




---

*You will succeed  
when you discover  
your natural talents  
and work where you  
can use them.*

---

### Inside this issue:

Book Corner: <i>Don't Waste Your Talent</i> , by Bob McDonald, Ph.D. and Don Hutcheson	1
New Bosses	1
Leadership Assessment	3
Meeting Starter	4
<b>Contacting Us</b>	4

---

## Book Corner ~ *Don't Waste Your Talent* by Bob McDonald, Ph.D. and Don Hutcheson

Last issue we reviewed *Now, Discover Your Strengths*. A *Collaborations* reader suggested we also read a similar book -- *Don't Waste Your Talent* by Bob McDonald, Ph.D. and Don Hutcheson. We read it and offer a review here.

The premise of the book is that you will succeed only if and when you discover your natural talents and work where you can use them. The research cited shows that when individuals focus on their natural abilities and construct a strategic plan, they experience profound and lasting benefits such as reduced stress, more overall balance, decreased burnout and increased satisfaction.

The eight critical factors for learning your talents and then applying them are:

- Abilities
- Values
- Skills
- Goals
- Interests
- Family of Origin
- Personality
- Stage of Development

The book will help you understand what each of the eight is, why it's important, and how to explore and understand it for yourself. If you are feeling unsatisfied with your work or career or just are ready for some self-discovery, you may find this book a helpful tool.



## New Bosses

*Question: I have been recently assigned to a new (at least to me) manager. I have many questions. In my career I have worked for several different people and some of them have remained a mystery for a very long time. I also anticipate becoming a supervisor soon and am wondering if there are any guidelines for what I should say to the people who will work for me?*

### Collaborations response

An excellent question! You'll find that our advice will work for you both with your new manager and with subordinates when you become a new supervisor.

In much of our work we find the same basic problem, a lack of clarity and understanding between subordinates (we'll use that word generically here for every level of reporting relationship, from front line employee to vice president.) and bosses (we'll use that word here to cover every level of reporting relationship, from supervisor to CEO.)

We are very big advocates of bosses telling the people who work for them as much as they possible can about themselves, how they work, what they expect from subordinates, how they will work with direct reports, what they perceive their own role to be and what they perceive the role of their subordinates to be, etc.

## New Bosses

*(Continued from page 1)*

We also advocate that this conversation, or series of conversations, be two way instead of just one way.

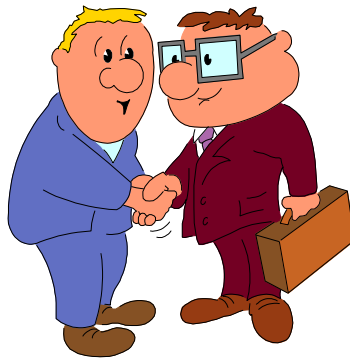
We have worked many places where those conversations have never taken place. The resulting lack of clarity has led to misperceptions, misunderstandings and faulty assumptions.

The solution can be as simple as having a conversation between the boss and the subordinate about anything which might have any bearing on their working relationship. This may actually be several conversations. If your boss doesn't initiate these conversations, you ought to.

### What to Talk About

Below is a list of topics you may want to include in your conversation. As you prepare for the conversation, you might find you will become clearer about how you work, what your expectations are, etc. For some of you that might happen for the first time!

Here is a list of some key topics which we think need to be covered. The list is not meant to be all inclusive.



How do you prefer to get information? verbally? in writing? with a summary? verbally first then in writing?

How do you delegate? clearly? with deadlines? with intermediate checkpoints?

What do you expect a subordinate to do when they encounter a problem? solve it? do the research then solve it? keep you informed? include you in the decision?

How will subordinates know they are doing a good job? a poor job?

What does it mean when you say "please see me"? right now? fit it into your priorities? make an appointment? within the day? within the week?

When do you want to know that a deadline cannot be met? ASAP? after a subordinate has exhausted all possibilities?

How do you like to receive written materials? in a rough? in a final draft?

How will the subordinate know you are displeased?

How do you want "bad news" to be delivered?

Is it ever too late to correct an error?

What is your concept of ethical behavior?

What makes you angry?

What do you want subordinates to do when they think you are wrong? if that doesn't work and they still think you are wrong? and if that doesn't work and they still think you are wrong?

How do you prefer to make decisions? alone? with input? by consensus?

How will they know that you have made a decision?

### Executive Transition Workshop

Discussing these topics is sometimes difficult, so we offer a workshop to assist in this vital exchange of information. The Executive Transition Workshop is for incoming bosses and their key people.


