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Explosive 'C4' principles redefine
customer-driven business philosophy

Alliance Construction Management LLC

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LEADING WITH PURPOSE

Explosive 'C4' Principles Redefine Customer-Driven Business Philosophy

by Erica Bender

These days when you're looking for a company to handle your building and construction needs, some of the most common elevator pitches you hear involve phrases like "we care about our customers" or "we deliver quality" or "we provide the best services and tools." Promises like these fall flat in explaining how or why a business is different from others in the competitor pool.

But there's one construction company owner who doesn't have a problem delivering a purpose-packed spiel. Five years ago, John Glover, the Senior Vice President of Alliance Construction Management LLC (Alliance CM), adopted a dynamite set of business principles to reshape the bedrock of his customer-driven construction management practices.

Today, the company's focus on four guiding principles—calling, character, capability and commissioning (C4)—has been met with success in generating lasting relationships with staff, business partners and customers. But for John, it was the road to redemption in his personal life that gave his company a clearer direction.

AIMLESS WANDERER TURNED AMBITIOUS ENTREPRENEUR

Born in Irving, Texas, John comes from a family with a long history in construction. His grandfather was a carpenter and his father a carpenter and builder by trade. John, though, didn't have any real aspirations in his early life, partly because he was raised in a family fractured by divorce.

"When I was young, I had no real focus, no direction. I didn't dream of being anything—it was like I was just on pause," recalls John.

Despite his troubled childhood, John's parents were important role models in his life. "My mother gave me a spirit of perseverance, and my father gave me a heart of excellence. I wouldn't be here without them," he says.

It was his mother's exceptional work ethic and his father's passion for high standards that taught John the value of hard work. "My siblings and I didn't grow up in a home where things were given to us. If we wanted something, we had to go get it," remembers John.

At 17, John struck out on his own; at 19, he got married. The not-so-studious teenager opted to skip college and instead immersed himself right away into the commercial construction industry—learning valuable skills through real-world experiences rather than textbooks.

"Just starting out, I installed windows and doors, and did selling and servicing. I was always in an arena filled with people older, wiser, and more experienced than me," shares John. "My main goal was to let these people teach me, or just listen and ask questions. I realized that I didn't have to know everything. For instance, when you flip a switch and the lights go on, you don't have to know immediately all about the current and circuitries—you gain that experience over time. You just have to know who to call, who to ask."

One of the most useful lessons that he learned is to look at services and goods from the customer's point of view, and to treat others fairly and respectfully.

"This is a very difficult industry, but you'll knock out 95 percent of your competition just by showing up on time, doing what you say you're going



Alliance CM is a general contractor, programming and construction management, and design-build firm based in Irving-Las Colinas, Texas. Pictured here is Senior Vice President John Glover (middle) and his two sons, Tyler Glover (left) and Tanner Glover (right), who also work with him.

to do, charging a fair price to do it, and being done within the time frame that you said you'd do it," says John.

An ambitious nature and quick learning style helped him successfully land and complete several construction projects on his own. With a wife and children to support, John decided to push himself even further and opened his own business—Alliance CM—in 1998.

THE ALLIANCE WAY

Alliance CM, based in Irving-Las Colinas, Texas, is a general contracting, project programming and construction management, and design-build entity specializing in new construction, renovations, structural repairs, tenant improvements, and interior finish-outs.

The naming of the company is rooted in John's desire to align the right

people with each and every project. This goal does not just apply to his team members—it applies to owners and subcontractors, too.

"At Alliance CM, we are a central hub that aligns the right personalities and the right people to projects. We have as much allegiance to our customers as we do to our subcontractors and our vendors and our own team members," states John. "The 'Alliance Way' is to strive for excellence, not perfection, by doing our best consistently."

The family-owned operation has seven full-time team members and proudly "serves organizations that serve others." Known for its expertise in the golf club and hospitality sectors, Alliance CM primarily works with customers in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, but also participates in multiple capacities in projects across the nation.

John adds, "Our customer-driven construction management philosophy is built on delivering excellence, especially when no one is looking, so that ultimately we serve the customers who commissioned us on the project."

