

# Ribb "IT" Review

## Can You Hear Me Now?

As we've met with our clients over the past few months, we heard more and more concerns about costly phone bills. We've been testing a cutting edge solution over the past several months, and have found one that meets our extremely high standards. We are rolling this out to a few clients each month, and they have seen an average of a 48.5% cost savings on their monthly phone bill. If you want to be one of the first to experience this savings, call quality, and ability to use cutting edge features, just give us a call.

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This monthly publication provided courtesy of Alex Bleam, Owner of Frogworks.

*"As a business owner, you don't have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That's where we **shine!** Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!"*

- Alex Bleam, Frogworks



**F**or the past few months, we've been swamped with questions about Windows 10.

If you're wondering whether now is the best time to upgrade your system, here's what you need to know:

First and foremost, if your organization relies on your computers in any way to make money or save lives, consider the risks carefully.

As with any software upgrade – but especially your computer's operating system – you've got to weigh the advantages of upgrading now against potential downtime if there are problems with the new code.

A good rule of thumb regarding any operating-system upgrade is to wait six months after the product release before deploying it into any system or group of systems that your business depends on.

Since January 29 marks six months since the Windows 10 official release date, it's a good time to look at whether

## Upgrading To Windows 10? Avoid Headaches, Downtime, And Frustrations By Following This Advice

it's wiser to upgrade now or wait for further fixes and improvements.

That being said, here are a few of the key questions we've been fielding – and pitfalls to avoid:

**Q. It's free for a "limited time" – don't I have to act now?**

A. No. You have until July 2016 to take advantage of the free upgrade. And, if your system hasn't prompted you to upgrade yet, you'll need to wait. If and when your system is deemed capable of adapting to the upgrade, your current Windows OS will notify you. Either way, you have until July 28, 2016. If you do plan to upgrade, we strongly advise that you get it done well before that date, in order to avoid any last-minute scrambling.

**Q. It's better and/or faster, right?**

A. Maybe... It depends. Here's what we're seeing:

- Windows 10 radically changes how your system operates, compared to Windows 7. While some computers make the change with no problem at all, it can

cause older systems to lose key hardware drivers (like networking or printing), rendering them an “instant brick.”

- Some systems, even those certified by their manufacturers as “Windows 10 ready,” start misbehaving after being upgraded. That means undue downtime while you reinstall or upgrade MS Office or other software – or even revert back to your older OS.

- Some older systems actually run slower on Windows 10 than on Windows 7 or 8.1.

#### Q. Will my computer work with Windows 10?

A. Age is probably the biggest factor for any Windows-based device. Anything older than three years is not worth upgrading. At three years old, your machine is nearing the end of its useful life. You are better off leaving the old operating system in place and waiting for Windows 10

until you upgrade to a new computer.

#### Q. I’ve heard Windows 10 transmits all of your personal information to Microsoft. Is this true?

A. This is true, unless you opt out of some of the most attractive features, such as the MS Store and Cortana, the voice-controlled virtual assistant. According to Windows 10 terms of service, Microsoft can:

*“access, disclose, and preserve personal data, including your content (such as the content of your emails, other private communications or files in private folders), when we have a good faith belief that doing so is necessary to protect our customers or enforce the terms governing the use of the services.”*

If you decide that giving that kind of control of your personal and business

data to Microsoft is not in your best interest, you can still install Windows 10; just call us, and we’ll help you adjust the settings to keep all your information from being sent to Microsoft.

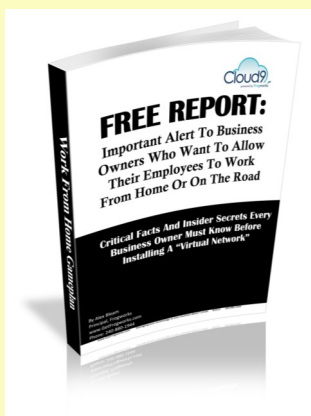
#### Q. We use some custom software here. Will it run on Windows 10?

A. Until your custom software vendor blesses Windows 10 for that program, the answer is no. In all cases, we advise against upgrading to Windows 10 until your custom programs are 100% fully vetted, compatible, and supported for it. Deciding when to upgrade to Windows 10 isn’t as simple as Microsoft and some pundits would have you believe. But if you know the pitfalls we’ve laid out for you here in advance, you’ve at least got a fighting chance for a smooth, headache-free transition.

