

Questions and Answers with Author Evan Rosen about *The Bounty Effect: 7 Steps to The Culture of Collaboration*®

Why did you write *The Bounty Effect*?

I wrote *The Bounty Effect* as the second book in a series about collaboration. My previous book, *The Culture of Collaboration*®, begins the conversation about how organizational culture is critical to collaboration. While working with organizations to collaborate, I found that the same barriers kept manifesting themselves across multiple industries and sectors. These barriers involve the structure of organizations. So I researched how organizational structures developed. What I discovered is that most organizations—from large corporations and small businesses to universities and government agencies—still use structures developed during the Industrial Age when command-and-control defined the culture. These obsolete structures are holding back collaboration in the Information Age even though many organizations now have a desire to collaborate. Adopting collaborative culture throughout an organization requires changing the structure. And I wrote *The Bounty Effect* to guide organizations in redesigning and rebuilding these antiquated structures so that they can collaborate.

Why do you call the book *The Bounty Effect*?

The book gets its name from the H.M.S Bounty. In school, you may have read the novel *Mutiny on the Bounty*. Well, the novel is based on a true story. The Bounty sailed from England in 1787 with Captain William Bligh as the leader of the ship. Captain Bligh used a well-worn management technique: command-and-control. Some 13-Hundred miles west of Tahiti, a mutiny occurred. The mutineers put Captain Bligh and his loyalists into the Bounty's launch, a small boat. With minimal food, water and supplies, their fate was almost certainly death at sea.

These were exigent circumstances, which are those that demand action and change. And that's exactly what happened. Bligh became a collaborative leader and changed the structure and the culture of his organization. With his crew's buy-in, Bligh set rations for most meals and consumed the same rations as his crew, sometimes less. Today most organizations face all sorts of exigent circumstances—everything from disruptive market forces and natural disasters to terrorist attacks and global downturns. These exigent circumstances make legacy organizational structures irrelevant and compel the redesigning of organizations to advance collaboration. This is The Bounty Effect.

What are some obsolete organizational structures that impede collaboration?

The Industrial Age was command-and-control. The Information Age is collaboration. Yet Industrial Age structures render collaboration dead on arrival in the Information Age. Most organizations are still using traditional organization charts which were developed in the mid-19th Century as railroads grew. These org charts create silos preventing people from interacting and collaborating. In *The Bounty Effect*, I show how to replace the traditional org chart. Another antiquated element of organizational structures is the annual performance review, which often negatively reinforces team members and creates internal competition which impedes collaboration. The book shows how to replace performance reviews with a more collaborative approach. Another remnant of command-and-control organizational structure is headquarters. The notion of headquarters raises the status of anybody who works at that location and diminishes the roles of anybody who works elsewhere. Now decision makers are distributed across multiple regions, and they're often mobile. Headquarters is an anachronism.

Why does your book take aim at meetings?

The traditional meeting is a remnant of command-and-control organizational structures and the Industrial Age. The physical meeting environment often discourages collaboration. Typically, one person—usually the person with the biggest title—sets the agenda and presides over the meeting. And too often everybody else plays to this person and agrees with the meeting runner. In *The Bounty Effect*, I show how to replace traditional meetings with an infinitely more collaborative approach.

What about the notion that introverts can accomplish more than collaborators?

Silence, simplicity and meditation are important and fabulous ways for us all to develop ourselves and maintain a healthful lifestyle. And we need to do more of it particularly in this era of information overload. Some activities like reading a book or learning to play the piano by their nature often involve solitude.

But in the business environment today, it's all about strategy and execution neither of which are solo endeavors, because business today is too complex. No matter how much silence, simplicity and meditation we may want to do, a lone wolf cannot execute. Execution requires the synergy and shared ideas of people collaborating.

The Bounty Effect is about making sure the structure allows collaboration to happen.

And let's make sure we understand what collaboration is. My definition is working together to create value. And in *The Bounty Effect*, I discuss common myths about collaboration. And one of these myths is that collaboration is about relinquishing individual thought. Nothing is further from reality. Collaboration inspires people to think clearly and independently, share their thoughts, constructively confront one another,

and through synergy develop ideas, produce products and service and create greater value. Companies and organizations are facing challenges far too complex for us to go off in corners and get stuck in silos and go it alone in the workplace.

What is the most important process change that organizations can implement in adopting a collaborative structure?

It's the recognition and reward system. Many organizations are trying to adopt more collaborative cultures, but their recognition and reward systems reinforce command-and-control culture and behavior. It's a key manifestation of how obsolete organizational structures impede collaboration. Changing the recognition and reward system to incent collaborative behavior is essential to creating collaborative value.

Why do you include a chapter called Planet about sustainability in a book about collaboration?

Sustainability and collaboration are inextricably intertwined. Consider the interlocking ecosystems impacting every organization. Team members depend on the organization, and the organization depends on team members to survive and thrive. The organization is also interdependent with its customers and business partners. And this ecosystem, in turn, depends on the vitality of communities in which the company and its partners do business. And communities depend on the planet. How can we as organizations evolve and embrace working together to create value if our actions harm the planet? We can't.