked crew members how important it is to have these things with them. The study also examines the effects on astronauts of their prolonged absence from family and familiar life on Earth.

Investigators note that this work goes beyond traditional space psychology's emphasis on problems. "It is important to recognise and measure the positive effects of being in a challenging environment such as space," says co-investigator and psychologist Peter Suedfeld, also at the University of British Columbia. "We look at personal change in attitudes and perspectives once back on Earth to see the effects on an individual's life after such a dramatic experience."

For multi-year missions, such as voyages to Mars, this work could lead to more effective

ways for astronauts to feel at home and to collaborate effectively with fellow crew members. "If we can help them be comfortable and happy, it helps morale and the success of the mission, and reduces potential problems," Johnson said.

NASA correctly points out that some communities on Earth experience conditions similar to those in space, including oil rig workers, crews on long-voyage tankers and cargo ships, researchers in remote locations, such as the Antarctic, and those on long military deployments, each of which requires a degree of collaboration that is outside the norm in everyday business environments.

By helping to identify the most effective ways to make astronauts feel comfortable, this research will ultimately lead to happier and more productive crews on long missions where stress and tension are unavoidable.

And in this zero-gravity, confined space, that has to be the ultimate goal for effective collaboration in an environment unlike any other. ■

**Previous pages, left and above:**  
Astronauts from widely differing cultures and backgrounds working both inside and outside the ISS

## Collaboration between academia and industry is nothing new but, says NATASHA D'SOUZA, in the pursuit of a competitive edge the relationships are becoming stronger than ever

For well over a century, industry and academia have represented two major catalysts driving innovation and research worldwide. Historically, both sectors have encouraged significant cross-pollination of ideas and expertise, helping some of the world's greatest companies – such as technology giant Hewlett-Packard – to life-changing inventions and discoveries such as the double-helix structure of DNA.

The immense innovation potential innate to this form of cross-sector collaboration is a major draw for industrial enterprise. Growing market pressures in the wake of rapid advances in complex technology, along with increasingly restrictive and risk-averse corporate funding environments, have added additional impetus for industry to turn to academia to research and develop commercially viable products and technology that can provide companies with a sustainable competitive edge.

### Collaborating to compete

It is this pursuit of a competitive edge that continues to prompt industrial corporations worldwide to turn to institutions like the

Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). The iconic American university is among the elite echelon of academic institutions at the forefront of shaping the future of science, engineering and technology.

The MIT Industrial Liaison Program (ILP), established in 1948, is among the world's oldest industry-oriented partnership programmes, with almost 200 top global companies on board at present. "ILP aims to work closely with corporations to create mutually beneficial relationships that meet key strategic objectives – not just for the institutions involved, but for the greater good of industrial advancement and scientific discovery," says Todd Glickman, Senior Associate Director, Corporate Relations at MIT.

For an annual membership fee of US\$75,000, corporations can access the entire slew of MIT's expertise, cutting across departments and disciplines in a holistic approach unlike most industry-academic partnerships. According to Glickman, the anchor for all ILP engagements is the company's long-term strategic approach. He adds:

# IN THE GR ACAD



“When company CTOs meet us, we want to know that they’re eager to explore key developments in science, engineering or technology that could disrupt their industry in the next three to five years. MIT professors don’t want to solve problems that have already been solved, because that’s not a challenge. We want to work with companies looking to shape the future.”

#### The case for commercialisation

The pharmaceutical sector was among one of the earliest industries to jump on board the collaboration train, despite very divergent intentions. “Historically, academia has been more focused on basic mechanisms and disease pathogenesis, and industry has been more focused on drug development and commercialisation,” explains Dr Gary Firestein, Distinguished Professor of Medicine and Dean and Associate Vice Chancellor of Translational Medicine at University of California San Diego (UCSD) School of Medicine. “More recently, however, industry seeks academic partners for

innovation related to novel targets to address urgent unmet medical needs.”

A case in point is pharmaceutical powerhouse Pfizer collaborating with UCSD in 2011 to accelerate the process of drug discovery, pushing the most promising treatments through the toughest phase of preclinical development and into early human trials. Housed under Pfizer’s Center for Therapeutic Innovation, the partnership saw almost US\$50 million pumped into projects designed to leverage UCSD’s expertise in neurosciences, cancer, inflammation, metabolism, clinical pharmacology, HIV and pain.

For Pfizer, the collaboration was critical in order to replenish its depleting pipeline of patents for some of its best-selling drugs, such as Viagra and Lipitor. Moreover, the company pivoted from the typical ‘big pharma’ partnership approach, investing only in drug discoveries determined most viable by a panel of experts, with membership split among the drug-maker, UCSD and Sanford-Burnham. “The tendency for industry to heavily vet projects based on potential for commercialisation is a mindset that needs to be more inculcated with researchers joining a corporate collaboration. Even if the science is outstanding, however, the project might not have potential for commercial success, and this is an important lesson for many university-based researchers,” emphasised Dr Firestein.

#### Innovating for future growth

As some of the world’s most successful companies expand into new markets – especially across Asia and Latin America – developing products and technologies tailored to consumer demand in these growth markets entails a heavy investment in R&D. National universities in these countries, with regional or global reputation, represent especially attractive candidates for a collaborative partnership. →

# OVES OF DEME





“With Rolls-Royce as a pinnacle luxury brand, it is incumbent upon us to innovate and produce the best possible. In the words of our founder, Sir Henry Royce, ‘If it does not exist, design it,’” says Paul Harris, Asia Pacific Regional Director of Rolls-Royce Motor Cars. Positioning the legendary brand for a technology-driven future was the main driver for the luxury automotive company’s Asia-Pacific division collaborating with Singapore’s Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP).

“Our partnership was a first-of-its-kind pilot project aimed at innovating a 3D virtual reality experience for customers, a relatively new platform for Rolls-Royce,” explains Harris. The resulting concepts were competitively selected through various pitching rounds, with winning ideas chosen for their ability to allow customers “to virtually experience the simulated world of Rolls-Royce Bespoke through immersive 360-degree motion graphics videos.” While enabling the luxury automobile maker to quickly experiment with a variety of 3D concepts, the collaboration also strengthened bonds with the local academic community and served as a form of corporate social responsibility by nurturing young, creative talent.

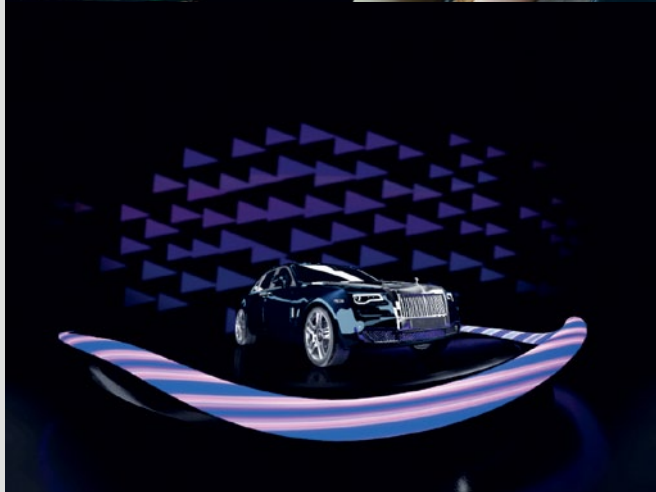
### The rules of engagement

While industry-academic engagements adopt a number of operating models, some key partnership principles prove essential to their collaborative success: Relationship, Relevance, Review and Research Protection.

**1. Relationship:** MIT ILP believes in a high-touch approach, assigning a relationship manager to each corporate partner. This officer conducts site visits to understand ground realities and is responsible for identifying the professors and programmes working on subject matter relevant to the partnership. Company leaders are invited to meet with researchers, and it is these collective conversations that determine the best approach.

**2. Relevance:** Establishing clearly defined and mutually beneficial objectives is important when laying the groundwork for an industry-academic partnership. “Both Rolls-Royce and NYP

Right, top: Dr Gary Firestein, Dean of Translational Research in his lab at the School of Medicine at University of California San Diego; Right, lower three images: Rolls-Royce’s Asia Pacific division has embraced technology to prepare for the future



committed time and energy across several meetings to arrive at a core sponsorship agreement; an important foundation for the work ahead,” noted Harris. Core objectives were also communicated to the participating students. “We had key senior personnel lead student briefings in order to educate them on the brand ethos and product detail, and to ensure their understanding of the base concepts.”

**3. Review:** Regular review and monitoring mechanisms are essential for a successful partnership, affording an opportunity to assess necessary changes to project timelines, identify any roadblocks, clarify points of contention or eliminate inefficiency.



## Most industry-academic collaborations appoint a joint steering committee



Most industry-academic collaborations appoint a joint steering committee with shared membership from both parties. “Projects are monitored by the joint steering committee and have well-defined benchmarks and milestones. This is commonplace in industry, and academia needs to appreciate this way of conducting research,” shares Dr Firestein.

In the case of the Rolls-Royce and NYP partnership, the company also invited industry executives well versed in the VR field to monitor students’ progress and suggest any adjustments.

Regular monitoring also often reveals opportunities for partnership evolution or a shift in focus, to keep pace with industry developments. “Project topics have become less focused on individual technology. For example, the initial programme was solely for biologics, but later expanded to small molecule agents. Rather than narrowing the focus, casting a larger net allows for projects to address unmet medical needs,” noted Dr Firestein.

**4. Research protection:** Corporations and universities would do well to negotiate intellectual property (IP) ownership upfront in the early stages of officiating a collaboration. “By virtue of US laws and regulations, all IP that is generated at MIT remains under the ownership of MIT,” shared Glickman. “While MIT has general licensing terms to allow companies to procure exclusive or non-exclusive licences for use of any IP generated, these terms are typically negotiated in advance.” Based on Glickman’s experience, most large companies choose not to take the IP that comes out of a partnership with MIT, as it can be very risky and not ready for market. “In this case, the IP leads to a spin-out company that undertakes early commercialisation of an idea before it goes to the mainstream market,” commented Glickman.

### Looking ahead: beyond borders

Currently, a third of MIT ILP members are based in North America, another third in Europe and the Middle East, and the remainder from emerging and growth markets – namely mainland China, India and South America. Glickman notes a 20 per cent growth in members from these markets, a shift indicative of developing nations recognising the importance of open-source innovation and cross-sector collaboration.

“With China, the last five years in particular has seen many major Chinese corporations investing in growing their global competitiveness,” observes Glickman. “There is an improved understanding of open-source innovation and the value in working with established academic partners to help them develop their technology as they aim to become global forces to be reckoned with.”

In Glickman’s view, when it comes to American multinationals, “the increasing geopolitical importance, economic power and technological capabilities of countries like China and India is motivating them to partner with MIT and leverage our global reach in these key markets”.