John and his wife Charlotte, who helps run the company as Director of Operations, view the business as multi-generational.

"We are planning to pass this business along generationally. We are called by God to prepare, not just for our children, but for our children's children," shares the father of three.

John works closely with his youngest son and Director of Marketing, Tyler, who runs a digital marketing company on the floor just above the Alliance CM office. His other son, Tanner, an Irving firefighter, serves as



Members of the Alliance CM team (from left to right): John Glover, Senior Vice President; Tyler Glover, Director of Marketing; Tanner Glover, Project Manager; Charlotte Glover, Director of Operations; and Estee Martinez, Office Administrator.

a key Project Manager. The couple's daughter, Taylor, lives in California and works as a television sports production manager. When he's not at the office, John enjoys spending time with the most recent additions to the family, two granddaughters.

When asked to reveal the identity of the company's president, John's reply was surprising.

"This is a kingdom business, and God holds the highest-ranking position of CEO. He owns everything," states John matter-of-factly. He then half-jokingly adds, "But if there were a personified President or CEO, it would be my amazing wife, Charlotte. She sees things from a completely different perspective than I do, and when I combine that with my point of view—together we see the whole picture."

John and Charlotte have not always seen "eye-to-eye" on business and family. In fact, the couple divorced after 25 years of marriage because John repeatedly sacrificed time with his kids and stay-at-home wife to manage the company. The man who had once

promised that he would never allow his children to experience the tribulations of a split family was shell-shocked.

But, amazingly, four years later in 2012 the couple remarried by what John calls "an act of God's grace."

Determined not to repeat past mistakes, in 2011, John enlisted the help of Phillip Moss, a local business coach, to help him better balance his work priorities and build a new foundation for his company. Phillip shared with John

the C4 principles developed by Gerald Chester, Ph.D., a Business and Management Consultant and President of Strategies@Work LLC.

John calls this creed the "dynamite" of his now team-oriented company.

AN EXPLOSIVE BUSINESS IDEOLOGY

The C4 fundamentals are centered on calling, character, capability and commissioning.



Project Managers Eric Chavez (left) and Edwin Cruz (middle) strategize with John Glover, Senior Vice President of Alliance CM.

COURTESY OF HUMBLE BEAR DIGITAL MARKETING

John Glover, Founder and Senior Vice President of Alliance CM, relies on C4 business principles—calling, character, capability and commissioning—to align the right people with the right projects.



"These are not just buzz words and key words, and you can't ask your staff, subcontractors, clients and others to do these things if you're not willing to practice them yourself," emphasizes John.

When asked to elaborate on his new business philosophy, John enthusiastically obliges.

"Calling is an internal motivation or a legitimate passion for excellence in what you do, and character is what you do when no one else is looking. Capability refers to your skills and abilities and knowing the difference between what you *can* do and what you *should* do. Commissioning occurs when your motivation and passion are validated by someone in authority," he explains. "These concepts help us clarify our direction and ethics as a company. Now, we strive to treat every person as part of our team."

Nowadays, when John hires employees he looks for C4-quality individuals.

"Most people will hire on capability before they do character. We reverse that and we hire on character because we can teach people skills if they have the right character. If they are passionate about what they do, we can teach them how to do what we want," states John.

The Alliance CM team uses similar discretion when meeting with potential clients.

"Capability refers to your skills and abilities and knowing the difference between what you *can* do and what you *should* do."

- John Glover, Founder and Senior Vice President, Alliance Construction Management LLC

"If we meet with customers who do not have C4 principles, we're not going to get involved with them," shares John. "For instance, if they're focused on how cheap and how fast we can perform a job, I'm going to tell them very quickly, 'I'm sorry, we're not the right fit for you. Someone else might be able to serve you better.' You can't have the cheapest price, the highest quality, and the fastest time. You can have two of the three, but you can't have all three. We're not a commodity contractor."

After 27 years in commercial construction, John no longer identifies with the aimlessness of his youth. As he continues to concentrate on aligning together the right people with the right projects, he is sure to create dynamic relationships filled with purpose. 🐼

Author Bio: Erica Bender, a Texas-based freelance writer and communications consultant, has worked with clients in the AEC industry for 13 years.