

NEWS RELEASE
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Collaborative leader? - so you want to be an oxymoron

Today every aspiring business executive has to think of himself as an oxymoron - a collaborative leader. That's according to leading member organisation the Global Business Partnership Alliance (GBPA) in its *Discovery* report: **Being collaborative**.

GBPA's latest *Discovery* explores the drivers and inhibitors of collaboration for leaders, teams and individuals. And from this research, GBPA has launched practical online tools to enable its members to assess their 'collaborativeness'.

GBPA chairman Philip Anderson explains: "Traditionally business leadership has been about individual decisiveness, clarity of vision, clear command of a situation - collaboration was viewed as a possible weakness, involving too many people and too much time.

"Today the tables have turned. The pressure and pace of globalisation means the ability to build, orchestrate and sustain networks of fruitful collaboration is emerging as a critical competence for the modern leader."

According to GBPA everyone can be collaborative. There is no 'non-collaborative' personality type. 'Collaborativeness' as an individual is a learned rather than instinctive behaviour.

However, in its report GBPA states that certain things need to be in place for collaboration to actually take place - there has to be a need or desire, a firm set of beliefs, the skills and capacity and the right environment. Anderson states: “GBPA’s online tools assess collaboration against these requirements, and we believe this will be invaluable not just for leaders, but for individuals and teams, too.”

Leaders who aspire to be more collaborative can no longer announce “This is where we are going, follow me”, says GBPA. A collaborative leader seeks to engage participants in establishing the direction and vision, and in developing the solutions or means to get there. This ability to ‘hold the vision and set direction’ is one of five key collaborative leader attributes identified by GBPA in its research. Equally important are: empowering the team, creating freedom within a framework, acting as a role model, and building relationships.

“The very act of climbing the corporate ladder can seem opposed to collaboration”, states Anderson. “It’s often a competitive game, demanding technical and political skills; a game in which self promotion is a major driver. Despite this, GBPA believes that people who are successful at climbing the corporate ladder can also be good at collaboration - even though ‘collaborative leader’ appears to be a contradiction in terms.”

Being collaborative, as with all GBPA *Discovery* work, provides members with a practical means to assess and improve their ability to collaborate with customers and suppliers, or even internally.

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

About: 'Being collaborative - the essential capability for success in today's business environment'

Being collaborative is one of a series of *Discovery* projects from GBPA. This report, with its online tools, provides individuals, teams and leaders with an insight into their own propensity to collaborate. The **Being collaborative** report is available to members through GBPA www.gbpalliance.com and the Collaborative Tools are available online www.gbpalliance.com/collaborative-tools

About: GBPA (Global Business Partnership Alliance)

GBPA's mission is to enable organisations to transform their capacity for effective collaboration and business partnering.

Through accessing GBPA's exclusive research-based *Discovery* programme and advisory services, and participating in GBPA facilitated events, senior executives access best practice, independent advice and practical solutions to address their internal collaboration and business partnering challenges.

By developing more effective internal and external business relationships, GBPA enables participating organisations to discover ways to innovate, manage risks, reduce costs and improve profitability.

For further information contact:

Philip Anderson
GBPA Chairman
+ 44 (0)1276 856660
panderson@gbpalliance.com

Philippa Baines
GBPA Communications Manager
+ 44 (0)7768 955238
pbaines@gbpalliance.com

Global Business Partnership Alliance
35 New Broad Street
London EC2M 1NH
+44 (0)20 194 8111
www.gbpalliance.com