



6

SECRET BENEFITS OF COLLABORATION



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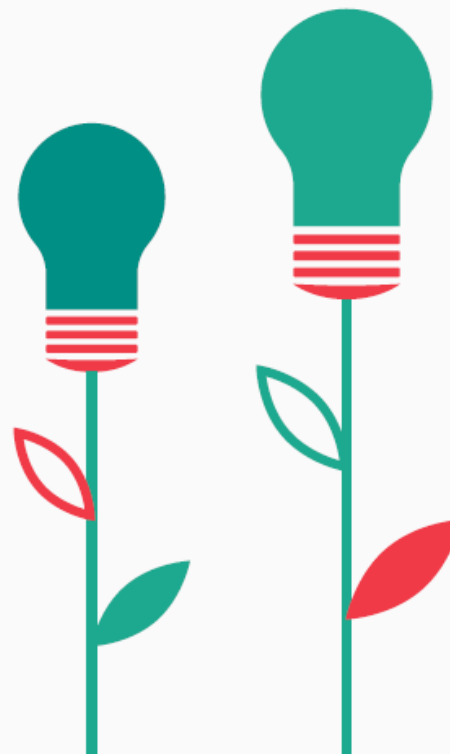
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Collaborative initiatives between organizations develop for any number of reasons, but are often limited to a single project or purpose.




Benefits of collaboration, however, can be considerably greater, and need not be unnecessarily limited.

Here's a glimpse at six "secret" benefits of collaboration.



1. 1+1=3

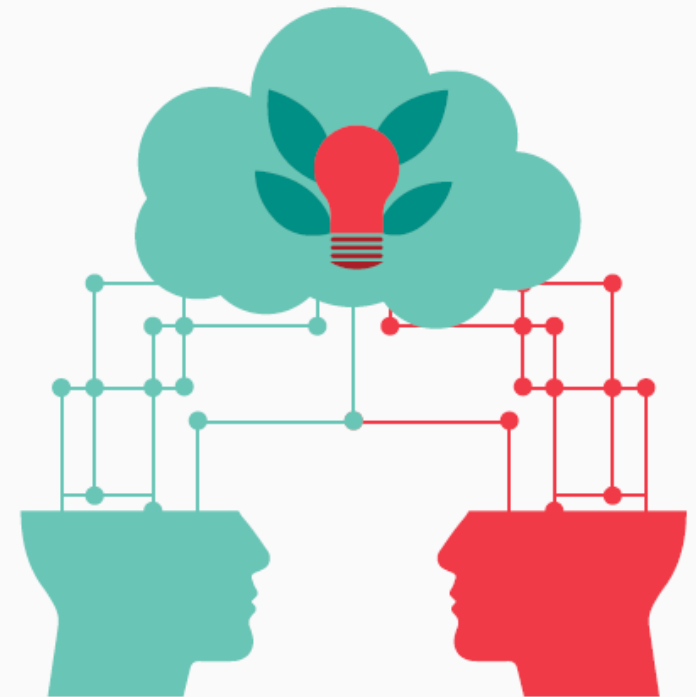
When people from different organizations - who would not otherwise find themselves in the same room at the same time - are directed to work together on a project, the whole can be significantly greater than the sum of its parts.



By trading ideas, exchanging concepts, talking proposals out, and revising on the fly, there can be a spark of a new idea, a new direction or new concept revealed, or an innovative approach hammered out.

“Many ideas grow better when transplanted into another mind than the one where they sprang up.”

-Oliver Wendell Holmes



The result of collaboration could be two organizations forging an unforeseen and potentially more effective, productive or lucrative path forward.

2. Gut Replaces Rut

Collaboration can be a breath of fresh air, for an organization and employees. Often, organizations fall into predictable patterns, where employees are not challenged to be innovative or creative – the internal system is satisfied with predictability.



Collaboration on a specific project – when individuals from two organizations are integrated to develop approaches or solutions outside their usual sphere of work – can get synapses firing in a new way.



