communiqué

The keys to a collaborative culture

Valuable tips and real-world examples help present
a compelling case for communicators

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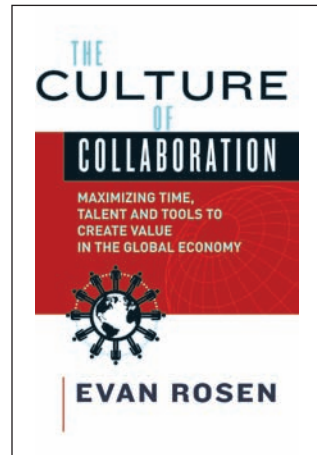In *The Culture of Collaboration: Maximizing Time, Talent and Tools to Create Value in the Global Economy,* author Evan Rosen collects enough anecdotal information to inform both the communication novice and the seasoned professional about why collaboration works. And thanks to a concise writing framework and entertaining examples, he has accomplished both goals.

Rosen obviously understands that today's busy communicator does not have hours of uninterrupted time to read business titles, and so has broken the book into not only easy-to-read chapters, but short, comprehensive subsections, many of which can easily stand on their own as mini-case studies in effective and collaborative work styles.

Both the preface and introduction are worth reading, as they bring you quickly into the author's world, mind-set and writing style, sharing real-world stories, facts and figures, even in the first few sentences.

Using many real-world examples, Rosen proves again and again that teamwork and collaboration, rather than individual accomplishment and a highly competitive internal structure, lead to a more efficient work environment.

If the book has one flaw, it is that it is somewhat North American-centric. While many of the examples are from global

about the book
*The Culture of Collaboration:
Maximizing Time, Talent and
Tools to Create Value in the
Global Economy*
by Evan Rosen
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companies (I particularly appreciated the examples of Ford Motor Co. working with Volvo and making accommodations for its Swedish business culture), the references and context will be most familiar to U.S. audiences.

Yet, using examples from all types of companies—including the Mayo Clinic, the World Bank, General Electric, W.R. Grace, Ford, Dow Chemical, BMW, ILM and DreamWorks Animation—the book expertly covers cultural gaps, cross-cultural collaboration and how to break down barriers. It talks about work styles and lifestyles,

as well as the impact of physical environments. Rosen's data is most effective in demonstrating how a collaborative culture is changing business models and the nature of work. As a primer, it does a very good job of defining the cultural elements of collaboration, as well as the common attributes. And the real-life examples of cultural collaboration will provide good ammunition for any communicator's arsenal in advocating for a culture of collaboration in his or her workplace.

You would expect a book of this type to spend a lot of time discussing technology, but Rosen does the smart thing and focuses instead on how the technology matches the strategy: how collaborative tools help foster and enhance a collaborative work environment. Communicators looking to help their companies in integrating these tools would do themselves a service by reading this book. Rosen's opinions on how the tools are best provided—and who pays for them and how—show how you can integrate collaborative tools quickly and securely, or fall just as easily into the pit of despair.

For communicators looking to integrate a collaborative culture into their work environment, or leverage or enhance one they may already have, this book gives valuable tips and solid examples. ●

about the reviewer
Kim A. Hanson, ABC, is principal and owner of South County Communications, a communication consulting firm. A lifetime member of IABC, Hanson has held a number of chapter leadership positions and is currently the member-at-large liaison for IABC's Heritage Region.