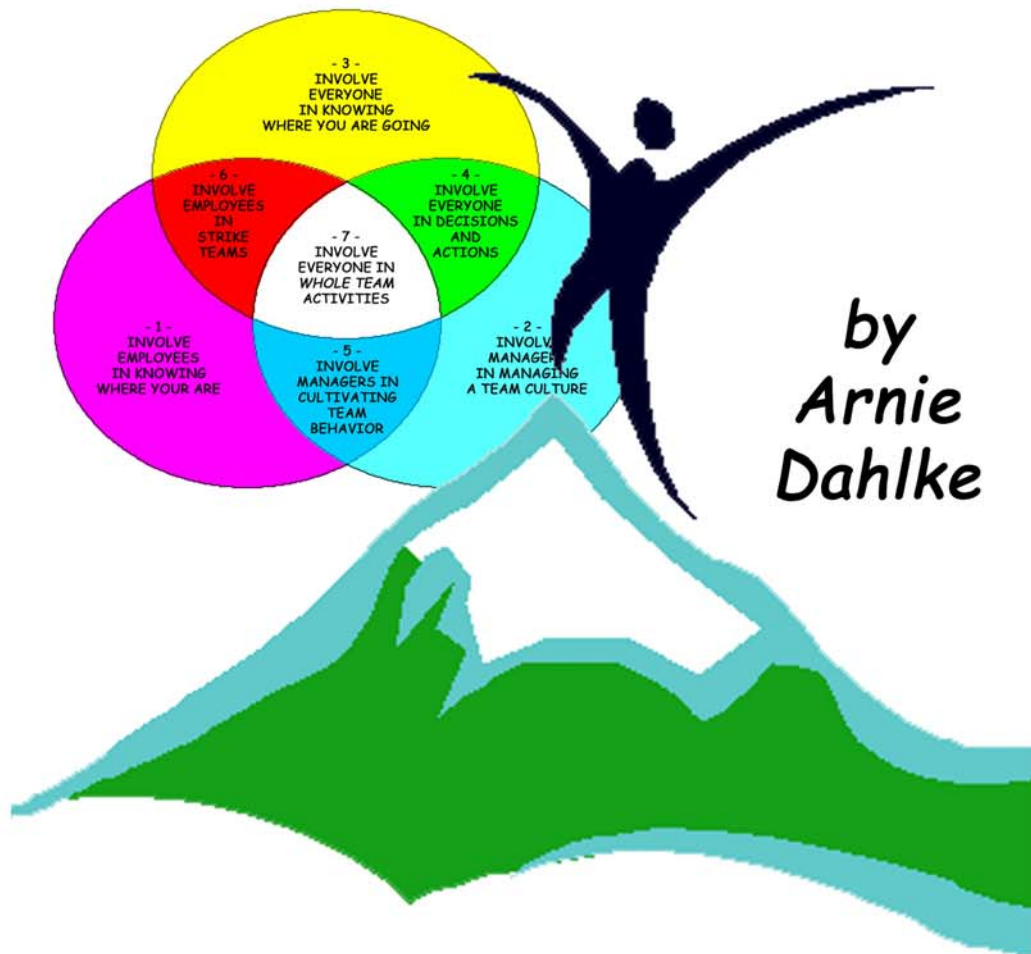


# JOE GIG AND THE OLD MAN ON THE MOUNTAIN



by  
*Arnie  
Dahlke*

Seven Strategies For Building  
An Organization-Wide Team:  
*A Whole Team*

## A Note to My Readers...

I've received a spectrum of reactions to this little book, ranging from "*simplistic*," to "*It's wonderful, just what people need to hear!*" to "*Heart-warming and Cute!*" These reactions prompted me to write this note to my readers.

I deliberately chose to write Joe Gig as a simple fable. I want it to be engaging. I want it to be a quick-read that won't frighten off busy people.

I want Joe Gig to be especially appealing to mid-level managers who form the backbone of any organization. Scrambling to keep up with daily challenges, they are too busy to be scholars—they are constantly looking for more down-to-earth solutions to their problems.

At the same time, I want to convey some very important concepts about teamwork in organizations. My intent is to focus readers on looking at *an entire company as one dynamic team*, instead of concentrating on *teams within a company*, which is the more typical approach.

Moreover, I set out to describe a set of seven integrated strategies that *involve every single employee in a company*, not just members of management teams, or sales teams, or work teams.

