



# CUTTINGS...

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Compiled and edited by Geof Cox

Welcome to 2019 and the continuing chaos in the UK. We have daily reinforcement of the learning that competitive negotiation and compromise leads to lose:lose and both parties being equally unhappy. Despite all of the research, books and training in collaborative, win:win negotiation approaches, politicians don't seem sign up to it.

So, a couple of timely articles: PwC's blog *strategy&* points out that collaboration is only one of several options when you encounter people that you disagree with, but is the only one that delivers the possibility of new ideas. In the following article, the phenomenon of creating an "accidental adversary" through pursuing local rather than collaborative targets is discussed. And finally a plea for dialogue during change.

Enjoy...

*Geof Cox*

## Conflict and Collaboration

Adam Kahane's most recent book is titled *Collaborating with the Enemy*. What he is at pains to point out though is that this does not mean treason or consorting with the devil. What he focuses on is the tension that is inherent and central to working with people you don't agree with or like or trust — not something that occurs only in extreme cases. Collaborating in this context meaning "to work jointly with" rather than "to betray."

Some of our most important and difficult challenges are when we need to work with people whose perspectives and positions are so very different from ours that it causes us to worry that it may require us to betray what matters most to us. We certainly will not be able to work only with people we agree with, but equally compromise or collaborating is not the only option for situations that are perceived to be unsatisfactory, unsustainable, or unfair.

There are three other options to collaboration:

- Force the situation to be the way you think it should be, ignoring, circumventing, or defeating those who think differently to get compliance.
- Try to adapt to the situation as it is — grin and bear it
- Live with the situation because we can't change it and it's not worth quitting over. Exit or escape from the situation by leaving and working somewhere else - different boss or company.

### In this edition

**Conflict and Collaboration** - you have other options when working with conflict but only collaborating delivers innovation.

**Accidental adversaries** - when short term gain gets in the way of long term collaboration, both parties can suffer losses.

**The dialogue of change** - communication is often poor during times of change. Dialogue may be an answer

Plus details of **Public Courses, Book Sales,** and **Snippets** to further provoke your thinking and reflection

## Snippets

*A collection of thought provokers and quotations...*

"85% of your success is due to your personality and your ability to communicate, negotiate and lead. Only 15% of your success is attributable to technical knowledge."

*Carnegie Institute of Technology*

"A follower with a vision is a leader. A leader without vision is a follower."

*Simon Sinek*

"We all have two lives. The second one starts when we realise we only have one."

*Tom Hiddleston*

"Vulnerability is not winning or losing; it's having the courage to show up and be seen when we have no control over the outcome."

*Brene Brown*

Often one or several of these approaches can work. For most people, collaborating is what they choose to do only once they've concluded that forcing, adapting, or exiting will not get them where they want to be.

If you do choose to try to collaborate, though, don't assume that compromise and betrayal are inevitable outcomes. Collaboration doesn't mean that either you prevail and get what you want, or your opponent does, or both of you sacrifice and meet somewhere in the middle. Collaboration means understanding more of the situation so you can create new options that are better than the ones you'd been able to imagine or implement separately. As a character in Rent, Jonathan Larson's musical, says, "The opposite of war isn't peace, it's creation!"

There is no magic formula to resolving conflict. Sometimes people succeed and sometimes they don't; sometimes the ways of working we find last and sometimes they don't. Often collaborating is unstable and we also employ forcing, adapting, and exiting. But attempts at collaboration will always produce new ideas, relationships, and possibilities, and these are always valuable. As Winston Churchill said "Jaw, jaw is better than war, war."

## USEFUL LINKS

[Click here](#) to read the original blog post in *strategy&* from PwC.

**New Directions** offer workshops and consultancy on negotiation and collaborative decision making processes. For more information on workshops [Click here](#) or on our consultancy offers [Click here](#)

The x-factor of great leadership is not personality, it's humility."

*Jim Collins*

"Leadership is not being in charge. Leadership is about taking care of those in your charge"

*Simon Sinek*

"The last 10% it takes to launch something takes as much energy as the first 90%."

*Rob Kalin*

"More men have become great through practice than by nature."

