

Greetings! Here's your February, 2019 edition of Gator Bites with ideas and tips to help grow and improve your organization.

FEATURE ARTICLE: Teamwork - The Know-It-All

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Success, real success, is helping other people be successful.

Pass it On

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TEAMWORK: The Know-It-All

Many years ago I participated in a training program that was a business game. Everyone was divided into teams with each team having a participant from a different discipline: sales, R&D, accounting, marketing, HR, production, and purchasing. There were six teams. All the teams sold the same product and had to determine where to manufacture that product, what price to charge, marketing media, etc., and a budget for each business function. All the variables were uploaded into a computer model which compared our team's strategy to every other team.

The purpose for teams is to take advantage of the collective wisdom of all the team members. We learn from each other's education, experience, and perspective and apply that to the problem at hand. We all look at problems and opportunities from different backgrounds and perspectives. Hearing someone else's viewpoint

stimulates each person's thinking and triggers new ideas. There was a Ph.D. research chemist on my team who considered himself to be the authority when it came to business. He was a really smart guy but was adamant that **HIS** solution was the only solution. He totally dominated the discussions and insisted on his own way. Finally, the rest of the team gave in and we turned in his solution. When the results of the first round were announced our team was dead last. Our Ph.D. was crestfallen. He couldn't believe he had been wrong. It was a very humbling experience for him and a lesson for all of us. In the ensuing rounds, our inputs represented the combined knowledge of the whole team and we gradually improved our results. We rose in the standing and finished in the middle of the pack but we were too far behind from the first round to have any chance of winning.

The next time you are on a team:

1. Remember, no one knows everything
2. Respect the views of others
3. Learn from the perspectives of others
4. Delight in contrary opinions, they stimulate your thinking

Remember: There is no "I" in Team

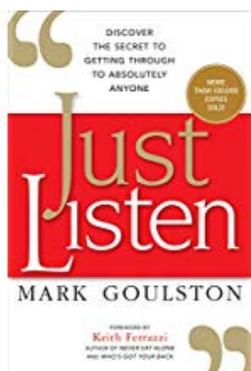
Here's an teamwork article you might enjoy: *To Improve Your Team, First Work on Yourself*

Jennifer Porter, **JANUARY 29, 2019, Harvard Business Review**
<https://hbr.org/2019/01/to-improve-your-team-first-work-on-yourself>

Click here for more articles: [Click here](#)

Quote of the Month

“Learn from the mistakes of others, you can't possibly live long enough to make them all yourself.” - Eleanor Roosevelt



Book of the Month:

Just Listen by Dr. Mark Goulston

I read this book last year and I'm currently re-reading it. It is excellent. Author Mark Goulston shares simple but powerful techniques readers can use to really get through to people—whether they're coworkers, friends,

strangers, or enemies. Just Listen reveals how to:

* Make a powerful and positive first impression

* Listen effectively * Make even a total stranger-a potential client and feel "felt"

* Talk an angry or aggressive person away from an instinctual, unproductive reaction and toward a more rational mindset

* Achieve buy-in, the linchpin of all persuasion, negotiation, sales, and more.

Getting through is a fine art but a critical one. With the help of this groundbreaking book readers will be able to turn the "impossible" and "unreachable" people in their lives into allies, devoted customers, loyal colleagues, and lifetime friends.

INSPIRATION

The Obstacle in our Path

There once was a very wealthy and curious king. This king had a huge boulder placed in the middle of a road. Then he hid nearby to see if anyone would try to remove the gigantic rock from the road. The first people to pass by were some of the king's wealthiest merchants and courtiers. Rather than moving it, they simply walked around it. A few loudly blamed the King for not maintaining the roads. Not one of them tried to move the boulder.

Finally, a peasant came along. His arms were full of vegetables. When he got near the boulder, rather than simply walking around it as the others had, the peasant put down his load and tried to move the stone to the side of the road. It took a lot of effort but he finally succeeded. The peasant gathered up his load and was ready to go on his way when he saw a purse lying in the road where the boulder had been. The peasant opened the purse. The purse was stuffed full of gold coins and a note from the king. The king's note said the purse's gold was a reward for moving the boulder from the road.

The king showed the peasant what many of us never understand: every obstacle presents an opportunity to improve our condition.

[App of the Month](#)

This is a new column for Gator Bites that hopefully will help you improve your productivity. If you have a favorite app please email me at rockwell@hargray.com so we can share it with the Gator Bites community.

DropBox

At the 2017 Institute of Management Accountant's international convention in Denver I had the pleasure of meeting Beth Ziesenis.

She calls herself "your nerdy best friend." Beth has written several books which profile numerous apps. Here is a quote from her book "Nerd Know-How."

"I could not, would not, cannot live without Dropbox. In a nutshell, Dropbox is your hard drive - everywhere. When you sign up for an account, you download the software to your machine and install apps on your devices. The system creates a Dropbox folder on your computer and anything you place into that folder is available anywhere you need it."

You can share folders and give people either read only or write access so you can work on files together. You have a local file on your computer and a file in the cloud so you can access files from your phone or tablet. In effect Dropbox is an additional backup.

I use Dropbox to share files and collaborate with clients and associates. I also use it to store all my photographs.

Words of Wisdom

[Observations from an Old Farmer](#)

If you find yourself in a hole, the first thing to do is to stop digging.



