*Throughout our development, we are instilled with a strong sense of individual responsibility through our parents, teachers, and coaches. It is therefore not surprising that these values follow through in our working lives . . .*

discover their living room furniture completely rearranged, or even discarded, to match his own vision of the room.[3]

This individualistic nonteam behavior exhibited by Wright is mimicked in fiction. In Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead*, Howard Roark is the prototypical individualist designer. Roark refuses to see his personal vision compromised in the slightest. In a characteristic example, Roark receives a commission to ghost-design a public housing project, and agrees on the condition that the buildings not be altered in any way from his designs. When it becomes clear that the plans have been altered mid-project, Roark blows up the unfinished building. Roark's condition to undertake the work, and his later behavior, are the antithesis of team design. The result of his project, one intended for the good of the public, is lost in a battle against his ego and stubborn philosophy.

However, if recognized and addressed, particularly with reference to how to meet a performance challenge, individual concerns and differences become a source of strength. Real teams do present ways for each individual to contribute and thereby gain distinction in three ways: (1) team members recognize the contributions of one another in ways that are truly meaningful; (2) teams take great pride in their joint accomplishments, and when those are recognized, every member of the team feels rewarded; (3) enlightened organizations take account of the team contributions of individuals when they are evaluating and advancing individuals. Indeed, when tied to a common team purpose and goals, our need to distinguish ourselves as individuals in design can become an energy source for team performance.

## Teams Facilitate Problem Solving

Through jointly developing clear goals and approaches, teams establish communications that support real-time problem solving and initiative. The flexibility and responsiveness of a team allow approaches to be realigned as new information and challenges come to light. Teams also provide a unique social dimension. Real teams do not emerge unless the people in them work hard to overcome barriers blocking collective performance. By tackling these obstacles together, people on teams build trust and confidence in each other's capabilities. This collective commitment causes teams not to feel as threatened by change as an individual, and to enlarge their solution space. An added bonus is the discovery that teams seem to have more fun! Team members will often talk about the fun aspects of working together, and a highly