As both universities and corporations across the world continue to forge new partnerships, it’s clear that cross-sector collaboration remains an integral part of both corporate and national innovation agendas. Eventually, this will level the playing field in terms of the quality and complexity of innovation in our increasingly connected world. ■



# The constructive disruptor

Norman Nashed, a Partner in the Odgers Berndtson Zurich office, talks to DR HARALD NUSSER, (right) Head of Novartis Social Business, about the vital work it does in bringing much-needed medicines to some of the world's poorest communities

**Norman Nashed:** Can you explain what Novartis Social Business is and why the work it does is so important?

**Harald Nusser:** Novartis Social Business (NSB) combines five important access-to-medicine initiatives: Firstly, Novartis Access was launched two years ago to address the rise of non-communicable diseases in lower-income countries; secondly, there is the Novartis Malaria Initiative, which has been ongoing for 15 years and is one of the biggest access-to-medicine programmes in the industry. This particular programme has delivered more than 800 million anti-malarial treatments to the public sector *without profit* since 2001; then there is Arogya Parivar (meaning healthy family in Hindi), launched 10 years ago in India. It provides healthcare education to the poorest people in rural India. This programme also exists in Vietnam and Kenya, and we are looking to expand it further. Sandoz NGO Supply [Sandoz is the generic medicines division of Novartis] has a very broad range of products that are offered to international NGOs like WHO, UNICEF, Global Fund and so on. And finally, SMS for Life, an innovative public-private partnership led by Novartis that uses mobile and digital technology to improve stock management of essential medicines and increases quality of care in sub-Saharan Africa.

**NN:** What specific issues has NSB encountered when carrying out this work in some of the world's poorest communities?

**HN:** First, as a responsible company, it goes without saying that it is important for us to look beyond the usual business approaches – hence why we're called Novartis *Social* Business. We need to look into the social externalities that our programmes generate, beyond the traditional financial KPIs. That is a disruptive approach in the sense that the traditional business model as understood by Wall Street is being expanded.

Through Novartis Social Business, and in particular Novartis Access, we have learned to accept that even though we don't have all the answers, we should still try things out. For instance, we don't know when Novartis Access will break even or exactly how we'll get there. Being transparent and vulnerable means that we're not expected – and indeed cannot – know all the answers from the get-go.

Non-communicable diseases are *chronic* illnesses that usually require lifelong treatment. So when we say we want to reach 20 million patients over the next five years, it means we will need to produce roughly seven *billion* pills per year: the biggest European pharmaceutical production plant has about that capacity. It tells you a lot about the scale Novartis Access may eventually have. →



A pharmacist explains the correct dosage for a Novartis hypertension medication to a local clinician in Kirinyaga, Kenya



In Vietnam, Giang Giua Cua, who suffers from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), is visited at home by Dr Chang As Sinh, the only doctor in the community



A malaria surveillance team from the Walter Reed Project on malaria in Kenya undertakes a case study on a young child with the malaria parasite, helping to develop effective medication to combat the disease



BRENT STIRTON/NOVARTIS



Internally, aligning a programme such as Novartis Access with the standard commercial operations of our company is challenging and requires substantial cross-divisional collaboration. This ranges from allocating manufacturing capacity to dedicating sufficient resources to run activities such as regulatory submissions. Intense discussions took place on how we could operate Novartis Access without running the risk of negatively impacting our core business in developing countries. In some countries we are trying to build a new commercial business as well as a social business using the same products. So there's a healthy tension in the system that needs to be managed, and you do that through optimising a diverse set of KPIs collaboratively.

**NN:** Internal collaboration, then, is key to reaching a compromise. But how do you collaborate *externally* with the WHO, NGOs, the Gates Foundation on one hand, and other, possibly competitor, pharmaceutical companies on the other?

**HN:** First of all, you need to have all the internal conflict points resolved in order to be a good partner to any external group. Collaboration for me encompasses more than the usual or traditional partnership model. It means leaving one's own comfort zone and co-creating something with the risk of failure – and learning from that failure. This also means that we may need to move away from the traditional public-private partnership model. This is why we are looking beyond our industry sector and exploring collaborations with competitors in the access-to-medicine arena. In areas such as diabetes care or oncology, beyond the critically important public health actors like the WHO and the Gates Foundation and many more, we also need industry-wide efforts to make a scalable impact.

What is key is to demonstrate tangible benefits for everybody. The usual notion of “we are good, they aren't” is simplistic and shouldn't be used any more in the era of sustainable development goals. I would argue that it's *always* for profit also for NGOs. Not necessarily *financial* profit, but for the profit of having done good and really moved things in a positive way – and eventually getting the recognition for that.

A key benefit, for example, for us is

employee engagement. Attracting and retaining talent today is inevitably linked to a sound social agenda.

**NN:** Can you provide an example of really effective public-private collaboration?

**HN:** We have just signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Pakistan to roll out Novartis Access. Novartis Access medicines will be made available to the poorest population through hospitals under the Prime Minister's National Health Insurance Program. We expect first treatment deliveries by early 2018. For me this is a success story in two ways: on one hand, internally, the local Novartis commercial organisation was determined to make this programme a reality, and, on the other hand, the Pakistani Government was overwhelmingly positive about the programme and made things happen quickly. We had a press conference with the Pakistani Minister for National Health Services Regulations and Coordination in May during the WHO Health Assembly in Geneva, which exemplified the keen interest of the government to help its people. This is critical collaboration in practice.

**NN:** Do you have any final thoughts?

**HN:** We have started a journey which is far from being straightforward. This is a huge change programme with lots of ambiguity and diversity of thought and perspective. Putting this in place and looking to impact public health policies around the world, being perceived as a *constructive* disruptor and being part of the solution, for me, is incredibly exciting. ■

Dr Harald Nusser (right) and Norman Nashed of Odgers Berndtson





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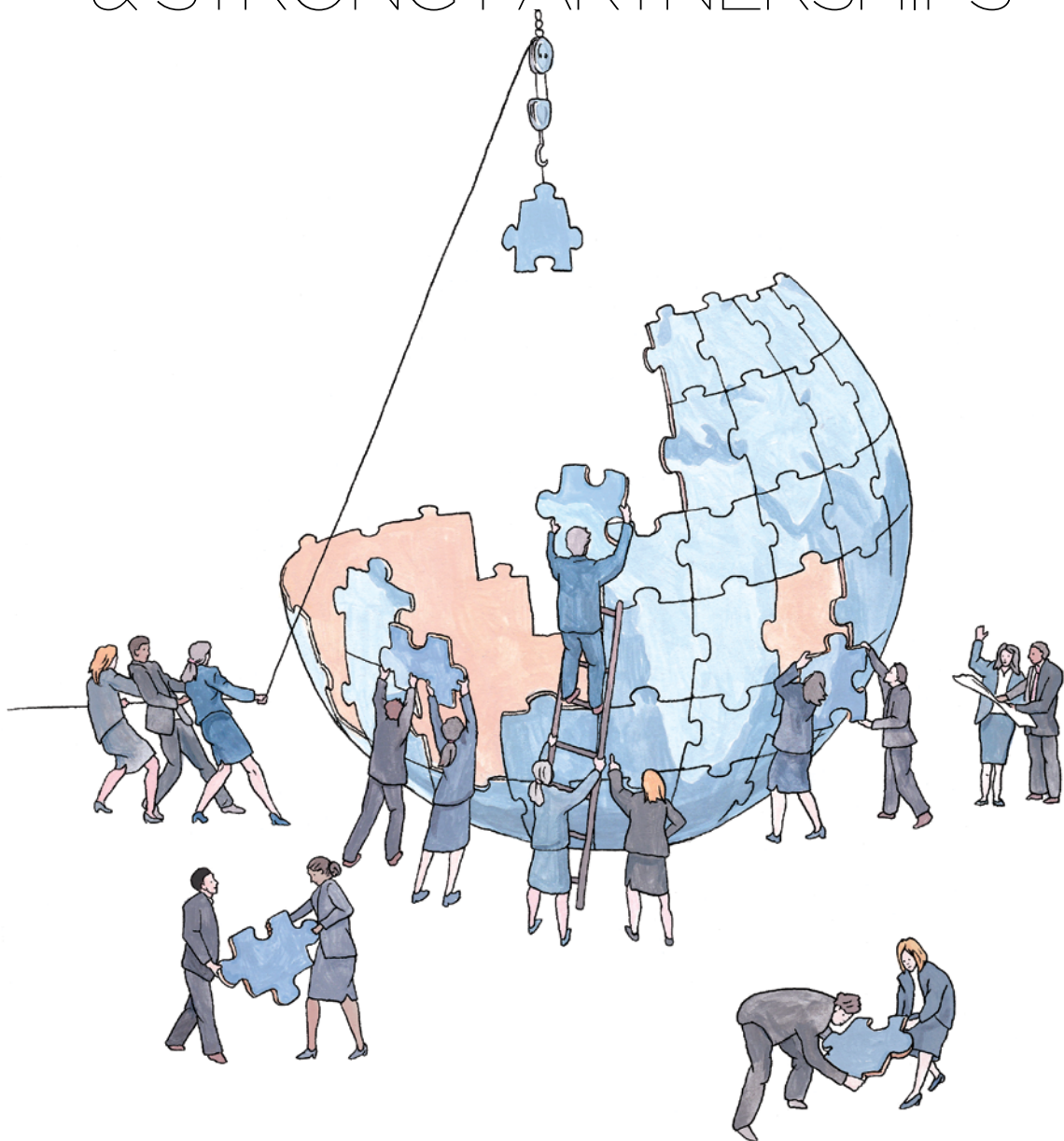
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INSIDE  
ODGERS BERNDTSON  
**A STORY OF**  
**GLOBAL**  
**COLLABORATION**  
& STRONG PARTNERSHIPS





**H**enry Ford, who knew a thing or two about the workplace, once said: "If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself."

Yet how many individuals, groups, and local, regional and even multinational corporations fail to heed these sage words? Too many, we would argue.

What follows is our own distinctive story about collaboration in action. It is intended to show what real collaboration – Ford's idea that moving forward together is the best way to succeed – can mean for our clients and candidates around the world and how we live and breathe this ethos.

ILLUSTRATIONS: PETER JAMES FIELD  
This philosophy will, we feel sure, resonate with all readers of *Observe* from whichever discipline he or she comes, and at whichever stage in their career they might find themselves. After all, no client wants a candidate shortlist of one when it comes to filling a key position. Our in-depth knowledge across candidate pools, which includes tomorrow's stars



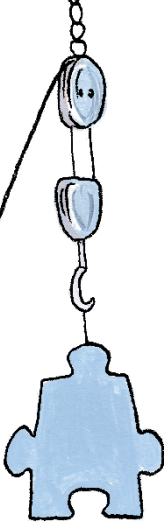
and not just today's leading lights, means the best people take our calls and trust our guidance throughout their careers.

Our values have remained constant for more than 50



Our values have remained constant for more than 50 years. That's a long time in which to develop and hone our skills





years. That's a long time in which to develop and hone our skills as a leading executive search firm with truly global reach.