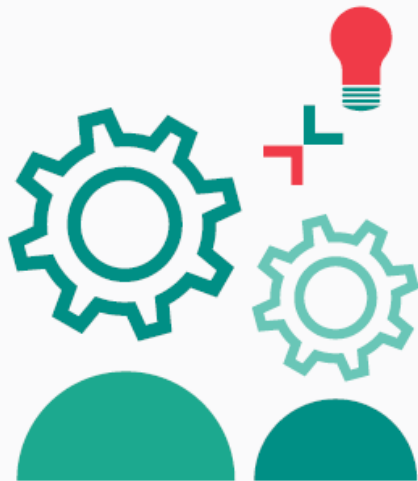
Feeling empowered, employees may emerge from the rut of “same old, same old,” and trust their gut in suggesting new ways to achieve objectives.



The benefits may accrue well beyond the collaborative project – back to each of the organizations and the work employees do for other clients and customers.

3. Discovery Channel

While two organizations may come together to advance a specific project, their work together may lead either or both of them down an entirely unexpected path.



By working together, they may discover common interests that they had been unaware of, which can present additional opportunities to collaborate, or completely new and distinct business possibilities for the organizations individually.

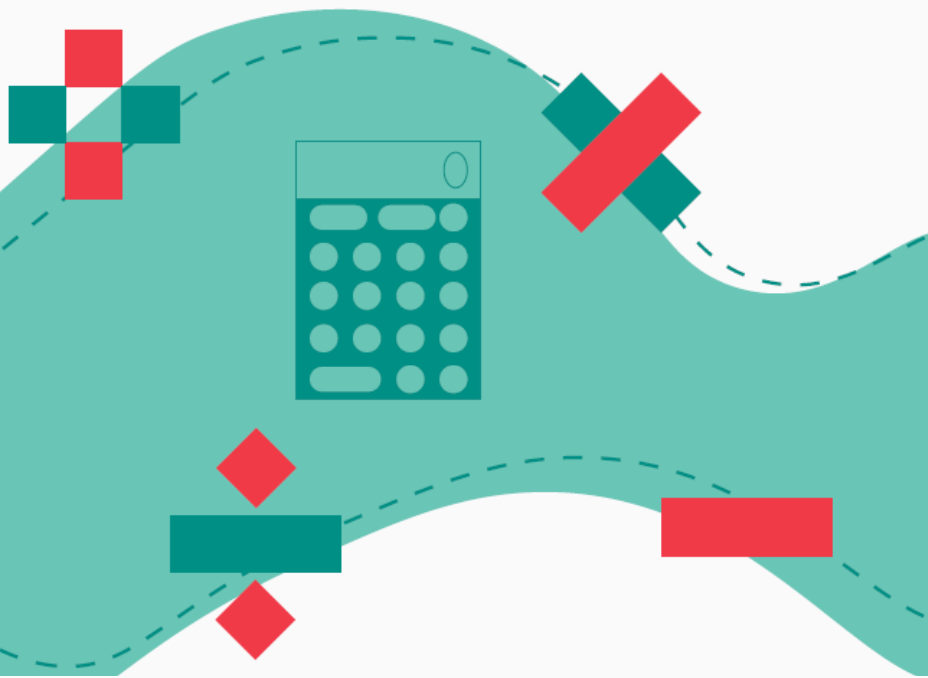
They may discover organizational abilities in specific aspects of their field they had been unaware of or underestimated previously, which can suggest additional business opportunities.

And they may discover previously hidden talents in employees that can be put to good use on other projects or programs in the organization's portfolio.

