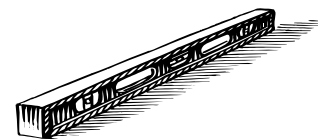


The Straight and Level



An Independent Newsletter from the
Home Builders Association of the Upper Rio Grande

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October 2011



President's Message

by Bob Van Iwaarden

The uncertain economy has many business leaders poring over their financials, crunching the budget and nixing every unnecessary expense, but financial problems aren't the only ones your company might be facing. Have you recently taken a good hard look at the character of your company?

When you really think about it, many of the transgressions we see in business today, from CEO scandals to terrible customer service, boil down to a lack of solid character and character does matter in business. There's no time like the present to sit down with your employees and define goals for the character of your company.

Here are five simple rules that every employee, from the top of the corporate ladder on down, should follow to ensure that they have a rock-solid character.

1. Don't Tell White Lies. We're all guilty of telling a white lie or two. While we may consider those little untruths to be harmless, consider that instructing your receptionist to tell a caller you're out of the office when you really aren't is a reflection on your own character. White lies are still lies, after all. Think of how many business-scandal stories this past year were the result of dishonesty—and how that dishonesty shattered the lives of many people.

Tell the truth because it is the right thing to do, and encourage your employees to do the same.

2. Keep Your Commitments. Have you ever made a business promise that you didn't keep? Don't take your promises casually and explain to your employees that they shouldn't either. Your employees

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HBAURG Board Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month. The Board of Directors welcomes members to attend the Board Meetings. Please call Bee @ (719) 873-5440 for more information.

***PLEASE NOTE:** As of June 28, 2011, membership dinner meetings are being held every other month - on the last Tuesday of the month.

Five Rules to Help Create a Character-Driven Company

will be less inclined to follow this guideline if they don't see you doing the same. Before you commit to anything, make certain that you can live with the worst-case scenario resulting from what you're agreeing to, and always, always follow through.

3. Go the Second Mile. One of the most common character flaws in leaders and their employees is that they do just enough to get by—enough to get paid and not get fired. That must change. If the majority of people are doing only the minimum, then those who give just a little bit more will stand out and be highly valued—a great asset for any company or individual.

Some of the most successful businessmen and women will readily admit that they are no smarter than their less successful counterparts. They simply outwork them, outthink them, and, as a result, outperform them. By doing what others were unwilling to do, going where they were unwilling to go, and risking what they were unwilling to risk, they earn successes that the "just enough" can't attain.

4. Don't Give False Impressions. When it comes to business, false impressions are everywhere. From misleading advertising campaigns to padded resumes, you have to be upfront and honest with those you work with. There are a few simple things you can do to get your employees and organization on the road to transparency. Make sure that you aren't "spinning" information and don't mislead potential job candidates or employees about realities concerning compensation, advancement or future plans. Cultivating a culture of honesty in your organization will improve your business.

5. Reconcile and Forgive Immediately. Holding grudges is a common and unfortunate consequence of competitive business. Mistakes are made. It doesn't matter how far back the offense was. If you're carrying it around, it's affecting your performance, whether you realize it or not.

When you are busy harboring resentment and holding onto grudges, you are taking time and precious energy away from the things you could be doing to increase your productivity and your business. Bring closure to past offenses. Identify amends you must make, with whom, and do it quickly. Having a clear conscience and a sound heart is a key component to having a solid character.

Still skeptical about your ability to pull off this company character assessment—not to mention how well received it's likely to be? Just give it a try. You'll be pleasantly surprised by the results. But you have to walk the walk. If you haven't been doing so, make a point to change, and others in your organization will be sure to follow.

-Taken from a commentary by Dave Anderson



Notes from Bee

Contact Bee to make dinner reservations, 873-5440 or email at hbaurg@aol.com



October 25th Dinner Meeting

Location: The Annex in Del Norte

Dinner will be catered by Bubba Hyde's Pit BBQ and Catering.

Time: Social 6:00 p.m.; Dinner 6:30 p.m.

