

The innovator's guide to **COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE**

AI used to be just a tool, now it's claiming a place on your team. It has the potential to revolutionise the collective intelligence of your business, but only if you change the way you work.

#5 IN A SERIES

What is it?

Good teams make better decisions when they are working together than when they are working apart.

But the best potential teams are often divided by geography, which can lead to informational and behavioural silos, a leading cause of operational inefficiency.

Bring people together around reliable data and you enable **collective intelligence** (CX) which will deliver better decision making.

Collaborative intelligence (CQ) is even more powerful. By using proactive collaboration to solve problems, it's designed to drive the industry-changing innovation that we're all looking for.

Your team needs to be agile and lean if it's going to make the most of AI's continuous flow of data-fuelled insights. That's why CQ is self-organising. Its ability to make swift judgements is the result of sharing, fast-track testing and peer review. The old hierarchical approach to decision making simply can't keep up.

With the right mobile tools, the predictive powers of machine learning can get teams solving problems faster and better than ever before.

Why should I care?

Because valuable innovation is going to emerge faster when you've harnessed collaborative intelligence properly, and that requires AI.

Simply put, better collaborative intelligence means more innovation, which delivers your objectives faster, thereby lessening risk for the business.

When digital tools are easy to use, their real-time flow of reliable data can be collaborated around by teams in the field, increasing productivity.

With the power of predictive analytics at their fingertips, teams can flag up problems before something actually goes wrong, allowing next best step management and management by exception to become a real possibility.

Given access to a single source of truth, and the freedom to experiment, self-organising teams have huge potential for silo-busting innovation.

By getting individuals with different but complementary skillsets to join forces and form a network, CQ instils a culture of openness and sharing that smooths workflow, improves transition planning and clarifies team priorities.

Business objectives in the modern world are often moving targets. Fortunately, CQ's lean, agile approach can adapt quickly to changing customer needs and market conditions, as well as internal organisational upheaval. It lives off and inspires innovation.

Self-organising teams like those championed by Google's Moonshot Factory have demonstrated their ability to deliver revolutionary solutions to seemingly

intractable problems. These results are made possible by a culture that sees failure as a stepping stone to failing better, rather than rewarding success alone. That attitude is key to the long-term success of CQ.

In order to innovate you must embrace the disruptive potential - and price - of new ideas.

What should I do?

Improving your business' collaborative intelligence starts with three simple steps:

01

Build a team that includes AI

02

Give them tools to collaborate

03

Allow them freedom

1. Drum up some volunteers

Get volunteers involved. They will embrace new ways of working better than conscripts, for longer. If necessary, give them training in how to think creatively about problem solving.

To give the process credibility, make the size of the team commensurate with the objective. Failing that, present the problem in manageable stages.

Speed is of the essence for the lean and agile approach. Fast prototype some solutions, then test them, then respond immediately to feedback. You're already on the road to a better solution.

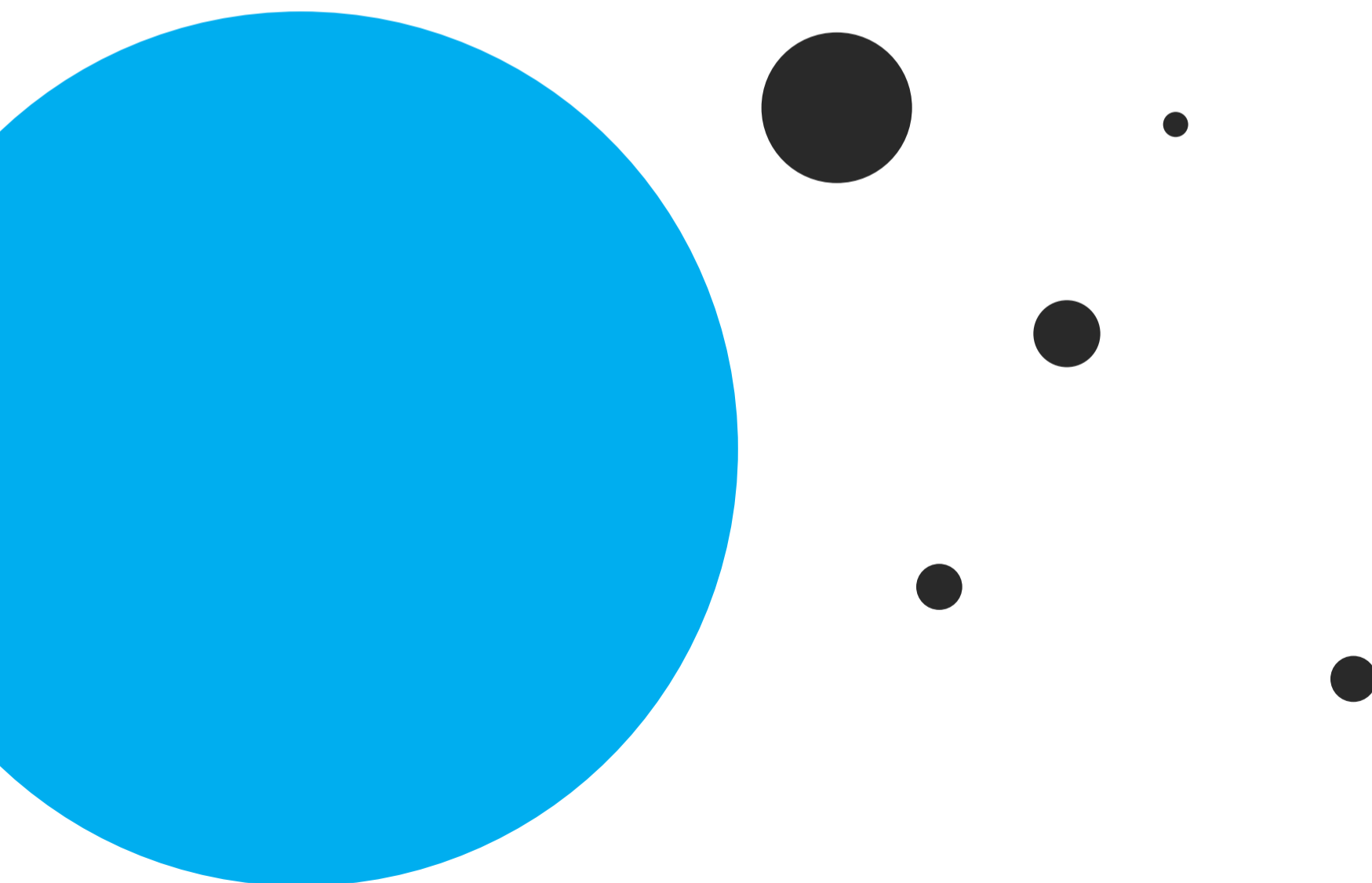
Building trust and team spirit is vital if people are going to collaborate effectively around AI and adjust to a more intense work tempo. The AI will bring valuable insight to the table and help the team reach objectives faster and better.

