THE TRUE MEANING OF PARTNERSHIP

When I began consulting, it was my plan to focus on working with corporations. But one of the first calls I received was from the managing partner of one of the international accounting firms. When I said I wasn’t an accountant, he replied, “You don’t need to know accounting. You just need to understand a partnership.” That firm became a client and I began to learn how partnerships should work.

Over time, I came across a short piece that beautifully and succinctly defined a successful partnership. It was exactly the message I had been trying to deliver to law firms and accounting firms. Since then, I have used this piece as the opening section in all my reports and I have seen it change the attitude and culture of many firms. It’s pretty simple. Here it is:

A good partner is the other partners’ biggest supporter – and severest critic.

A good partner doesn’t just make the other partners look better. A good partner makes the other partners be better.

Successful partnerships are based on four principles:

1. Change is inevitable. “There is no progress without change.”
   John Wooden
2. Leadership is essential.
3. Great minds don’t always think alike. They sometimes think differently.
4. Partners are not independent. They are interdependent.

In a true and successful partnership:

- The partners look to the future – but often with different perspectives.
- The statement “We’ve never done it that way” doesn’t end a discussion. It starts it.
- The partners don’t just share credit. They increase the amount of credit to be shared.
- Partners do not merely build their own practices. They help feed and grow other business in the firm.

What’s best for the partnership is more important – and ultimately more productive – than the desires of any one person.

Recently www.AttorneyatWork.com posted this for their readers.

Bob Denney

P.O. Box 551, Wayne, PA 19087-0551 • 610-644-7020 • fax: 610-296-8726
email: bob@robertdenney.com • web site: www.robertdenney.com