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**USE TEAM MEMBERS' STRENGTHS TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS**



## **USE TEAM MEMBERS' STRENGTHS TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS** **LIFE LESSONS for BUSINESS OWNERS**

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If you've hired correctly, you have a team with the talent to grow your business. Understand what each team member brings to the table and use that! Below is my column "The Comfort Zone is Your Business's End Zone" which originally appeared in The Tennessean. Read on to learn about growing your business by utilizing team member strengths.

Football season is upon us. If you're a sports fan, you've undoubtedly dusted off your mini grill to get it into tailgating condition, and you've drafted your all-star fantasy football roster, picking players who are talented in their specific position, enjoy playing that position, complement the skills of other team members and have an overall passion for the game.

This football season—and even after the last touchdown—manage your business's team members like your fantasy roster. Hire team members who 1.) have the necessary skills, 2.) are ready to work and 3.) fit the team dynamic. Then, play to their strengths.

If you've already recruited individuals who can do the job, will do the job and fit in, now it's your job, as head coach of your business to identify your team members' strengths and utilize them to build your business. For accurate identification of their strengths, I recommend using a personality assessment like DiSC. It's a series of questions used to measure an individual's proclivity toward Dominance, Influence, Steadiness or Compliance.



It's important to note that everyone has all of these behavioral traits but naturally favors, and therefore operates best from, one. For instance, if a team member measures highly on the Influence scale that's a good indicator that team member will be better at inspiring and leading initiatives. You want your quarterback to rate highly as an Influencer, for example.

The object of identifying which behavioral style each individual favors is not to put him or her in a box, but to better understand that team member's comfort zone and assign him or her tasks that lie within that arena. A recent Gallup poll showed that when employees are able to operate from their strengths, they're six times more likely to be engaged in their role. To maximize productivity give team members work they're good at and enjoy doing. In short, let your kicker kick.

Conversely, don't have your wide receiver play on the defensive line. Even though Sue, your on-staff accountant, may be good at discussing numbers with a small group of familiar faces at the office, she may not enjoy explaining the company numbers to a large boardroom. Sure she has the ability and talent to do this, just as your running back has the athletic ability to play wide receiver, but don't make this Sue's primary role.

Even individuals in the same DiSC quadrant will have varying work styles. Just because Joe is on the sales team, doesn't mean he operates like every other sales specialist. Yes, everyone on the sales team may be higher on the Influence and Dominance scales than your team of computer analysts, but each member may operate best under different conditions. For instance, some sales representatives can close over the phone whereas others have to be face-to-face. As a manager, offer flexibility to accommodate your team members' working styles.

So Andy, wait a minute. Isn't one of our roles as business owners or coaches to challenge our team members? How will they know if they're good or not good at something if we never give them the opportunity to try?

I'm not saying never pull your team members outside of their comfort zones, just make sure their primary role is inside their comfort zone. Overall DISC will give you better understanding of your team so you can better assign, better communicate, better manage and spend more time in the end zone.

# THE PETRA EXPERIENCE

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## **Looking to change your business life - forever?**

The daily grind of growing a business is tough... it doesn't have to be that way. We work from our own business experiences while focusing on your business – as coach and an accountability partner. We implement the Petra Process in a way that ensures it “sticks” then we stay engaged to keep you on your path to success and less frustration. We don't want this to be just another thing you start – then it gets ignored and finally dies... let's stop that cycle in your business. The Petra Program 'clarifies' what is most important to be done – by whom, by when – **AND** creates an accountability structure to ensure **IT GETS DONE.**

*Andy Bailey is lead entrepreneur coach with business coaching firm Petra and serves as the Entrepreneur Organization's global membership director. Visit his blog at [www.petracoach.com](http://www.petracoach.com) for more business and leadership insight.*

### **PETRA COACH**

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