7 Ways small businesses can benefit from artificial intelligence?

Chris Hervochoon, Owner at SOAR

Gator Bites welcomes guest columnist Chris Hervochoon, owner of SOAR - A Better Way CPA. <https://betterwaycpa.com/>, 843-608-0298, chris@betterwaycpa.com

The ways in which you can leverage AI in your business are really only limited by your imagination and the amount of data you have. If you don't have much data or your business doesn't generate much data, you are going to be limited in what you can implement. That's why it's so important to collect and store data in your business, as was recently discussed in this article from Global Banking and Finance [article](#)

"Transactions come in many forms, but they are united by the fact that it is ultimately about data management. In a digital world, data thrives in the form of ones and zeros. It is the first milestone in any digitization journey. With truly digitized transactions, end-to-end whether it's within

sales or procurement, you'll start your transformative venture in the right end."

For the purpose of this article, I am including bots, algorithms and machine learning in the AI bucket. Tools such as Dataroot, H2O.ai, Dataiku, BigML, Azure AI and the Watson API are democratizing AI, as are the AI and bots which natively exist in apps that we use every day. Here are some examples of how small businesses can benefit from AI today:

- **1. Making predictions** - in my last job we were deploying DataRobot to predict the cost of cancer treatments based on prior-authorization data collected from the doctor. If you have enough data, and you have something you want to predict, this use can transform your business.
- **2. Categorizing accounting transactions** - this is something that's built into the outsourced accounting workflow of my CPA firm.
- **3. Chat bots** - for marketing and customer support. Tools such as chatfuel, ManyChat, MobileMonkey, and Zendesk can be used here.
- **4. Fraud detection** on credit card purchases (yes, this impacts your business and also protects the transactions you make with your business credit card).
- **5. Facebook ads** - the algorithm that sits beneath the ads you run and helps you with targeting. In fact, this probably applies to any social media advertising you do.
- **6. Recommender systems** (e.g. - in your Shopify store) and shopping cart abandonment.
- **7. Zapier** - connects tons of apps together with their APIs using no code. Effectively you're building your own bot [as I did in this video](#) to automate some of my customer acquisition processes. There are also similar services such as Flow and Automate.io.



Brad Tholen with Horizon Home Inspectors talks about how he came to a better understanding of Accounting
[Listen to the interview](#)

DWIT AWARD

Gator Bites proudly recognizes people who Do Whatever It Takes to help the business community and other businesses succeed.

Unfortunately, I didn't get any nominees this month for the DWIT award.

Email me at rockwell@hargray.com with your nominee for a future DWIT award.

STAPLES Advantage Money Saving Idea

In 2010 we partnered with Staples to create Rockwell Purchasing Association (RPA) so small businesses could qualify for commercial discounts. Your organization would have to purchase \$35,000/year to qualify for commercial discounts. By combining the purchases of our 100+ members, we qualify for 10-15% discounts. I've actually gotten as much as 40% but that isn't the norm. Contrast that with Staples Rewards, which is a retail discount program for individuals that gives 5% discounts. As a member of Rockwell Purchasing Associates (RPA), you can buy online or in any store in the lower 48 states. There are over 23,000 items in the RPA catalog. Not only do we have office supplies, but we have cleaning and break room supplies, furniture, technology products, logo items, and many other business services like printing and promotional products. Non-profit organizations are also eligible for membership.

Membership in RPA is FREE and there are no purchase requirements. To sign up click on [RPA](#) and start saving.



Bridge The Gap

Is there a gap between where you are and where you want to be?

Our coaches can help you bridge the gap and put you on the right path to reach your vision. Why use a coach? In pro football games the offensive and defensive coordinator's sit up high in the

sky boxes. Why? Because from that vantage point they can see the whole field and relay that information to the coaches on the field. The coaches on the field can only see a little of the field and the players can only see what is in front of them. In your business it is hard to see more than the operations side of the business let alone anticipate business trends and competitors. Your business coach can provide a unique view to help you bridge the gap. Contact us at rockwell@hargray.com or 843-597-4826 for a free consultation.

Need a speaker?

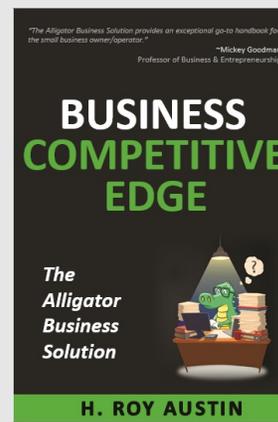
Coach Roy Austin has presented to audiences all across the country at conventions, company management teams, and non-profits. His presentations are characterized as combining humor and true stories to convey business education. Contact Roy at 843-597-4826 or email him at rockwell@hargray.com.

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Book Review

“As managing partner of a regional accounting firm, I see many small businesses’ financial results. I believe if more of my clients read this

book and paid attention to the details that are discussed, I would have more successful clients. Many of my small business clients are good at certain aspects of their businesses but have many details that are wanting for lack of attention and lack of knowledge on these issues. This book puts into simple readable perspective some of the basic things that businesses can focus upon to achieve greater success. One of the issues I have with the many business books I read is keeping my attention and not lingering on a point too long. This was written well, flowed nicely, and kept my attention. I really believe it will be a help to small businesses that take the time to read it.”

~ **Michael T. McCarthy. CPA**

Managing Partner, Hancock Askew & Co., LLP
Offices in Savannah, Atlanta & Miami



Promote your Business

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