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## REVISE THE GOLDEN RULE

Do you know what others want or need from you?

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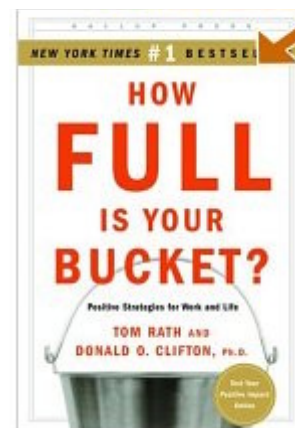
## Book Corner : *How Full Is Your Bucket?*

by Tom Rath and Donald Clifton

The number one reason people leave their jobs is that they don't feel appreciated! In a recent poll, 65% of Americans reported receiving no recognition for good work in the past year. These statistics are an excellent reason to read this book!

Rath and Clifton make a compelling argument for positivity. Then they share five key positive strategies for work and life. They are:

- 1) **Stop negative comments**  
How often do you make a negative comment? Listen to yourself and stop before you make that comment.
- 2) **Shine a light on what is right**  
Do you focus on what's right or what's wrong? Take the 15 question assessment to find out.
- 3) **Make best friends**  
How much support and encouragement do you give your friends?
- 4) **Give unexpectedly**  
Do you look for opportunities to give little gifts to positively influence someone's day?
- 5) **Revise the golden rule**  
Do you know what others want or need from you?



If you need your attitude boosted, or if you know someone else who needs an attitude adjustment, this is a great tool!

## Go Ahead, Take A Risk...

**Question:** I have tried to tell people to take appropriate / necessary risks. However, I really don't see many people stepping outside their comfort zone. How can I encourage people to take more initiative, and to go ahead and take a calculated risk once in a while?

**Collaborations response:** The question revolves around two topics: risk taking and initiative, which, while perhaps they are related, at the same time are different subjects. First let's try to focus on risk taking, and we'll discuss initiative in the next issue.

We certainly hear a lot of talk that sounds like, "We need to take some risks around here. We need to push the envelope a little more." Well, quite frankly, talk is cheap

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## Go Ahead, Take A Risk...

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and actions speak louder than words. While many managers and organizations say they encourage risk taking, their actions and cultures really do just the opposite. What is your history with risk taking? What is the history with “risk taking” in your organization?

Without being too critical, let’s look more closely at the question above.

The question specifically asks about “appropriate / necessary,” and “calculated risks.” What exactly do those words mean? Who defines and decides what type of a risk is “appropriate,” “necessary” and / or “calculated?” Is there any understanding of what those words might mean to you or in your organization?

Risk taking can get very messy and given enough time will undoubtedly result in failures with which you and your organization will have to deal. How have you dealt with risk taking and failure in the past? We can tell you that many managers and organizations we have worked with may say “they want people to take risks.” However, take a risk that results in failure and punishment, public ridicule, and reprimand follow quickly, not necessarily in that order.

It is easy to envision that “appropriate / necessary,” and “calculated” risks means one thing to senior management, another to middle management and yet another to the people closest to production or delivery. How have you and your organization dealt with risk taking and failures in the past?

Has risk taking been discussed to some depth in your organization? Some ongoing discussion of “appropriate / necessary,” and “calculated” risks would be a good idea. What are the limits and boundaries? It is one thing to risk something that may cost a few hundred dollars. It may be entirely different if the stakes are considerably higher.

Should the person with the risky idea discuss it first with you or someone else before going ahead? Maybe a “clearing house” for new ideas would be a good idea. What perceptions or misperceptions exist about past risk taking and risk takers? There may be “urban legends” in your organization about past risk-taking decisions. These need to be set straight. If the organization, or you, have not been receptive to risk taking in the past, or have said one thing and done another when people take risks and fall short, that needs to be acknowledged and owned. Then you can start talking about wanting to improve on or change past approaches to risk taking that haven’t worked out just perfectly.

If you really want people to think outside their comfort zones, they will need to be encouraged. Your encouragement needs to be consistent and on-going.

If you really want people to think outside their comfort zones, they will need to be encouraged. Your encouragement needs to be consistent and on-going. When people do take risks it would be good to debrief those decisions and actions. If they were successful, debriefing will re-enforce the idea that risk taking is encouraged around here. Debriefing also encourages others and sets examples for them.

