

# Editor's Note

Greetings in my first edition as Editor of the Bama Chatter! I look forward to serving you this year.

In June, 2009 I had the privilege of attending my first HFMA ANI in Seattle, Washington. Keynote speaker, Patrick Lencioni, kicked off the opening session speaking about Leadership.

Lencioni often works with hospitals to adopt ideas around teamwork. Now, it's more important than ever in these difficult economic times, when everyone is expected to do more with less. He gave us five ways that leaders often fail with teams. I've definitely been on some bad teams and some good ones, and I think this guy has it right:

**1. The absence of trust:** Most think about predictive trust, which means we have known each other long enough I can predict your behavior. But that's not what makes a team great. The team we need is based on vulnerability. Vulnerability-based trust happens when human beings say things like "I don't know the answer" or "I think I need help; I think I messed this up," or even "I'm sorry." When you have that dynamic on a team it creates a powerful competitive advantage.

**2. Fear of conflict:** Why don't people like to engage in conflict? They say they don't want to hurt people's feelings. Organizations that think conflict is bad tend to crush people because it ends up being a conflict of people and not issues.

**3. Lack of commitment:** When we can't get people to debate, people generally will not commit. If people do not weigh in on a decision they will not buy in on a decision. Truth is if we want people to commit we need to make sure that we are hearing people and their opinions. My job as a leader is to make sure I know what everyone thinks, and if it takes time so be it and if there is not a consensus then it is my job to break a tie. When you can do that, hear everyone and



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factor in their input, 99 times out of 100 they will support the decision even if they disagree.

**4. Avoidance of Accountability:** This is the most common and dangerous of all the dysfunctions. When you walk out of a meeting and know that person next to you didn't commit, how much courage will you have to hold them accountable? The thought of letting down a trusted colleague is the biggest motivator. They love their teammates. You find it in firefighters and police. The best teams play for one another.

**5. Results:** Pay attention to results of the team rather than individual needs. You have to make sure to do the best for the hospital, not the department. When there are silos at the top of the organization, they suffer the most. The most important priority is the collective results of the organization.

As we continue in these challenging economic times the value of teamwork is priceless, it costs nothing and reaps big dividends for the organization.

All the Best,  
**Jerry Smith**  
Newsletter Editor