Questions? Feel free to give Bee a call @ (719)-873-5440

Common sense

by Wally Amos

It has been said that common sense is not so common. When I was an agent in show business, attending a recording session or a television taping, and the performer would miss a lyric or flub a line, the producer or director would stop the tape, have a friendly chat with the artist, and announce, "OK, let's do another take. We're rolling, take 25."

Why is it when people make a "mis-take" in business we get so angry, and our response is anything but friendly? It would help us all to remember the times we made a mis-take and to realize we are all in training and in the process of becoming a better parent, student, friend, employer and employee.

I can clearly remember the times I caught an employee burning a rack with 20 trays of cookies, and just before I yelled, a little voice reminded me of the times I burned cookies. I settled down, explained the tremendous loss incurred when we burn cookies—ingredients, labor, time, etc.—and told the employee to do another take, only the next time more carefully. Patience and periodic explaining can go a long way in encouraging your employees through their mis-take.

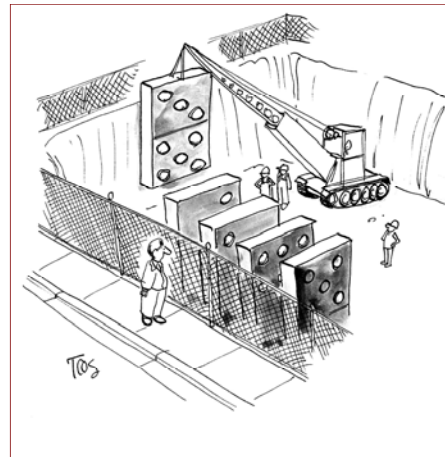
I am reminded of another popular quote: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." In personal

or business relationships, a little tender love and care can go a long way toward increasing productivity and loyalty.

In looking for ways to save money and time and motivate your employees, a good starting point might be to examine how you treat your people. It costs a lot more to train a new employee than it does to help and encourage your current employees to get each "take" right. Your employees are your most important assets. Happy, positive employees create a strong bottom line.

So, remember one more age-old saying, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." As they say, it's just good common sense.

Wally Amos (once known as "Famous Amos") is the founder of Uncle Wally's Muffin Company. You can reach him at www.wallyamos.com.



Gain the Upper Hand on Your Next Bid, and Help Boost Our Economy at the Same Time...

By Frank Duran, Marketing Director at Dell's Insurance Agency, Inc.

Watching the news the other night when a story caught my attention. It was a story about a builder in Bozeman, Montana named Anders Lewendal. Turns out that Anders was constructing a home out of 100% American made materials.

If it wasn't **Made in America**, he wouldn't use it - period. After much seeking and searching it turns out the only thing he couldn't find were J bolts for the foundation.

Well, if you can't find them, you can't find them. What's a guy to do...?

Anders, not being one to give up, decided if you can't find them, make them! And that's what he did. He used stock from **Pacific Steel** in Utah and had a local machine shop custom build the J bolts. *Genuine Made in America materials and ingenuity!*

Cool story, but here's the part that really jumped out for me... Anders figures that home builders could create 220,000 American jobs if they each bought just 5% more American made materials.

Wow! That's a lot of jobs!! Imagine what would happen if every builder used 10%, 15%, or more American made materials. Shoot, that alone could set our economy back on the right track.

Now for the million-dollar question: How much is using American made materials going to increase the builders' cost? According to the story, the all-American home (which was not yet finished) was only running 1% to 2% more than a foreign-sourced house.

Example: In the TV story they said a box of American made nails cost \$5.00 more than those made overseas. *BUT*, a big bonus was that they didn't jam in the nail guns as often. Which, when you think about it, probably makes them cheaper in the long run.

Now here's how I was thinking this could help HBAURG members. I believe that if a builder cleverly promoted the fact that he or she used X percentage of "American-Made" materials. And explained how using those materials helped boost the U.S. economy. That builder could not only justify a 1-2% increase in price (if it was even that much), but could quite possibly gain an 'unfair' advantage in the bidding process!

OK, so you're probably asking yourself "Who has the time to research and track down all these American Made materials?"

