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# Playing The Great Game at Dorian Drake International

## Success By the Numbers

Dorian Drake International Inc.  
2004-2007

**Game plan:** Drive efficiency and profitability by eliminating workflow issues, developing a balanced scorecard and building a global ownership culture.

### Results:

- Sales: Increased by 17% in '05, and 15% in both '06 and '07.
- Profit: Achieved 6 consecutive years of stellar growth: 51% in '04, 45% in '05, 24% in '06 and 28% in '07.
- Bonus: Employees received 110% of their target for 3 years running.
- Key drivers: new products, new-account development, on-time delivery, claims resolution and order throughput.
- Balance sheet: Strong cash position and quick ratio.
- Mini-games: Increased document accuracy, speeded up transactions and improved efficiency.
- Voluntary employee turnover: Pre-Game: 25%. Now: 5%.
- Culture committee: Identified most-desired cultural traits and wrote a 'behavioral' mission statement. Ran a fundraiser and set up a conflict-resolution process for staffers.



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## Company Background

Dorian Drake International, a \$55-million export-management company, provides leading manufacturers (including Turtle Wax, Hamilton Beach and Scotts) with a full-service alternative to running their own export division. The company focuses on four product lines: automotive, food service, industrial and hardware/landscape; its sales teams dock their laptops at DDI's New York hub or at offices worldwide. Dorian Drake's 50 businesspeople just celebrated the company's 60<sup>th</sup> year in business.

## Great Game Solutions

DDI kicked off its Game with regular companywide and unit huddles. Within months, employees were explaining variances and compiling 90-day rolling P&L forecasts to focus attention on the critical number: profit. Today, all-staff post-huddles are conducted via teleconference—and they're webcast so salespeople in Dubai or Hong Kong can follow the action. "We create a PowerPoint presentation of our corporate huddle results, and we conference on the same day and time every month," explains CEO Ed Dorian, Jr. "These are truly global meetings."

Teams played mini-games to streamline tasks, produce more accurate and complete transaction documents (so orders don't get backed up) and to boost overall efficiency. The inside sales and traffic teams set up a document-completion game that speeded up transactions and improved workflow in only 90 days. Now everyone's careful about collecting data, verifying information, filling out forms and checking their work. Teams also designed a balanced scorecard to help them strengthen five areas: new-account development, new product lines, on-time delivery, claims resolution and order throughput.

DDI continues to work diligently on its working environment. Its culture committee identified desired cultural traits and crafted a 'behavioral' mission statement. In 2007, the group championed two very successful initiatives: a fundraiser that took in \$10,000 for charity and a conflict-resolution process to help staffers work out issues that may arise.

## Results

DDI has achieved six consecutive years of phenomenal earnings growth. For the past two years, annual sales and profit growth were 15% and 25%, respectively. And for the third year in a row, employees reached their stretch goals and received 110% of their bonus target. "Open-book provides us with a way to engage employees in conversations about how to improve our performance in virtually every area of the business," CEO Dorian concludes. "It has transformed our culture, and it's made Dorian Drake a better place to work." •

## The Great Game of Business

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