At the root of everything we do is a collective desire to help great organisations place great people. Collaboration and teamwork – locally and globally – isn't just part of our culture; it's what we do every day. We form strong relationships with the most talented people, which in turn are underpinned by a distinctively non-transactional ethos.

A candidate can, of course, become a client, but that might be the case only if the relationship begins in a professional, courteous and honest manner, and remains so well beyond the point of appointment. In a world of quick-fire global business and pressure to deliver now, adopting a longer-term view has never been more critical. For us it's essential, so we combine the freedom to consider the future with the agility to act today. And all of this is predicated on immersing ourselves in a client's business and applying that deep knowledge in the most effective way possible: by ultimately finding the best possible leaders in every part of the business world.

Another great American industrialist, Andrew Carnegie, wrote: "Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward

organisational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."

Carnegie's premise, that collaboration has no hierarchy, is exemplified in every search we conduct. Individuals across Odgers Berndtson's extensive global network of 56 offices in 28 countries work together as one. It is by no means an easy task, but we maintain that our ability to meld together thoughts, actions and deeds from across our business gives us a unique edge. Just read the individual stories that follow to get a sense of how this works on the ground.

Ultimately, Odgers Berndtson exists to help form strong partnerships with the most talented people, with those seeking them and between our own teams globally to bring both sides together for long-term benefit.

It's our point of difference. Collaboration is at the heart of everything we do. Without it we would not be able to provide the level of service, thinking, expertise and rigour that today's business demands.

To read more about Odgers Berndtson and how we have helped businesses across the globe, go to: [odgersberndtson.com](http://odgersberndtson.com)



## Six senior Odgers Berndtson leaders from around the world describe their approach to seamless collaboration



**MARK BRAITHWAITE**

**MANAGING DIRECTOR, ODGERS  
BERNDTSON ASIA PACIFIC**

In the APAC region we have been working to make collaboration the central theme of our culture.

Effectively delivering a global solution for clients can only work if we truly collaborate internally. The collective intelligence of our 1,000 people worldwide is far greater than that of a small local team. Bringing this collective intelligence to our clients is what they expect and why they engage a search firm with a global footprint.

People collaborate because they really want to. It's about relationships and trust, so creating an environment that encourages people to build relationships, even before they have a need, is a critical task of our leadership team.

The cultural differences between countries in the APAC region go far beyond language. Cross-cultural collaboration comes from "why am I here" and a sense of shared values. If there

were a scale of collaboration where one is non-existent and 10 is perfect, our business in APAC has moved from two to nine in two years. We have focused on three areas to make this happen.

Firstly, we have worked on shared business development efforts with clients across the region and globally. This has aligned the mutual interests of our industry-focused teams in each country. It has also increased the long-term potential of these clients for us, and this goes hand in hand with the need for better communication.

Secondly, by increasing the number of clients we serve across APAC and globally, along with our build-out into new sectors, our research team has needed to collaborate more to ensure candidates are cared for at the highest level.

Finally, we launched a fun CSR programme last year that everyone, at every level, in every country, takes part in. The sense of community and engagement this created was beyond our expectation, but the internal relationships needed to truly collaborate have moved to the next level.



People collaborate  
because they  
really want to



**KLAUS HANSEN**  
**MANAGING PARTNER, ODGERS  
BERNDTSON FRANKFURT AND  
HEAD OF THE BOARD & CHAIR  
AND CEO PRACTICES IN  
GERMANY**

Collaboration in practice means working with colleagues from other functions and other markets to ensure clients and candidates benefit from a seamless service that excels in everything it does.

Let me give you an example. A recent merger between two 'natural resources' companies, one based in the Americas and the other in Europe, meant that there was a need to effectively blend the two organisations' senior people. This was a merger of two very diverse cultures and backgrounds.

The two companies decided to conduct a 'neutral' management audit that would be objective and transparent. Its aim was to make sure that even though one company was larger than the other, there was a clear desire to ensure that this was a merger of equals, so that all the best people had the best opportunities to secure the new positions.

They sent out an RFP to no



less than 16 search agencies globally, all our well-known competitors as well as smaller boutiques. After three rounds of physical presentations we were awarded the assignment. It is a huge project auditing the top 140 managers of both companies. We had only been able to win this because of the collaborative approach of many of the people involved at Odgers Berndtson combined with the speed and agility of our response.

Together with the office here in Frankfurt, we immediately joined up with the respective assessment teams in our Vienna, São Paulo and US offices. These four offices in a short time period – and from a standing start – prepared a very sophisticated paper on how they would conduct this project in a collaborative and cohesive way. The client acknowledged that they could see how committed we were to the assignment, to transparency and to answering the brief in a creative fashion. We offered a tailor-made solution – not just something ‘off the shelf’.

The head of the Odgers Berndtson Leadership Practice for this project said he would participate in all the assessments – in Brazil, Austria, the US and Germany – wherever necessary and would not devolve it. We were the only firm to offer that personal involvement at that senior level: one leader who joins up with the local Odgers Berndtson offices to bind the whole project together. The collaborative ‘glue’, if you like. We believe that it was this approach, this desire to go the extra mile, that made the difference.



**AYSE ÖZTUNA**  
MANAGING PARTNER, ODGERS  
BERNDTSON, ISTANBUL

In my 26 years at Odgers Berndtson there have been numerous examples of connecting and collaborating with clients and candidates, going back to the days when technology was nowhere near as advanced as it is today. It is those long-term relationships that have enabled us to provide sustainable solutions and, in turn, triggered relationships elsewhere.

For example, we have a client who we started working with in 1992 when he was a regional President for a technology-related company. He is from Pakistan, educated in the UK, and then came to Istanbul. He was very impressed with the work we were doing for him in finding high-level executives and quickly understood why we were working with in-depth assessment, analysing every candidate. He told us that he hadn’t seen this approach before, even in the US. He wasn’t expecting to find it in Turkey!

Later on, the company he worked for was taken over and his region grew to the extent where he became an even more senior person in the organisation. He referred us

other work in Germany via a colleague in the same organisation and so the relationship flourished over the long term.

What’s important to remember is that it was a collaborative relationship from the very beginning, built on trust and his appreciation of our free-thinking, innovative culture.

More recently, he became a board member candidate for us when we recruited him into a business to conduct some re-engineering and transformation work. He continued developing his career, but all the time he was sharing and collaborating with us: comparing us with our competitors, why we were doing better than them but also how we could improve further.

The relationship remains strong to this day. He has recently joined us in Istanbul to give a talk on how he has worked with us over the years and how the close collaboration continues to develop.

What this long-term relationship demonstrates is that CEOs can’t be just one person with all the answers – they *must* collaborate. Not just with outside organisations like ours that help provide outstanding people but internally with co-executives and staff right through the organisation.

In Odgers Berndtson that *modus operandi* is critical. I like to use the analogy of an orchestra. It’s not just that every person knows what he or she is doing but how what they do relates to other players and enables each of them to be heard. Senior and junior players share knowledge, interpretation and inspiration as the performance unfolds. It only takes one player for things to go wrong. →



## STEVE POTTER

**CEO OF ODGERS BERNDTSON,  
US. HE ALSO SITS ON ITS  
GLOBAL BOARD**

Collaboration is a must. If you look at any of the best service businesses, they all have a culture where teamwork and collaboration is at the heart of everything they do.

Today, you simply will not hire the best millennials if you have a command-and-control kind of structure – and that’s a challenge for a lot of older leaders who still inhabit a world where employees don’t leave the office before the boss or the mantra is: ‘How high do you want me to jump, sir?’ It’s the complete reverse of a collaborative culture. Millennials demand respect, demand to be part of a team and want accommodation around lifestyle issues. It’s now being provided by enough companies that if you don’t provide it to them, you simply won’t hire the best people.

At Odgers Berndtson, collaboration is woven into the fabric of the organisation. Search is an art *and* a science. We need collaborative brains on both sides. Think about it: we have an open-ended

mandate to fill a position. You can fill it, or you can fill it with a *great* person – and that great person can be located anywhere in the world.

In the US, around a third of the top 50 CEOs were not born in this country. We have an Indian running Coca-Cola, had an American running Barclays, Microsoft’s Satya Nadella, Google CEO Sundar Pichai and so on. It’s a global world now, so to deliver in a non-collaborative environment globally is a near-impossibility. Your systems and your culture need to support that – and in our company they do.

An interesting example right now – and this in an environment with US sanctions against Russia – we are hoping to start an assignment to provide three advisory directors to the largest companies in Russia. They want at least two of these directors to be US tech marketing professionals. It’s a fascinating assignment in light of what’s going on globally. We are putting together a team that will involve Odgers Berndtson people from the Russian and US offices and market ourselves as one company. One way of thinking. One collaborative brain, if you like.

It is this particular way of working that we believe separates us from the crowd. We understand every aspect of the prospective client’s business, we ensure candidates are treated with respect and guidance throughout the search process and, coupled with our free-thinking, collaborative culture, ensure that whoever is appointed is the best person to fill the role.



## KESTER SCROPE

**CEO OF ODGERS BERNDTSON’S  
UK AND ASIAN OFFICES**

For me collaboration means ensuring that everyone in our business can access the expertise of their colleagues and the reach of our network anywhere in the world, to bring the full power of our organisation to bear for our clients.

Our philosophy has always been predicated on having highly empowered, expert people who adopt a free-thinking collaborative culture, people who are agile and get things done. A values-based



Our philosophy  
has always been  
predicated on  
having highly  
empowered people



system, not a rules-based one, which is client-centric and unconstrained by command and control. Today, with more cross-border and cross-sector movement of people, it matters more than ever that our people interconnect to the benefit of our clients.

For a network to really run smoothly it must have people with deep expertise in their specialism who reach out and support one other, sharing ideas and co-operating fully.

I believe there is something exciting about working in an organisation where there is a shared culture of wanting to win and fulfil on behalf of clients above all else.



**JULIE STEINER**  
**MANAGING DIRECTOR, ODGERS**  
**BERNDTSON AUSTRALIA**

One of the best ways for me to describe collaboration in action in this region is to tell you about one of our current assignments: our ongoing work with the University of Western Australia's Leadership Team.

The University of Western Australia (UWA) is a research-intensive university in Perth, and an important member of the Group of Eight Universities (similar to the Ivy League

universities in the US or the Russell Group in the UK). It is the premier university in Western Australia.

The recently installed Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dawn Freshwater, appointed Odgers Berndtson to assist it in building a new corporate services executive to support the university's stated aims of growth, quality and excellence. UWA's key strategic goal is to be one of the top 50 universities in the world by 2050.

The corporate services roles are the key leadership positions focused on the operations and governance of the university; strategy and planning; finance and commercial; technology and digital; plus real estate and architecture.

