

The Power of Teambuilding
TEN YEARS OF UPLINE
Russ DeVan

The Teambuilding System is a proven, powerful Network Marketing business-building process that is so simple anyone can do it. It is the most duplicatable way to grow your business that I have ever seen-- and I'm convinced it is absolutely, positively infallible. It cannot fail!

I've worked in this business for more than [18] years now. In the past, I've succeeded with some programs and I've failed with others. There were times I went broke; times I earned \$10,000 a month. I've had companies go out of business on me. Others I quit because it just wasn't working.

Today, my [partners] and I earn a consistent \$60,000-a-month residual income and we're on the verge of another quantum leap. What that next level will be-- \$80,000 a month, \$100,000 or more-- I honestly don't know. But I do know this: My success has been accomplished by learning how to duplicate my current level of success with key leaders in my downline organization-- and helping them to do the same.

The key is building a team of men and women who can be trained to do whatever it is that you are producing-- in terms of volume and income-- and consistently moving them up to the next level of productivity following your example.

Teambuilding starts small: \$100 a month in combined personal consumption and retail sales. Then, according to your compensation plan, you train a manageable number of people to do the exact same thing you've just done. You keep doing that over and over as you progress up the ladder.

Of course, there are other ways to build a business, but in my experience, Teambuilding is the best. It's not the fastest way, yet it is the only system I've found that gives you all of the following advantages: highest productivity, lowest attrition, greatest loyalty from your people, strongest organizational foundation, highest quality people, most fun, real residual income, and ultimately, checks that grow consistently.

The Path of Least Resistance

In prospecting, most Network Marketers are taught to make a list of family, friends and associates-- their warm market-- and to prospect everybody and anybody they meet. It's the "three-foot rule"-- pitching the opportunity to anybody who gets within three feet of you. The thinking goes that sooner or later you're bound to find somebody who's interested in your business opportunity, somebody who'll perform and make you a big check.

Prospecting this way, you're going to encounter lots and lots of people who are resistant to what you have to say; people you have to work really hard on trying to convince them just to take a look at what you have to offer. That's the Path of Great Resistance!

Talk to people because you enjoy talking with people. It's amazing what happens when you don't have prospecting as a hidden agenda.

The Path of Least Resistance begins by thinking through in advance what your

ideal prospect/new distributor would look like.
Ask yourself, "Who do I really want on my team?"

Don't you really want somebody who's already successful ... someone who doesn't need the money, but is instead a person who sees this business as a tremendous opportunity for growth, development and even greater financial independence ... someone who's always wanted to start his or her own business, but just didn't know where or how to start?

Perhaps it's someone who's wide open to the possibilities of Network Marketing. Not someone you have to fight with about pyramids or sales objections.

Why not go after people who are aggressive, self-motivated, open-minded, good with people, who already have sales, communication, management and leadership skills?

If you were the founder and CEO of your own company seeking to fill an opening for a key top management position, you wouldn't interview just anybody you went to high school with or just met on the street-- would you? So why would you do that for your Network Marketing Sales company where you are the CEO and owner ... where you are looking for the best people to build and manage your organization ... men and women committed to their own and the business' growth, success and productivity?

Having in mind a clear idea of who you're really after on your leadership team changes the kind of people you approach to sponsor and how you approach them, as well.

Now, I'm not suggesting you don't talk to strangers. I'm saying don't prospect everyone. Talk to everybody, but prospect only those people who fit your criteria for the kind of people you really want on your team. Talk to waiters and waitresses, everyone you meet, and as you do, listen for those leadership/team-member qualities you're looking for to emerge from the conversation. Talk to people because you enjoy talking with people. It's amazing what happens when you don't have prospecting as a hidden agenda.

Who To Talk To and About What

I recommend you develop your own list of characteristics and behaviors that you're looking for in people to prospect and sponsor on your team. Here's a list of some of the qualities I'm looking for when I prospect people-- and I highly recommend you write down your own list and review it regularly:

People who are open-minded.

Someone committed to having something better than he or she has now.

Hard workers.

People-people.

Attractive people; by that I mean a person other people are attracted to.

People who have a plan for their future-- who want to succeed by design.

The way I find these people is to have a conversation with them.

I'm looking for people who want something better and who have some kind of plan on how to get it. I have little interest in someone who says they want a better life, but has no idea what it takes. It's not important what I think of their plan: what matters is that they have one. That way, I know they're the kind of people who will appreciate "Success by Design," and I don't have to spend a lot of time and effort trying to get them to see that you can't succeed without a plan.

And that's how I find out what somebody's committed to as well: If they have a plan, they're committed. They know what they want and have an idea of what they're willing to do to get it. When they say, "Gee, I never thought I needed a plan for how to do it," that's not commitment. That's a hope and a prayer. Although I have nothing against hope and praying, I side with the Quakers who say, "When you pray-- move your feet."

