

## Collaborative Advantage: How Organizations Win by Working Together

*By Elizabeth Lank*

Palgrave Macmillan: ISBN 1403993459

**Collaborative working.** Your plumber does it with aplomb. Your builder has built his business doing it. If you've ever admired the tradesman's ability to tap into a network of skills and expertise to form mutually profitable teams, here's a guide to both the strategic and practical aspects of collaborative working.

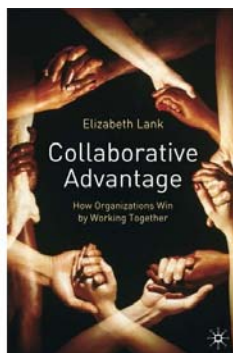
We can readily accept that that  $1+1=3$ , in that each party in collaboration achieves more than it ever could by working alone, but Elizabeth Lank's tenet is that the benefits extend much further: by collaborating, organisations can create a unique competitive advantage that is difficult for others to replicate. Read the book and you'll be convinced.

Virtually any organisation can benefit from collaborative working. So the case studies are wide-ranging and international, demonstrating the value of collaborative working in sectors as diverse as governmental and non-governmental organisations, academia, and niche groups such as the Scottish whisky industry, as well as large corporates.

What makes 'Collaborative Advantage' so valuable is that it includes a raft of techniques and tips to put the theory into practice – and ensure that all collaborators walk away from the table smiling. The author's own experience shows: there are checklists of key activities, sample SWOT analyses, inter-organisational/inter-personal considerations, typical scenarios, outlines of the roles of significant players, and even email templates. In this, 'Collaborative Advantage' amply fulfils the author's goal of addressing the practical 'what do we do on Monday morning?' challenges.

Personally, I began reading with an eye to advising my clients. Now I'm looking much closer to home to see how I could adopt the principles within my own business – evidence of the book's impact.

Collaborative working anyone?



This book review was written by Margaret Cain of M Squared Corporate Communications. For more information on how Margaret can help you to promote your business, please call 0118 969 9389 or visit [www.m2cc.co.uk](http://www.m2cc.co.uk).