
COLLABORATION

GET ALL STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED EARLY

In most challenging situations facing communities, the best way to achieve a sustainable solution is to get all stakeholders, public and private, engaged early. Avoid the temptation to invite others “on board” late in the process, when they will feel marginalized. Beware of creating a board or committee with too many observers; each stakeholder should have a role, deliverables, and a responsibility to make and manage the consequences of decisions.

ENSURE YOUR PARTNER’S SUCCESS

If you approach all of your organization’s relationships and collaborations with the attitude that your partner needs to be successful for you to be successful... you will be successful.

PAYING LIP SERVICE TO COLLABORATION

A lot of organizations talk about collaboration, but it’s just lip service. Collaboration is not about scheduling a lot of meetings or forcing people to physically interact more. As I’ve explained, to be a successful collaborator, there are several guiding principles that you must embrace, including that you need to be willing to put your partners’ needs ahead of your own so that you can both succeed.

C TO THE 6TH

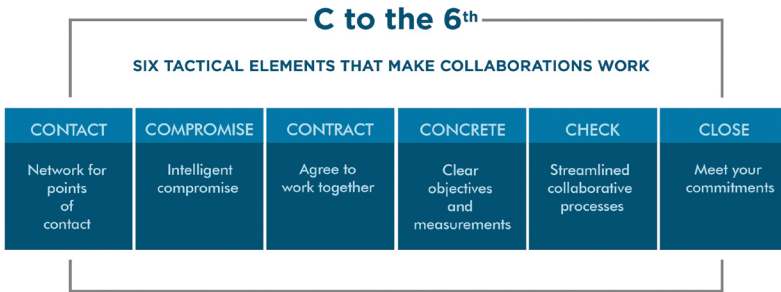
“C to the 6th” focuses on six tactical elements of collaboration that I feel are important to actually make collaborations work:

An excerpt from:

100 Definitive Morganisms

Practical Insights for Improving Your Leadership
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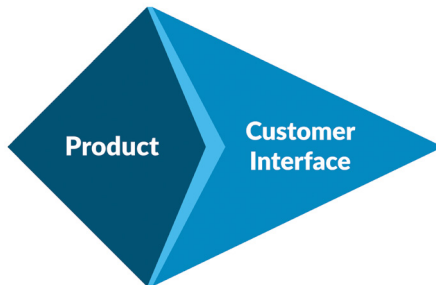
by James C. Morgan



I'd draw your attention to the last three — Concrete, Check, and Close. When I advocate collaboration, I do not mean schedule a lot of meetings. Collaborating often means aligning and combining the efforts of teams that do much of their work separately and that, to be productive, must be allowed to focus on the clear, high-value deliverables needed to make a project succeed.

USE THE “FLYING WEDGE”

For companies, the “flying wedge” is a strategy where you use your existing successful products to drive customer relationships. Make yourself a top provider of service for those products as a competitive advantage, and then use your increasingly close relationships to your customers to give you insights as to what other products they want and need.



A “flying wedge” approach is a useful tool in many business settings. When you provide good service, you become close to customers who will be willing to share their plans and desires, helping you anticipate their future needs. This is vital in high technology, but it works in many industries.

BRING A COLLABORATION MINDSET

It's important to bring a certain mindset to collaboration. We operated under some basic guidelines, both in setting up partnerships and in managing them. I circulated this list among my executive team members.

- Agreements must be perceived as fair by both parties. Goals should be attainable and payoffs realized.
- Long-term relationships have greater payoffs financially and in personal satisfaction than quick reward of advantage.
- I don't expect to make money before my partner makes money.
- I keep my partners apprised of both the success and failures of my efforts.
- I believe my contribution is critical, but that my partners can be successful without me.
- All partnering relationships require open and honest communication, teamwork, and patience.

IN COLLABORATIONS LOOK FOR COMPLEMENTARY STRENGTHS

Collaborations work best when each partner brings a high level of competency but also complementary strengths. In business, those strengths may be qualities like additional products, new markets, strategic thinking, operational experience, or excellent sales skills. Organizations have different kinds of resources, executives have followed different experience paths that may be valuable, and then you want to make sure the personalities can work together.

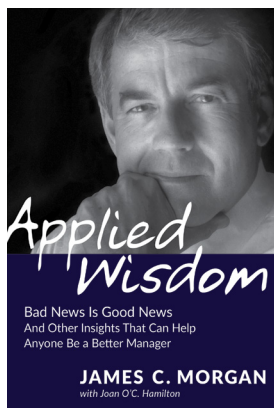
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