

# Building a Collaborative Workplace

Great article on an important topic – maybe THE most important issue for organizations to-day <http://bit.ly/Afj6N>

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## Going Back to Basics Helps Sometimes : What IS Social Media?

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## Slide Show about Collaborative Intelligence

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## Collaborative Intelligence:

# Riding the 'Bull'

Creating a collaborative relationship depends on many things not least the 'first impression' we make.

Recently in the National Post (Canada):

"A professional bull rider has to hold on to an irate, 2,000-pound bull for eight full seconds in order to receive a score," the Columbus (Ga.) Ledger-Enquirer says. "Not so outside of the bull-riding arena, where points are won and lost for everyone in just seven seconds, the average length of time you have to make a first impression. According to a study conducted at New York University, people make 11 decisions about others in the first seven seconds of meeting. Among these 11 decisions are perceived credibility, believability, competence, honesty and trustworthiness. ...Most folks worry about what they will say, but your choice of words counts for only 7 per cent of your first impression." This effect is well documented in Malcolm Gladwell's book '[Blink](#)'.

## **Face-to-Face First Impressions:**

This research has been around for a long time – face-to-face meetings are heavily affected by information that is exchanged in the first 7 seconds. It makes you stop and think about how to prepare for meeting new clients, or new team members for example. We all know that we really can't fool other people – probably because the first 7 seconds is conveying so much information.

When I am going to meet someone in person, for the first time, I imagine myself smiling at them and extending a 'friendly' energy toward them, this enables the initial meeting to go well most of the time. Nothing works all the time – otherwise we'd never learn new behaviors, but this process has helped me build initial positive rapport, thousands of times.

In order to be able to imagine myself smiling – I have to do

something else and that is suspend as many of my assumptions about the other person as I can. This may appear simple but it is not as easy as it sounds. It took me a bit of practice – consciously suspending my pre-judgements and focusing on extending that positive energy and interest. When I reviewed ‘first meetings’ with people I often noticed that it was erroneous assumptions that often made the first impression less than optimal.

### **Phone First Impressions:**

When connecting with people for the first time on the phone – the visual aspect of your smile is lost, but the effect a smile has on how you sound has not. The ‘trick’ I used for preparing for meeting someone face-to-face still works. I still imagine how the other person looks (them smiling and being pleased to meet me etc.) working myself into a ‘smiling state of mind’, I then pick up the phone. I have also noticed that if I wish to convey energy and enthusiasm I can do this by standing up to have the phone conversation.

Seven seconds isn’t a long time – unless you are riding bull and then it might seem like a long time. Either way it is an important amount of time that can have a big effect on how successful we are at connecting with other. Of course creating great connection is central to building [collaborative intelligence](#) wherever we are.