If risk taking resulted in decisions and actions that produced poor results, or failed, debriefing will help people learn from their mistakes. This will also encourage others and set the example for them. If you really want people to stretch and take risks, then your objectives have to be to celebrate successes and to learn from mistakes. And until people are convinced of that they probably won’t venture out.

In a nutshell what you are trying to do is to create a culture where “appropriate / necessary,” and “calculated” risk taking is understood and encouraged. Where successes are celebrated and where we all learn from our mistakes. That will take time.

In our next issue we will discuss some ideas about encouraging people to take more “initiative.”

ON THE WEB ~ Visit [www.susangerke.com](http://www.susangerke.com) and [www.davecarey.com](http://www.davecarey.com)

Both websites carry all past issues of *Collaborations*. With *Adobe Acrobat Reader 4.0* you can view or download and print the issues.

# Teams

Much has been written about teams and teamwork. We've touched on the topic in several issues of Collaborations over the past 9 years. Let's look at an aspect you may not have considered.

Teams exist in many forms. The particular form of a team provides information that can help with goal setting, meetings and other key team activities. This model looks at two dimensions of teams. One dimension is Cooperation — that is the degree of cooperation needed between team members. The other dimension is Specialization — that is the degree of uniqueness of skills among team members. Let's look at this in a matrix.

Unique Skills

Degree of Specialization	<p>Each member has different skills. The sum of their performance = team performance.</p>	<p>Each member has special skills. Team performance is the result of integrated work.</p>
	<p>Each member has the same skills. The sum of their performance = team performance.</p>	<p>Team members have similar skills. Team performance is the result of integrated work.</p>

The two independent types of teams (left column) are characterized by individual goals and infrequent meetings. The two interdependent types of teams (right column) are characterized by team goals and frequent meetings.

The two types of teams with similar skills (bottom) can benefit from attending skills training together. The two types of teams with unique skills (top) are more likely to benefit from each member independently getting deeper training on their particular skills.

So, what type of team do you lead or are you a member of? You may want to bring this model to the team and have an open discussion to determine what type of team you are. Then the team can determine the implications and put an action plan in place to improve team performance.

Similar Skills

Independent

Interdependent

Degree of Cooperation

Unique Skills

## Examples

Degree of Specialization	Swim team	Football team
	Track and field team	Symphony orchestra
	Bowling team	Soccer team
	440 Relay race team	Synchronized swimming team

Similar Skills

Independent

Interdependent

Degree of Cooperation

## Susan Gerke

is the president of Gerke Consulting & Development and “helps people work better, together.” Susan’s focus since 1989 has been in designing, customizing and implementing leadership and teamwork programs meeting the needs of executives, managers, and employees in a wide number of companies and industries.

Application of her skill and knowledge has been in facilitation, consulting, curriculum development, and coaching. Susan has developed and delivered experiential programs in the areas of *group dynamics, team basics, mentoring, and facilitation skills*. She has worked with global teams and has certified facilitators around the world to deliver management, leadership, and team offerings.



A recognized expert on remote leadership and teaming, Susan is the co-author of *The I in Team ... Accelerating Performance of Remote and Co-located Teams*, and *Quick Guide to Interaction Styles and Working Remotely*.

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## Dave Carey

is a sought after motivational speaker, organizational consultant, and coach. As a motivational speaker, Dave relates his experiences as a P.O.W. with intensity and humor, inspiring others to overcome seemingly insurmountable difficulties and gain a renewed sense of purpose, satisfaction, and control over their circumstances.

As a consultant and coach he focuses on *helping people work together more effectively*. He is an expert in team building, organizational & leadership development.

A graduate of the United States Naval Academy, Dave is a retired Navy Captain. As a Navy pilot he was shot down and spent 5 & 1/2 years as a POW in North Vietnam. His book *The Ways We Choose: Lessons For Life From A POW's Experience* is in it's third printing.



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### Unique Skills

## Teams

### Challenges

Degree of Specialization

May not see selves as a team, so don't communicate as much as they should	May get stuck in conflict, so may not reach synergy.
May compete for recognition, so don't share best practices.	May not recognize their interdependence, or may not plan enough together.

Similar Skills

Independent

Interdependent

Degree of Cooperation