

### Where is the Goal Line?

Does everyone on your team agree as to what it means to “win”. Do you even know what the different people on your team think is “winning”? When different people have different ideas, it can lead to a total mess and might cause major problems with the company. When everyone agrees as to the one top priority, the whole company can work together towards that goal.

When Ed Whitacre took over GM, he spent a lot of time to get his team to agree as to what they were doing and what their goal really was. In the middle of rescuing the company, he thought that this was an important part of the rescue. We can debate whether they got it right, but the push to get a common goal really made a quick difference in the financial situation at GM.

There are many in a company who think that getting a team to agree on what the goals are is a total waste of time. They know what they need to be doing and it really doesn't matter if someone else has a slightly different idea. Just tell them what to do and make sure that they do it.

The problem is that when there are wildly different ideas of what the team or company's goals really are, people start working at cross purposes. Some people think that more sales is the only goal. Others think that the volume of shipments is the goal. Others don't care what the company's goals are, they just want as much for themselves as they can get. We see this attitude on some

sports teams where a hot shot player hogs the ball and works for highlight reel moments to the detriment of the score.

When a company or team has such wildly divergent ideas of what it means to succeed, it is very unlikely that the company or team will succeed.

When we get our team to agree on what the real goals are, then we can get the team all working together towards those goals.

### Get The Team Working For A Common Goal

There are a number of ways to get a team to agree on a goal. All of these ways take time, honesty, and commitment. Yes, different members of the team have different ideas of what the goal should be.

Others will wonder why we have to have only one

goal. There are many managers who claim that they have multiple number one priorities. However, for success, a team needs to have one and only one goal. Why only one goal? Yes, teams may have multiple objectives, but at some point, there will be a conflict between objectives. Look at how sports teams may have multiple objectives in their practice sessions and might have multiple strategies during the course of a game, but they have just one goal – winning the game. Likewise, in business, there needs to be a common agreed upon priority between all objectives so that the conflict will get resolved towards the real goal.

Goals change over time. This goal setting is an exercise that bears repeating on a periodic basis. Another objective may become the top one and become the goal for a while. At a company that nearly went under, the CEO made sales the number one goal. Later, profitability became the goal.

### Wakeup Call

When hackers set off 156 tornado sirens in Dallas at nearly midnight on April 7, that should be (quite literally) a wakeup call on how vulnerable our critical infrastructure is to a cyberattack. The US is not prepared for the type of cyberwarfare that is happening in other parts of the world. The quick push into the Internet of Things is making the situation far worse.

It is possible to infect systems that are not even connected to the Internet through infected USB plugs and other ways of passing programs between systems. Thus, much of our electrical system, water supply, and other critical infrastructure is vulnerable. So are many of the Department of Defense systems.

We built the Internet on trust. Covey is absolutely correct that systems built on trust are cheaper, run faster, and generate more profit. However, systems built on trust break down under attack.

The Internet is under deep attack. Places like North Korea, Syria, etc. all have cyberwarfare units that are actively looking to disrupt activities in our country, looking for weaknesses that they might exploit if they have to go to war with us, and running criminal activities that generate significant cash. For several years, the Syrian Electronic Army was behind a number of attacks on web sites. Look at any place in the world where there are tensions with the US or active fighting and ask if they could be trying to hit back electronically.

We need to rebuild the Internet in order to have a more secure system. Right now, it is like living next to a busy highway – anyone can come into the neighborhood and cause problems. Perhaps a “gated community” might make us safer.

### Risky World

A case of a malfunction on the part of a garage door opener that you could run from your phone blew up into a major spat. Because the part was connected to the Internet, the maker was able to shut the device off and prevent the homeowner from opening his garage. The support forum took sides and hurt feelings were all around. Internet connected items in your home are shared.

A View from the Prairie is published by  
Prairie Trail Software, Inc.,

**Making Information  
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