

**Can You TRUST  
Consulting Firms  
with Valued  
Information?**



When I first started H&J, there was very little information I wanted to share with our contractors, a little more I liked to share with my employees, and just a little more I would share with my business partners. In the past, people have used that information for their own gain. It happens all throughout life; I've shared with a friend a crush I had on a girl, only to have him ask her out himself. I also can't count how many times I have had confidential information shared with me in the oilfield. Things such as bit records and mud recaps with well specifics removed. With only a little effort, I was able to determine whose information that was. I often wondered if this was the intent of the person who asked the information to remain confidential. Even more troubling than being provided that information was being told that although they were not allowed to give me certain information in writing, they would be more than willing to talk about it in great detail. Was that because the person with this confidential information wants it shared verbally or is it the more likely case where they are just far more likely to get caught and held accountable for their actions? All these events would indicate that valuable information should be held tight and given to only those on a need-to-know basis. As a consulting and project management firm, H&J has had the luxury of working for several different operators and has seen how the flow of information (or the lack thereof) affects a project.



As a project manager, I was often a part of meetings with senior management to discuss very detailed and sensitive most success in, or details on possible acquisitions. I was often surprised by the depth and detail of the information I had access to. It was somewhat unprecedented and unusual based on other areas where we had performed similar work. This unprecedented access helped H&J understand exactly what drove value at the company and helped us participate in a significantly more proactive manner in our ability to add value. The H&J team simply became an extension of the business and played a big role in helping guide their drilling department. In Arnold Nall's own words, "H&J was effectively our drilling department". While this let their teams focus on the strategic goals of the company, it also let H&J and all of our team members assist them with this. Author Ken Blanchard, in one of my favorite books, "Servant Leadership" has said, "All of us are smarter than any one of us". I can say in my broad experience, working together as a team is much more effective than trying to do everything by yourself. A key to healthy teams is healthy communication, and that includes access to needed information. We all know that this does not come without risk, but if you choose your team members (and your consulting firm) carefully, and develop relationships based on a foundation of mutual trust and shared values, the results you desire become more attainable. This approach by H&J was key in our ability to help our client develop and divest their assets for almost one billion dollars. But what I take the most pride in is the strong bonds and relationships I have developed with the individuals and those who trust us with their companies as part of this process.