Integrated Collaboration

Four Key Questions

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INTEGRATED COLLABORATION is one of the "Four Pillars" or Best Practices proven to produce extraordinary results. They're distilled from decades of researching the greatest companies on the planet.

The "Four Pillars" are:
- **A One-Page Strategic Plan**
- **Real-Time KPIs**
- **Integrated Meetings**
- **Integrated Collaboration**

If a company or organization properly implements these, they are on the path to amazing success.

INTRODUCTION

A recent study by McKinsey found that "facilitating group collaboration effectively was essential in every situation" for businesses to advance.

But, today's workplace has become so saturated with a myriad of email, texting, and other tools that collaboration actually begins to break down.

People waste time searching several platforms, asking themselves, "Where did I see that message? Where is that document? Why am I included in this thread?"

If you have a mess already, how do you untangle it? Or, how do you unleash a new tool effectively?

Collaboration in practically any situation can be clarified by reviewing the <u>four questions</u> posed in this guide.

They apply to any combination of tools—and can help you reap the full benefits of your employees' desire to work together.

And for a game-changing solution: see **Integrated Collaboration** at the end.

"Collaboration is a powerful tool for speeding up innovation, because innovation is all about ideas. If you have an idea and I have an idea, then if we're collaborating we can develop the better idea."

— Eric Maskin
*Nobel Laureate &
Harvard Professor*

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Disjointed data in a haphazard collection of collaboration tools

The desire to collaborate in today's workplace is so great that collaboration tools often arrive at your business on their own.

When that happens, even when your employees have the best of intentions, they can't help but implement them in a haphazard manner. Even their best efforts can quickly become a random morass of threads, invitation-only files, apps and platforms. **Tools that were supposed to align teams end up confusing them.** Rather than sharpening accountability, work becomes disjointed and knowledge gets lost in technology silos. Most frustrating, chats that were supposed to capture everyone's input and preserve intellectual property end up losing both.

This frustrates executives and employees alike. "Great people want to do great work," the *Harvard Business Review* writes, "it's highly motivating," adding that when collaboration enables them to do so, their results gather strength. So, how do you get there?

Don't let collaborative tool chaos ruin you chance to harness one of your true avenues to success.

FOUR COLLABORATION QUESTIONS FOR YOU

Question #1: Why Collaborate?

"In modern business, collaboration is next to godliness."

— *The Economist*

This question is about the big picture, because today's employees can't engage until they know what it is. From a leadership perspective, there is a yin and a yang to their desire. You need to address both.

Collaboration creates different perspectives to help ensure your company doesn't overlook possibly better ways of doing things.

First, the yang: Your workforce just endured the worst economic recession in a century. The hardship it caused forever transformed their attitude towards work. One major reason they need to know the big picture is so they can have confidence that your business is viable. The more complete their understanding, the higher their level of confidence. The best way to convey this is with a One Page Strategic Plan, and we provide the best tool in the world to create one.

Now, the yin. Once a person has bought-in to your Strategic Plan, they're primed to contribute at a whole new level. They want to do their job well. They want their company to succeed. And the big picture lets them make their best contribution.

Business leaders can tap into this energy in two ways. First, align tasks and projects with strategy. Draw the connection between the day-to-day and the grand scheme of things. Today's employee finds this enormously satisfying, and it puts their collaboration into the proper context.

Second, as they're executing their tasks and projects, invite employees to think critically and to make suggestions. Collaboration is all about opening up communications and seeking different perspectives.

Question #2: What Will Collaboration Accomplish?

"Great things in business are never done by one person; they're done by a team of people."

— Steve Jobs, *American Entrepreneur*

According to the *Harvard Business Review* study, "the outcomes of smart collaboration are long-term" and valuable. The investment to make it happen is well worth it.

The answer to this question usually seems obvious when people find collaboration tools on their own. They have a presentation due, for example, so they collaborate on the chat tool built into Keynote, or they start a Slides document on Google. In and out. No problem.

That simply won't suffice for modern management. Once your people understand the strategic reason for their collaboration, they'll want to know they're contributing. You need to define how they'll know. The McKinsey study concluded that "fact-based measurements" work best for this purpose, because everyone can agree that an objective measurement isn't subjective and doesn't play favorites.

This makes life easier for managers since it's so clear. Coming up with the metric (often called a Key Performance Indicator), can be a challenge, but the time spent is well worth it. **It frees your managers and their team to collaborate clearly about how make the metric move.** It focuses effort and defines success. Progress is easily tracked. Excellence can be pursued.