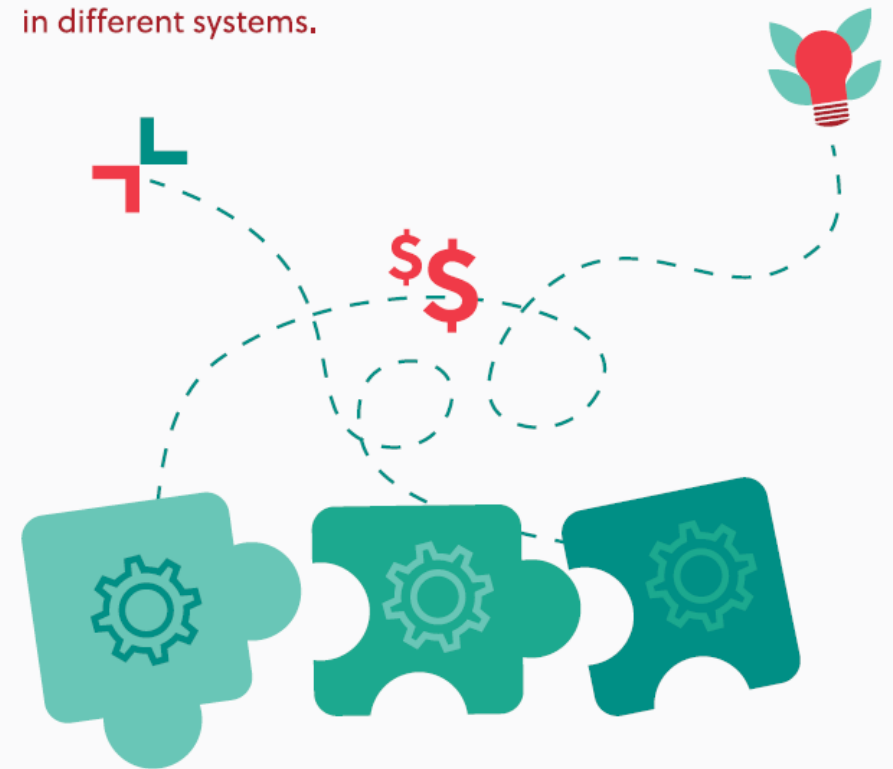


4. New Math

From grade school to business school, we are always admonished to “do the math.” But as individuals and organizations, we tend to fall into patterns – from balancing our checkbooks (or not) to accounting for client hours – that may not be the most efficient and cost-effective way of proceeding. Often, however, longstanding habits are hard to break.



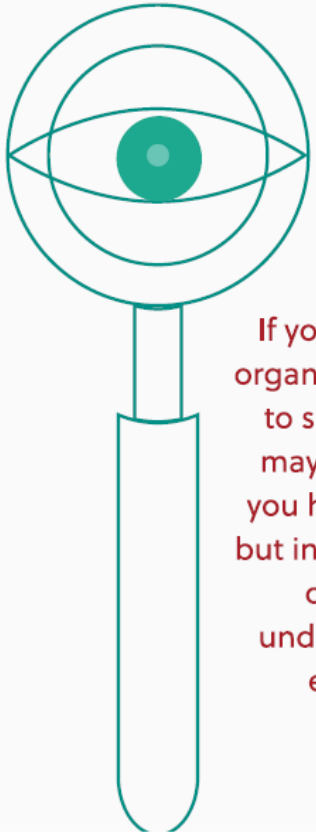
When two organizations collaborate, they often come to the project with different approaches or grounded in different systems.