This workshop is designed to compress to a couple of days all of the normal "checking out" that goes on when a new boss arrives.

We are able to:

- 1) Get all of the normal questions subordinates have for a new boss answered immediately, and vice versa.
- 2) Quickly and concisely give the new boss the "lay of the land."

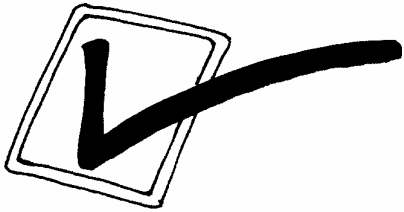
This typically evolves into three sets of information:

- 1) stuff we want to hear from the new boss,
- 2) stuff we want the new boss to know - but not do anything about, and
- 3) stuff we want the new boss to know - and do something about.

We have found this workshop to be extremely effective up to as much as a year after a new boss's arrival. If you'd like more information please call or e-mail one of us. 

## Leadership Assessment

We ask people at all levels of the organization to be leaders. But, how often do we stop to define what leadership is -- particularly for supervisors, line managers and team leaders? And, if we do define it, do we assess ourselves and others against that definition?



We have defined leadership in 4 key areas:

- Relationship
- Environment
- Processes
- Business Focus

In this and the next 3 issues of Collaborations, we will share our Leadership Assessment with you.

If you would like printed copies of the entire assessment, send an e-mail to [sgerke@att.net](mailto:sgerke@att.net).

### The Relationship Portion of the Assessment

1 = I could use work in this area    2 = I do OK in this area    3 = I could help others in this area

#### **As a Leader, I:**

- 1. Demonstrate effective communication skills.
- 2. Build trusting relationships with my followers.
- 3. Understand and build on people's differences.
- 4. Show appreciation of others.
- 5. Actively solicit feedback from others.
- 6. Provide useful feedback to others.
- 7. Use leadership styles based on individual's needs.

*How am I doing?  
Where do I need to im-  
Do I ask for and*

### How can you use this assessment?

**For Self-Understanding:** You could ask people to self-assess using these questions and then use the data to develop a plan for growth and development.

**For Feedback:** You could ask for feedback from peers or direct reports and then share the summarized data with the leader.

**For Organizational Understanding:** You could ask all leaders in a function or organization to self-assess and then use the data to formulate an organizational learning plan.



# Collaborations

PO Box 28085  
San Diego, CA 92198

## Contacting Us

### MARILYN DEMING

Deming Development Group  
26062 Kornblum Drive  
Escondido, CA 92026  
Voice: 760.746.6852  
Fax: 760.746.6052  
mdeming1@aol.com

### DAVE CAREY

P.O. Box 28085  
San Diego, CA 92198  
Voice: 858.485.1530  
Fax: 858.485.1007  
dave@davecarey.com  
<http://www.davecarey.com>

### SUSAN GERKE

Gerke Consulting & Development L.L.C.  
28782 Jaeger Drive  
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677  
Voice: 949.831.7088  
Fax: 949.831.0502  
sgerke@att.net



## Meeting Starter



The meeting starter for this issue is one we have used many times. It works particularly well with large groups or with groups who don't know each other very well. Susan frequently uses it when facilitating nonprofit Board of Directors retreats.

Purpose: This activity is a vehicle to help participants build relationships by getting to know each other on a more personal level.

Directions: *"You have 15 minutes to find one thing you have in common with each other person here. Once you have found something in common with one person, you cannot re-use that item with someone else. (example: Joe and Suzy both grew up in Oklahoma. If Mary also grew up in Oklahoma, Joe can't use that with her since he already used it with Suzy). There will be a prize for the pair who have the most unusual or unique thing in common."*

Hand out the sheets with names preprinted (or with blank lines if you don't know who will be there) -- get them on their feet -- watch the time. Try to provide enough time for everyone to finish. For a large group you may need more time -- or they just might not get to everyone.)

Debrief: Have each person share their most unusual or unique item. Give prizes, if appropriate. (offering a prize is optional)

You will be amazed at some of the unique things people find in common and you will be pleased at the "buzz" of energy in the group.



### We'd Like to Hear From You

Do you have a question for us or a topic you would like us to write about? We'd love to hear from you. Send an e-mail to [sgerke@att.net](mailto:sgerke@att.net) with your question or ideas. We can't respond to each individually, however we will respond in *Collaborations* based on topics most requested.