I've described how a company can tailor those seven strategies to build its own unique, company-wide team, *on-the-job*, instead of having to rely on generic workshops, seminars, and off-site weekend teambuilding retreats.

So please do not let Joe Gig's simplicity fool you. Wrapped within its simple structure, you will find some very useful and important strategies for building company-wide teamwork.

I have seen them work many times and I invite you to try them out.



January 3, 2008

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AND  
THE OLD MAN  
ON THE MOUNTAIN**

**Seven Strategies For Building  
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*A Whole Team***

**by  
Arnie Dahlke**

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To Lesli, *sweetheartwifeofmylife*,  
who taught me the true meaning  
of love and caring  
when I thought I already knew it all.

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# *Prologue*

“There aren’t a lot of new ideas, just old ideas put together in new ways,” a friend of mine once said.

In some respects, he could have been talking about this book. I don’t claim to have written a book filled with brilliant new ideas that you’ve never heard before. I’ve drawn ideas from many articles and books about coaching, about facilitating, about teams, about leadership, and about process improvement.

What *is* unique about this book, however, is the combination of those ideas into one viewpoint. *I focus on an organization as a **Whole Team**, not simply on teams in an organization.*

Successfully cultivating teamwork is an ongoing, constantly changing, dynamic process. It involves every single individual in an organization. It is not simply something managers bring back from a weekend seminar to spread among their employees.

Typical approaches to building teamwork are piece-meal. Companies whisk top managers off to a two or three day retreat. Some send people to workshops to learn how teams function. Managers talk “team” until it loses its meaning.

These approaches miss the big picture. They fail to involve everyone at the same time. They remind me of fast-food restaurants. I call these approaches *Take-Out Teambuilding*.

I was a take-out teambuilder early in my career. I developed and conducted many teambuilding “retreats.” I experienced the tremendous emotional high that typically comes at the end of such intensive sessions. Participants, confident that their time had been well spent, talked of feelings of camaraderie, feelings of togetherness they never had felt before. They expressed a sense of accomplishment in knowing where they were going together and pride in the plans they had developed to get them there. They described a sense of excitement about the future.

The problem is that those feelings typically didn’t last very long. Everyone returned to the office excited and motivated. But after a short time, it was business as usual. The norms of the old organizational culture took over. The emotional bounce of the teambuilding exuberance faded into the past.

The approach I describe in this book has a different focus. I offer an integrated set of seven, on-the-job, teambuilding strategies that continuously involve everyone in a company, day after day after day. From the very beginning, a team-oriented culture grows like a snowball rolling down hill, and then continues to grow and grow. The end result (which truly never ends) is a company-wide team, a *Whole Team*.

I developed my approach gradually during many years of teambuilding experience in a variety of settings—educators, police, military personnel, Job Corps training staff, mental health professionals, salespeople, service technicians. I worked with a diversity of employees in private and public organizations at every organizational level from a City Manager and his staff to a front line dealership employee who parks cars.

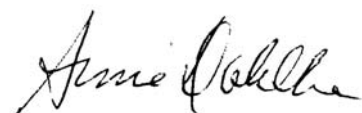
Building a *Whole Team* is especially important today because we have become a *service* economy in which every employee in an organization is interconnected with every other employee in a web of service to customers. Outstanding service depends on effective teamwork. And effective teamwork cannot take place in a culture that does not facilitate it—from mom and pop stores to giant conglomerates, from small city governments to large federal bureaucracies,

The typical organizational culture in our society during most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century can be described as competitive, individualistic, and rooted in the traditional authoritarian model of management. Time has proven this to be an outdated culture, not very conducive to satisfying customers or fostering teamwork. It is a culture that values control from the top—managers directing and telling instead of facilitating and coaching, hierarchies instead of teams, and short-term cost-effectiveness, rather than long-term investment.

Twenty-first century organizations require a different culture, a culture of *interdependence* in which managers support and develop employees in the service of customers, rather than a culture in which managers direct and control employees in the service of profit. The former culture sees employees as the most important organizational resource. The latter culture views them as expendable.

My approach is rooted in the belief that individual employees are the most valuable resource of any organization.

The strategies I describe in this book are designed to involve *all* employees at every level in the building of an organization-wide team, a *Whole Team*.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arnie Dekker". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

January 2005



**THE OLD MAN  
ON THE MOUNTAIN**