



Syntegrity

Collisions are the New Brain Power

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It's not just about brain power any more

It used to be about brain power. When it came time to solve something, it used to be all about brain power: Who can figure this out? Who's good at figuring things out in general? Who's got the most experience to draw on? Who's got the best processor? Who thinks of everything? That's who we were trained to trust with our biggest head-scratchers: the person or people with top-tier brain power.

In sports, it used to be about budget: Whoever spent the most money and acquired the highest-end talent would win. In the salary cap age (in sports where there is one), budgets are more or less normalized and it's no longer about who has the most money to spend. Now it's about drafting well, and chemistry, and analytics, and a strong organization. Talent, yes, but overall team and organizational talent – not just one or two players in their prime earning top dollar and single-handedly carrying their team to victory; but the whole team and the transcendent magic that yields a sum greater than the individual parts.

In the first industrial revolution, it was all about becoming industrial and urban. In the second industrial revolution, it was about electric power, mass production and technological advances. In the third industrial revolution it was about moving from analog to digital, electronics and automation. The fourth industrial revolution will be about technology becoming embedded within societies and even the human body (robotics, artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, quantum computing, biotechnology, The Internet of Things, 3D printing and autonomous vehicles, for example).¹

The point is, things change. The currency of solving big problems, changes. We know now that companies can't successfully resolve their biggest challenges anymore by handing them over to the biggest brains – the challenges are too big and too complex; they also move too fast. The writing is on the wall for what worked in earlier times. You can no longer rely on a small number of smart people to figure things out and single-handedly guide everyone else to victory.



What is the currency of solving big challenges?

We know a lot more today than we did in the past about the importance of networks.

Strong **networks** yield robustness, efficiency and reliability.

We believe a lot more strongly today than we did in the past that there is strength in **diversity**.

We know that **agility, flexibility, adaptability** and **speed** are survival “must-haves”.

We understand that without **innovation**, nobody keeps up or stays ahead.

What many people don't explicitly understand yet is the vital importance of interactions.

Chemical reactions happen when substances mix. Recipes work because ingredients are blended. Teams form when people interact. Insights and advancements happen when previously separate thoughts are put together.

When networks connect diverse groups and rapidly, dynamically, and systematically drive high-quality interactions (or, as we like to say, collisions), “serendipitous” invention happens.

The currency of solving big challenges is **collisions**; many, many collisions amongst the right variety of people in a connected, comprehensive, robust and exponentially-paced way – that's the new currency.

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¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fourth_Industrial_Revolution#Stages_of_the_Industrial_Revolution



How much currency is needed?

It is fairly straightforward to figure out how much variety is needed in the context of solving any given complex challenge. The Law of Requisite variety (aka Asbhy's Law) – "only variety destroys variety" – turns the calculation into an exercise in thinking through the appropriate diversity in relation to the challenge. Our 12 Zones and 13 Characteristics² can be used to figure that out. In most cases, it will yield a number between 18 and 50 people.

The connectivity number comes from a straightforward formula: $n(n-1)/2$. That's how many connections are needed to connect every person in a group of n people to every other person.

For a group of, say, 42 people – you need 861 connections.

42 people, 861 connections...but...

How many collisions?

Three additional factors come into play in calculating the number of collisions required:

1. The need for **iteration**. Specifically, the need to iterate through every collision point 3 times, moving from an interaction about how things are, to an interaction about how things could be, to an interaction about how things should be (in this way driving progress for each pair of people in a way that allows them to gather knowledge from each other and everyone else, before ideating and leveraging each other's and everyone else's ideas, before recommending anything and leveraging what everyone else has recommended – or in other words, from sensing and absorbing, to thinking, to deciding).
2. The need for **5 different kinds of micro collisions** between two people:

#	Person 1	Person 2
1	Speaking	Speaking
2	Speaking	Coaching
3	Speaking	Listening
4	Coaching	Speaking
5	Listening	Speaking

3. The need for **macro** collisions after each iteration, so that everyone can hear and react to highlights (key insights, major barriers, major breakthroughs, ...) no matter where or when they happened during the iteration.

