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## Business Books: 'Vital Friends' and 'Kiss Theory Goodbye'

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By JIM PAWLAK / Special Contributor to The Dallas Morning News

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### Vital Friends

**Tom Rath** (Gallup Press, \$22.95)

Your career can't progress if you don't make on-the-job friends. While the lines between them may be a bit blurred, here are six types of friends you need to succeed:

- Builders** – They are your mentors and sounding boards. They help you see your strengths and your weaknesses, and you can count on them for constructive advice.
- Champions** – They are your PR friends. They tell others about your capabilities and your successes. You've earned their respect. Make sure you tell them they've earned yours.
- Collaborators** – You share interests with them outside work. At work, you share passion for your jobs, so it's easy to share ideas and brainstorm.
- Connectors** – Internal networkers know who and how. These friends are vital to getting things done, pushing your ideas and establishing your personal brand. Strive to be known as a connector.
- Energizers** – These are the "day makers." Although not Pollyannas, they manage to see the upside. They change your perspective.
- Mind openers** – They stretch you by asking questions. They tap your creativity and make you see change as opportunity.

### Kiss Theory Good Bye

**Bob Prosen** (Gold Pen Publishing, \$21.95)

The publicity kit accompanying this book contained an excerpt from a leadership survey of 190 top executives done by Bob Prosen's consulting firm. Most of these companies had sales between \$5 million and \$200 million.

The results are an indictment of company leadership: Only 19 percent "mostly agreed" they had ample time to plan. Only 24 percent "mostly agreed" they got reports that gave them information they needed to make smart decisions. Only 27 percent "mostly agreed" that their people were focused on the most important business goals.

Yet 70 percent "mostly agreed" they knew what they had to do to maintain a loyal customer base. Give me a break – they don't have a clue.

Mr. Prosen provides a battle plan focused on planning, achievable targets and execution. Execution relies on an engaged, smart staff that knows what to do without being told. They provide management with quality information needed to make informed decisions.

*Jim Pawlak reviews business books for The Dallas Morning News.*