To help UWA, Odgers Berndtson Australia formed an integrated team of four Partners and three senior researchers plus an analyst. The team members were made up of functional Partners from the CIO and CFO practices combined with Partners from our Public Sector team. The key was to ensure we represented the university in Australia and overseas with the same messaging and clarity about the leadership and experience needed in each portfolio leader.

To ensure UWA had deep insights into the way this new team could work together required constant discipline, cross-practice collaboration and co-ordinated review as the candidates emerged. Rigorous analysis, creative thinking and collaborative teamwork were vital as we looked at the 'whole' as opposed to individual searches. Fit with the university and Vice-Chancellor's vision was a core component of our work.

The Partners and senior researches worked closely

“

It matters more than ever that our people interconnect to benefit clients

”

and collaboratively at every step of the process, sharing information gleaned from client and candidate discussions and addressing a broad range of issues, right down to the detail of evaluating complementary skill sets of candidates for these appointments.

Many candidates were not from the education sector, so our analysis around capacity to work in a complex, matrixed organisation with ambitious timelines and public scrutiny was tested. The longlists were characterised by diversity in gender, country, sector and leadership and management of large and complex portfolios.

The success of the project to date has seen UWA appoint an Executive Director, Corporate Services (COO equivalent) who was promoted from within and understands the university's ethos, and two world-class functional leaders from outside the Higher Education sector – a Chief Information Officer and Chief Financial Officer.

The project continues with the same collaborative underpinning as we look to place a Director of Campus Management, an HR Director and Deputy HR Director. ■



We never forget we are the  
custodians of a client's reputation;  
the experience of every  
candidate counts



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## Eric Beaudan on five key ways to ensure your business is collaborating effectively

**W**hile researching my book *Creative Execution*, I took a tour of one of Toyota's assembly plants in Cambridge, Ontario – the first outside Japan to assemble vehicles from its Lexus brand. As I meandered through the labyrinth of RX frames being mated to their engines, something unexpected happened: the theme song from Disney's *It's a Small World After All* started chiming overhead, and the assembly line came to an abrupt halt as employees gathered around to figure out what to do.

The problem, as it turned out, was a small defect in the chassis welding process. The team worked together to fix the problem, and within 30 minutes the line was humming again. The anodyne Disney tune was in fact a signal to the team that the problem was related to welding. This musical mnemonic was a clue that the team should stop all its work and direct its attention to the faulty process.

I was struck by how quickly and seemingly effortlessly this Toyota team sprung into action, putting aside any of the individual team members' agendas in order to resolve an issue that could, if left unanswered, affect all. How many times have you seen a potential issue arise in your organisation, only to see

everyone run as far away from the problem and its source as possible?

In working with senior teams, the problem often gets worse: people's need to 'get ahead' and distinguish themselves from their peers often overrides the need to 'get along' with others, which Dr Bob Hogan has identified as a fundamental leadership challenge. Left to their own devices, senior teams can and often do collude to ignore challenges that they perceive to be either outside their mandate or someone else's problem.

What can CEOs and executives do to enhance collaboration among senior leadership teams? Below are some best practices together with five tips to allow you to fast-track collaboration:

**1. Define collaboration.** Trust and collaboration are seen as the two most important ingredients of effective teams. But defining what collaboration means in your own business and culture could be miles apart from what Toyota calls collaboration. The worst thing a CEO or senior leader can do is declare collaboration to be essential to success and then fail to define why that is or what it looks like in action. If collaboration means having your entire team figure out how to solve day-to-day challenges without those being elevated to the CEO's desk, you need to explain why that matters and how you expect collaboration to manifest itself.

**2. Be precise.** You've defined what you mean by collaboration, but now you need to identify what you want people to collaborate on. Identify two or three business priorities that require cross-

functional collaboration, and treat those as you would any other priority, which means delegate, track and report back. And remember, not everything requires collaboration, so be clear and direct with your expectations.

**3. Make space.** A recent study by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which cross-analysed more than 40,000 published papers and 2,350 patents, found that regular face-to-face interaction significantly increases the likelihood of people working together and collaborating. Creating shared open spaces for people to interact is key to highly creative companies such as Google and Apple. The likelihood of collaboration is cut in half when the distance between people shrinks by a mere 400 metres.

**4. Encourage conflict.** The soft underbelly of collaboration is the need to encourage candid dialogue and allow conflict to surface in a productive way. For people to put aside their own need to 'get ahead', they need

# THE FAST TEAM



to be able to voice their opinion freely and disagree without fear of reprisals. In fact, one could argue that the main goal of collaboration is to allow people with different viewpoints and experiences to solve problems together, which inherently means bringing opposite ideas to the table. That combustible mixture is what creates greatness, but can also lead to breakdowns without proper guidance.

#### 5. Hold people accountable.

Collaboration done right isn't a 'nice to have', it's a business requirement. The integrity of Toyota's famous production system depends on people stopping their work and solving defects before they get passed on to the next point on the assembly line. And the Toyota culture demands that people do this. When an ex-GM plant manager proudly told a senior Toyota executive that his plant had not experienced a shutdown once during the month, the Toyota

executive rebuked him by saying "stop hiding your problems". If you want true collaboration, hold people accountable for it, and reward them accordingly. In 25 years of organisation development and leadership consulting, I've never met a CEO who disagreed that increased collaboration was a potential key to their future business success. But the companies that succeed in

this journey are the ones whose senior leaders constantly look for ways to embed collaboration to make their business work, as Toyota did, rather than as a vague operating principle. It's your turn to take those first steps. ■

**Eric Beaudan** is the Global Head of Odgers Berndtson's Leadership Practice and the author of *Creative Execution*



# TRACK<sub>TO</sub> COLLABORATION



# Modern

Arts and cultural institutions are seeking new collaborative ways to enhance their offering. JONATHAN ARNOLD reports on some of the latest activity

**T**wenty-one years ago the *Harvard Business Review* ran an article entitled 'How the arts can prosper through strategic collaborations'. The piece declared: "The arts have been hard hit by shrinking audiences and rising debt. Cuts in government funding have become severe, and many sources of funding – especially government agencies and private foundations – have been earmarking grants for specific programs so that less is available for general operating budgets."

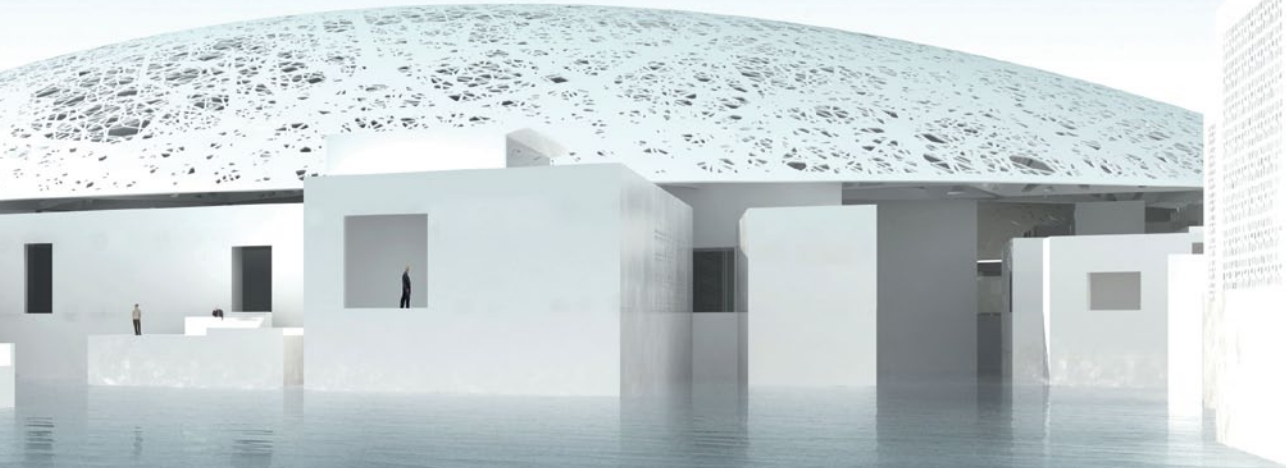
Although looking specifically at the US landscape, the sentiment remains just as

relevant today as it did in the 1990s. Perhaps, one might argue, even more so. Arts and cultural organisations around the world have had to up their game when it comes to forging collaborations, not just with business and industry but with tech companies and even other countries, as they seek to create engaging visitor experiences – and generate much-needed revenue. In recent years there have been some quite extraordinary alliances.

Take, for example, the collaboration between the iconic Louvre Museum in Paris and the creation of the Louvre Abu Dhabi, due to open this year. To put it

mildly, this surprising alliance has caused some raised Parisian eyebrows. Purists are horrified. Reporting on the new museum, *Wallpaper\** magazine said that many felt it was akin to "creating 'a branch' outside the country. Franchising is for McDonald's, they sniff, not for a treasured national artistic institution that has been France's bastion of high culture since 1190."

Maybe. But the Louvre stands to make a record US\$1.3 billion in fees, of which about half is solely for granting Abu Dhabi the right to use the Louvre name for the next 30 years. The rest of the money meets the cost of the Louvre's curatorial expertise. *Wallpaper\** added:



The Louvre Abu Dhabi

# renaissance

“Martinez [Jean-Luc Martinez, the president-director of the Louvre] retorts that the Louvre Abu Dhabi is not a branch of the Louvre. Nor is it even French. ‘It is not for the Louvre or, indeed, for France,’ he says. ‘It is a new museum for Abu Dhabi. It is from this country, by this country. We are working for current and future generations here in the UAE. That is its heart. *Bon!*’”

Not to be outdone by its Parisian sister, the Centre Pompidou has just announced the launch of Centre Pompidou Shanghai. The new gallery will be installed as part of a long-term cultural collaboration project between France and

China that will start in 2019 and continue until 2025. The Centre Pompidou described it as “the highest-standard cultural exchange project of such long duration between China and France in the cultural field”. And no doubt highly lucrative, too.

There are many other examples of collaboration between cultural bodies and others outside of their normal sphere of activity, although not all have the same high profile, or financial windfall, that the Louvre project does. For example, Google collaborated with New York’s Metropolitan Museum to create an immersive experience for its ‘We Wear

Culture’ fashion show, which utilised Google’s Daydream platform; Microsoft has collaborated with the Museum of Digital Art in Zurich, Europe’s first physical and virtual museum dedicated to digital arts; and the Sydney Opera House is looking to appeal to a new generation of travellers through a two-year tie-up with disruptive global travel brand Airbnb. “The Opera House is keen to appeal to Airbnb’s demographic, and for everyone to belong there. Together, we can help open up the Opera House – the symbol of modern Australia – to new global communities, highlight Sydney as a destination, and support the Opera House’s →





Shakespeare's Globe production of *Hamlet* at Kourion Amphitheatre in Cyprus

flourishing contemporary music and environmental programmes," Sam McDonagh, Airbnb Australia Country Manager told *AdNews*.

