

## Smarter Collaboration Insights

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Sharing ideas to accelerate smarter collaboration

September 2024

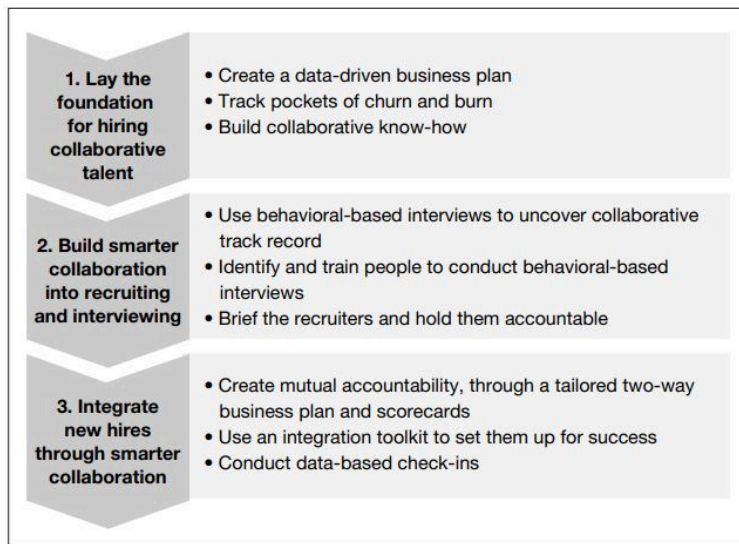
### FEATURED THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

#### Lateral Hiring and Integration

We are excited to announce that Dr. Heidi K. Gardner and Ivan Matviak recently co-authored a book chapter on lateral hiring and integration in law firms. It's part of Globe Law and Business's [Managing Partner Performance: Strategies for Transforming Underperforming Partners](#). Here's an excerpt:

*"Clearly, firms need a well-constructed plan, a relentless focus on execution, and clear accountability processes if they expect to help laterals achieve two-way collaboration quickly and efficiently. To keep up, law firms must hire the kinds of partners who have the skill and the will to collaborate with peers with the goal of building multi-threaded client relationships. Firms need a robust infrastructure to help integrate lateral talent into client service teams and relevant sector groups. Finally, incumbent partners – especially the leaders of the practice groups and sector teams who wanted to hire the lateral – need to have laterals' success on their scorecard, with direct links to their bonus. These need to align closely with the lateral partners' scorecard. The remainder of this chapter lays out these steps for success."*

**Core stages and steps for successful lateral hiring**



## Q&A with Dr. Heidi K. Gardner

Dr. Heidi K. Gardner was recently asked a series of provocative questions as pre-work for an event. We'd appreciate your take on her responses below. Would you have answered similarly, or do you see things differently?

### 1. In your opinion, what are the top three skills future leaders will need to thrive in a rapidly changing world?

**HG:** Future leaders will need three skills that are deeply intertwined with smarter collaboration, allowing them to address complex challenges in a dynamic way: (1) curiosity to seek new ideas and perspectives – especially those that challenge their convictions, (2) the ability to build a high-quality, trust-based network so that they can multiply their influence, and (3) the ability to crystallize and communicate a vision to keep their people motivated and on track.

### Q: What strategies do you employ to stay adaptable and resilient in the face of constant change?

**A:** To thrive through constant change, I continually seek new ideas and challenge myself (and my team) to bring them alive in our day-to-day work. Having lived and worked on four continents, I deeply value the ways that cross-cultural influences can sharpen ideas and open our minds to new possibilities. I also routinely engage with other chief-level executives – especially women – to trade advice and support.

And let's not forget the fun factor: for me, a great (or even terrible!) round of golf, hiking with friends, and traveling with our college-age daughters all feed

my soul. My increased energy, creativity, and focus keep me at my best.

**Q: How do you see global economic trends influencing your industry, and what proactive measures are you and your team taking to adapt?**

**A:** The best performing organizations constantly seek new ways to harness the full power of their workforce – including juniors, new joiners, introverts, people in “support” functions, and even retirees and other “alumni.” Their strengths and perspectives are too-often overlooked.

