



THE WILKINS GROUP

# Tool Kit

Providing Tools for  
Productive Workplaces

WINTER 2003

## IN THIS ISSUE

NEW YEAR,  
NEW WEBSITE, AND  
A REMINDER THAT  
HUMAN BEINGS MAKE  
A DIFFERENCE

SURVIVOR SYNDROME!  
— NOW WHAT!

WORK FROM HOME  
WITH THE RIGHT  
TECHNOLOGY

## New year, new website, and a reminder that human beings make a difference

**H**appy New Year to you and yours! May 2003 be filled with good health, prosperity and success in all your endeavors.

We're pleased to introduce our newly created website at [www.wilkinsgroup.com](http://www.wilkinsgroup.com). You'll find information about our services and our successes, plus a two-year archive of our newsletter, Tool Kit. Please take a look.

World peace continues to elude us as we begin the new year. California's outlook doesn't look too promising, either.

However, on an individual level, we can take charge of our lives. We can set goals and we can make choices. We can make our world a better, kinder place by the way we interact in it. When all is said and done, it is human beings, not



technology, who make the ultimate difference.

This issue talks about processes people in organizations can use to work effectively together, especially after layoffs.

When organizations decrease their staff numbers, they don't automatically decrease the workload. There are simply fewer people to accomplish the existing work to be done. Very often, the

amount of work is overwhelming and daunting to the employees who were not laid off. Sometimes, it's hard to know where to start.

I'm also pleased to introduce a colleague, Pete Babiak of Lighthouse Computer Group, who offers us some tips about working from a home office.

— Sheila Wilkins

## Survivor Syndrome! — Now what?

By Sheila Wilkins

**A** few years ago, I worked with a client who had just completed massive layoffs, all in the name of greater efficiency. I was asked to facilitate the new beginnings and help figure out ways to get the work done.

The layoff residue had settled and it was time to start anew. People who had survived the downsizing breathed a sigh of relief, but gulped when they realized their workload was staggering. They looked at each other with the question, "How are we going to do this? It's impossible!"

This is what we did.

We met as a work group and assumed it was not "business as usual." We decided to start from the beginning as a new entity. We asked the question, "How can we reform and revitalize our work unit?"

We began by redefining the mission and purpose of the work group and by clarifying objectives and outcomes. Once everyone agreed to the mission and outcomes, we moved on to restate the work group's

individual roles and responsibilities so everyone was clear on who was doing what. Individually, we asked and answered:

- ☞ What are my roles and responsibilities?
- ☞ What do I need from my boss to be successful?
- ☞ What do I need from you, my colleagues, to be successful?
- ☞ What do I need from myself to be successful?

Realizing the overwhelming workload was not going to disappear by itself, we met again and posed the question, "How do we manage the

work that needs to get done? We broke that question into smaller chunks by asking:

- What work can we eliminate because it doesn't make sense any more?
- What work can we delegate elsewhere because it belongs somewhere else?
- What skills do we require to get the work done?
- Do we have those skills?
- If so, who has them?

*Continued on next page*

**"Speak  
your  
truth  
quietly  
and  
clearly."**

*Desiderata*

**How do we manage  
the work that  
needs to get done?**

# Work from home with the right technology

By Pete Babiak

**W**ouldn't it be great to be able to take some of your work home so you can spend more time with your family and still be able to deliver the quality of work expected of you? You have the PC, what more do you need?

In order to avoid a great deal of frustration I strongly recommend a DSL/Cable data line. At a cost of about \$40 to \$50 per month, the speed will save you that much in time each month.

Without a high-speed connection the volume of data being transferred back and forth between your PC and the office can slow down your productivity to the point of giving up.

There are two primary means of communicating with the office, (1) Takeover, and (2) Remote Node (technically known as Virtual Private Network, or VPN).

In Takeover, you connect to a specific PC in the office and "take over" the PC. You have access to all of the files on your C drive and on the file server at work. Whatever you see on your office PC you see at home. In short, you could work at home.

In Remote Node, you do not have



access to the files on your office computer C drive, but you do have access to the file server. Your home PC behaves as if it were a part of the office network. It will have only the network data drives and the programs that run off the file servers in

the office, not the files that are stored on your C drive.

Security is going to be your network administrator's biggest concern.

Most corporations require employees to store their data on the file server, not on their C drive. For these employees, a Remote Node access at home makes sense.

For those employees who work for companies that allow them to store data files on their C drive, a Takeover connection might be more practical.

Which is best? Takeover tends to be slower and more prone to disconnection, but is easier to set up. Remote Node takes more work from your office technicians to set up, but is faster and more stable.

Take Remote Node if it's available, but the Takeover option is not a bad second choice.

— Pete Babiak, president of Lighthouse Computer Group, in Martinez, CA, has been assisting Fortune 500 companies down to one-person businesses with their computing needs for more than 15 years. His services include networking, hardware and software selection and setup, Internet access, and web design.

## Survivor Syndrome!

Continued from front page

► If not, how do we get them?

As a sense of order began to prevail, we met again and asked, "How are we going to work together effectively so we can get the work done?" We broke that question down into smaller pieces.

- ◆ How will we make decisions?
- ◆ How will we solve problems?
- ◆ How will we resolve conflict?

As the weeks went by we began to make some progress. However, we realized we were missing an important element.

In any layoff situation, the first

thing that goes out the window is organizational trust. Work groups must reestablish trust among themselves if they are to work effectively and harmoniously together. Tackling the trust issue was difficult because trust is intangible and difficult to measure.

The work group asked themselves, "What will it take for us to reestablish trust among ourselves?"

- What will trust look like in our group?
- What do we need to do, individually and collectively, so trust is one of the basic foundation pieces of our work group?

This is what happened.

Results didn't occur overnight. People were experiencing a variety of emotions and we needed to work through them before we tackled the work issues.

As the work group became involved in shaping their own future within the given parameters, they became energized and enrolled in the processes they were developing. Within a reasonable amount of time they were able to get the work done, find some satisfying career opportunities and remain whole in the process.



THE WILKINS GROUP

Consulting and Training

- Project Management
- Team Development
- Instructional Design
- Training and Facilitation

2182 Gill Port Lane  
Walnut Creek, CA 94598

925-937-6055; Fax: 925-939-2950

Email: Sheila@WilkinsGroup.com

Web: www.wilkinsgroup.com



**"You have reached the end of the caller menu. If you wish it repeated, please call back."**