At London's Victoria and Albert Museum a groundbreaking collaboration with China Merchants Group (CMG) will support its plan to develop an ambitious new Design Society located in the Sea World Culture and Arts Centre in Shekou, China. It is the first time the V&A has developed such an international collaboration. It, too, is due to open this year. Also in London, Shakespeare's Globe has created some wonderful collaborative programmes around the world,

of which more below.

One of the most dynamic examples of a multi-group collaboration is the 'Hold the World' project that London's Natural History Museum (NHM) is working on with media giant Sky, tech company Factory42 and Sir David Attenborough – an icon in his own right – to create a revolutionary VR experience unlike anything ever seen before.

"The premise of 'Hold the World' is very simple," Sir Michael Dixon, director of the NHM, tells *Observe*. "David actually talks to you about an object that you can take apart, make bigger and smaller. He appears as a hologram in front of you but he looks like a real 3D person.

He explains the object to you as you 'manipulate' it in your hands". As we go to press, the NHM is expecting the new VR app to be ready by year end.

For such an innovative project, harmonious collaboration is the key to its success. Many of the protagonists in this four-way partnership have worked together before, which certainly helps when it comes to resolving issues – be they technical, financial or even academic. Dixon avers: "Most good partnerships work if people bring essential things to the table that don't reside in the other participants: Sky is bringing its distribution

network; Factory42 its technical skills in creating the product; we're bringing the content; and David is bringing his phenomenal pulling power and storytelling ability. My experience in business before working in museums tells me that these co-ventures work most effectively when you do have that reliance on different people and expertise. When both parties bring the *same* skills to the table, it often doesn't work. We do a lot of things on trust because there isn't a business model for this kind of thing. It's an experiment we wanted to do."

Dixon acknowledges that there can be cultural issues when working with different organisations and that there is an assumption that the public sector is much slower than the private sector. But in this case, those claims are unfounded. The NHM already has an enviable reputation for the way in which it embraces new technology for national and international audiences.

John Cassy, chief executive

of Factory42, says: "We took the idea to Sir Michael Dixon and outlined our thinking about how to take their collections to a wider audience. He immediately got the idea, loved it and went to see Sir David, for whom interactive VR was a first. We developed the idea further, worked closely with the NHM curators – experts, of course, in all the artefacts – and took the proposal to Sky. They have been a fantastic backer, very forward thinking. They made a quick decision on it and they've been giving creative input throughout."

Cassy adds that for this kind of four-way collaboration to work a "clear process" needs to be set up. "They [NHM] are the experts, but there are things related to tech or storytelling where we are the experts. We work out the rules of engagement and we all have to be comfortable that the rules are in everyone's interests and objectives. We had a clear plan that everybody bought into. When things go wrong, it's when you are not clear what your shared objectives are."

Across London at the internationally renowned Shakespeare's Globe its 'Globe to Globe' project saw it take a production of *Hamlet* to every country in the world over a two-year period: no less than 197 countries and 202 venues. Neil Constable, Chief Executive of Shakespeare's Globe, told *Observe*: "We chose *Hamlet* because 'To be or not to be' is probably *the* most recognised Shakespeare phrase across the world. *Hamlet* has so many themes that could relate to individual countries, depending on what is happening with their own internal affairs. *Hamlet* can speak in a way other plays might not."

Such a gargantuan artistic endeavour required multi-level collaboration, from local arts venues in remote Pacific islands to finding a chapel to perform in the Vatican or ways to deliver the play to displaced refugees from war-torn countries such as Yemen, South Sudan or Syria.

Adds Constable: "The first problem was getting people to believe we were doing it! No one had done this before so people →

The V&A's collaboration with China Merchants Group (CMG) – a new design museum, located in the Sea World Culture and Arts Centre





likened our actors to astronauts. We were only in each country for two to three days. We had significant support from local arts centres, British Council representatives and Government missions – they found the flexibility to make it work.”

An artistically led project such as this, borne out of the ‘Cultural Olympics’ in London in 2012, presented financial problems that Constable and his colleagues could hardly have predicted. “The other unknown was the finances,” says Constable. “It is no secret



Sydney Opera House



Sir David Attenborough with VR goggles

“No one had done this before so people likened our actors to astronauts”

SKY

that the project cost around £3 million. We had to raise funding from all the venues and through other relationships to fund the whole project. When you’re considering what the cost might be of taking a group of 16 actors round all of the Pacific Islands or across Africa – they’re not the type of budgets we’re used to dealing with.”

Shakespeare’s Globe is a brand in demand. To help increase awareness – and deliver a new revenue stream – it has launched the Globe Player app. Downloaded in more than 120 countries, it is the first such digital enterprise by a performing arts organisation

to offer either purchase or streaming of its filmed catalogue. Its library of more than 50 productions performed at the Globe in London, many of them in a foreign language as well as English, has opened up the Globe’s canon to millions of theatre-goers who may never set foot in its London home.

For Constable, collaboration is an “open dialogue and an understanding of each other’s expectations, an empathy with the culture you’re working with”.

*Hamlet* Globe to Globe and the Globe Player app are powerful examples of what true collaboration can do to bring communities together

wherever you are in the world.

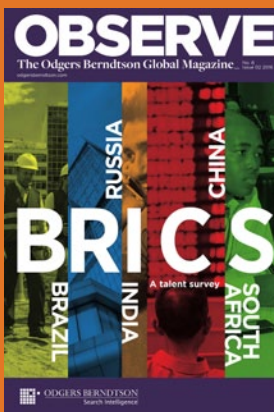
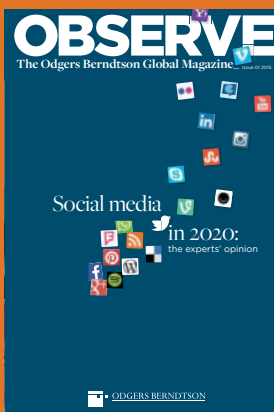
So what does all of this cross-fertilisation mean for talent and the ability to find the right leaders to help navigate this sea change in arts and culture? Samantha Colt, a Partner and Head of the Arts, Culture and Heritage practice at Odgers Berndtson, London, says: “It is no surprise we are seeing more and more crossover between the commercial and non-profit arts and cultural sector in terms of talent. Within the arts sector it is now common to see long-standing artistic and curatorial experts working alongside colleagues from the commercial world who have been drawn to the arts by the opportunity to innovate and push boundaries. It may seem counter-intuitive at first to think of the non-profit sector as the innovator; however, it has always been so from an artistic perspective, and now increasingly it is applying this innate creativity to other aspects of its activities.

“Irrespective of background, the leaders of the future in the arts and cultural sector need to be flexible and courageous; unafraid of leaping into the unknown but, as the comments above have suggested, discipline, rigour and astute financial acumen will never be far away.” ■

# OBSERVE

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ODGERS BERNDTSON



**P**icture this: you are on a busy city street and need a taxi, so you tap your phone and within moments a car pulls to the kerb. There's no driver inside but as soon as you're belted in, it pulls away towards your destination. Imagine being at

an airport seeing driverless 'pods' shuttle people and cargo between terminals, or cruising down a motorway and glancing into another speeding car to see all its occupants fast asleep.

The question is not whether these changes will happen, but how soon. That's why all the

leading automotive companies are already jostling for position to maximise their stake in what will, within the next decade, become an everyday means of transport. And how will they make it happen? By forming partnerships: with tech companies to develop vehicles



# AUTONOMY



that can pilot themselves safely, with government bodies, insurers and law firms to develop an infrastructure that can cope with this new reality – and even with rival car manufacturers.

“It’s important that collaboration is right at the centre of every project,” says

Professor Paul Jennings, a physicist at the Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG), a department at Warwick University, a leading UK institution helping industrial and academic partners “get to market more quickly and competently, exploit all the huge

opportunities that are coming and overcome some of the challenges”.

Top of that list of challenges is safety. The perceived risks currently dominate public perception of this autonomous future, but Jennings says this usually changes when people understand the rationale → behind



Automated driving



# RULES

The move to a world where all cars are driverless requires deep collaboration, as KEIRON PIM explains



## Global collaboration

Another way these collaborations are developing is through the British government's £20 million, three-year Autodrive project, in which 16 automotive, technological, academic, governmental and legal organisations have come together to get autonomous vehicles on the roads. One of them is tech firm RDM Group, which collaborates with WMG and is fitting laser, radar and ultrasonic sensors to low-speed electric vehicles known as 'pods'. Sales and Marketing Director Miles Garner says: "WMG has an excellent reputation for churning out some very clever people, and one of the projects we're working on with them is to understand how autonomous pods can operate in a testing lab."

"We're also collaborating in America with Arup, a global firm working in every aspect of today's built environment, using its offices in Texas. They are often involved in new town and city engineering – a lot of governments are looking at ways of taking cars out of the city, and Arup are landing a lot of contracts in that field."

All around the world, autonomous vehicles are pulling into view – from Sweden, where Volvo is trialling 100 self-driving vehicles in Gothenburg, to Australia, where RDM Group is developing an autonomous

cargo transporter for an Adelaide business park, to America, where Silicon Valley firms are pioneering much of the new technology. To an extent this is already in use: automatic braking and self-parking are established features of many cars today. Industry experts foresee the technology progressing through stages regarding the driver's degree of involvement: first 'feet off', then 'hands off', 'eyes off' and finally 'brain off', at which point a vehicle's occupants will be able to sleep while travelling. It's expected that in around eight years' time we will reach the 'eyes off' level whereby the driver can sit reading a book when the car is cruising; then sometime after 2025 the steering wheel will phase out and truly driverless cars become commonplace.

## Shared mobility future

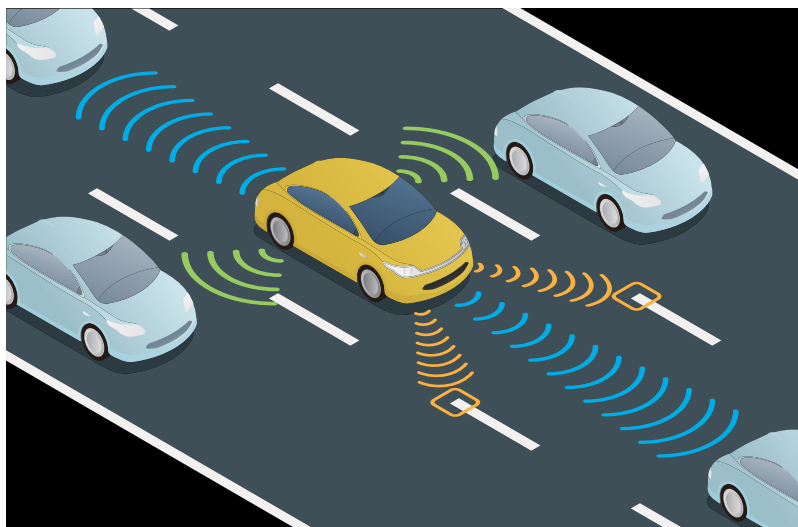
Businesses spanning manufacturers, tech giants and cab-hailing services know that pooling knowledge, finding efficiencies and effectively collaborating is the only way to reach that milestone. Earlier this year Jaguar Land Rover made a US\$25 million investment in Lyft, a rival to Uber headquartered in San Francisco. Lyft expects its fleet to be almost wholly autonomous in five years' time. "Lyft envisions a future where shared mobility will transform cities and improve people's lives," says co-founder and President John Zimmer. "This partnership will help us achieve that ambitious goal." Toyota has paired with the Californian tech company Nvidia; Daimler and the parts supplier Bosch is aiming to manufacture 'robotaxis' by 2020; and BMW, Delphi, Intel and Mobileye aim to get a fully autonomous vehicle on the road by 2021.