Commitment is vital, I would even say it's mandatory for success in Network Marketing. If we researched all the new distributors who sign up in this business, I bet we'd find the number who quit directly equal to the number who started without a commitment-- without a goal and a plan to reach that goal.

Success By Design

I think the "throw 'em up against the wall and see who sticks" theory that's so pervasive in Network Marketing comes from the misguided impression that the only way to succeed in this business is to sponsor a whole lot of people. That's the MLM lottery, and the chances of winning that are not much better than the odds for hitting your state's Lotto jackpot-- currently averaging about 7.1 million to one.

What I'm encouraging you to do is the opposite approach to this business. It's what I call Success By Design. You're looking for five or six strong people (or whatever number works best for your compensation plan; my number is five). These are your leaders. That's all you need. You can arrive at that goal quicker, with far less effort (and frustration) by seeking out those special, capable people you really want to be in business with right from the start.

Obviously, you will have to sponsor some number of people more than five to get five leaders. My point is to focus on signing leaders. Not just everybody you meet.

Once you have your first five leaders, don't stop-- but do slow down. Don't continue to sponsor more and more and more. Focus about 15 percent of your time on bringing in new people and 85 percent on managing and supporting your team. Don't dilute your effort by constantly going wider. Now it's time for depth, and that comes from duplication.

The Three Tasks of the Team Captain

Job one is leading by example. You've heard, "The speed of the leader is the speed of the pack." That's it. When people talk about a "visionary leader," they're not talking about some ivory-tower theorist who hands down inspiring ideas from on high. True visionary leaders give their people vivid pictures of

how to succeed by their own actions-- actions that the others can readily duplicate. It's modeling at its best.

True visionary leaders give their people vivid pictures of how to succeed by their own actions-- actions that the others can readily duplicate.

The second function is setting the direction-- establishing each of your leader's goals and a time frame for their accomplishment. This is based on what each of them is committed to. It's a process where you both work together to become clear on their "Where am I going?" questions.

The first step is to explore their possibilities and help them set the direction for their businesses. You have a partnership with these people, which is based on your aligning with their goals and your being committed to working with them to accomplish those goals.

Accomplishment has three parts: 1) the result; 2) personal growth and development; and, 3) fun. Your job as Team Captain is to set the direction for the achievement of all three of these goal areas.

For results, we're talking about both volume and income goals. For personal growth and development, it's education and training to develop the personal and professional skills required for Network Marketing Sales leadership. And fun is just that: What needs to be put in place to assure that we all have fun in our Teambuilding effort?

The Captain's third task is support, which means communication and follow-up on tasks One and Two. Two other words for this are management and leadership.

Is It Duplicatable?

When people get excited about their products or their compensation plan, they tend to go wild with their retailing or sponsoring efforts. The problem is that those efforts can't be duplicated consistently in a million years-- in very, very rare instances, they may find someone exactly like them and achieve limited, isolated duplication by lottery-luck.

It's great to be a product sales super-star and get the platinum-plated, rapid-ruby-retailer award from your company-- but can you teach five other people to do that? And can they teach 25? No way.

Prospecting 10 people a day, having your armada of audios laying siege to half the Sony Walkmans in North America, and sponsoring 30 front-line folks a month is fantastic personal performance; but will you ever have anybody else in your organization do anywhere near the same thing? How can you possibly manage or support all those people?

You can't.

Instead, what a duplicatable effort looks like can be small at first. It can be \$100 or \$200 worth of retail product a month. It can be signing five people up on an auto-order. What it needs to be is something that you are confident you can do and that you can show somebody else how to do month-in, month-out, and that they will continue to do easily and consistently like water rolling off a duck's back. You need to create a level of retail and sponsoring performance your people can do without being told to do it, without being

monitored and constantly motivated to do it. It must be that simple an effort.

Teambuilding By The Numbers

Let's look at how this works with a simple \$100 monthly effort. Forty percent of that \$100-- Step One-- is personal consumption; you know you can consistently use \$40 worth of products every single month yourself. That leaves \$60 of retail requirement. Anyone can retail \$60 a month consistently, and if he or she isn't willing or able to do that, they're not going to build a business anyway-- and they certainly aren't leaders or team-builders.

Step Two: You have \$100 of effort yourself, and you next show your five team members how to do what you do. Now you have a \$600 duplicatable effort. Next, show them how you did that (you at \$100 plus five others at \$100).

Step Three: You have five leaders (each doing a \$100 effort themselves) who each have five \$100 efforts from their five team people. What new performance level have you reached? Over \$3,000 a month in volume: your \$100 plus your five team members' \$100 (i.e. \$500) plus each of their five team members' \$100 (i.e., \$2,500) which now totals \$3,100. Now you teach your team what it takes to have a \$3,000-plus group volume effort each month themselves.

