



Tips FROM THE Top[®]

Business insights
from those at the top
for those at the top

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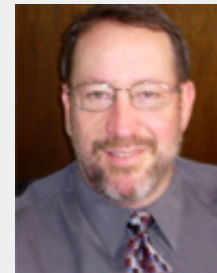
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THE ALTERNATIVE BOARD[®]

Achieve Success with Peer Advice and Coaching



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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Doing It Their Way Is His Way



“When are you going to get off your ass and do it?” asked his long-time mentor. The question resulted in a clarifying moment for Art Hance. He took his knowledge of and experience in construction management and started his own business because he wanted more flexibility in how projects were delivered. Art wanted to tailor services to the individual client and project.

Clients often come to him with a desire to use contractors that they know or have worked with in the past. They may want to use a particular material or process that they have heard about. Hance Construction’s method of assembling a unique team based on a project’s parameters allows them to get the job done and accommodate the client’s wishes.

Hance’s oversight on the design and construction of a 10,000 sq. ft. Bavarian Chalet residence in New Jersey illustrates that flexibility. The chalet took 2 years, 50 shipping containers of authentic German materials and a willingness to apply techniques more common to industrial construction to complete.

Hance Construction is responsive as well as flexible. Art didn’t hesitate

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

when he received a call that an industrial gas processing facility had been severely damaged by an explosion. He loaded a truck with tools, headed for the site and assembled a work crew on the way. The plant was back in operation within 72 hours.

Art says, “I like to figure out ways to do jobs that may not have been done before. We get most of our business from referrals vs. competitive bidding.” Potential clients approach us with an outline of a project. We evaluate the job and the client’s preferred approach. Sometimes we turn projects down because we know from experience where things can go wrong and have learned that the customer is not always right.”

Art joined his TAB Board® in July of 2005. Prior to TAB, he saw himself as “always in the weeds.” He has started to think and act more strategically and to set goals and objectives. Art says, “I can see ahead to the time when the major strategic goals will be reached.”

Reading Allen Fishman’s book, *7 Secrets of Great Entrepreneurial Masters*, reminded Art of his primary motivation for succeeding in his business. “The business really provides me the opportunity to enjoy my family which is the whole point of all this. I look forward to increasing that enjoyment every year with the help I get from TAB.”

For more information about Hance Construction, [click here](#) to go to www.hanceconstruction.com.

FINANCE

Even Out Your Monthly Corporate Cash Flow

Managing cash flow effectively is an issue for all companies. Payroll is one of the largest expenses for many companies. If you are paying your staff bi-weekly (26 pay periods per year), you can eliminate monthly spikes in wages/salary cash flow by switching to paying your staff semi-monthly (e.g., 15th and last day of month—24 pay periods per year). Thus no more three-pay-period months twice a year—which can strain corporate cash flow.

Cameron Inglis, Germinate Inc., Winnipeg, MB

HUMAN RELATIONS

TAB Informational Breakfast

Tuesday, October 31, 2006

7:30 AM - 9:00 PM

[More Information](#)

TAB Informational Lunch

Wednesday, November 8, 2006

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

[More Information](#)

TAB Board Meetings

Wednesday, October 11, 2006

[Bottom Line TAB Board Meeting](#)

Wednesday, October 18, 2006

[President's TAB Board Meeting](#)

Thursday, November 2, 2006

[CEO TAB Board Meeting](#)

Friday, November 3, 2006

[Strategic TAB Board Meeting](#)

QUICK TIPS

Three-of-Five Rule

A story I tell my employees is the same story I told my children as they became adults and started their careers. It is a rule I live by and believe everyone should live by. Here is how it goes.

If you get up in the morning and look forward to your day (weekday/workday) three of every five days, then you have a good job. If you get up in the morning and look forward to your day four days a week, then you have a great job. If you get up in the morning and look forward to your day five of every five days, then you are a very fortunate person.

Work as life is not about how much money you make; it's about enjoying your day and what you do each day. The real value is in what you accomplish, the friends you make, the environment you spend your time in and the fulfillment it provides you. Generally speaking, the money for the work will be fair for what you do, plus or minus 10 percent—the real paycheck is being happy. If you can only say to yourself you look forward to your day two days or less each week, you should find something else to do.

Jeff Mattson, Black Box Resale Services, Brooklyn Park, MN

OPERATIONS

Banning Inter Office Email Can Improve Communications

I think e-mail has become a bottleneck to communication in many companies. All too often, I see someone struggle for 20 minutes on the computer to describe a situation for the person in the office next door. Even worse, the question involved only requires a “yes” or “no” answer!

I recently experimented with my own 30-day campaign against internal e-mails. I announced that I would not accept any e-mails from my own staff. They would have to contact me face-to-face or via telephone.

After only a couple of weeks, our communications are better, projects are moving faster, and my relationships with my direct reports have improved.

Randy Smith, FORUM Systems Group, San Antonio, TX

TECHNOLOGY

E-Recruiting

Virtually every business has a Web site or should. Do you use yours for recruiting? Always have a button or link for “job opportunities.” The savings can be substantial, especially if you reduce your newspaper help-wanted ads with ones that only check your Web site.

John F. Dini

Principal, TAB-Certified Facilitator

San Antonio, TX

Headache Tax

We all have customers that demand extra time and attention. Instead of firing them, I levy what I think of as a “headache tax” to compensate for the issues that they raise. If they leave, they leave. If they stay, at least we are being compensated.

Frank Kelly

Kelair, Inc.

Port Chester, NY

Leave Early for a Vacation

For a scheduled vacation, plan to remove yourself from your normal day-to-day tasks and supervision, before you actually leave the office (i.e., “leave” on your vacation a week early). This will have the effect of flushing out any latent problems that might otherwise not surface until you were half-way around the world and less likely to be able to deal with them while being away.

Jack Goncalves

JMCC Cleaning and Maintenance

Services

Zaba Who?

In July '06, a new database became available free to the general public that displays your personal information (names, addresses, phone numbers, e-mails, birth dates, and the information goes back many years). This is more than simple contact information.

The database is www.zabasearch.com. Type in your name—it is interesting to see all the names and information, until you realize this may be more information than you want available. If your name is in the database, you may want it removed.

If you want the info edited or blocked, you may e-mail info@zabasearch.com and they will e-mail you on how to edit or block your information. The State Attorney General's office recommends following up to ensure Zabasearch complies with your request and filing a complaint with the AG office if they do not.

Russ Hill, Ultimate Lead, Cleveland, OH

FINANCE

Planning for a Rainy Day

The time to advertise and promote your business is when you're busy and doing well; in that way, you have a good story to tell, have the funds to do it and will always have something in the pipeline to see you through downturns. It's also the best time to set up your bank line of credit—when you have a good balance and don't need it.

Jim Woerner, James Woerner Inc., Farmingdale, NY

The Alternative Board® brings business owners, CEOs and presidents of non-competing businesses together in boards, where members can present challenges and opportunities to the board for seasoned, practical advice from other owners who understand one another's perspective and contribute meaningful solutions. The boards consist of up to 12 members, meeting monthly under the guidance of a TAB-Certified Facilitator. Over 300 TAB Boards are operating each month across the United States, Canada and South America. Since its inception, thousands of businesses have benefited from membership in The Alternative Board®. For more information on The Alternative Board®, visit www.TABBoards.com

Toronto, ON

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Masters by Allen E. Fishman, Founder and CEO of The Alternative Board®.

*800 CEO Read, Aug. 1st, 2006.



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