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Sit + Sip: when collaboration beats competition

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[Sara Eizen](#) has a company called [Nest](#). [Piper Lauri Salogga](#) has a company called [Natural Balance](#). Both do interior design and redesign, color consultation and organization. While I've known Sara to also do home staging and personal shopping, Piper applies Feng Shui to office spaces and calls it "Office Shui." Upon meeting each of them you might feel they do variations of the *exact same thing*. Fold into the mix that they both live and work in central Seattle neighborhoods. They are both mothers of young children, appealing to new moms with a lot of clutter and not a lot of time. And they're both on Biznik. Total competition right? Yes... but these two looked beyond the ways they compete and found a way to collaborate.

It started with Sara asking Piper to coffee. "Hey, it sounds like we do very similar things, and are both on Biznik. We have a lot in common, want to meet?" One coffee meeting led to regular walks around Greenlake, sometimes with strollers in hand. Six months later their relationship is going strong. What exactly do they have to offer one another? Don't they worry about protecting their precious *trade secrets*?

Competition is real. But if you believe that there is enough work for everyone, you're already one step ahead. Put your energy into developing a clear marketing message, establish a niche customer, demonstrate authenticity, integrity and professionalism in everything you do. Then reach out to your competition and look for ways you can support one another.