



ALOTECH

MANUFACTURING *Mastered*



TOMMY KIRK

CEO ALOTECH, INC.

At a young age, right before going off to college, Tommy Kirk's father, a General Contractor, gave him the advice to learn a trade saying, "No one can take it from you, and if you don't like it you'll always have something to fall back on." And so Tommy decided to become a Machinist. His reasons were entirely practical: it allowed him to solve problems which he enjoyed, there were good careers available, and his starting salary was enough to raise a family on. And so he began. But once he started, he fell in love with it.

He soon set a goal to run his own business. Over the years, he perused several possibilities. While his ventures into entrepreneurship proved exciting, he always ran into a dead end until he met his mentor and eventual business partner, Bill Murphy.

Murphy hired Tommy as General Manager of Alotech and taught him the ins and outs of business ownership. Bill's philosophy was to develop people not just products. Together they helped the company grow from 5 full-time employees generating \$500k in sales to 50 employees with over \$8.5M in sales. And Tommy has whole-heartedly adopted Bill's business philosophy, which seeks to find ways to help employees succeed.

Alotech is not a typical contract manufacturer since they don't just manufacture products; they work with client-entrepreneurs in creating the best possible products while reducing overall manufacturing costs. The service Alotech provides is bigger than production; It is about improving manufacturability of products through value engineering and robust processes. Helping the small manufacturing guys work smarter not harder. We help them focus on what they do best by getting their products to market more efficiently. Let them work on the business rather than in the business. The unique and people focused structure of Alotech has created an innovative company that constantly surpasses customer expectations.

For more information call (919) 774-1297 or visit alotechinc.com

WHEN PASSION MEETS KNOW-HOW

Servant Leadership

Tommy has created an outline of how to become a servant leader. This is the most important part of running a business with employees. If you want people to follow you, humble yourself and give more than you receive. Tommy believes that life is not any fun at the top if you don't surround yourself with those who helped you succeed. True happiness is in the quality of your relationships. To Tommy, caring for the employees and putting yourself in their shoes is part of being a great leader and a productive citizen.

Made in the USA Matters

Tommy speaks on the marketing advantages of "Made in the USA." Most people go to China because that's what they have to do to compete and make money. They really think that's all they can afford but that is what devalues their product from the start. Everyone wants to buy cheap and sell cheap. But there are major benefits to buying higher and selling higher.

Pursuing Your Passion

One of Tommy's biggest passions is helping people pursue their own passion. Often, when people start a business, they are forced into the role of CEO—a role not everyone is cut out for. The key to enjoying your work is doing what you do best. If that's inventing and designing, you have to find the most qualified person you can to do the rest. Of course, when you're a small business, you have no choice. However, to enjoy work, you must find the right people to do what you can't or would rather not spend your valuable time on.

Market Research Is A Must

Tommy talks about the primary importance of market research. He helps explain key reasons for doing market research before starting a business. Tommy helps early entrepreneurs learn the importance of establishing a peer group, business coach, or mentor early on. The lesson here is to gather plenty of people who will give you free advice. His tagline is, "don't spend any money on anything until you've spent some on a third party market analysis."

Entrepreneurial Pitfalls To Avoid

Tommy speaks about common mistakes made by Entrepreneurs—something he knows too much about. He explains that you are going to make mistakes. It's an education that can be costly at times but you learn over time how to avoid pitfalls and recover. His advice is: seek counsel from people who will give informed and honest feedback. His own success is the result of his business partner, Bill Murphy, who always tells it like it is.