GenAI and many digital innovations will increasingly take away the rote tasks. So how can leaders create an environment where people use their freed-up capacity to be creative, and contribute and apply those novel ideas – to proactively solve problems, build community, and delight customers and clients?

My team and I are building scalable, tech-based solutions to help leaders equip their organizations with the necessary skills and empower people (not just the usual suspects) to contribute their fullest.

### **Thought Leadership on Thought Leadership: Preview**

Our team has spent the last couple of months gathering insights from professional services leaders and contributors on how to build world-class thought leadership through smarter collaboration.

The result is a white paper that explores how to combine unique and cutting-edge knowledge - from across one's professional ecosystem – to develop and disseminate impactful and unified original thinking. A comprehensive guide for PSFs aiming to excel in thought leadership, it outlines the key benefits, essential role profiles, generation cycle, and methods for measuring success.

If you are interested in receiving a copy, please email [christine@gardnerandco.co](mailto:christine@gardnerandco.co).



## EVENT RECAPS

### **Economist Impact General Counsel Summit in New York City a Success**

Over 500 people gathered for the Economist Impact's 21st annual General Counsel Summit in New York City September 5, to hear more than 60 speakers deliver rich insights on being an effective GC in today's increasingly complex world.

Dr. Heidi K. Gardner was thrilled to be one of these speakers; her session on smarter collaboration generated animated and provocative conversations among the elite panelists (Zac Katz of Grindr, Derek Windham of Telsa, and Sara Morgan of Axiom).

As part of the discussion, Dr. Gardner challenged attendees to not just use GenAI in their daily work but to create a culture of true experimentation, where failure is anticipated, and people know how to learn from it.





## Workshop with Chilean Company and Board Leaders

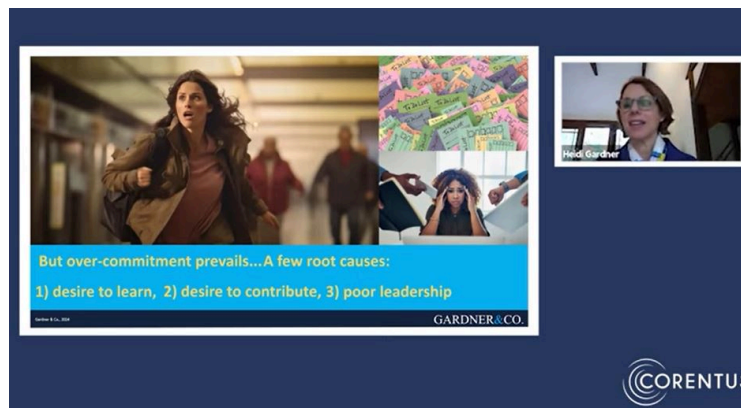
Dr. Heidi K. Gardner's session with a dozen executives and independent directors from Chile – organized by AmCham Chile – kindled rich conversations about leaders' roles in sparking effective collaboration. One juicy topic involved the ways that real inclusion (not just tokenism) brings healthy debate to boards, ultimately creating higher-performing boards that face less shareholder dissent.

For further reading, see Dr. Gardner's HBR articles "[Back Channels in the Boardroom](#)" and "[Is Your Board Inclusive - or Just Diverse?](#)" (or email [christine@gardnerandco.co](mailto:christine@gardnerandco.co) for a copy).



## Corentus *First Friday with a Thought Leader* Event

Earlier this month, during a Corentus "First Friday with a Thought Leader" session, Dr. Heidi K. Gardner shared pro tips for combatting team overload - both as a contributor and a leader. For example: for each new opportunity, understand why you feel compelled to say "yes." Is it because you believe you have spot-on expertise that can really make a difference? Or because you have a case of FOMO? If it's the latter, a tactful "no" is probably the better choice. To hear more advice from Dr. Gardner, check out the [full event recording on YouTube](#).



But over-commitment prevails...A few root causes:  
1) desire to learn, 2) desire to contribute, 3) poor leadership

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## PRODUCTS

## Smarter Collaboration Interactive Workshop Kits

Lights. Camera. Collaboration!

