Questions and Answers: Evan Rosen
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What has changed since you wrote the first edition of *The Culture of Collaboration*?
When the first edition appeared, there was barely a consciousness for collaborative work styles and culture. Most companies embraced command and control as standard operating procedure. Now there's a consciousness, but there's a big gap between a consciousness for collaboration and The Culture of Collaboration. Bridging this gap requires principles, practices and processes…not just a desire for a collaborative culture.

Also, collaboration has become a buzz word, and it means different things to different people. Some people think using social media is collaboration. Others think virtual meetings are collaboration My definition of collaboration is "working together to create value while sharing virtual or physical space." And it's easy to use social media or participate in a virtual meeting and create no value whatsoever. It takes collaborative principles, practices and processes to create value.

Have we as a society become more collaborative since you wrote the first edition of *The Culture of Collaboration*?
In many ways, we've become less collaborative. We're still recovering from COVID's impact on culture and collaboration. Command and control is alive and well. It just manifests differently. Many organizations have become less hierarchical but more scheduled. And scheduled meetings and interactions are a form of control. In the early 2000s, most people answered their phones no matter who was calling. These were typically one-dimensional voice calls, but we could reach one another—no appointment necessary. Now we have all these collaborative tools, but few people spontaneously connect and jump into a collaborative session. This lack of spontaneity inhibits collaboration and compromises value.

How did you expand the book?
The book includes two new chapters, one on trust and security and the other on collaborative robotics. I also revisited some of the companies that I wrote about in the first edition including Toyota, Boeing, Industrial Light & Magic, and Mayo Clinic. These were organizations that had highly-collaborative pockets which were early adopters of collaborative work styles and culture. As I began research for the new edition, I was interested in examining how collaboration had evolved

over more than a decade in these organizations. I did a deeper dive with Boeing and interviewed numerous engineering leaders and program leaders on the original 787 and 777X programs. Despite Boeing's stumbles over the years, the 787 program remains a significant model for global collaboration with business partners on a global scale. What I learned is that The Culture of Collaboration is dynamic. Organizations may take a step forward, take a step or two back, then perhaps leap a few steps forward. It takes constant focus on collaborative principles, practices and processes even after collaborative culture has begun to take hold.

The new edition has a slightly different subtitle: Deserializing Time, Talent and Tools to Create Value in the Local and Global Economy.
The new words are *deserializing* and *local*. Why the change?
Deserialization and collaboration are inextricably linked. Deserialization means producing in parallel rather than in sequence and involves removing steps and stages from product and service development. Deserialization is also about removing steps from interacting. The word *local* reinforces the necessity of creating value through collaboration both in the local and global economy.

Could you explain deserialization?
Serial work is I do my part and pass the work product to you. You do your part and pass it on to somebody else. Serial interaction is I message you for your input or approval. You message somebody else. Deserialization in the semiconductor industry means leapfrogging by designing multiple generations of products simultaneously rather than sequentially. In the visual effects industry, deserialization means moving post-production to pre-production by designing the effects concurrently with the production. That's product and service development. Deserialization of interaction means we can all hash it out together on the fly. Deserialization creates collaborative value by letting people make better, faster decisions and by enhancing product and service development.

How does globalization tie in with *The Culture of Collaboration*?
Global has become a dirty word, but there's good and bad globalization. The bad kind is when companies embrace globalization to outsource jobs, manufacture where labor is cheap and ship finished products across the globe. In contrast, The Culture of Collaboration is about sustainable globalization. Partnering companies develop, produce, deliver and support products and services regardless of geography. They work in concert and tap diverse talent from different countries and cultures. This creates infinitely more value than exploiting cheap labor.

Is the challenge greater now collaborating remotely or in person?
When I wrote the first edition, collaboration tools were just taking hold…and I wrote that the challenge was collaborating as effectively at a distance as we do in the same room. I also wrote that tomorrow the challenge would become the reverse as tools would become more robust and we would become more comfortable with remote collaboration. Then COVID-19 happened, and same-room collaboration collapsed. COVID revolutionized the way we meet but not necessarily how we work. Post-COVID, the challenge is collaborating effectively in the same room…and also collaborating at a distance in that COVID work styles were more about scheduled virtual meetings than real-time collaboration.

Are most organizations collaborative?
Most companies say they collaborate, but few collaborate effectively. Effective collaboration involves deserialization. There are three levels of collaborative organizations: highly-collaborative, evolving, and non-collaborative. The biggest group is evolving. Companies in this group want to collaborate and have pockets of collaborators, but the challenge is instilling The Culture of Collaboration throughout the organization.

What was the inspiration for the first edition of *The Culture of Collaboration*?
Back in 1999, BMW invited me to its design center in Munich. The company was preparing to launch the X5 Sports Activity Vehicle. The X5 was the first BMW vehicle produced through telecooperation, which BMW defined as technology-supported collaboration and communication allowing globally-distributed teams to design and produce a product. The automaker realized at the time that the shift went well beyond tools and systems. Telecooperation would change the nature of work and the culture of BMW's organization. BMW's experience was an early manifestation of The Culture of Collaboration.

Is there a role for competition in a collaborative culture?
Companies must compete. But there's a difference between internal and external competition. Competing in the marketplace is essential. But internal competition is insidious, breeds fear and suspicion and drains value out of a company. When we pit people against each other, we squander resources and lose focus. The road is littered with examples of companies that failed or stumbled, because of internal competition, command and control and a star-oriented culture which incidentally can also lead to cutting corners. Enron is one example, and Enron is defunct. General Electric, which was once the most valuable company in the United States, stumbled in part because of internal competition and star culture.

Are you collaborative?
I spent my early career in television news, which at its best is a highly-collaborative pursuit. Photojournalists, reporters, producers, assignment editors

jointly create value, often in real time. So reporting for television for me was collaborative. There's a perception that writing a book means you go off into a corner and work by yourself. The reality is that the best writing involves input and ideas from editors, interviewees, book designers, jacket designers, web team, marketing and publicity people. If you wait until you've written a draft to get input, it's too late. For this book, I visited companies to see firsthand how people collaborate and spent hundreds of hours interviewing and engaging people from individual contributors to C-level leaders.