



Corley Hanson Associates Newsletter

Making Your Business a Team Sport!
April 2005

Greetings!

April arrived, roaring with the promise of fresh starts, blue sky, and sunshine. On the East Coast, the frigid winds of winter have finally taken their leave, at least for now. Baseball season is here and the dream of being world champs once again awakens. Fond memories may last us a lifetime, but we're ready to bring the dream to life once more. And in true Yankee character, we hope for the best and prepare for the worst, knowing that setbacks are a way of life, there for the purpose of creating a path to success.

in this issue

- Book Review: *The E-Myth Revisited: Why Most Small Businesses Don't Work and What To Do About It*
- Leadership Moment: *The Importance of Simplicity*
- Functional Feedback
- Will Corley's Point Leadership
- Movie Review: *Mr. Holland's Opus*

Leadership Moment: The Importance of Simplicity

"Life is really simple, but men insist on making it complicated." - Confucius

We live in a complicated world and there's no better place to see that in action than in the business environment. Ever-evolving technology, a world market, and our insatiable quest for more, better, faster, and newer adds to the complexity. Of course, change is good. But when a situation gets needlessly complex, time, energy, and money are wasted. It often falls to us as leaders to provide perspective and clarity. One way to do this is to ask a basic question: How can we make this simpler?

Members of the Corley Hanson team were recently involved in a fundraising project for a women's business organization. In an attempt to connect clients, sponsors, money, etc., the committee had created a process so complicated that we lost sight of the goals we were trying to achieve. The solution was to ask, "How can we make this simpler?"

When a project or situation seems to be more complicated than it needs to be, it usually is. In Henry David Thoreau's words: "Simplify, simplify, simplify. . ." Wise words that are as true today as they were then.

Leadership Inquiry: How can I make my project more simple?

"Making the simple complicated is commonplace; making the complicated simple, awesomely simple, that's creativity." -Charles Mingus



Book Review: *The E-Myth Revisited: Why Most Small Businesses Don't Work and What To Do About It*



The E-Myth Revisited: Why Most Small Businesses Don't Work and What to Do About It by Michael Gerber

This book explores the challenge that faces most small business owners who fail because they believe that their craft or expertise is the critical ingredient for success. Gerber shares the glum fact that 95 percent of small businesses fail within the first five years. The problem he points to is that most business owners are technicians who go to work "in the business, and

Functional Feedback

Employees need it, surveys ask for it, and Web sites solicit it: your feedback. It's considered valuable because it's a way to measure results. But feedback that isn't specific, or even wanted, isn't helpful at all. Here are some guidelines for giving good feedback.

1. Get permission to give feedback. If you're being proactive and your feedback hasn't yet been requested, ask the other person for the okay. "May I have your permission to give you some feedback on . . ." or "Do you mind if I give you some feedback on that?" Now you've set the stage for the other person to be more open and receptive to your comments.
2. Before you share your observations, ask the other person to give his feedback on the situation. For example, ask "How do you think you did?" This gives the other person the opportunity to gauge the accuracy of his perceptions.
3. Be specific. Vague or non-specific feedback is not helpful because it doesn't provide enough information. An effective way to frame your comments is to say:
 - o This is what I liked about what you did
 - o This is what I wanted more of
4. Make eye contact. This not only shows your confidence in what you're saying, it makes the other person feel you're really listening when they're talking.
5. Give often. Feedback is most effective when provided on a regular basis.
6. These Edible Feedback questions help you to prepare your feedback:
 - o What worked?
 - o What didn't work?
 - o What might you do differently?



become swallowed up by the demands of the being both of the worker and the owner." Only when the owner learns to "work on" the business and is able to create systems that work for the business does he or she have a chance to succeed.

Gerber has a new book out, *E-Myth Mastery: The Seven Essential Disciplines for Building a World Class Company*, which is full of rich ideas - but read *E-Myth Revisited* first.

[To order this book](#)

Will Corley's Point Leadership

Growing up, I loved to play basketball. The position I embraced most naturally was the point guard. The point guard is the natural leader on the court; it's the person responsible for running the offense. A truly successful point guard makes everyone a better player by putting the ball in their hands at just the right time in just the right place. That, of course, helps the team as a whole. When the game is flowing, it's fun and productive and winning comes easy.



At Corley Hanson, we believe that organizations can benefit by developing point leaders who see and seize opportunities to put individuals and teams in situations in which they will flourish.

Point Leader Inquiry:

- Where do you show up as a point leader?
- What opportunities exist to engage others?

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Movie Review: Mr. Holland's Opus

One of our favorite movie themes is when one person makes a difference in the lives of others. In Mr. Holland's Opus, the main character (played by Richard Dreyfuss) is a musician who takes a job as a music teacher because he believes it will allow him the time to pursue his life's dream of composing music. Instead, he helps his students recognize their own gifts and encourages them to "play the sunset" so that they can achieve their dreams. Dreyfuss gives a terrific performance and the supporting cast is magnificent. An inspirational movie you'll want to own so that you can watch it over and over again.



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