Benjamin Braun, Marketing Director of Audi UK, adds: "It will be essential for policy makers, ethicists and car companies to collaborate to ensure these machines act in ways that are consistent with our values."

## Adapting new technologies

The auto manufacturers' collaborations are not just with firms outside their industry – it benefits everyone to set aside



rivalries and ensure that all brands of autonomous car speak the same language. Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) is working with Ford and Tata Motors' European Technical Centre so these companies' cars can talk to each other. JLR's head of research, Tony Harper, says: "This collaborative approach is a major stepping stone towards all connected and autonomous vehicles co-operating with each

other in the future. Our aim is to give drivers exactly the right information at the right time, and collaborations with other manufacturers are essential." As the auto industry has changed to embrace this revolutionary technology, so of course have the challenges involved in recruiting suitably skilled staff.

"If you went back many years in the auto industry," says WMG's Professor

Jennings, "it was predominantly mechanical engineers, and now we're looking at computer scientists, software engineers, psychologists, ergonomists. It's a very different skill set. Moving forward to things like artificial intelligence, it's turning into technology development almost as much as it is automotive manufacturing. We can see that there's a need for more people with those skills." ■



# The power of SWP

KATE PARKER, Head of Berwick Talent Solutions, on a major upcoming survey on the adoption of Strategic Workforce Planning

If Strategic Workforce Planning – or SWP – isn't on your corporate radar, then it certainly should be. Why? Because SWP is one of the critical HR practices that combines an organisation's overall strategy with its workforce strategy. Ignore it at your peril.

For two similar organisations with similar product portfolios in similar locations, effective SWP could be the key differentiator in gaining competitive advantage over its rival. Aligning people strategy more closely with overall business strategy allows both greater speed to market and more agile adoption of change agendas, not least because the lead time to resource critical projects is decreased.

Most of the Chief Executives involved in this year's Odgers Berndtson 'CEO X 1 Day' initiative cited the pace of 'perpetual change' as the most pressing challenge facing their organisation. Many of the CEOs also highlighted continuing access to talent and the importance

of attracting, developing and retaining good people as an area of focus. This is likely to be more achievable through effective SWP, and links directly to the importance of better collaboration between the Board and senior HR stakeholders.

Berwick Talent Solutions\* is embarking on a major piece of international SWP research that aims to provide significant

insight into the maturity of SWP among global organisations, to identify trends and to understand the barriers and obstacles to effective adoption.

We are seeking input from HR professionals on what effect the many issues faced by businesses today (diversity and inclusion, Brexit, the millennial wish list and AI, amongst others) have on their ability to embed SWP effectively.

We want to hear from businesses that have compelling cases for SWP – where it has given them a clear competitive advantage – and from those who feel their businesses have suffered through a lack of effective SWP. ■

## TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SURVEY PLEASE CONTACT:

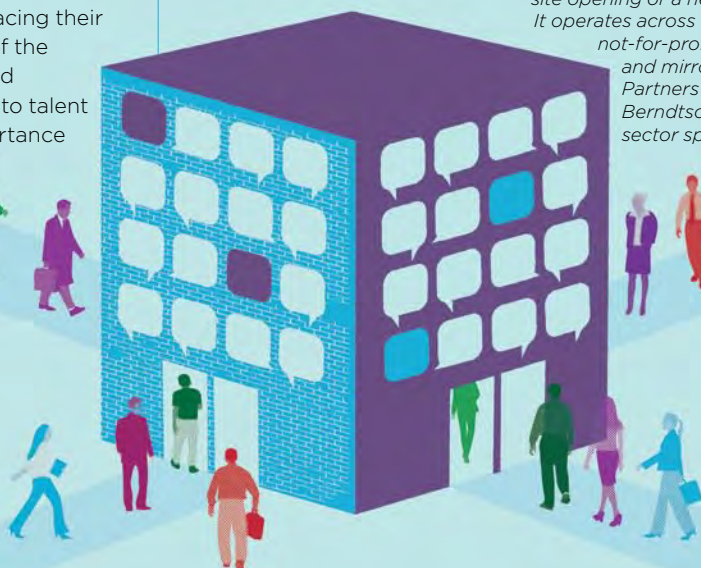


Kate Parker –  
Head of Berwick  
Talent Solutions  
– by email:  
[kate.parker@berwicktalentsolutions.com](mailto:kate.parker@berwicktalentsolutions.com)

Or go directly to the survey online at:  
[surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SWP\\_2017](https://surveymonkey.co.uk/r/SWP_2017)

The survey will close at the end of November 2017, and findings will be published in the February 2018 edition of *Observe*.

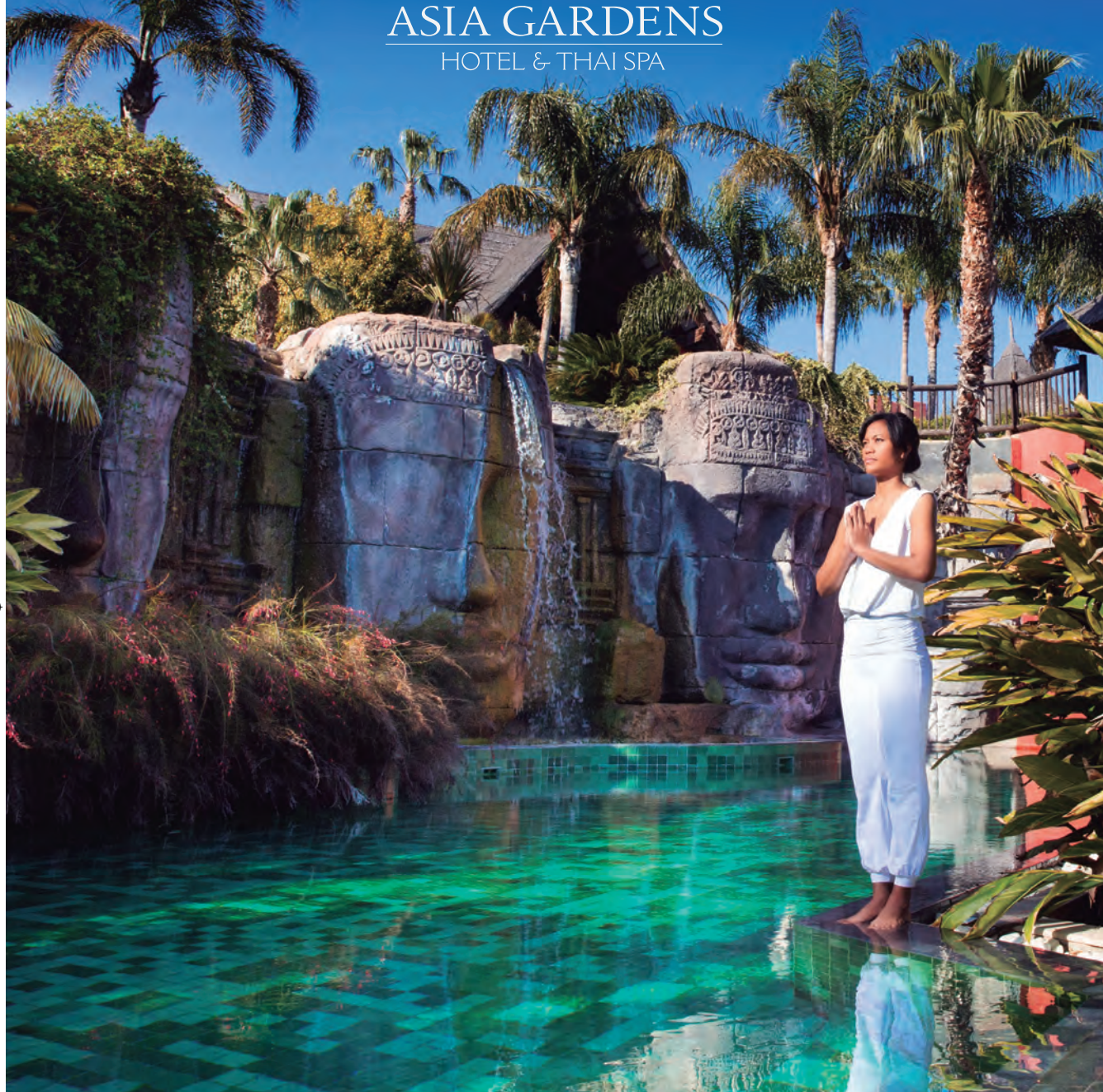
*\*Berwick Talent Solutions delivers project and volume recruitment campaigns for mid-senior management level and specialist roles, and critical talent intelligence via its market mapping and pipelining projects. Its projects are driven by business growth, change or transition, and often, but not exclusively, by factors such as expansion, M&A, relocation, a new site opening or a new product launch. It operates across the commercial, not-for-profit and public sectors, and mirrors the Berwick Partners and Odgers Berndtson functional and sector specialisms.*





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COFFEE



TIME!

## Ten Thousand Coffees is a whizzy piece of smart tech that can transform the way in which people collaborate

What could be more convivial than meeting a co-worker – especially one you might never otherwise speak to – over a cup of coffee? Simple, really. Everyone enjoys a coffee (or tea) moment when the pressure's off, and you can engage in relaxed conversation about work-related issues. The question is: how can you encourage people to collaborate via a non-threatening, easy-to-use system that positively encourages these regular, informal dialogues?

Canadian entrepreneur Dave Wilkin believes he has come up with the perfect solution: the wonderfully named Ten Thousand Coffees, launched in the autumn of 2016. A self-styled “spokesman for the next generation”, Wilkin’s aim with Ten Thousand Coffees is to encourage every employee to proactively build relationships. “The simplest solution is always the best – just add coffee,” he says. “By connecting hundreds of thousands for coffee, we have uncovered the best practices relied upon by companies, schools, entrepreneurship centres and many more.” Wilkin adds that Ten Thousand Coffees is now being used in 10 countries worldwide and connects more than 200,000 people for conversation over coffee – mostly in person, but also via Skype.

Behind this simple solution is a piece of technology that drives the process. Talking to

Observe, Wilkin frequently stressed that Ten Thousand Coffees’ software takes only 30 minutes to install and, as a result, can “transform” a company’s mailing list into a private mentoring and networking programme. “No more manual matching,” says Wilkin. “Our customisable algorithm automatically connects your members for impactful conversations.”