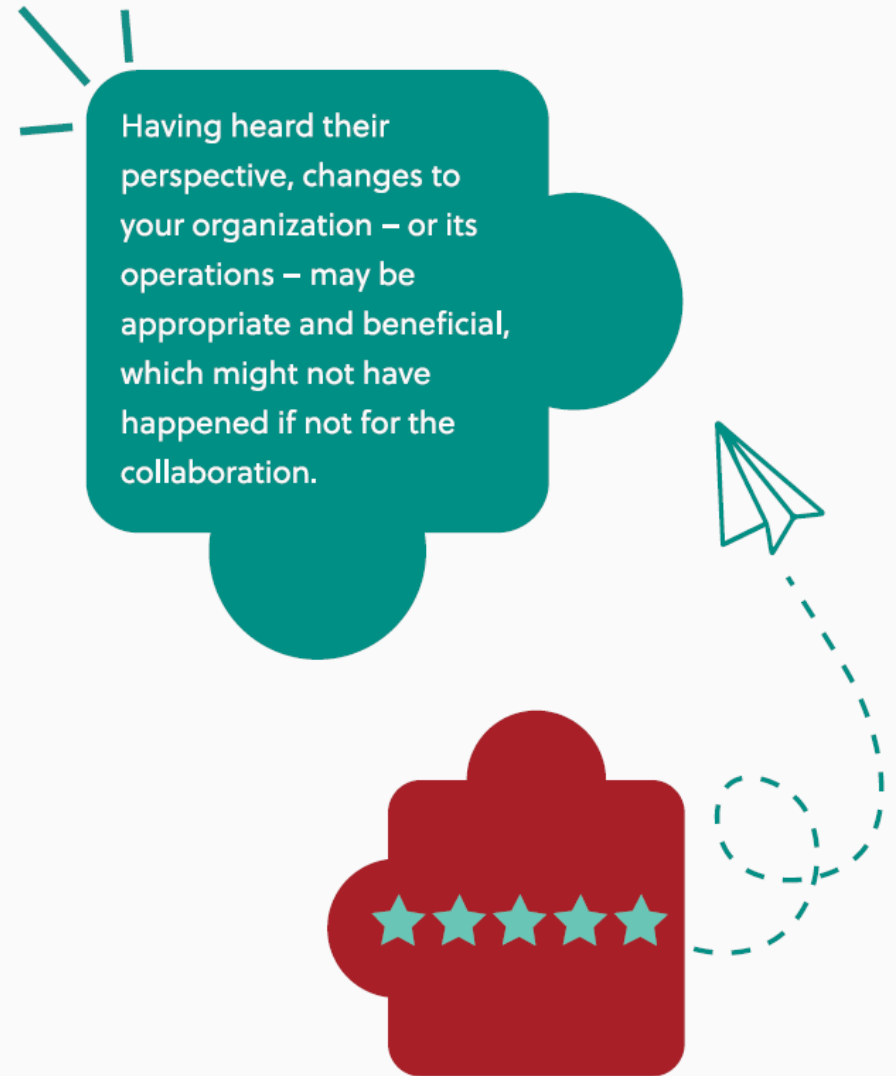
Having to forge a compromise, of necessity, can lead to the revelation that there is a different – and perhaps better - way of handling financial matters that can provide far-reaching benefits to an organization.

5. Different Eyes

Providing another organization the opportunity to get "up close and personal" with your organization as a collaborative initiative runs its course can provide an opportunity to see your organization through their eyes.



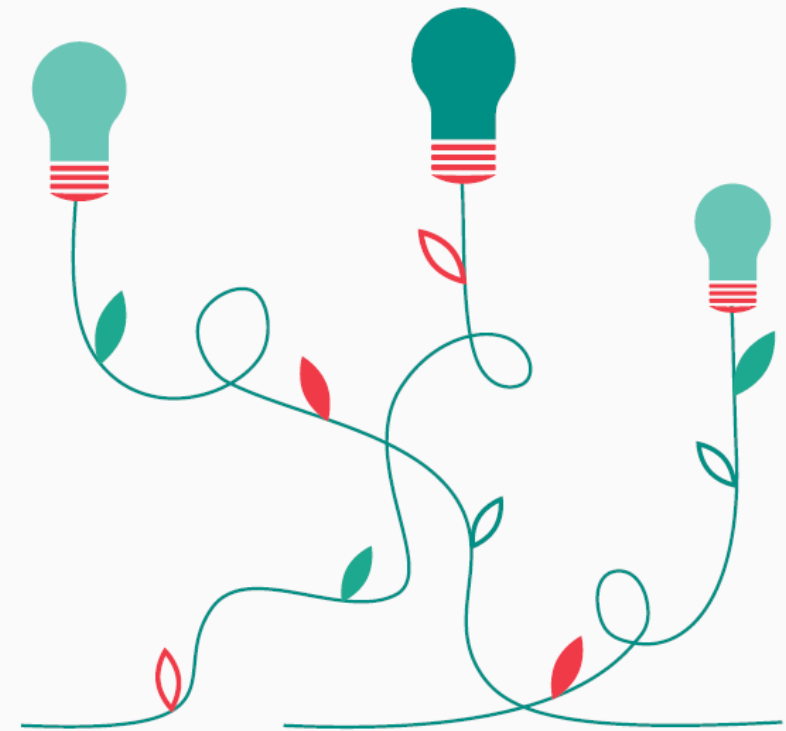
If you ask, your collaborating organization will likely be happy to share their opinion. They may see you differently than you had hoped or anticipated, but in a world where perception often becomes reality, understanding what is in the eye of the beholder is absolutely critical.