Luckily, you don't have to worry about that - Anders already did it for you! I've included a copy of the story from the ABC News website. It has a list of over 120 different materials that he used, including the American manufacturer of each item. *This is a HUGE time-saving shortcut!!*

Here's another thought. We have 2 lumber mills here in the Valley. Alpine Lumber in La Jara, and Mountain Valley Lumber in Saguache. Not only American made, but San Luis Valley, Colorado made! *(I'm sure there are plenty more examples, but these two popped into my head first.)*

Just a thought I had. Hopefully you can put it to use in winning more bids - and helping to create more American jobs. The story from the ABC News website follows on the next two pages:

How to Build a Made in America Home

In Bozeman, Montana, Anders Lewendal is hard at work building a home he hopes will be a blueprint for creating jobs in America.

Lewendal, an economist turned builder, is constructing a house made entirely from American-made products. Everything from the nails, screws and bolts, to the steel, staples and bathtub is made in the United States.

In all there are more than 120 products from more than 33 states. However, the builders do acknowledge that using American products can be more expensive.

A box of nails is \$5 more than those made in China and steel is \$146 more a bundle. Even though certain goods are more expensive, in total, the cost of the house is nearly identical. Currently, the all-American home, which is not yet finished, is running only 1 to 2 percent more than a foreign-sourced house.

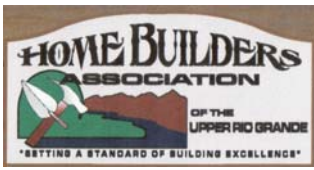
Lewendal is convinced that if every builder bought just 5 percent more American materials it would create 220,000 jobs.

Here's the list of products Lewendal is using to build the Made in America house:

Product			Manufacturer/Supplier State		
J bolts/foundation	S.C. Prototypes	MT	MiraTEC fascia	CMI Corp	PA
J bolts/foundation/stock	Pacific Steel	UT	treated plate	McFarland Cascade	WA
Gorilla Duct tape	The Gorilla Glue Co	OH	T braces/framing	Appleton Supply	WI
4" perforated pipe, radon	Northern Pipe Co.	ND	sill seal	Reflectix	IN
4" pvc fittings	GPK	ND	powder actuated pins	TW Ramset/Redhead	IL
pvc glue	Oatey	OH	foam board	Dow	IL
8d ring shank nails	True Spec	CA	Spray paint	Rustoleum	IL
16d sinkers	Griptite	WI	Spray insulation	JM Corbond	MT, TX
1/2" foundation nuts	CAT	IL	Screws	Por Pac	CO, CT
gun nails	Maze	IL	Wire joint	Thomas & Betts	TN
damp proofing	Mulseal/Tremco	OH	Spray paint	ACE	IL
Rebar	Nucor	UT	paint	Sherwin Williams	OH
Concrete	CMI	MT	Window foam	Touch n Seal	MO
Concrete Portland	Ash Grove	MT	Caulking	White Lightning	OH
Concrete aggregate	CMC. Beglade	MT	Plastic elect. Straps	Handy Straps	WI
Concrete sand	CMC. Beglade	MT	meter base	Eaton/Cutler Hammer	PA
Hangers, straps, H clips	Simpson Strong-Tie	CA	electric panel	Eaton/Cutler Hammer	PA
TJI's	I-Level Truss Joist	OR	Breakers	Eaton/Cutler Hammer	PA
2x4's and 2x6's	RY Lumber	MT	PVC pipe/fittings	Ridgeline Pipe	OR
Plywood	Potlatch	ID	2" Romex connectors	Bridgeport	CT
2x4's and 2x6's	F.H. Stoltze	MT	Boxes	Allied	OH
2x4's and 2x6's	Idaho Forest	ID	Wire-service, romex	Southwire	GA
PL 400 sub floor adhesive	Loctite	CT	staples	Sturgeon Bay	WI
			4/0 SER straps	Sturgeon Bay	WI
			Telephone wire	3M	MN

