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'Magic Megaphone' works

By: Brad Alexander

Through a twist of fate Nick Montoya and Roger Peterson came together to produce the book, "The Magic Megaphone." Two years of work produced a 128-page book both predict will have readers shouting its praises.

Twenty-three years ago Montoya, a senior manager at Intel Corporation's Folsom campus, wrote a dream list of 20 things to do in his lifetime. Until this fall, writing a book was one of those 20 dreams.



Courtesy Nick Montoya and Roger Peterson partnered to produce the book, "The Magic Megaphone."

Enter Roger Peterson, a Rocklin resident and former freelance writer, who met Montoya when he contracted to work as a business writer for Intel.

Peterson had written a detailed 25-step process for Intel groups about project management and getting projects unstuck. "Hence the title, "The Magic Megaphone: How to get your projects unstuck and back on track in under 60 minutes."

He heard from other Intel employees about Montoya's Megaphone process.

Peterson read over the process and urged Montoya to publish it.

"I walked into his office on the very last day I worked there and suggested to him that he should turn 'The Magic Megaphone' a book," Peterson said.

Montoya developed the first edition of the megaphone process 15 years ago to establish a simple method for businesses and organizations to get their projects unstuck and back on track.

Fast forward to present day and the model that "The Magic Megaphone" created has been used as a Holy Grail for Intel employees at its headquarters in Folsom and around the world.

The book was so well received that Intel's vice president and chief information officer wrote the forward, praising its simple approach to collaboration within groups.

Folsom Lake Dodge also ordered more than 100 advance copies of the book for its staff.

"The Magic Megaphone" had already worked for Montoya, who is also a guest lecturer for the masters business program at Sacramento State, on hundreds of projects that had landed in a rut.

The book elaborates on how a simple, uncluttered method is the best way to approach even a complex, multinational problem. Peterson notes that it is easy for a company, like Intel, that operates in dozens of countries, over a mess of language barriers and thousands of personnel to inadvertently steer projects off track.

But Montoya doesn't keep his Megaphone process at the office. It goes home with him.

"I've used this simple process with my daughter's salsa dance group, church groups, my family and kids sports teams," Montoya said.

He even used "The Magic Megaphone" with the San Juan Soccer Club, which is based in Folsom.

Montoya said the principles are easy for anyone to do. He said when people think they do not have to give 100 percent effort, they will come up with 100 percent answers.

Ants are used as a metaphor for those who follow "The Magic Megaphone."

The ants represent (the reader) about to have a meeting with their bosses. After the meeting is over, they leave the room and magically crawl back under the door as ants to hear what everyone is saying," Montoya said. Montoya said that if a group focuses on achieving the same goal, "wowing" the boss is no sweat.

Peterson and Montoya expect the book to be the first of a series focusing on a specific group, like families, human resource managers, government managers or sports teams.

Megaphone Communications, formed by Montoya and Peterson, will publish future editions of the Magic Megaphone books.