**Relational GPS® Your Roadmap to Relational Success**

*By Ed Wallace*

***When do business relationships really begin?***

My customers often look at me in confusion when I ask this question. Their responses include: ‘*when I take them to lunch,’* ‘*when we meet for the first time,’ or ‘when they connect with me on LinkedIn®’.* Each of these is a valid answer; however, true Relational Leaders are seeking a much deeper connection to the human being they are interacting with for the first time.

Therefore, I believe that business relationships really begin when one party or the other starts sharing what matters most to them—a goal, a passion or a struggle. I call this idea, Relational GPS® - a career spanning concept that anyone can use to effectively launch business and even personal relationships. In fact, my experiences in sharing this concept with over 20,000 business professionals validates that almost everything that a customer shares with us can fall into one of these three categories.

The idea of getting to distinctly know someone reminds me of the thinking behind movie productions. There is a great deal of complexity in making a movie, beginning with the script, moving through funding, selecting actors, going through rehearsals, then shooting and editing the movie and ending up with a product that will be ‘coming to a theater near you.’ All of this complexity has one overarching goal—**connecting personally** with each movie-goer during the two hours they spend in the theater. It’s that individual connection that manifests in people talking about the movie and then hopefully a snowball effect happens and more and more people attend the movie. These thousands and sometimes millions of personal, one-to-one connections result in great financial performance and notoriety for the movie company.

Just like with the movies, seeking to understand your contact’s Relational GPS® takes you back to the basics where people connect individually in powerful ways through understand what they are trying to accomplish (Goals), things they care deeply about (Passions), and their challenges in business and life (Struggles). It’s a powerful, yet simple way to become intentional each business relationship.

Think about it this way – LinkedIn is knowing *about* people; **Relational GPS is *really knowing people***—one by one. Nothing else matters!

**Capability Builder**

Try this…please write down the name of a key relationship you need to launch or advance in order to achieve your goals this year. Then fill in what you really know in relation to their Relational GPS. Can you do this for your top five, ten or even fifteen business relationships?

**Important Relationship Goals Passions Struggles**

I find that many of my clients think they really know their own colleagues and customers until they think aboutconsider the relationships using the Relational GPS shorthand. Most are surprised at how little they know but how easy it is in order to learn about Relational GPS.

Ed Wallace is president and chief relationship officer of The Relational Capital Group. He speaks with companies and organizations around the world with a client list that is a Who’s Who of Fortune 500 Companies. Ed has published four books on the power of business relationships, ***Fares to Friends, Creating Relational Capital, Business Relationships That Last, and his most recent, the #1 best seller, The Relationship Engine.*** He is on the faculty of Drexel’s LeBow College of Business and Villanova University’s Masters in HR program.