Thanks to its ability to process huge amounts of data from different sources, AI can provide a useful 'crowd' perspective based on customer data, for instance. But its insights are limited by the quality of the data it receives, and the personal inclinations of whoever designed its algorithm. AI's insights need to be questioned and verified just like the opinions of its human colleagues on the team.

A diverse team mix that includes AI is essential to stimulate new ideas. But all those different perspectives need to be balanced by people having

enough in common to frame a discussion and agree on a shared objective. Gender balance makes for better communication. Organise some offline events to cement the teams.

Now motivate the team by providing them with a measure of success. Incentivise sharing, peer review and thinking globally. Where synergy is needed, CQ can channel competitive instincts into innovative consensus decision making.



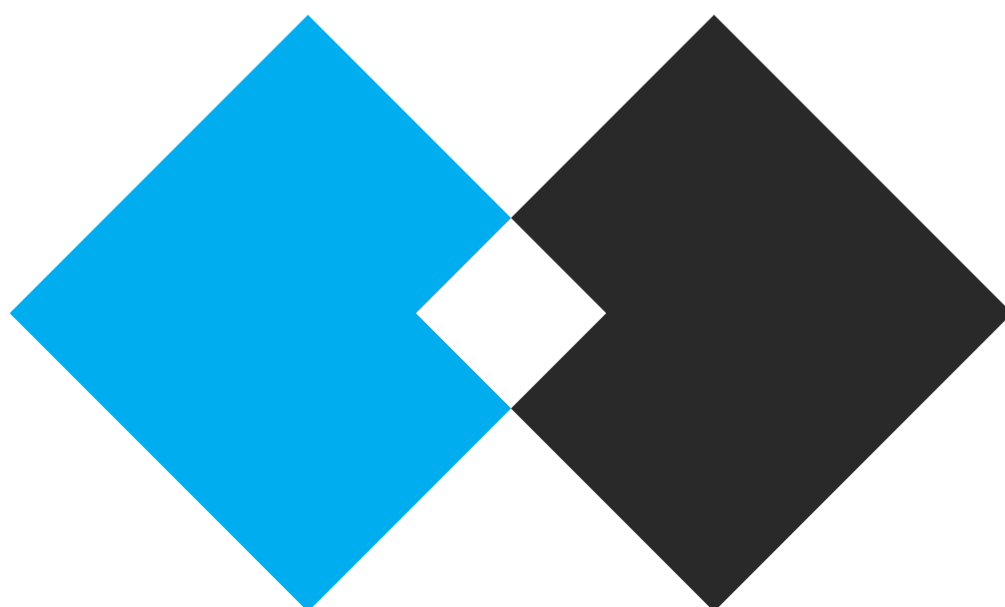
2. Provide the tools that will spur collaboration

Once the silos of geography and information are broken down, you need to power up your ideas factory. Do that by getting everyone to talk to each other around the information at hand, including the insights from AI.

Game-changing ideas come from real-time collaboration, and for that to happen you need communication tools that are intuitive and easy to use. Everyone needs access to a single source of truth, too.

Make a start with a simple collaboration service like slack.com. Organise a central shared repository for documents, like Google Docs. There are new services being launched all the time, so find one that suits you.

With technical and communication issues out of the way, team members from different ends of the value chain can get to work on finding innovative solutions to problems both old and new.



3. If the ideas don't fit the rules, change the rules

Management needs to 'let go' in order for a team to self-organise. That means trusting them to get on with it. But your job doesn't end there.

Innovation often comes into conflict with existing approaches. Self-organising teams threaten the status quo, especially when successful.

So everyone else in the business needs to engage as well. Identify sources of resistance in the hierarchy early on, and get them on board. Disruption should be celebrated.

Leading by example is the best way to achieve this. Results and ideas arising from CQ must be acted upon, and seen to be acted on, in order for them to be taken seriously. If the rules and charters are holding up a promising new approach, change the rules and charters.

Show your commitment. Ultimately, only you can make CQ work.



Innovation checklist

Is your business model maximising its collaborative intelligence?

- ▶ **Your team will produce better ideas when it's prompted and inspired by AI generated insights. Set up a simple predictive service to help them out. Make sure that all of the information they need is available all of the time in a single source of truth.**
- ▶ **Have you actively solicited new ideas from every corner of your business, and taken steps to tap into outside skills? The client rim is a great place to identify problems and seek customer focused solutions.**
- ▶ **The best way of convincing other people to embrace innovative methods is to embrace them yourself. Rethink the rules of your business in order to nurture innovation, and follow through on the results.**

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