6. Hidden in Plain Sight

The process of collaboration itself - figuring out a way to productively work closely with another organization to meet a specific objective - can reveal to an organization an expertise or ability it did not know it possessed.

You may also discover that your organization thrives when collaborating, which may suggest that you pursue additional opportunities to collaborate with other firms.

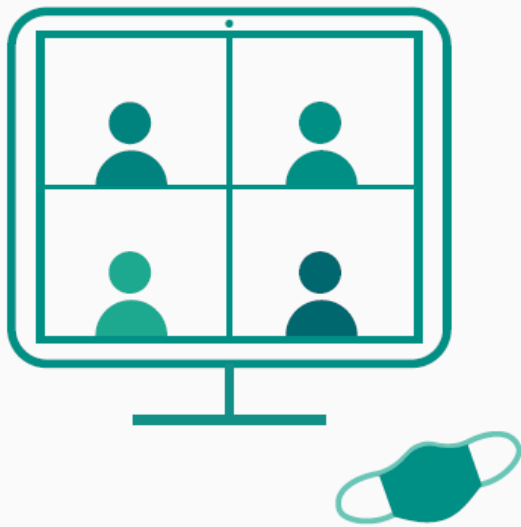


The old adage "one good turn deserves another" may apply - which may mean new chances for your organization to grow in reputation, in stature, in the delivery of services, in employee morale, and on the bottom line.



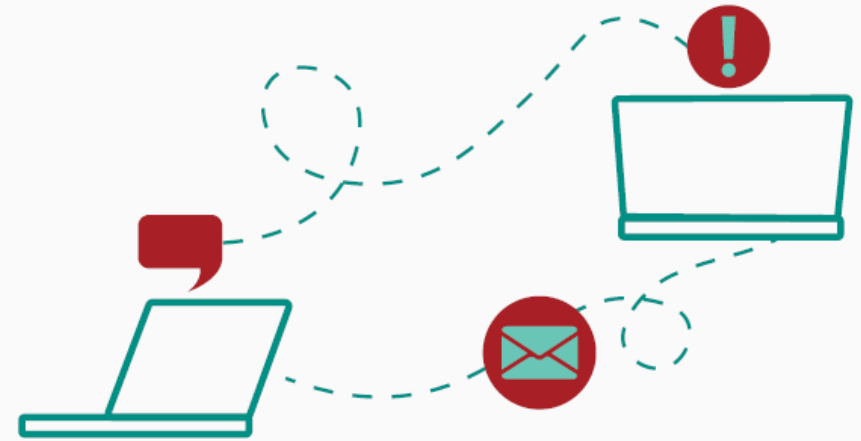
Learn by Doing

Even as daily routines have been turned inside out and upside down, we have discovered there can be silver linings to the dark cloud that has been the past year plus.



We are better able evaluate past practices with fresh eyes, because we are seeing them – quite literally – from a different vantage point. In many instances, that has been accompanied by a reinvigorated appreciation for the value and intensity of collaboration.

Collaboration with colleagues is now of necessity more distant – and more closely resembles what used to be commonplace in collaboration with people from partner organizations.



It can require more effort (or technical prowess) to accomplish objectives when everyone isn't just down the hall from one another. But it can work, and there are benefits (see previous secrets) as well as hurdles. Hold that thought for the post-COVID era.



"Organizations that embrace collaboration," someone once observed, "are poised to accomplish great things."

Now more than ever.

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