*Democritus*

"If you say your job is something 'you don't plan to do forever', then why are you doing it now?"

*Simon Sinek*

## Accidental Adversaries

The phenomenon of "accidental adversaries" was first described by systems thinker Jennifer Kemeny in an article that appeared in Peter M. Senge's *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*. It is a pattern of behavioural interaction that can cause well-intentioned people to make short term choices that undermine their longer term collaborative goals. This phenomenon is growing more common as organisations become more global, virtual, and complex. In these situations it takes more effort for teams to stay in sync and to act as one company. It becomes all the more difficult to detect the unintended negative side effects of their actions — and makes it all the easier to default to distrust when the interactions are at the speed and the impersonal mode of digital communications.

Recognising this, Elizabeth Doty, a former fellow of Harvard University's Center for Ethics, looks at how to keep these 'accidental adversaries' working as allies in a recent article.

A typical example is where two sales managers see the opportunity to collaborate on sharing leads in order to drive even larger deals on a regional basis. However, when local targets come under pressure, one manager is more likely to focus on local deals and forget to share the leads, making the other manager focus more on local deals as the

## The Dialogue of Change

Julie Hodges from Durham University Business School highlights an approach to effective communication to employ when in a change initiative. Despite good communication being central to effective change in all of the research evidence and in all of the literature, it is often ignored, especially at the start of a change initiative, or it is done badly and makes things worse.

The first thing most people know about a potential change is in rumour and casual conversation. The first question that typically arises is "How will this change affect me?" Yet answers to this question often suggest delay "nothing is fixed yet" or confusion "I don't know anything either" or even denial "this is only a rumour". All of which raise tension and concern.

referrals dry up. The increased focus on local, short term gains then means that both parties achieve lower results as they both miss out on the lucrative referrals. With each manager wrestling with how to pursue their own success, their strategy often unwittingly undermines their partner. Even if one partner wins and the other loses, the company results are sub-optimised, regardless of how often senior leaders explain that “we are all in the same boat.”

The key to turning accidental adversaries back into allies is to increase awareness of hidden connections — both the negative ways people’s actions can undermine others, and the positive ways that collaboration can pay off. Ask your colleagues: How do our actions impact those around us? What would you like us to understand about how we make your work easier or more difficult? If we were to collaborate, how might we both benefit? For their part, senior leaders can avoid managing blindly to targets and elevate the importance of shared goals. In practice, doing so means taking a more systemic perspective and digging into root causes and interdependencies.

Turning accidental adversaries into allies requires effort and tough conversations. But the alternative is continued deterioration.

### USEFUL LINKS

[Click here](#) to read the full article from Strategy+Business

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And when there is an announcement of a change, many companies are fond of sending a presentation by email or posting notices on the company intranet. Few people read these and even less are motivated by them. This is not communication; it is abdication to technology.

Hodges promotes dialogue - a process that has two components to it: listening and voicing. Starting early with a planned strategy for all managers to engage with all employees before the rumours start. Then a constant dialogue with employees on the impact at individual and organisational level at a space that is appropriate to the needs on both sides. With open dialogue you have a base for effective change communication.

### USEFUL LINKS

[Click here](#) to see the article from HRZone

**New Directions** change management expertise: for workshops [Click here](#) for consultancy [Click here](#)

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**Kuala Lumpur** [21-24 October](#)

### USEFUL LINKS

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**Bundle both titles** for **£15.00**

Price includes p&p in the UK, for deliveries outside the UK add £1.00.

## Cuttings

**Cuttings** is a bi-monthly collection of ideas and comments published elsewhere which have attracted my attention over the past couple of months. It is designed for readers who are interested in individual, organisation and management development and is free. It has been published continuously for more than 20 years by *New Directions*, an international network of consultants and trainers who work together to learn, research, design and provide consulting and training in individual, management, and organisation development.

### USEFUL LINKS

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### Contact details

[Click here to go to the secure \*Online Shop\*.](#)

T: +44 (0)117 968 1451  
M: +44 (0)7753 626284  
Skype: GeofCox.NewDirections  
E: geofcox@newdirections.uk.com  
P: 26a Downleaze, Bristol BS9 1LZ

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