**To Schedule A Free Windows 10 Readiness Assessment, Call Us At: 240-880-1944 Or Email Us At: [Info@GetFrogworks.com](mailto:Info@GetFrogworks.com)**

*“Some systems start misbehaving after being upgraded, which can lead to downtime.”*

## The Ultimate Small Business Guide To Setting Up A Work-From-Home System For Your Staff



#### You Will Learn:

- ✓ What telecommuting is, and why so many small businesses are rapidly implementing work-from-home programs.
- ✓ The single most important thing you MUST have in place before starting any work-from-home or remote office initiative.
- ✓ How one company slashed its turnover rate from 33% to nearly 0%—and increased productivity by 18%—by implementing a work-from-home program.
- ✓ How to get a FREE “Home Office Action Pack” (a \$97 value).

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(240) 880-1944**

## Shiny New Gadget Of The Month:



### Who Else Wants A Little Music With Their Light?

The next time you replace a lightbulb, you can now pick one that will stream your favorite music and light up your life in your choice of over 16,000 colors, all with a tap on your phone.

In case you haven't noticed, some LED bulbs now include a Bluetooth- or WiFi-controlled speaker. And at least one, the MagicLight® Plus, available on Amazon, also lets you pick a light color to suit your mood.

At anywhere from \$15 to \$129 or more, these bulbs can add music – and light – throughout your home or office in a matter of minutes, at a fraction of the cost of a wired-in sound system.

How's the sound quality? It depends on the one you select. And it may not resonate like Carnegie Hall live...but hey, it's a lightbulb – what did you expect?

# The Five Biggest Mistakes All Leaders Make

Although everyone agrees that hiring is tough, most managers struggle with an even more prevalent leadership mistake. It's an affliction as prevalent as the common cold, and one of the least recognized in the workplace today.

Over the last 20 years at ghSMART, we have been able to empirically observe where executives excel and where they get in their own way. We have conducted five-hour interviews with more than 15,000 leaders across every major industry, producing more than 9 million data points.

So, what is the No. 1 most common mistake that holds leaders back?

The complete inability to remove underperformers.

And why do we all struggle with this? Here are the top five reasons that we see:

1. You are an eternal optimist. You somehow believe that you will fix poor Mark in Finance, or Emma in Marketing. Or, even better, perhaps they will magically fix themselves.
2. You don't want to rock the boat. You believe in accepting the cards that you are dealt. You have been taught to make do. As kids learn at daycare today, "You get what you get, and you don't get upset."
3. You dislike conflict. Difficult conversations are difficult. So it is easier to suffer through it even if your whole team can now get less done.
4. You will look bad. You may have hired or promoted them into the role. You don't want to just pass the buck.

5. You excel at procrastinating. Why do today what can safely be put off for another day? Besides, who knows? He or she might resign, and that would make it easier for everyone.

You may suffer from just one, or more likely a combination, of these reasons.

And yet our research found that executives who excelled at removing underperformers from their teams are more than twice as likely to have had a successful career than all other senior leaders.

Yes, that's right: twice as likely. The best leaders we meet tell us that it makes all the difference.

Panos Anastassiadis is one who does it very well. He was the CEO of Cyveillance, which grew over 1500% in five years. His secret? "I have simply been constantly averaging up who is on the team."

Yet how do you do that and still do right by the individual in question?

You can set them clear goals and craft the role to play to their strengths. But when it clearly isn't working, it's time to take action. Run a fair, objective talent management process, tell them that their performance isn't where it needs to be, and give them 30, 60, or 90 days to turn their situation around.

If that doesn't work, it's time to have that tough conversation that deep down you know you should have had 6, 12, or maybe 24 months ago.

Once done, yet only then, can you hire that A player you really need.



**GEOFF SMART** is Chairman & Founder of ghSMART. Geoff is co-author, with his colleague Randy Street, of the *New York Times* bestselling book, *Who: The A Method for Hiring*, and the author of the #1 *Wall Street Journal* bestseller, *Leadocracy: Hiring More Great Leaders (Like You) into Government*. Geoff co-created the Topgrading brand of talent management. Geoff is the Founder of two 501C3 not-for-profit organizations. SMARTKids Leadership Program™ provides 10 years of leadership tutoring, and The Leaders Initiative™ seeks to deploy society's greatest leaders into government. Geoff earned a B.A. in Economics with Honors from Northwestern University, an M.A., and a Ph.D. in Psychology from Claremont Graduate University.