In a recent piece in Canada’s *Globe and Mail* newspaper, Wilkin wrote: “How many collisions have your employees had in the last two weeks? Ask employees who they have had lunch or coffee with. If it’s with someone they functionally work with, or are already friends with: not a collision. If it’s a new colleague that recently got hired, someone they want to learn from, or a colleague from a different function: it’s a collision.” It is these ‘collisions’, especially among younger employees, that Wilkin wants to attract to Ten Thousand Coffees.

“It’s about using networking as a vitamin and not as an antibiotic

Dave Wilkin



Once installed, the Ten Thousand Coffees software, apart from allowing employees to meet colleagues they might not otherwise encounter, also enables managers to see how employees are connecting. “It’s about building relationships across functions,” adds Wilkin, who adds that Ten Thousand Coffees works with organisations ranging in size from 150 to 80,000, and in markets as diverse as Australia, Asia, the UK, Canada, the US and South America.

Wilkin stresses that Ten Thousand Coffees is about “using networking as a vitamin and NOT as an antibiotic. In short, it’s about meeting new people over time, without a specific need, before you actually need it. People that network because they need something do not build strong relationships. For millennials, the coffee chat is a magical experience,” says Wilkin. ■





# Ignorance isn't bliss

Understanding cultural differences is essential to successful business collaborations. Yet too many organisations ignore it...



**W**hen Air France and KLM merged in 2004 they seemed destined to become one of the world's most powerful airlines.

Thirteen years on, the business's future looks uncertain, after a report leaked in July revealed a divided company brimming with distrust and resentment between French and Dutch staff.

Air France managers feel they try to do what's best for the whole company but that KLM staff focus on their own sector and are money-obsessed; the Dutch consider the French aloof and don't trust their economy. The "extent to which employees are disillusioned is shocking", says the report, which was compiled by trades unions surveying members within the company and finally questions "whether the alliance can survive given the long-standing mutual incomprehension between the Dutch and French camps within the group".

Jean Vanhoegaerden has kept a close eye on the saga. As a Professor of Practice at Ashridge Executive Education, part of Hult International Business School, the Belgian academic is an expert in helping businesses handle cross-cultural collaborations.

"I don't say that culture is the most important aspect of doing business, but it's the most ignored one," he says. "The problem in mergers is that there's not a lot of thought given to culture before they merge – it's very often a problem afterwards. Probably the big difficulty here is the Dutch are very direct in the way that they do business, and the French are much more: 'We will talk and, in the end, we get to the point.' These are called 'low context' and 'high context', in academic terms."

The other main problem is conflicting attitudes towards power and hierarchy. "I remember working with a French company and when the CEO came it was almost like God had arrived: everyone had to sit up. While in the Dutch culture you can challenge the boss, not just intellectually but also: 'Why should I do that just because you told me to?' – and that is an important difference."

Air France-KLM's troubles highlight

how significant cultural differences can prove in business. Every country has cultural norms that seem... well, normal, to people of that nationality. But to outsiders seeking to build business relationships there, they form a minefield with the possibility of misunderstanding and offence at every step.

China, for example, is a country many Western businesses wish to penetrate better but whose business etiquette is rife with potential pitfalls. Meetings are often planned months in advance, all overtures should be conducted in written Chinese, and bureaucracy is unavoidable – decisions will not be made in the meeting but passed slowly through the hierarchy. The Chinese fear of 'losing face' means you should never criticise someone in person; tactful silence is the preferred option. And you should research any gifts you intend to bring as some might seem unlucky – for instance flowers, which are associated with funerals. Roy Chua is Associate Professor of Organisational Behaviour and Human Resources at Singapore Management University, and knows its business culture well.

"My advice to CEOs doing business in China is to study and understand some Chinese history, literature and philosophy," he says. "The Chinese thinking is greatly shaped by their history ... Their language itself often makes reference to stories from thousands of years ago. It's hard to truly understand them if you don't know where they are coming from."

"In general, it's important to gain deep knowledge about an unfamiliar culture that you are working in. However, →



Ultimately, it's all about being respectful and considerate



knowledge itself is not sufficient. One also needs to develop cultural meta-knowledge,” he adds – that is, become aware of the gaps in your understanding and when you are making assumptions, then work to address these.

There are many organisations – in business, academia and the not-for-profit sector – whose purpose is to enable smoother cross-cultural trading. For instance, Business Data Processing introduces companies to Eastern European IT firms. Its director, Elena Kozlovskaya, has often seen “business parties being very harsh, demanding and outsmarting each other”, she says, and “in the end, these projects didn’t go long-term. In Eastern Europe we care about building relationships with business partners: sometimes a sincere promise is valued more than a long business agreement, and established relationships are valued more than a sophisticated proposal.”

The UK India Business Council, meanwhile, exists to improve working relationships between those two countries, though its advice on Indian business etiquette should prove valuable for anyone. A guide on its website

([www.ukibc.com/india-guide/how-india/business-culture/](http://www.ukibc.com/india-guide/how-india/business-culture/)) gives many tips, including how to receive a business card, address people and phrase your questions to best effect.

Anglophones are at an advantage in India, as English is its official language of business. But what if you travel somewhere where it’s less widely spoken? Prof. Vanhoegaerden is fluent in English but even he finds himself baffled on occasion by idiomatic phrases; he was perplexed the first time someone in the USA closed a meeting by saying: “Let’s call it a day.” So he advises avoiding lingo and slang, and speaking in literal terms. “It’s about making your language understandable to the non-English-speaking people,” he says. “That is, I think, the responsibility of the English speaker.”

Ultimately, it’s all about being respectful and considerate. Master that and you’ll be fluent in a business language that’s understood in every country in the world. ■

See [businessdataprocessing.com/](http://businessdataprocessing.com/), [ashridge.org.uk/faculty-research/faculty/jean-vanhoegaerden/](http://ashridge.org.uk/faculty-research/faculty/jean-vanhoegaerden/) and [smu.edu.sg/faculty/profile/108216/Roy-CHUA](http://smu.edu.sg/faculty/profile/108216/Roy-CHUA) for more details.







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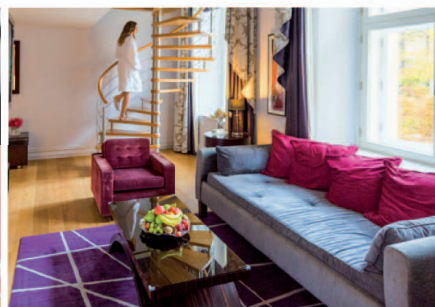
To create a truly personal experience during your stay in the hotel, you can now treat your body and soul to the luxurious services of The Mark Spa. The plunge pool, saunas, massages, and also a brand new fitness area for exercising the whole body, are awaiting your visit!

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# The power of two

Some business collaborations have become industry folklore; others, it seems, should never have started, as DAVID CRAIK reports



**D**isney's iconic 1940 movie *Fantasia* is perhaps best remembered for Mickey Mouse and his battles with magic brooms. But it is also a prime example of the benefits of collaboration – not just between classical music and popular culture, but between businesses.

Disney needed an audio oscillator able to measure sound frequencies to help it fine tune the acoustics of *Fantasia* in movie theatres, and the model they chose was one developed in a garage by a young Bill Hewlett and David Packard. From that moment of ingenious inspiration and application, Disney and Hewlett-Packard (HP) continued their collaboration.

HP powered Disney's theme parks over the following decades, and in 2003 they signed a 10-year strategic alliance aimed at further elevating customer experiences in the internet and digital age. This would be achieved through the “collaborative development of new technologies and enhanced entertainment experiences”.

Bob Iger, Disney President and Chief Operating Officer at the time, said: “With Disney's phenomenal creative content, unparalleled guest experiences and expertise in technological innovation, adding HP to the team strengthens our respective positions as leaders in the world of digital entertainment.” The collaboration continues to this day.

Online B2B matchmaking platform Powerlinx believes successful business collaborations like these can transform companies, disrupt industries and reinvigorate brands. This is achieved, it believes, through pooling knowledge and leveraging the



ALAMY

#### NOTABLE COLLABORATIONS

##### **Disney/Hewlett-Packard:**

Creating and powering digital entertainment

##### **Renault/Nissan:**

Carmakers combine expertise to grow global sales

##### **Barnes & Noble/Starbucks:**

Coffee and books make a winning story

##### **Sony/Samsung:**

Devising and engineering the latest LCD technologies together

##### **Standard Bank/MTN:**

Tapping into huge demand for mobile communications in Africa

##### **NASA/Lockheed Martin:**

Developing aircraft, such as a new supersonic passenger jet

##### **Apple/IBM:**

Mobile-first collaboration, creating apps focusing on sectors, such as education

##### **General Electric/Safran:**

Developing powerful jet engines

##### **Fiat/Lavazza:**

Italian cars and coffee come together with an onboard espresso machine

##### **Coca-Cola/Evo Plastics:**

Run a Lincolnshire, UK recycling plant together

brand and expertise of your partner when entering new market segments or meeting customer needs. It can boost technological development and innovation and make companies more agile when looking to reduce costs or get products to market. It can also make life hotter for your competition.

In 1993, US retail book chain Barnes & Noble teamed up with coffee gurus Starbucks so

bookworms could enjoy their Kerouac with a cappuccino and their Marquez with a mocha. Barnes & Noble wanted to improve customer experience and dwell time, and Starbucks wanted to sell more coffee to more affluent people.

Both benefited from the tie-up, which, like Disney and HP, continues today. It also played a part in Barnes & Noble gaining increased market share through the demise of rival Borders. Can a few cups of coffee really make that much difference? Well, Mark Evans, former executive at Borders, thought so. In 2011, he wrote: “Barnes & Noble secured the exclusive US Starbucks partnership. It was a major branding and traffic-driving win for them.”

Starbucks certainly got a taste for collaboration, also partnering with United Airlines for its logoed coffee to be sold on its flights, with Kraft Foods for its coffee to be marketed in stores, and with Apple to sell music as part of its in-store vibe.

Collaborations can also be more formal and develop their own strategic momentum.

South Africa's Standard Bank set up a joint venture partnership with local mobile phone operator MTN in 2005. It ran a banking service that allowed around 20 million customers to open and access accounts using their mobile handsets. At the time, Irene Charnley, commercial director, MTN Group, said: “This convenient retail environment revolutionises financial-sector marketing and distribution channels, while massively simplifying service access.” It did so well that Standard bought the banking business from MTN.

In 2004 Sony and Samsung created a joint venture called S-LCD, with the aim of delivering →

“advanced and cost-competitive” LCD panels to both companies. The groups said that the tie-up contributed to the expansion of both their TV businesses and benefited the large LCD market overall. That was until 2011, when Sony paid £600 million to buy out Samsung’s stake in the venture and make it a wholly owned subsidiary. However, they agreed to enter into a new strategic agreement for the supply and purchase of LCD panels and to continue co-operative engineering work on LCD panel technology.

