

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

FEATURE ARTICLE: Teamwork - Your Secret Weapon

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

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TEAMWORK—Your Organization's Secret Weapon

A lot has been written about, and extensive research has been done, on the value of teamwork. Often leaders cite teamwork as the secret for their success. All of the 18 companies interviewed for *The Alligator Business Solution* cited teamwork as a prime ingredient for their success. I've worked with and interviewed many organizations that pay lip service to the concept of teamwork but they really don't practice it. They often describe the whole organization as a team and one big family. That sounds great but is it true of your organization. Ask yourself this question:

“Do I really have a team or do I just have employees whom I call team members?”

Do you find this question to be both sobering and a little insulting? My first response, when asked this questions, was defensive – “*of course I have a team.*” For a few minutes put ego aside, step back, and look at your organization from 40,000 feet.

What constitutes teamwork?

I define teamwork as:

“A group of people working together to achieve a common goal they are excited about and committed to.”

Does your organization have goals? If so do your teams and team members have goals? If not, are they really a team?

What's in it for me?

If you want committed team members there has to be something in it for them. What is their reward for achieving goals? In one case an owner promised the IT Director that he would receive some ownership in the company. Year after year the same promise, ownership someday but, now is not the right time. He eventually quit creating a huge vacuum of knowledge. Do you have a reward system for your teams?

Does your team know the score?

In sports, the score may determine the strategy. In football, if the team is down by 21 points at the start of the 4th quarter it may be time to change the game plan. If your team doesn't know the score how can they devise a new plan? Are you sharing relevant information with them such as financial information? Espy Lumber has weekly and monthly meetings with teams and employees. They track an amazing number of operational and financial metrics and share that with their employees. Espy's transparency builds trust and commitment. If people don't trust you they won't follow you. The pros and cons of sharing financial information are discussed in more detail in *The Alligator Business Solution*. Does your team know the score?

Do you have regular team meetings?

Having regular team meetings is a critical aspect of team building. I interviewed The Landings, a residential community, for *The Alligator Business Solution*. They are fanatical about regular team meetings and have a daily ten-minute meeting to review issues that need to be addressed. At that meeting, they discuss one of their ten values. Every ten days, year after year the same value is discussed. Those values define their culture and become ingrained in their team's attitude and performance. Yes, that ten minutes takes time away from operations but pays huge dividends in efficiency, and productivity, and commitment to the organization's goals. Are you having regular team meetings?

Are team members included in the decision-making process?

Ultimately you have to make the final decisions on critical issues. But do you listen to your team's recommendations? Do you give your team the freedom to make certain types of decisions? Yes, they will make mistakes. When I became CFO of D.J. Powers, Inc., I told my team *"I expect you to make mistakes. I make mistakes. When you make a mistake I expect you to tell me and recommend how to avoid that mistake in the future. I won't hold mistakes against you unless you try and hide them or keep making the same mistake over and over."* Are your teams and team members given a voice in decision making?

Summary

Would you feel part of the team if you had no input into decisions, no goals, no rewards, and weren't told the score?

Do you have a team or just employees called team members?

For more tips on better teamwork go to <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/tips-for-better-teamwork-1919225>

Gator Bite:

There is no "I" in Team. Team really stands for

Together

Everyone

Accomplishes

More

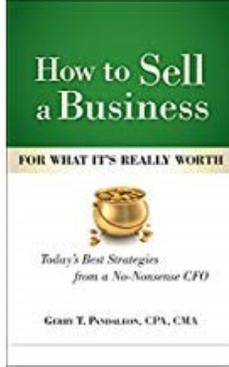
Click here for more articles: [Click here](#)

Quote of the Month

Real knowledge is to know the extent of one's ignorance. - Confucius

Book of the Month:

How To Sell A Business For What It's



Really Worth, No-nonsense secrets from a forensic accountant and CFO by Gerry Pandaleon

I had the pleasure of meeting Gerry in Indianapolis last year where we were both speaking at the Institute of Management Accountants International Convention. Gerry points out that the time to start planning to sell a business is 5 to 10 years before the actual sale. The book is only 112 pages and is full of tips, strategies, and true stories.

INSPIRATION

Once, there was an older man, who was broke, living in a tiny house and owned a beat up car. He was living off of \$99 social security checks. At 65 years of age, he decided things had to change. So he thought about what he had to offer. His friends raved about his chicken recipe. He decided that this was his best shot at making a change. He left Kentucky and traveled to different states to try to sell his recipe. He told restaurant owners that he had a mouthwatering chicken recipe. He offered the recipe to them for free, just asking for a small percentage on the items sold. Sounds like a good deal, right? Unfortunately, not to most of the restaurants. He heard NO over 1000 times. Even after all of those rejections, he didn't give up. He believed his chicken recipe was something special. He got rejected 1009 times before he heard his first yes. With that one success Colonel Hartland Sanders changed the way Americans eat chicken. Kentucky Fried Chicken, popularly known as KFC, was born. Remember, never give up and always believe in yourself in spite of rejection.



Mike Peterson made this a requirement of his senior management team.

[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.

Words of Wisdom by Don Brashiers

Don Brashiers Chairs the Bluffton, SC Chamber of Commerce and is a highly successful businessman.

- **When You are Finished Learning and Changing, You are Finished**

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.



FOCUS

I met this young lady in the Okavonga Delta in Botswana. She didn't pay any attention to our safari vehicle because she was focused on a small herd of Impala antelope. She was hoping a suicidal Impala would come near. Her focus was intense. How is your focus? Do you need to re-energize or re-focus your efforts?

Our coaches can help you get your organization on track.

Need a speaker?

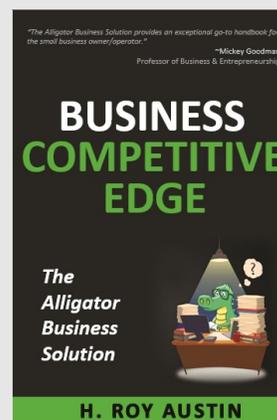
Coach Roy Austin has presented to audiences all across the country at conventions, company management teams, and non-profits. Contact Roy at 843-597-4826 or at rockwell@hargray.com.

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Paperback



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Book Review

"Roy's groundbreaking book is both fun and relevant. Early on, he indicates that alligators fail more than they succeed. I actually am happy about this! But the real "gator bite," or learning nugget, from Rocky the Alligator is that small businesses must learn from their mistakes and adapt to the challenges of customer sophistication, fierce competition, and, yes, onerous regulation. Remembering that small businesses in the U.S. generally account for 60 to 80 percent of net new jobs growth, this book is a must for small businesses to navigate the swamp and grow with confidence and integrity."

~ **Jeffrey C. Thomson, CMA, CAE**, CEO, Institute of Management Accountants



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