## Thought Leadership:

*"Solve a problem you didn't create."*

—Mark Sanborn, Author Of *The Fred Factor*





## Your Vacation

Resolved to see more of the world this year? Here are three surprisingly great places to visit, according to travel-guide publisher Lonely Planet: 1) For cutting-edge art scenes, emerging nightlife, great skiing, and rich wildlife-watching, including bison, wolves, lynx, and bears, Transylvania tops the list. 2) Celebrating 50 years of independence in 2016, Botswana features luxury camps, self-guided tours, community projects, and award-winning family safaris. 3) For postcard-worthy views of the stunning Sapphire Bay, as well as charming alleyways, tasty food, and its still-traditional way of life, Kotor, Montenegro, deserves a top spot on your short list. This year, get off the beaten path for a vacation that can't be beat!

*Today.com*

## Your Waistline

Make 2016 the year you can wear those favorite old pants again with these three tips... Drink more water: By far the easiest (yet most forgotten way) to lose weight, is just to swap soda and fruit drinks for water, and watch belly fat vanish. Get sound

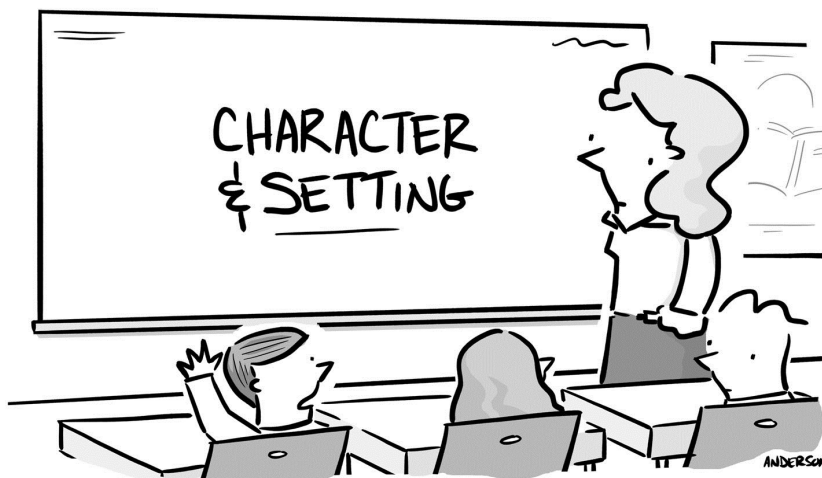
sleep: Science confirms that old saying “Early to bed...” Your deepest and most cleansing sleep happens when you get to bed earlier in the evening. Countless studies bear out the link between a good night’s rest and less belly fat. Train harder in less time: In High Intensity Interval Training you go hard for about 30 to 60 seconds, then rest. Just 20 minutes of HIIT training boosts your metabolism all day long.

*Bambu.com*

## Your Career

A mentor can help you achieve big things. But finding and connecting with the right person can be tough. Here’s what helps: First, get clear about what you want in a mentor: do you need a sounding board? A guide? An advocate for a project you’re working on? Once you know what you’re looking for, let the search begin. Look inside or outside your company, run an advanced search on LinkedIn, and be open to working with someone younger than yourself. When you find a good candidate, simply ask for help on a specific problem. Then make it fun, give back, and nurture the relationship.

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“Like how the people in the story configure their wi-fi?”

Mentoring can be a highly rewarding experience for you – and for your mentor.

*Forbes.com*

## Your Inbox

Got email overwhelm? Get more done in your day with these three tips used by top pros: 1) Empty your inbox often. Use “Follow Up” and “Hold” labels in Gmail (folders if you’re in Outlook) to quickly sort emails you can’t respond to right away. 2) Use the Two-Minute Rule: if it will take more than two minutes to respond to, sort it for later. 3) Respond quickly. This sets you apart in a world where most people are drowning in email. Often, a quick reply such as “Got your note, will get back to you by end of day Tuesday” is all you need. Pair this with time blocks for knocking out batches of replies for massive productivity.

*LifeHackerBook.com*

## Your Time

Being busy doesn’t always mean being productive. To win back big chunks of your time every day, avoid these three “busy-ness” traps: 1) Multitasking cuts your IQ by up to 40% and makes the two tasks you’re working on take 25% longer. 2) Interruptions suck up your time because not only does it take up to 20 minutes to fully refocus on the original task, but we tend to get back to trivial rather than more important tasks at hand. 3) You’re busy because technology wants you to be, not because you need to be. Must you really remain available to your boss, customers, family, friends, and social networks 24/7/365? Take control again – it’s your life!

*Inc. Magazine*