wire connectors/crimp sleeves	Ideal	IL	Kitchen Sink	Moen	PA
wire staples	Sturgeon Bay	WI	Kitchen Faucet	Moen	NC
Furnace disconnect	Eaton/Cutler Hammer	PA	Kitchen Basket strainer	Dearborn Brass	TX
recessed cans	Juno/Schneider Electric	IL	Kitchen disposer	In-Sink-Erator	WI
recycled glass	Livingston Landfill	MT	Bathroom Pedestal Lav	Mansfield	IL
Furnace	Trane	TX	Bathroom Lav faucet	Moen	NC
Cooling Coil	Trane	TX	Bathroom Lav sink	Mansfield	IL
HRV	Trane	TX	Bathroom toilets	Mansfield	IL
Air Cleaner	Trane	TX	Bathroom toilet seats	Kohler	AR
Zoning/Thermostats	Trane	TX	Master Shower	Aquaglass	OR
Ductwork	Norwesco	WA	Master shower valve	Moen	NC
Screws	Brynof Manufacturing	IL	Master shower trim	Moen	NC
PVC	Cresline	WA	Master soaker tub	Aquaglass	OR
Condensate Trap	Airtec	MA	Master soaker tub trim	Moen	NC
Registers/Grilles	Hart & Cooley	MI	Master soaker tub valve	Moen	NC
Allthread Rod	Chicago Hardware	IL	Bathtub waste and overflow	Watco	MO
Pipe Brackets	C&S Manufacturing	WI	Full Bath tub/shower	Aquaglass	OR
Conensate Pump	Franklin Electric	IN	Full Bath tub/shower trim	Moen	NC
Unistrut	Cooper B-Line	IL	Full Bath tub/shower valve	Moen	NC
Flexible Duct	Atco	TX	Water Heater	Bradford White	PA
Duct Sealant	Hardcast	TX	Pex Fittings	Zurn	TX
Flex Duct Straps	Source 1	OK	PVC Fittings	Sioux Chief	MO
PVC Glue/Primer	Oatey	OH	Hangers/pipe insulators	Sioux Chief	MO
Thermostat Wire	Honeywell	MS	Roof Jack	Oatey	OH
Exhaust Fans	Broan	WI	Plumber Putty	Hercules	NJ
Concentric Vent	Source 1	OK	Wax rings	Hercules	NJ
Exhaust Hoods	Broan	WI	Thread Dope	Hercules	NJ
Nuts/ Washers	Perine Danforth	WA	Plumber tape	Smith/Cooper	CA
Dryer Box	In O Vate Tech	FL	Black pipe	RJB Wholesale, Inc	WA
Duct Liner	Johns Manville	CO	Black pipe fittings	Anvil International	NV
Duct Liner Pins	Hardcast	TX	Gastite pipe and fittings	Gastite	MA
Allthread Anchors	ITW Buildex	IL	Soulder Flux	Rectorseal	TX
Ductstrap	Colombia Man	WA	Soulder	Exeon Inc.	IL
Manual Dampers	Norwesco	WA	Copper Pipe	Cerro Flow Products Inc.	MO
Sill Sealer	Reflectix, Inc.	IN	Copper fittings	Elkhart Products Corp.	IL
PVC Primer and Cement	Oatey	OH	Backflow preventor/PRV	Watts	ME
PVC Pipe	Crest Line NW	WA	Expansion Tank	Amtrol	RI
Pex Pipe	Viega	KS	Hose bibs	Woodford	CO

Link to story: <http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/business/2011/10/how-to-build-a-made-in-america-home/>



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In This Issue...

- ✓ The President's Message: Five Rules to Help Create a Character-Driven Company
- ✓ Bee's Message: 50 Ways to Waste Your Money Pt. 9 will return next issue
- ✓ The All-American Home - How Home Builders can Help Jumpstart the Economy



Happy Halloween!

Wishing You a Fun-filled & Safe Halloween

Remember to be on the lookout for ghouls, goblins, ghost and young trick or treaters. Better to drive a little slower *and safe*, than be sorry.

