

New business Targets corporate conferences

By Dave Simpson

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Corporate groups need to work together to succeed in business just like they need to work together to pilot a raft smoothly down the Snake River, and a new business intends to help them see the connection.

Grand Dynamics – which opened its doors about a six months ago – is geared toward helping corporate groups attending conferences in Jackson Hole improve their business and communication skills while having fun at the same time.

We're all about providing a framework for people to analyze their behaviors and actions and find ways to improve," said co-owner Tim Walther, who started the business with his brother Todd Walther.

"There's a common misconception that there always has to be problems for things to get better, but improvement does not have to be related to problems," Walther said. "you can take things that are done well and so them better."

The Walthers – who both have backgrounds in psychology and are finishing masters-degree work in experiential education – use a variety of seminars in their work that focus on new ways to learn and operate cooperatively as part of a team.

They also employ Snake River rafting trips as an exercise high-lighting the importance of working in teams, and a ropes course that helps individuals take new risks, Walther said.

"its based on people stepping out of their comfort zone – outside of their normal things that they would do every day – and kind of challenging their limits a little bit," Walther said.

The idea is that taking risks with something like a ropes course or some of Grand Dynamics' many other exercises can transfer very directly to taking new risks and ensuing improvement in the business world, he said.

The guiding principle is using experience-based learning, which Walther describes as "learning on reflection on doing." The idea is that conference groups participate in a new activity and then reflect on how they could have done better, he said.

"There's a connection with what they're doing to the workplace, and that connection is transferred," Walther said.

According to Walther, Grand Dynamics is working in conjunction with almost all the local resorts that host business conferences, and the new operation has received favorable response. They already have several groups on the books, including conferences this summer by national groups like MCI Long Distance and Prudential Insurance, he said.

For information, call Grand Dynamics at: 733-1989.