



Hi H. Roy, Here's your April edition of Gator Bites with ideas and tips to help grow and improve your organization.

## FEATURE ARTICLE: The Value of Contrary Opinions

### Also in this issue:

- iPhone Tip
- Book Review
- Quote of the Day

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**Success, real success, is helping other people be successful.**

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## Contrary Opinions - A Valuable Resource

*“Learn from the mistakes of others, you can’t possibly live long enough to make them all yourself.” - Eleanor Roosevelt*

How do you react when someone disagrees with you? Are you defensive? Are your feelings hurt? Probably, but think about it, if people agree with you, what have you learned? I was having dinner with my friend Robert Elsner, a brilliant engineer. I mentioned an idea I had for my book, *he Alligator Business Solution*. Robert looked me in the eye and said “Roy, I don’t agree with you.” He then explained his rationale. Internally, my first reaction was defensive. I thought I had a pretty good idea, and he was telling me it was not good. Instead of arguing my position, I listened to his perspective and tucked it away in the back of my brain. Over the next few days, I thought about what he had said and tried to think of some

logical reason why my idea was a good one. Eventually I modified the idea, and it fit much better. By disagreeing with me, Robert forced me to think and re-evaluate. Had he had simply agreed with me, I would have learned nothing. I trust Robert. He was not disagreeing with me to criticize me personally. He simply had a different opinion, and he voiced it diplomatically out of friendship.

## **When someone agrees with you, you learn nothing**

Often, small businesses are started by people who think that because they like a product or service, everyone will like it. Just because people need something doesn't necessarily mean they want it. If you "bounce" your business idea off of friends and family, too often they will tell you it's great even if they think it isn't so great. Why; because they don't want to discourage you or hurt your feelings. If you are planning to go into a new business, or make significant changes in your existing business, find a friend who will lovingly and caringly disagree with you. Just because someone disagrees with you doesn't make them right, but it should force you to think and re-evaluate your position. If you do not have a positive logical argument why you are right, then you need to make a change. I'm not talking about getting alternative opinions from negative people who don't have your best interest at heart. You don't need negative people in your life or your business. Robert's candor helped me to refine my idea and improve it. When you find someone whom you can trust and respect and who will offer up divergent opinions and contrasting views, you have found a valuable ally.

## **Find Someone Who Disagrees With Your Idea**

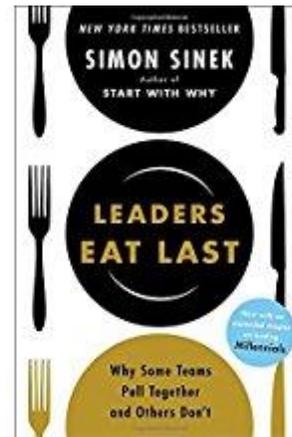
## Quote of the Day

**"You can't reach a million dollar dream with a minimum wage work ethic"**

**Kimberly Ellison-Townsend, Chair AICPA**

### Book of the Month

This book offers great insights into human behavior and the importance of trust and adhering to your values. In my book, *The Alligator Business Solution*, I wrote "NEVER compromise your values." That admonition was drawn from personal experience and observation of what happens when people compromise their values. Simon Sinek gives empirical evidence of the consequences of compromising your values. Mr. Sinek also explains why organizations with multiple locations are difficult to manage. Over my career I've noticed that people often don't trust the people in other locations. Why is that? They are all good people doing the best they can. You will gain a better understanding of this issue and more importantly, solutions to make your organization stronger. This is a MUST read!



### CUSTOMER SERVICE TIP - Jack Passarello

#### **INSPECT WHAT YOU EXPECT.**

"I've spoken to business owners regarding the service their employees have provided. They



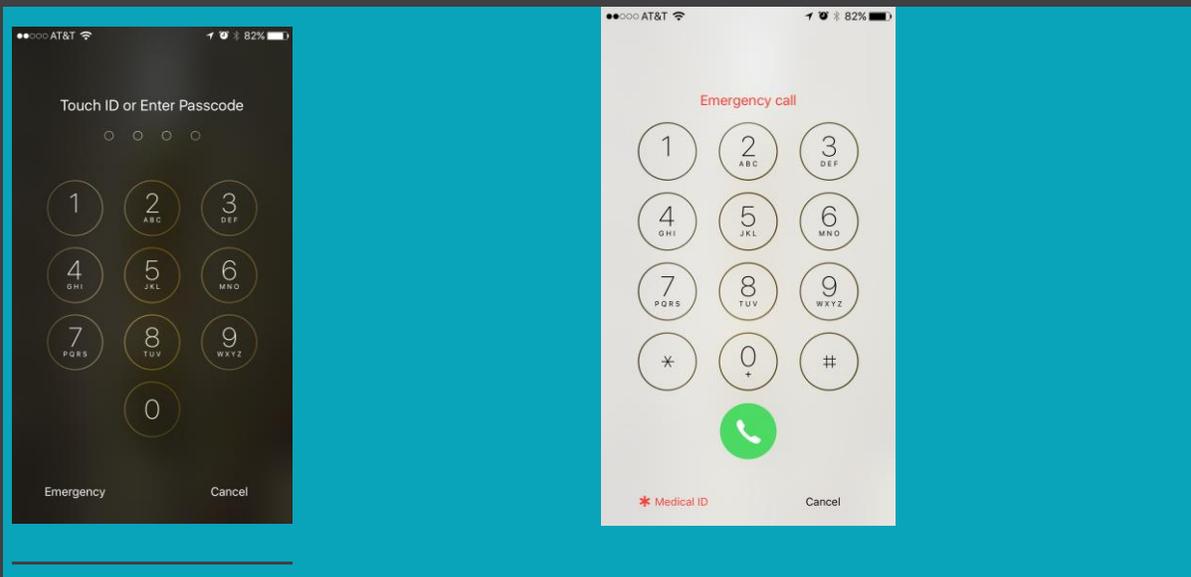
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respond with more excuses. Also, they say that their employee told them "I did the work". As a successful business owner, it is imperative to check on your folks often to insure that they are delivering the service that you as an owner promised to deliver. I realize great workers are at a premium. But I give you one chance to deliver *exceptional* service. Once you disappoint me, not only do I never call back, I'll probably tell 10 or more friends about the "BAD" experience." **Jack Passarello**, Retired AT&T Director National Engineering Staff

## iPhone Tip - Calling 911

To call for help on your own or someone else's locked iPhone, swipe right on the Lock screen. Tap Emergency and use the dial pad to call 911.

Have a phone tip? Let me know, and I'll put it in a future edition of Gator Bites.



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