And if everyone is collaborating on the same platform, metrics also put you in a po-

Collaboration is social and taps into human nature's deepest desires. When you tap into something that deep and get those forces feeding into your strategic objectives, you and your team become the masters of your success.

sition to take what McKinsey calls a "network view" of your team's activity. You can understand contributions more accurately, which means you can find out what works more quickly. And you can find out how everyone makes their contribution, which can cause a cultural renaissance within your organization.

"A network view often uncovers 'hidden' people whose contribution is far greater than individually focused performance metrics might imply," McKinsey found. "Executives were surprised to learn how much relational value was created by people they hadn't recognized as central contributors and how little by others they had regarded as more influential."

Nothing motivates and unifies a team more than seeing individual contributions accurately acknowledged. When managers go out of their way to highlight the earned merit of everyone, then the team feels that they are being evaluated fairly. "Strategic alignment and accurate fact-based decisions give people confidence in the merit of the system," McKinsey found, "so **collaboration becomes results focused, about how to get there, how to align the path with the why.**"

The psychological impact releases creativity. They get the strategy. They get the objective. They get how they'll know if they succeed. Now they can start thinking about global improvements. **"Collaboration is a powerful tool for speeding up innovation,"** McKinsey found, "because innovation is all about ideas. If you have an idea and I have an idea, then if we're collaborating we can develop the better idea," which is exactly what you want to accomplish.

Question #3: What Should We Learn From Collaboration?

> "If everyone is thinking alike, then somebody isn't thinking."
>
> — General George S. Patton

Besides its obvious benefits, collaboration can be key to "reframing" tough problems

Next time you face a problem, start by reframing it—but don't wait too long before getting out to observe your customers and prototype your ideas.

In today's knowledge-based economy where originality often matters more than capital, it's wise to formally tell your team that they need to do more than just finish a project or make a metric move. They need to think "out of the box."

One of the best ways to prime them to make this contribution is by inviting them to "reframe" the problem, if possible, that their metric or project addresses. Even if it's not possible to reframe it, the mental exercise will get them out of the box and may produce other, equally useful insights.

Use this "slow elevator" example to explain what "reframing" is: Imagine you own an office building, and everyone is complaining about the elevator. It's old and slow, and they have to wait forever. People are upset. Several tenants are even threatening to leave if you don't fix the problem.
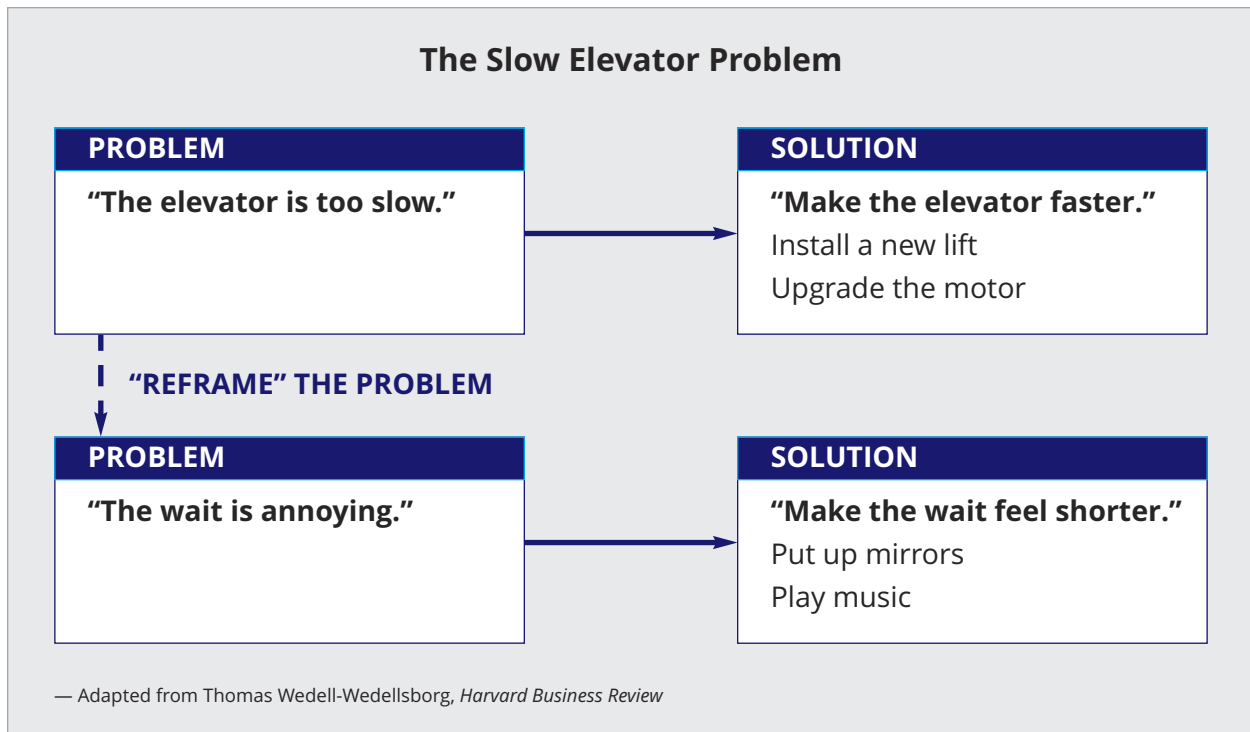
Ask your team what they would do?

