

## Smarter Collaboration Insights

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Sharing ideas to accelerate smarter collaboration

October 2024

### FEATURED THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

#### **Aligning Objectives for Cross-Silo Success (in Supply Chain and Beyond)**

What's the hottest topic today in the world of smarter collaboration?

The question we get asked the most (as in, four CEOs approached us in a one-week period) is “How can we change our incentives to shift people away from their silos?”

We'll keep returning to the topic in the coming months, offering insights and mini-case studies. Here's one Dr. Heidi K. Gardner just discussed on a recent podcast: Imagine you run a major industrial company. Your one procurement department's success is measured by the cost savings delivered. So they keep buying cheaper items, thinking they're doing the right thing (and getting rewarded for it). But here's the kicker: those “savings” are actually costing your company big time.

Sure, the supplies might be cheap, but they take forever to arrive. To meet customer demands, another department ends up shelling out way more on expedited shipping, like air freight.

Sound familiar? This kind of corporate dissonance often happens because people are incentivized for hitting their own targets rather than what's best for the company as a whole. People work in silos, lose trust in one another, and the company suffers.

In a recent episode of the Leaders in Supply Chain and Logistics Podcast,

Radu Palamariu and Dr. Gardner dove deep into how to reverse this phenomenon – exploring how, for example, multi-part performance scorecards are a proven tool to boost individual *and* collective results.

They also covered ways to:

- Bridge the gaps in decision-makers' perspectives that often create silos (in the supply chain and beyond)
- Spot collaboration blind spots using 360-degree feedback
- Make smarter hiring choices by asking collaboration-focused questions
- Keep collaboration strong, even under pressure, like during mergers and acquisitions
- Identify your passion, use it to create a unique offering, and help others know when to draw you into a collaborative effort that will leverage your strengths

[Enjoy the conversation](#) – and stay tuned for more insights on collaboration-related performance management and incentives.



## EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET

### Smarter Collaboration 360 Virtual Launch

Join the virtual launch event on November 13 for our new Smarter Collaboration 360 development tool. The SC360 provides pointed input from colleagues, managers, direct reports, and even external parties (such as clients) about how they experience working with you.



The analytics compare these assessments with your own, showing:

- Undiscovered strengths: Where are you under-confident? One company president recently under-estimated how much her colleagues valued her integrity and trustworthiness; this insight allows her to challenge her people more, with more conviction that they will believe she's got their back.
- Watch-outs: Ouch. These are areas where you think you're better than you are. Several senior executives and professional firm partners just learned that *they think* they're open to novel ideas...but their colleagues and direct reports *disagree*. Ditto on "dominating conversations." Double-ouch.
- Superpowers: When you and all your raters agree you're excellent, that's a collaborative skill to lean into. As hoped, one COO confirmed that he has serious ability in areas like, "Able to bring structure to complex and ambiguous situations" and "Can articulate the potential value/impact of an idea." His debrief with our G&Co. coach unpacked all the ways that the COO can leverage this strength, bringing even greater value than simply "getting stuff done": he's stepping up to play a much deeper role in bringing the company's strategy to life.
- Growth opportunities: Are you prioritizing the right skills in your own development plan? Having colleagues' confirmation lets you pinpoint specific areas to work on, understand the root cause, and set clear goals for improvement. In one law firm, we helped all the practice group and sector leaders hone their growth goals. Many of them zeroed in on moving from a "doer" to a leader after getting reinforcing feedback that they needed to step back when appropriate, and help others build their networks.

What differentiates the SC360 from other feedback tools is that it's laser-focused on driving higher performance through smarter collaboration. It's built on both the underlying empirical research and the behavioral insights from our decades of hands-on work with leaders. So far, dozens of early users tell us

that the personalized report is eye-opening, pragmatic, and immensely useful... even for the lucky few who regularly get significant feedback (most people don't!).

