

THE LAKE FOREST LEADER

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LB resident uses juggling skills to aid mid-size businesses

By: Alan P. Henry, Freelance Reporter

In the process of becoming a championship juggler during his undergraduate and graduate school years at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Lake Bluff resident Samuel Alper mastered the ability to focus on the task at hand while, quite literally, calmly and systematically keeping multiple objects in the air.

Today, Alper is using those same skills as president of Process Human Factors Consulting, LLC in Lake Bluff to help medium-size businesses improve customer service, increase productivity, strengthen their bottom line, or simply achieve the same results with less effort.

“The focus required to go from a new idea for a juggling trick to mastering the trick is similar to the focus required to go from identifying a new opportunity to successful implementation for one of my clients. In both cases, you decide what you are going to do, figure out how to do it, and do it over and over again until it becomes natural,” said Alper, 35, who, armed with a Ph.D. in industrial and systems engineering, has spent years researching the intricacies of labor and why people do their work the way they do.

“I systematically look at a company. I break it apart into small component steps so we can look at each step to see how we can make it better,” said Alper, noting that mastering a new juggling trick also requires breaking the trick into component pieces.

ProcessHF’s methodical approach helps companies analyze, understand and identify the barriers and opportunities presented by their own procedures and recommends strategies to help them move forward more effectively and efficiently. Because each analysis is specific to a particular business, ProcessHF’s recommendations and strategies are customized for that business.

“We get to the core of how our clients run their business and create a plan for them to succeed,” Alper said. “Some consultants work from the top down to find out what needs to be done to improve. Others come in with solutions based on what their software tells them. We work from the bottom up. We start on the front lines, individual by individual, and develop a solution that fits that specific company and its people.” Alper also advises clients in all stages of the product design process, including product review, development and review of warning labels and instructions, identification and evaluation of relevant regulations and standards, proactive risk and failure analysis, consumer product recalls and litigation.

He is a published author of dozens of scientific papers related to human factors, safety protocol and technology implementation, and has also been called on as an expert witness in cases dealing with failure-to-warn claims and human error.

Alper started juggling in sixth grade when his mother bought him the book “Juggling for the Complete Klutz.” He learned the basics using three bean bags in two weeks, and by the end of high school had mastered a number of tricks using four balls.

In Madison, he joined the Madison Area Jugglers, who had just won



Samuel Alper, of Lake Bluff.

an International Jugglers’ Association team competition. He went on to learn complex multi-person passing patterns with up to 10 people and 30 clubs.

“We call them clubs because if they hit you in the head it feels more like a club than a pin,” he said.

He went on to win a number of amateur events and compete in regional and national competitions.

These days, with a business to run, a wife, family law attorney Valerie Steiner, and a young child, Alper juggles only for his own amusement, though he has “bean bags all over the house.” To keep the competitive juices flowing, he plays in a 14-inch softball league and is a regular on the ice hockey rink.

For more information on ProcessHF, contact Sam Alper, (608) 347-6405, or go to www.processhf.com or [@processhf](https://twitter.com/processhf).