Most will suggest upgrading the elevator to a faster one—by replacing the lift, or installing a faster motor. These suggestions share assumptions about what the problem is—in this case, that the elevator is slow.

The Slow Elevator Problem

PROBLEM	SOLUTION
"The elevator is too slow."	"Make the elevator faster." Install a new lift Upgrade the motor

"REFRAME" THE PROBLEM

PROBLEM	SOLUTION
"The wait is annoying."	"Make the wait feel shorter." Put up mirrors Play music

— Adapted from Thomas Wedell-Wedellsborg, *Harvard Business Review*

However, if we reframe the question, the problem isn't necessarily that the elevator is too slow. The real problem is that the wait is annoying. With that reframing, we now have a new problem: how can we make the wait more pleasant?

Elevator companies solved this one a long time ago. How? By putting mirrors next to the elevator. This simple solution proved amazingly effective in reducing complaints, because people tend to lose track of time when they have something fascinating to look at—themselves. The wait remains the same, but their perception of time passing changes completely.

"The point of reframing is not to find the 'real' problem but, rather, to see if there is a better one to solve," a study in the *Harvard Business Review* explained.

So when collaborating, establish the idea of reframing first, and then ask your team to be on the alert for what you would typically ask them to do, such as how to improve, make tactical adjustments, and the like. When you establish reframing as the context for collaborating, you invite bold ideas that can yield enormous benefits.

Question #4:
How Should We Act When Collaborating?

"Focus on the positive."

— McKinsey

You, as the leader, set the tone that fosters positive collaborative interaction.

A McKinsey study concluded that businesses where collaboration works at the highest level possible use it to "Focus on the positive, put the spotlight on performance and alignment with values, and to learn from each other." Establish those expectations at the outset to keep everyone in the right frame of mind. When managers actively participate in collaboration threads, and model a positive, results-oriented attitude, it's much easier for team members to follow suit.

This enhances buy-in and makes the entire collaboration experience more pleasant and more effective. "The camaraderie of collaboration, the intellectual challenge associated with more-complex work, and the ability to learn from others can be crucial motivators," a separate study in *Harvard Business Review* found, adding that "those who are approaching the end of their careers often report wanting to leave a legacy of juniors who have apprenticed with them."

This study highlighted an effective technique that can establish camaraderie, but that many executives find counter-intuitive. It involves telling stories about small successes. This has a huge cultural effect, which is why some executives are a little leery of it. They worry that granular celebrations can be misconstrued as favoritism, and that would be true if the stories were always about the same people.

But when different managers tell stories highlighting the successes of different people, the stories establisha culture of excellence. People like seeing someone on their level getting public recognition. It makes them think, "That could be me."

INTEGRATED COLLABORATION

True "Integrated Collaboration" is a game-changer...and it's here

It's great to have real-time visibility into the projects and metrics that drive your winning strategy. Visibility is just the first step. Now you need to execute your Strategy. Running powerful Integrated Meetings is one of the major keys to strategy execution. So is Real-Time Integrated Collaboration.

There are a multitude of tools available to capture text-based collaborative conversations: Skype, Teams, Hangouts, Workplace, Hipchat, Slack, Yammer, Chatter, just to name a few. They are all pretty similar in terms of their functionality.

Results.com has collaboration built into its software platform. Just like the products named above, you can create topics/channels of interest and invite colleagues to chat. You can send direct messages too. **But, where RESULTS is light-years ahead of all the other tools, is that we offer "Real-Time Integrated Collaboration."**

All the team collaboration is linked directly to the exact goals, KPIs and projects being discussed.

To us, it makes no sense to have your communications divorced from the metrics and projects you are tracking.