Renault and Nissan are a good example of firms in the same industry employing cross-border collaboration. Since 1999 they have taken stakes in each other’s firms and worked together on product development and corporate strategy. By doing so they have both boosted their global sales figures, become the world’s fourth biggest carmaker and making up 10 per cent of new car sales worldwide. Renault states: “This cross-shareholding arrangement ensures that the two partners have the same interests, and encourages them to adopt win-win strategies beneficial to both.”

But not every partnership is a drive into a golden sunset; there are a fair number of car crashes as well.



“  
A banker said it  
was like trying  
to mate a horse  
with a dog  
”

In 2000 internet content distributor AOL and media content group Time Warner announced a US\$360 billion combination. What could go wrong with this marriage of the traditional and the internet future? Plenty, it seemed, as the partnership was stymied by culture clashes and a lack of management coherence and strategy. A banker at the time said the combination was like

“trying to mate a horse with a dog”. It was driven not by logic but by ego. There was no clear definition or understanding of what the two groups could do for each other.

Huge writedowns, fraud inquiries and the fizzling out of the dotcom boom were the final nails in the coffin. It ended in a demerger in 2009.

There are also the ones that get away. Confectionery giant Mars has cause to regret a brand collaboration opportunity that it failed to gobble up. It turned down an offer from Amblin Productions in 1982, which wanted to create a tie-in between its new film and Mars product M&Ms. Mars said no, and Hershey’s Reese’s Pieces benefited from the movie’s huge success instead. The film? *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*.

Collaboration can be out of this world, it seems – but do your research and develop a strategy and a clear need before you make your move. ■

Above: Renault Nissan CEO Carlos Ghosn during a visit to the Nissan car assembly line. Washington, Sunderland, UK

Below left: Reese’s Pieces product placement in *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*  
Below right: The AOL Time Warner building rises above Rockefeller Center in New York





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Fuengirola (Málaga)





As organisations become increasingly complex and our reliance on innovative collaboration tools grows, are we in danger of collaboration overload?

Effective collaboration is a fundamental driver of organisational success. We all know that. But can you ever have too much of a good thing? Evidence suggests that increased collaboration and the proliferation of collaboration technology could, in fact, have a detrimental impact on your business.

According to research by the *Harvard Business Review* [*HBR*], the time spent by managers and

# DANGER:





employees in collaborative activities has increased by 50 per cent or more over the last decade.

Similarly, it found that people spend upwards of 80 per cent of their time performing collaborative tasks – answering emails, making phone calls, and talking to colleagues on messaging tools. It leaves them little time to focus on their core work.

“An increasingly global and interconnected world has seen effective collaboration emerge as a fundamental goal for businesses,” says David Goulden, product director at Clarizen, a global leader in collaborative work management software. “Yet, achieving collaborative perfection remains elusive for most organisations.”

Driven by the complexity of project-related tasks, the growth of the remote workforce and

multinational operations, our reliance on meetings, emails, web-conferencing, IM/chat apps, file-sharing systems, intranets, social networks and more has increased exponentially.

Reb Rebele, a researcher for Wharton People Analytics, was part of *HBR*’s research into ‘collaboration overload’. “Organisations have made intentional pushes to become more collaborative and less siloed,” he says. “The challenge comes when there is too much emphasis on the benefits and not enough attention paid to the costs in terms of time, energy and engagement.”

Those ‘costs’ can include employees facing burnout as they juggle numerous meeting requests and manage a myriad of tools that can →





cause duplication of effort, build-up of unnecessary information and distractions. It is, says Goulden, a formula that leads to “business units and management teams being side-tracked by ad-hoc, fragmented communication that distorts priorities and hijacks decision-making”.

According to *HBR*, individuals can become ‘institutional bottlenecks’ within a team – top collaborators, valued for their contribution, but without whom work stalls until they are involved. To avoid this, leaders must be judicious in their approach to adopting collaboration tools and strategies. “Sometimes we need to take a step back before we charge ahead,” says Tom Marsden, CEO of team analytics business Saberr. “Consider whether you really need more technology, the impact it will have and how you can measure return on investment. There’s a balance to be struck. Collaboration is important and necessary for much of the work teams carry out today, but it’s not an end in itself. We first need to understand whether the task at hand requires collaboration or not.”

Of course, collaboration tools are nothing without collaborators, to whom leaders should pay close attention. “Many leaders likely recognise that having too many meetings or spending too much time on email or group chat is not ideal,” says Rebele. “But too few take the time to collect data or take steps to change it.”

Early ‘diagnosis’ of collaboration overload, then, is essential. Take a look at your team. Who is your strongest collaborator? Who is bearing the biggest costs of collaboration? “Rather than leave it to the individual to cope, leaders must ensure that the work for the group is a shared responsibility that doesn’t burn out those who just so happen to be kind enough to volunteer,” Rebele adds.

A leader must also lead, demonstrating that he or she is approaching collaboration in the right way. Goulden suggests that in many companies executives are not always using the available collaboration tools and so have limited awareness of how they are operated.

“Often, you’ll see executives using email for company-wide communications rather than a collaborative tool,” he adds. “It sends out the wrong message and hinders encouragement of

collaboration.” It’s also important – albeit potentially difficult – to allow individuals to stop. Steve Jobs famously said: “It’s only by saying no that you can focus on the jobs that are truly important.”

Marsden suggests that leaders have a responsibility in how they guide collaborators, thinking about company policy regarding answering emails outside of work, or disconnecting to complete an important task. The same applies to meetings. Leaders can avoid overload by creating an environment where it’s OK to say no, to decline a request or to leave a meeting if one believes they are not needed. “There comes a point,” says Marsden, “where we must question whether we’re meeting for a purpose or out of habit.”

It may seem controversial to suggest that, in the midst of vast technological investment and implementation, simplicity is key. However, it may also be key to avoid collaboration overload.

While technology undoubtedly accelerates the speed of progress, collaboration is ultimately down to people. Studies have shown that individuals are reluctant to use multiple tools at a time – email use alone is predicted to rise by 14 per cent by the end of 2019, which equates to in excess of 2.9 billion users.<sup>2</sup>

Collaboration tools must be chosen because they fit the needs of an organisation, and discipline must be used to make those tools effective. Technology, after all, should principally be support for people. It may even be the case, as Rebele suggests, that “organisations would benefit from having at least one senior leader who is tasked with understanding the costs and benefits of the current collaboration norms in their organisation, and actively planning for ways to make sure the collaborative load is evenly distributed and that the return is worth the investment of all that time and energy”.

Avoiding overloading your employees may seem like a relatively straightforward course of action. But in an increasingly complex world where collaboration is necessary for a number of reasons, it may be harder than imagined. Collaboration should happen for a reason, not simply for the sake of collaboration. ■

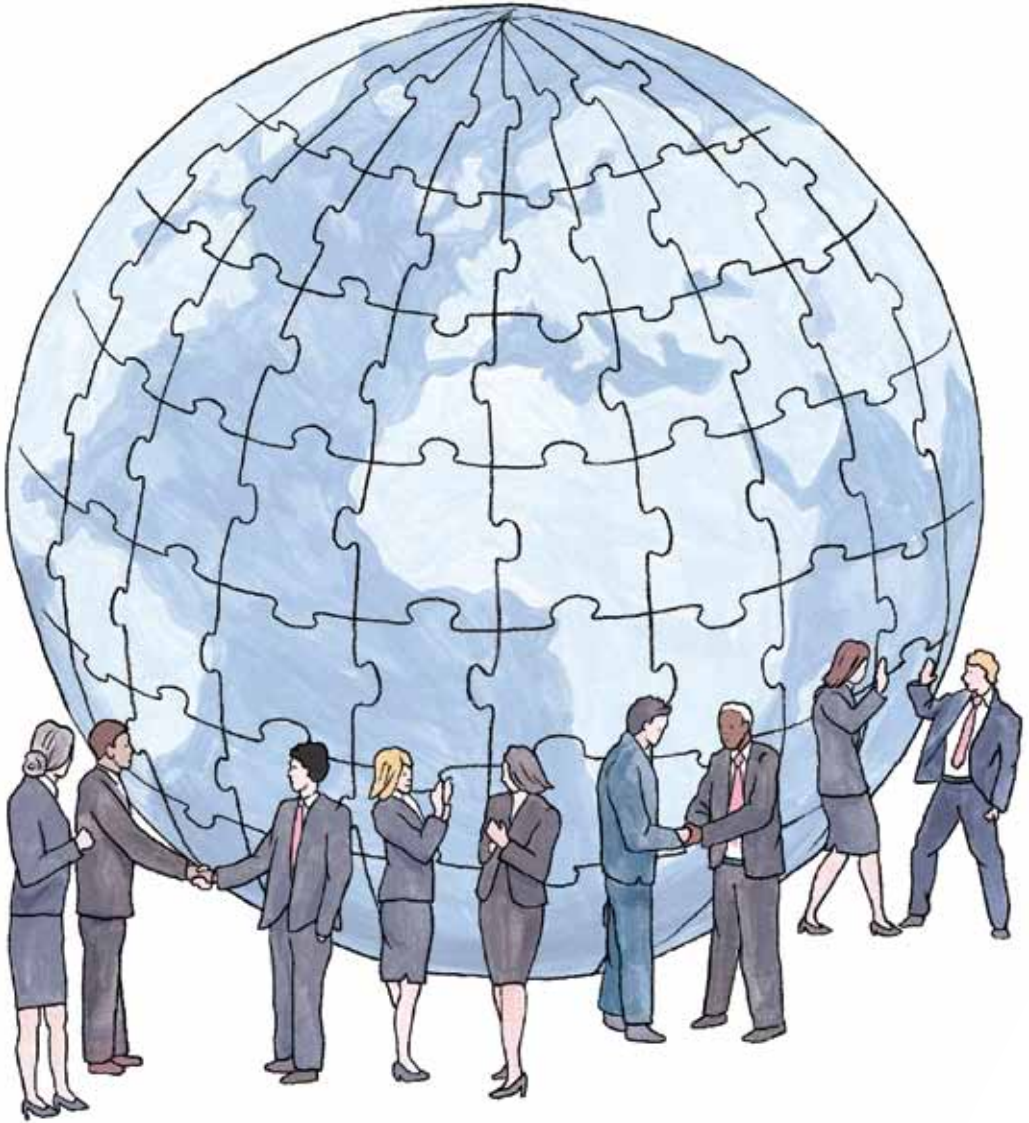
1: [hbr.org/2016/01/collaborative-overload](http://hbr.org/2016/01/collaborative-overload)

2: [radicati.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/](http://radicati.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/)

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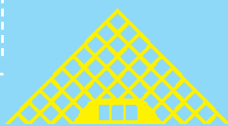
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ON THE ROAD



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