



## Corley Hanson Associates Newsletter

Making Your Business a Team Sport!  
March 2005

### Greetings!

Ahhh, spring! A time for new growth. (Although we on the East Coast are hard pressed to believe winter will ever end!) For some, this season brings to mind spring training; a time to prepare for coming goals and challenges. For others, this time of year represents renewal; a time for a fresh outlook brimming with new possibilities and hope. Everywhere we look, we're reminded that life is a cycle: what was cold and dormant is now revived and beginning to blossom. In the spirit of the season, let's revive our objectives.

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### Possibilities of Spring

What new possibilities are available to you? How can your team or business be revitalized? Consider implementing Single Daily Actions (SDAs) to initiate and sustain momentum toward your goals. Your SDAs might include:

- Connect with one contact with whom you want to establish a collaborative relationship.
- Schedule that appointment you've been putting off.
- Take one step of a project that's been stagnant.

The important thing is to take one action that will move you towards your goal or dream. It doesn't have to be a big step, but it has to be an action. In keeping with our spring metaphor: you can't get a blossom if you don't plant a seed. Do this right now!

*"The sages do not consider that making no mistakes is a blessing. They believe, rather, that the great virtue of man lies in his ability to correct his mistakes and continually make a new man of himself."* - Wang Yang-Ming (1472-1529) Chinese Philosopher



### Book Review: Tales from the Bed: On Living, Dying and Having It All



*Tales from the Bed:  
On Living, Dying and  
Having It All* by Katie  
Couric (forward);  
Jenifer Estess and  
Valerie Estess

A true story that proves the power of teamwork. It's the poignant story of Jenifer Estess who fought a courageous battle with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease). Jenifer and her two sisters formed an extremely powerful team: they had a very clear mission and they were focused. From Jenifer's bedside in New York City, they created Project A.L.S to improve research efforts to find a cure for this fatal disease; they also raised \$6

## High Performance Teams

Great teams don't just happen naturally; they're constructed. It's the team leader's responsibility to have a strong understanding of team-building principles so that he or she can develop a cohesive team. Answers to the following questions can help achieve success.

- What is your vision for this team?
- What is this team's objective?
- How often will the team meet?
- How will the team agree to work together?

Think of a time when you were on a winning team, whether it was a sports team, a committee, or a project. What made it successful? How did you know you were part of a great team? If you've ever participated on a team that wasn't successful, consider why it didn't work.

Chances are the successful team had these characteristics, which are necessary for high-performance teams:

1. A stated mission or purpose
2. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities
3. Team members are empowered to make decisions
4. Team members have flexibility
5. Good morale
6. Excellent communication

For an easy tool you can use to assess your team, e-mail [whanson@corleyhanson.com](mailto:whanson@corleyhanson.com) for a **FREE** copy of our High Performance Team Wheel and Rating Form.

## The Geese Metaphor: Team Lessons

What can a skein of geese (that's what a flock of geese in flight is called) teach us about the importance of teamwork?

**FACT:** As each goose flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the birds that follow. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71 percent greater flying range than if each bird flew alone.

**LESSON:** People who share a common direction and a sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they benefit from combined power.

**FACT:** When a goose falls out of formation, it's slowed by increased drag and resistance. It quickly moves back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power provided by the bird immediately in front of it.

**LESSON:** When we stick together, we help ourselves as much as we help each other.

**FACT:** When the lead goose tires, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies to the point position.

**LESSON:** It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership. As with geese, people are interdependent on each other's skills, capabilities, and unique combinations of gifts, talents, or resources.



million to fund that research.

An excerpt from the book: "There's enough brain power out there - enough raw intelligence. But no one's working together," said Valerie. "Or working efficiently," said Meredith. "Maybe we could make them work together," said Valerie. "And meet deadlines," Meredith continued. "I mean, what happens to us when don't meet deadlines?" "Fired," I said. "These doctors need to collaborate..."

What a gift to the world if we had more high- performance teams where they were needed. For more background on this inspiring book and Project A.L.S., see

[www.projectals.org](http://www.projectals.org) .

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**FACT:** Geese flying in formation honk to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

**LESSON:** If we're going to make noise, let's be sure it's helping the overall mission. Productivity is higher in groups where the individual members support each other. The power of encouragement (to stand by one's core values and encourage others' values) is the quality of honking we seek.

**FACT:** When a goose gets sick or wounded, two geese drop out of formation and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with it until it can fly again; together they join another formation or catch up with their flock. Eventually, they'll all end up in the same place.

**LESSON:** We must stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong. Helping others doesn't weaken our own chances for success.

### Movie Review: Million Dollar Baby

This Academy Award winner is about redemption, love, and following one's dream. It's a story of how three people pull together as one. The messages of faith and commitment hit all the right notes and will resonate in your heart and inspire you long after the credits roll.



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