During the 45-minute launch session, hosts Dr. Heidi K. Gardner, Ivan Matviak, and Csilla Ilkei will introduce the core concepts behind the SC360 and how it helps drive measurable improvement in collaborative capabilities.

This session is right for you if you are:

- an executive who needs to unlock stronger cross-silo performance
- a leader who wants to start building a feedback culture
- an L&D professional who's fired up to boost your organization's collaborative capabilities (in a fresh, data-driven way)
- a coach who want to empower clients to capture more career and personal progress

To accommodate multiple time zones, two launch sessions are available:

- 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Eastern Standard Time (click [here](#) to register)
- 7 - 7:45 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (click [here](#) to register)

We hope to see you there!

For more details, email [christine@gardnerandco.co](mailto:christine@gardnerandco.co).

### **Catch Up with Dr. Heidi K. Gardner**

Ready to book a client roundtable, an executive workshop, or a major offsite? Here's the (evolving) travel schedule for Dr. Heidi K. Gardner, in case you'd like to schedule time with her:

- Madrid: October 22-24
- London: October 28-31
- Paris: November 20-22
- Copenhagen: March 11-13, 2025
- Australia (Melbourne & Sydney): March 23 - April 10, 2025

## **CASE STUDIES**

### **Juan Valdez Café: Smarter Collaboration for Purpose-Driven Success**

Dr. Heidi K. Gardner and Ivan Matviak met Juan Valdez Café CEO Camila Escobar Corredor at the recent Leaders on Purpose CEO Summit in New York

City. In the new Leaders on Purpose CEO Study, they highlight the great example Juan Valdez Café has set through collaborating internally and with third parties.

For instance, over nearly five years the company’s executives, board, marketing and finance departments, and suppliers collaborated to invest in, launch, and refine a coffee cultivated and harvested by women coffee growers.

The executives worked hard to gain clear alignment between the various stakeholders on Juan Valdez’s mission and to navigate often-challenging conversations (like, “Is this a viable business objective?”). With their support, the coffee grew from a limited edition offering to the top-selling product in its most premium line of business. The initiative also created community engagement across 12 countries. “Everybody was thinking not just about profitability, but also the purpose itself,” Escobar told us.

The full report will be available soon – and we’ll let you know when and where. In the meantime, people can access the executive summary through [the Leaders on Purpose website](#).

### **Camila Escobar Corredor and Dr. Heidi K. Gardner**



## **RESEARCH**

### **Performance Management Survey**

Two of our collaborators in the performance management space, Ray D’Cruz and Paul Lemon, have launched their “Evolving Performance Management in the Professions” 2024 survey. If you work in a professional services firm (and

aren't an equity partner), please consider taking [their survey](#).

It takes less than 10 minutes to complete, and will drive enhanced PM insights and offerings for professional services firms to leverage (survey takers can provide their name and email to receive the research report and briefing invites).

We are excited about this research, in part because it's focused on client-facing and business service professionals – rather than just partners. These roles are often under-leveraged human assets, and collaboration between them and partners is far, far from optimal.

In our recent work with one firm, for example, business professionals repeatedly complained about feeling under-valued and disrespected, despite their decades of practical experience.

Figuring out how to (1) improve performance conversations and (2) develop more thoughtful ratings and metrics to evaluate business professionals' and other non-equity partners' contributions will go a long way toward helping firms make the most of the talent they've currently got trapped in these roles.

In [a recent LinkedIn post](#), Dr. Heidi K. Gardner covered how multi-part scorecards can drive both individual *and* team results. But employee input is another game-changer for smarter collaboration in performance management.

You can tap into:

- Satisfaction with the current performance management system
- Ideas for improving metrics, personal versus collective goals, and informal check-ins
- The very top priority for enhancing performance management

When aligned with strategic goals (like boosting client service and market reputation), these insights foster a stronger system, *and* help you anticipate reactions – so you can tailor your “socialization” and communications effectively.

**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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