And when you do that, what's next?

With your five team members at \$3,000 volume per month, your group volume is 5 x \$3,000, or \$15,000. At this point, you're earning \$700 to \$800 in most comp plans. Let's call it \$750.

Once you know how to create a monthly volume from a team effort that generates \$15,000 in volume and \$750 income for you, you then show your five leaders how to do that for themselves. Since you've already done it, they simply follow your example and you spend 85 percent of your working time and energy in supporting and following up with them to duplicate exactly what you have done. The result is a group volume of over \$75,000 a month, and your income is approximately \$4,000.

Now, what if you have a goal of having your team-building effort go five levels deep? What that would look like is a total of nearly 4,000 people throughout your five generations or levels-- which really is not that ambitious an accomplishment when all each person is doing is producing a \$100 effort and teaching five other people how to do the same thing.

You need to create a level of retail and sponsoring performance your people can do without being told to do it, without being monitored and constantly motivated to do it.

The result is a total volume in your group of \$400,000 and an income in the neighborhood of \$20,000 a month.

If it took you two or even four years to reach that goal-- so what? Could you commit to doing that-- could you make a \$100 effort yourself and then show five other people to do that exact same thing, and once you accomplished that, lead and support them to do what you all have just accomplished with their team of five?

Do you see that all we are doing here is based on a simple, manageable,

duplicatable effort that anyone can do, and then showing five other committed people how to do that, too-- and then leading them to build their team just like you did? That really is all there is to it. And it really is that simple: a simple effort you can do and show anybody else how to do, duplicated down through a number of levels. Each time you reach a new accomplishment of volume and income, you then focus on having your five team members do the same thing you've just accomplished.

The power of this is awesome! You just keep growing, and every time you reach another milestone in your business you turn around and show your five leaders how to do that themselves. You just keep doing this over and over and over until you and your team members run out of goals!

The Proven Power of Teambuilding

Teambuilding-- no matter what volume or income level you target-- is simple; the steps are always the same.

- 1) Get yourself to the first volume/income level by hitting your duplicatable sales volume goal.
- 2) Sponsor a manageable number of people who are committed to doing the same.
- 3) Show and tell them how to do what you've already done.
- 4) Once you've accomplished that, you'll be at the next level, so show and tell them how to do that-- and on and up and on.

Set the example. Give your team direction. Communicate and support them to accomplish the same thing you did. As you do more, they do more and you will be earning the most unbelievable income you have ever imagined!

Just for a moment, imagine how you would answer this question:

If you knew absolutely positively that I was telling you the truth about this teambuilding system, that if you hang in there with me, if you do what I do, if you work with me for the next three years, I'll make sure that each of you is going to earn a \$75,000 annual income from then on, will you commit to working with me for the next three years?

My guess is your answer is the exact same one the five people I wanted on my team and went into partnership with told me when I asked them. They each said, "Absolutely!"

The truth is, I can do better than that. I can show them how to have their five team people each earning \$70,000 a year. And so can you!

What it would look like is-- each with ten people who are customer/distributors doing \$1,000 volume per month (ten people @ \$100 each). That's a \$500,000 monthly group volume!

That's a \$1,000 monthly volume goal effort for each distributor. Just about everyone can see themselves doing that if you show them how.

What if you only get half that volume? In most compensation plans, that's at least \$10,000 income a month!

Next, shift to an income goal.

Once you've established a duplicatable effort and you show an individual distributor how to do what you have already done, you will grow an organization where you are all essentially at the same level, whatever the highest level in your company is. Now, you're all at the most lucrative level of the compensation plan.

Once you know how to earn \$1,000 a month yourself, you can show other people how to do the exact same thing. Spend the next six months showing your five leaders how to do that themselves-- how to earn \$1,000 a month. Once you get people to a \$1,000 goal, you've increased their income by \$12,000 a year.

Once you do that, the chances of their going somewhere else to play, like switching opportunities, is next to nil. You have loyalty. Once you have five people under you earning \$1,000, you've essentially quadrupled your own income! Producing five people who earn \$1,000 a month has to make you \$5,000 a month.

And once you get to that point, it's only a matter of expanding your income and their income. You spend more time with your team enlarging their incomes and then they do the same with their people. Once your people are each earning \$5,000, you'll be earning \$25,000, and you show them how they can each accomplish that themselves. Once they're each earning \$25,000 a month and you're earning \$125,000 a month, focus on showing them how they can do that, too, and on and on it goes.

RUSS DEVAN is a popular industry-wide speaker and trainer, and he is president of Success By Design Inc, the consulting firm he founded in 1991 to support both the corporate and distributor levels of Network Marketing. Russ is a long-time contributor to Upline. He is currently concentrating on developing his training system on the Internet. Russ lives with his family in Scottsdale, AZ. This article first appeared in the November 1993 issue.