We prescribe the following formula:

$$\#collisions = \#micro_collisions + \#macro_collisions = ((nxn-1)/2*i*5) + ((nxn-1)/2*i)$$

where n = the size of the group and i = the number of iterations

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² Cracking Complexity, David Benjamin and David Komlos, Brealey Publishing 2019

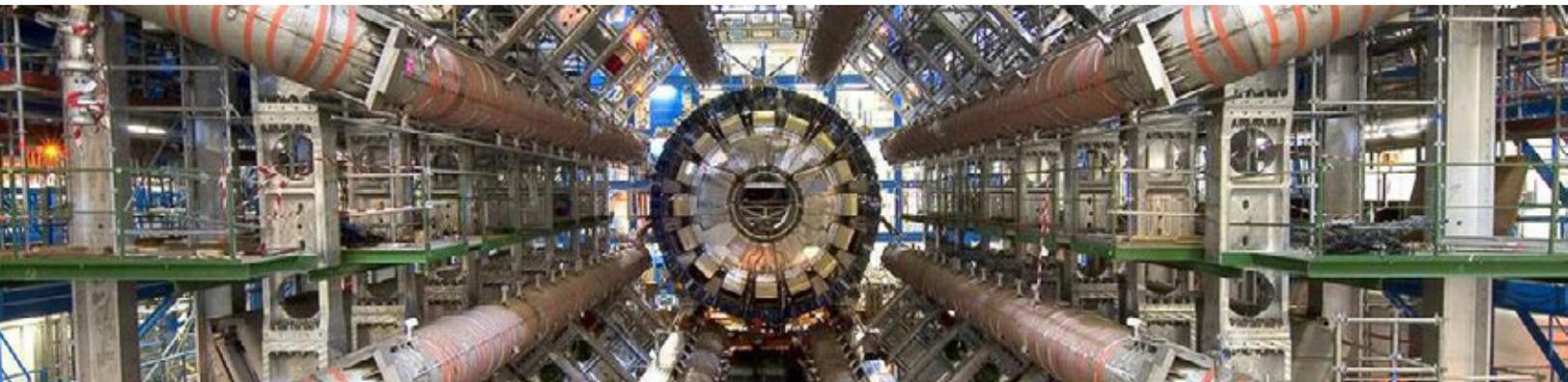


For Example

The following table lists a few different types of challenge, the requisite variety that might be needed for that challenge, and the number of collisions to strive for.

Type of Challenge	Requisite Variety	# Collisions
Annual Board Meeting	12	1188
Biz-as-usual Brand Planning	24	4968
Turning Point Brand Planning	32	8928
Small system strategy	36	11340
Medium system strategy	42	15498
Large system strategy	48	20304

You can see that the number of collisions grows exponentially with requisite variety, which you'll remember grows with the complexity of the challenge. As challenges become more complex you need more people and more collisions amongst them.



Synteegration and Collisions

Synteegration is like the Hadron Collider, driving high-quality collisions amongst people exponentially faster than traditional approaches.

It leverages a fully-connective network architecture, iteration, and multiple behavioral protocols to drive ample micro-collisions amongst a requisite variety group. It deploys after-iteration mechanisms to meet the need for macro-collisions.

At every collision point, whether in meetings or other forums, results are captured – either by participants or by our professional scribes, tacitly or explicitly – and rapidly disseminated to other collision points that can benefit from those results.

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Over the course of 2, and sometimes 3 days, Syntegration is engineered to produce the sufficient and necessary numbers of high-quality collisions that enable accelerated sensing, absorbing, thinking and deciding by the group. Because that number of collisions varies with the problem type, it is available in a range of formats to fit the range of complex challenges (and the collisions needed by each):

Format	# People	# Days	Challenge Type (examples)	# Collisions
Small Octahedron	18	1.5	Advisory Board	2304
Standard Octahedron	24	2	Brand Planning	3456
Small Cube	28	2	Partnership Launch or Renewal	7488
Standard Cube	32	2.5	3-year Operational Planning	11520
Small Icosahedron	42	2.5	Health Strategy for a Region	25200
Standard Icosahedron	48	3	Enterprise Growth Strategy	33120

Sometimes challenges are even bigger and multiple, cascading Syntegrations are needed to produce the required number of collisions; and sometimes they're smaller, requiring few enough collisions that they can be managed well by an in-house team.

Regardless of whether you're facing small, medium or large complexities, as you shift from believing that brainpower is the currency to believing that collisions amongst the right variety of people is the currency, you'll see that the door opens for you to get after your key challenges in a faster, significantly more cost-effective way. You'll make the shift from a scarcity mindset (I need the top brains) to an abundance mindset (I need collisions amongst people in and among my ecosystem). And you'll be in a position to take leaps forward at an exponential pace, instead of the slow-and-steady, linear progress that you're used to (which often amounts to no progress at all).

The by-product – as you'll see – will be the release of a tremendous amount of human energy, meaning the right people mobilized, activated and executing on the solutions they co-created.

Now that's big bang for the buck.

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