So, we make if possible for every metric to have its own chat thread, every project to have its own chat thread. This keeps everything properly organized and unified—and lets you see a complete history of all the questions, discussions, decisions, and tasks completed, along with all the actions being taken to advance your goals.

Never again will you need to ask, "What's happening here?" when you look at a metric on your dashboard. You'll see a complete history of everything being said and everything being done to drive the execution of your strategy.

IT COULDN'T BE SWEETER

With "Integrated Collaboration"... Collaboration Threads Appear Right Next To Their Relevant Goals, KPIs and Projects
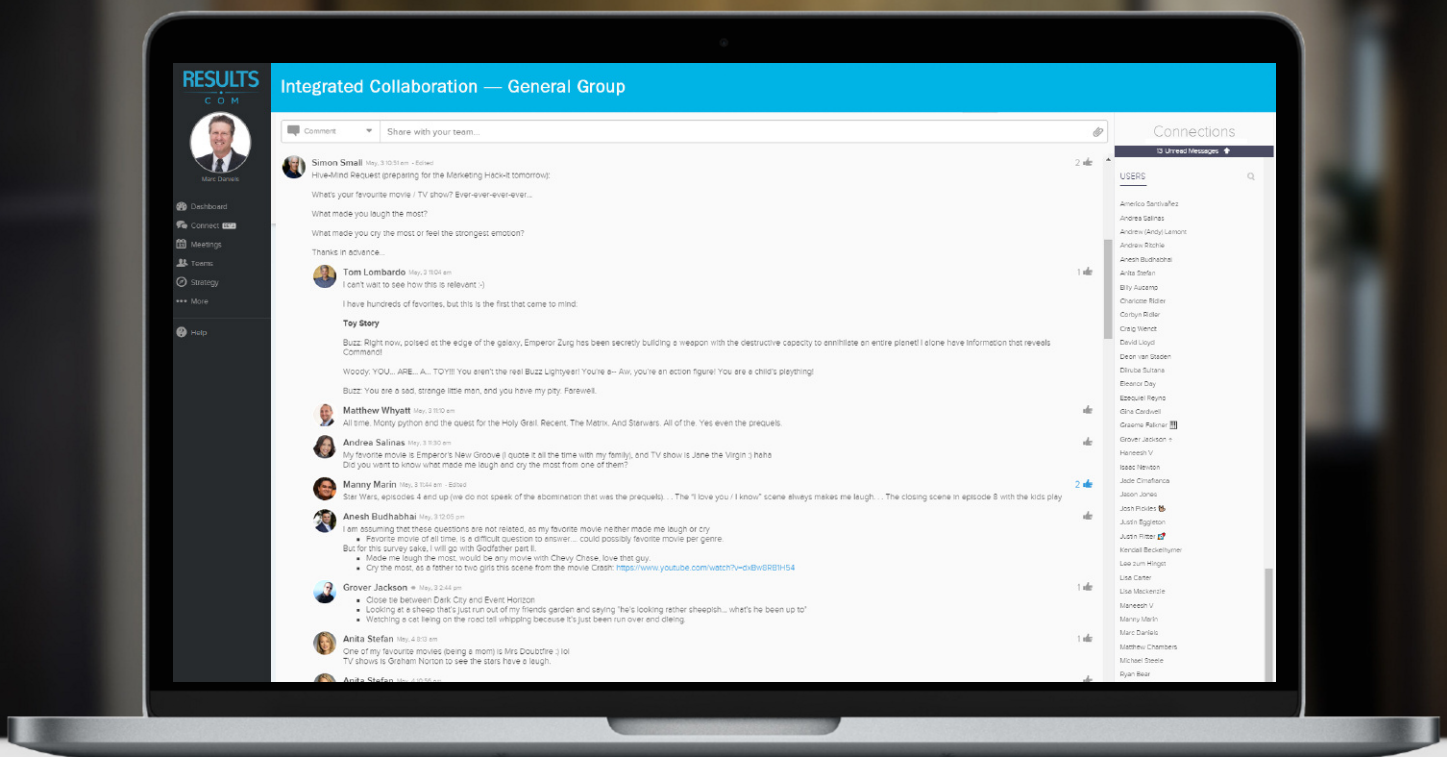
About RESULTS
The World's Leading
Business Management System
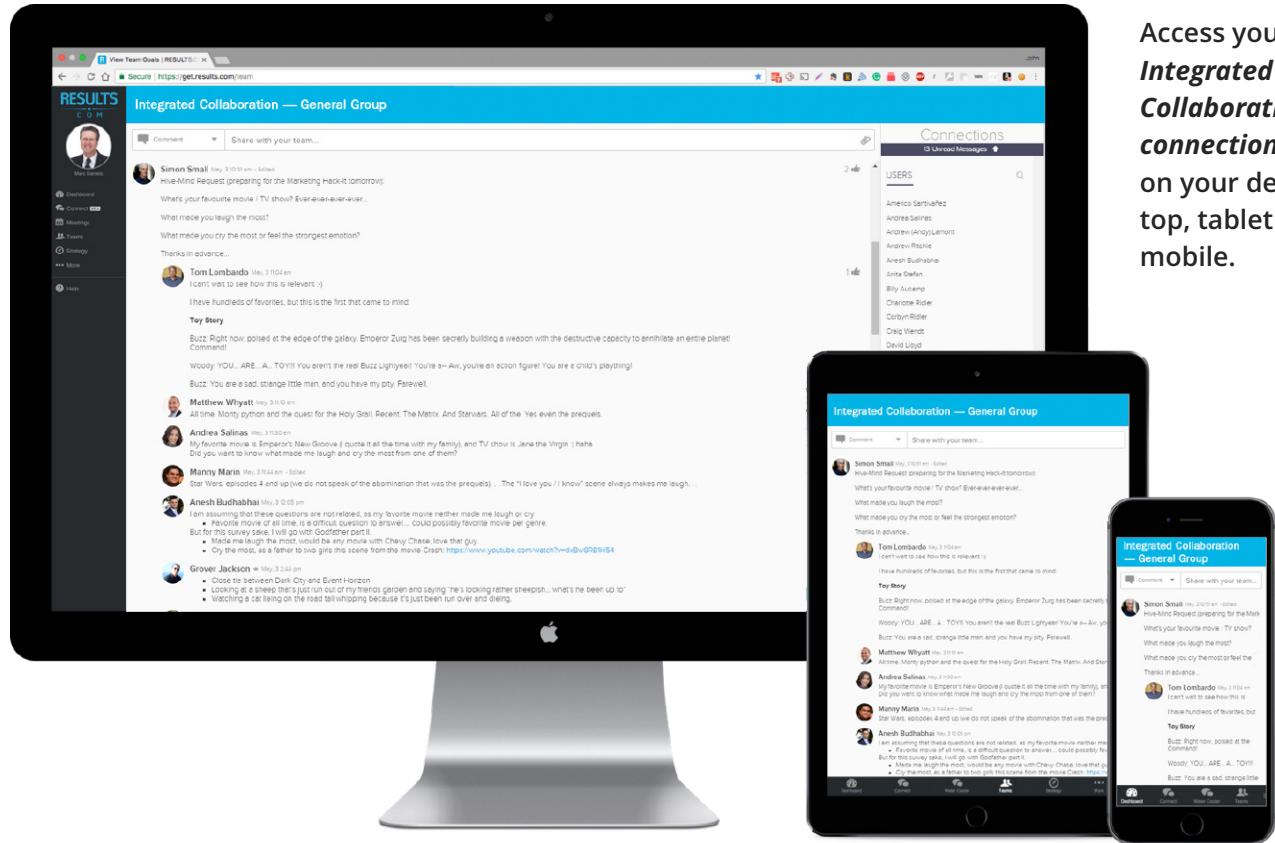
Access your *Integrated Collaboration connections* on your desktop, tablet or mobile.

Empowering Organizations To Execute Their Strategy and Grow

THE RESULTS SOFTWARE PLATFORM is based on what we refer to as the "Four Pillars." Found in most successful businesses, they are the proven methods known originally as the "Rockefeller Habits." Many popular management books expand upon them, while consulting organizations and consultants all over the world use them. The RESULTS system provides the software framework that makes the "Four Pillars" easy to implement, helping organizations across the globe successfully execute their Strategic Plans.

The RESULTS Platform helps you succeed with these "Four Pillars":

One Page Strategic Plan
Real-Time Projects & Key Performance Indicators
Integrated Meetings
Integrated Collaboration

A proven system that's helped over 10,000 businesses improve their results

ACHIEVEMENT UNLIMITED
& RESULTS
YOUR PARTNERS FOR SUCCESS

Clarity - Focus - Results®

Achievement Unlimited, Inc. helps business leaders get off the insanity loop, successfully navigate change, unlock the potential of their human capital and increase productivity to build a results-based culture. Our process generates organizational clarity and facilitates planning, execution and leadership development as a way to transform organizations. We act as a growth catalyst, moving people and organizations out of their comfort zones toward their most important goals, driving growth and results.

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