Dr. Heidi K. Gardner and Ivan Matviak had a blast filming videos for their new company, Smarter Collaboration International. Each module includes a video and related materials (facilitator guide, participant exercises) so it's flexible for major events, smaller workshops, or self-guided learning. Here are the current modules:

- Smarter collaboration foundations (intro)\*
- Benefits of smarter collaboration\*
- Barriers to smarter collaboration\*
- Building a feedback culture
- Collaborating across a global PSF network
- Influencing without authority
- Hiring and integrating laterals
- Launching new teams
- Over-commitment

(\* We have separate versions customized for professional services firms and in-house legal departments.)

We can tailor any version, or combination of them, with a personalized introduction for your firm's event, including research findings, your logo, etc. If you are planning your offsite for a large or small group, reach out so that we can co-create a high-impact session.

What other modules would you like to use?



## UPCOMING EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET

### Leaders on Purpose CEO Summit in New York City

On the heels of a successful [Leaders on Purpose](#) (LOP) CEO Summit in

London this summer, Dr. Heidi K. Gardner and Ivan Matviak will participate in a New York version of the event on September 26. The event coincides with the 79th UN General Assembly and New York Climate Action Week; it is exciting from a smarter collaboration standpoint.

First, LOP's new CEO study will be officially released, which includes insights on purpose-driven smarter collaboration from 14 CEOs of Fortune 500 and similar multinational companies that are delivering significant results. Secondly, it's a wonderful opportunity to connect and collaborate with others who are passionate about corporate purpose and strategy. Will we see you there?



### **Other Opportunities to Meet**

Dr. Heidi K. Gardner will be in the following places at the following times, in case you'd like to schedule time with her while she's there:

- Phoenix: September 27-30
- London: October 6-10, October 28-31, and November 2-10
- Chicago: October 15-18
- Madrid: October 22-24
- Copenhagen: March 11-13, 2025

### **CASE STUDIES**

#### **Smarter Collaboration...To Run a Marathon?**

We are proud to share that Insights Director Csilla Ilkei recently completed a marathon in New England (the Green River Marathon, from Vermont to Massachusetts). She was asked, "Did smarter collaboration help you achieve this tremendous goal; if so, how?" It might seem like a strange question for such a solo endeavor. But Ilkei came up with multiple ways in which smarter collaboration played a pivotal role in her accomplishment.

Smarter collaboration:

- **focused her on her specific goal:** to enjoy herself throughout the 26.2-mile course
- **made her identify her strengths:** her experience running other marathons, consistent training for this marathon, and strong self-determination
- **called attention to her weaknesses/**where she needs others' help: her overly competitive nature fixates on her pace/time and the question "are we there yet?"
- **prompted her to identify and line up the right collaborators** to help her achieve her goal

So, who were these collaborators? They aren't necessarily obvious to non-runners; yet each one served a specific purpose at a specific moment in time:

- **Nature** (in the first 10K): Ilkei kicked off her run drawing on the beauty of the quiet trail. Indulging in the juicy smell of the crisp air allowed her to feel fully present and grateful.
- **Masterful journalists** (in the second 10K): To keep her strong and fast pace without losing focus, she put in her earbuds to indulge in her favorite podcast personalities recount thrilling, long-form stories (e.g., Madeleine Baran, host of In the Dark).
- **Her teenage son** (between mile 8 and 16): At this point, her muscles were cramping up and burning. A phone call with her student-athlete son gave her the jolt of inspiration she needed to pull through, with him reminding her that she is indeed a role model.
- **Musicians** (in the last 10K): This is when Ilkei really needed the right collaborators to boost her energy and make her forget the reality of the trail. Her highly curated list of songs by brilliant composers put her in the right headspace; the regular beats guided her strides the rest of the way.

Pulling in these "experts" at the right time supercharged Ilkei's ability to achieve the nearly impossible: an enjoyable marathon race.



## STAY CONNECTED

### Keep in Touch

Follow Gardner & Co. on [LinkedIn](#) and [YouTube](#), and visit our [website](#) for extra news and insights on smarter collaboration.

### Give Feedback

What else can we do together? Please send your thoughts to Christine at [christine@gardnerandco.co](mailto:christine@gardnerandco.co).

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