



Corley Hanson Associates Newsletter

Making Your Business a Team Sport!

April 2008

Greetings!

Greetings! The Corley Hanson world headquarters has moved down to the coast of Rhode Island so this newsletter is barely squeaking out in the month of April. For those of you that are into sports, as Will Corley is, the baseball has started so the sports analogies and metaphors will begin to flow. For those that are not into sports, Wendy Hanson will make sure there is equal ground for those interested in arts, culture, film, movies, etc.

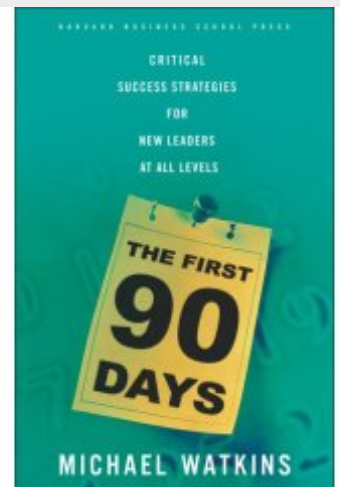
What seeds are you planting now? In our first article on Coach-ability we talk about this very important issue. Coaching is not for people that are struggling and suffering - coaching is for people that want to play a bigger game. That's the companies that we play with. Think about how well you coach your people and how much of you really understand the true meaning behind coaching. We will talk a little bit more about that in our second article. So wishing you all a wonderful spring filled with great business success and a balanced life.

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Coach-ability: Keys to Business Success

Book Review: The First 90 Days



by Michael Watkins

This book is a great resource for start ups, growth companies and managers. One purpose of this book is to help accelerate transitions that can be so painful and impact both the leaders, the players, the organization and business in many ways.

The author lays out a clear process for these 90 days that moves from getting clear on your strategy, what the leader needs to learn, creating credibility and setting priorities based on the business situation. It looks at how to get everyone

At Corley Hanson, we love partnering with businesses that are "game changing" the world. Creating synergy in a business doesn't just happen. Building a team requires focus, ongoing effort, adaptation (coming up with the right business strategy, ways of making money, etc.), and knowing what you are truly building. Many companies get lost, whether they are start ups or have been in business for awhile, they lose track of the end game. This takes a team effort as well as being on top of the game plan and continuing to develop and shift what it takes to succeed. You need to understand the wins; the set backs and look the barriers right in the face.

Coach-ability is so important for leaders in business because business is a challenging game to succeed in. The purpose of coaching is to improve the performance of a player, team or business. Coach- ability is a key element for success and a leader's willingness to be coached is a great sign to pay attention to. Recently we were talking with a colleague who worked with a venture capital group and there was a company whose CEO was not willing to be coached either by the board, the investors, or an outside coach. This didn't bode well for success in the future.

In sports, a key criteria for success on teams and for individuals is their ability to be coached because this is a sign that someone is approachable, willing to learn and develop their talents in the team. The difference between succeeding in business or sports and not, can often be slight. For instance, in baseball a couple of more hits in a week or one more win every ten games in a season can make a big difference. So the willingness to utilize the coaching provided can make the difference between just average and world class performance.

So remember, great leaders are "students of the game", whether they are talking about business or other games. They understand what executing means, they use all the resources that are available, they work hard, they are consistent and they support all the players on their team and develop a culture of people that are willing to be coached to make shift to move ahead.

[Coaching Skills for Managers](#)

on board-including your boss.

The underlying point is that there is logic to organizational alignment. Changing the structure before figuring out the strategy is unlikely to be productive. Also you cannot assess the fitness of your existing crew until you have a handle on your "destination, route, and boat."

One passage talks of Designing Organizational Architecture

Strategy: The core approach the organization will use to accomplish its goals

Structure: How people are situated in units and how their work is coordinated

Systems: The processes used to add value

Skills: The capabilities of the various groups of people in the organization

Culture: The values, norms, and assumptions that shape behavior

"Certainly, you need a focused strategy to move forward effectively. But misalignments among any of these five elements can make even the best strategy useless. Strategy drives the other elements and is influenced by them."

[To order this book](#)

Coaching is an important skill for managers, people's teams - it's a way of being, it's a way of asking questions, giving feedback, debriefing that becomes part of a culture. How are you going to create a coaching culture in your organization? Do you ask questions rather than jump to giving advice? Do you listen with curiosity rather than judgment? When you give feedback, do you ask the person first:

- "How do you think that meeting went?"
- "What are you think got accomplished?"
- Do you ask if you can give some feedback before just giving it?

These are all important things that a coach, as a manager or a colleague needs to learn how to do. It makes a huge difference in how an organization can move forward. For more information and to look at providing workshops, teleclasses, or training within your company on coaching skills for managers, send an email to whanson@corleyhanson.com.

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