



**Complete Transcript: HALO Talks with Peter Barbaresi  
Posted January 13, 2022**

Pete Moore:

This is your host, Pete Moore. And I am pleased and humbled to announce the launch of my one and only book, Time To Win Again. 52 takeaways from playing and watching team sports to ensure your business success.

Pete Moore:

Those of you who know me personally, and anyone who listens to halo talks or any length of time, know that I am an avid sports fan and a big believer in the value of team sports. What I've seen over the past 25 years, helping businesses grow raising capital, being an entrepreneur, myself, and coaching and mentoring executive in the sector. It's the lessons learned on the field perfectly apply to business entrepreneurs, executives, managers, you name it. Every company that's a strong company has got a good team. It's a quick read. There's also illustrations in there from our good friend, Mark Crutney, free cart tunes. If you go to integrity, sq.com, enter your email address and we will send you information on the book and the entrepreneurs' survival kit as well. Be great. Take names, go halo.

Pete Moore:

The Pete Moore on halo talks NYC on location, Dallas, Texas, my new best friend, Peter Barbaresi Dana Point, California. Hey buddy, I haven't spoken to you in like a couple hours

Peter Barbaresi:

Or at least last night, at least good to be on the Pete Moore show. Awesome.

Pete Moore:

Halo talks. We'll keep it broader. Okay. So let's talk about your, I know you, don't like to talk about your background, but give us your, you know, UN unbiased opinion about yourself and your, you know, your, your sequence to the, into the halo sector.

Peter Barbaresi:

<Laugh> all right. So I am a from the beginning a I'm an athlete, you know, we'll start with that, cut that segues into life definition. So college athlete back in the day, way back in the day hockey lacrosse and then fortune 100 company background with P and G Nestle Perina taco bell Mattel. So usually sales marketing, and then general leadership stuff with, as I started to get into smaller companies. So kind of

fast forward and probably most relevant to this. And what I'm doing now is I've been operating companies in the health wellness, fitness space or halo as we like to refer to it as.

Pete Moore:

Thank you. Take your time, take your time. Okay.

Peter Barbaresi:

So, so I ran velocity sports performance back in the early two thousands came in turnaround CEO old it's a stack mm-hmm <affirmative>. And so that was a good, that was a good deal for, for all parties then I stayed with that for a bit. And then I went into the yoga business. So I have a friend that's owns a, a studio or I should say a chain. So I got into that yoga and ran that business for a while. And then we ended up selling after about two years to exponential fitness mm-hmm <affirmative>. So since then I've been working with a variety of different brands, usually as a, an advisor, a board member, a CEO chairman in an investor. So kind of, I play all those different, you know, positions, if you will. Mm-Hmm <affirmative>, you know, in a, a bunch of different companies that I'm involved in, usually you know, I get involved on a fractional basis and but I get involved. I'm not just a you know, a wallflower that's, you know, watching things. I like to be very actively involved cut I think I, at this point terms of the, that that space I'm, I've gotten to know quite well and also on the multi-unit business. So many of these things are exactly that. Yeah.

Pete Moore:

Great. So, you know, I use this term all the time experiences, what you get when you don't get what you want. So talk about, you know, when you get involved in a company how you can kind of diagnose pretty quick, you know, Hey, I've seen this movie before, not sure which movie it was, but like, this is how my brain is wired now to kind of diagnose what's going on, where you need help, where you're strong and how I'm going to basically like rebuild your team or your business, or just, Hey, let me just be a trampoline for you and provide you what you need as a, as a mentoring tool. So like talk, talk about how your, how your process works and you know, when you think through it and you get involved and decide if you want to do something or

Peter Barbaresi:

Not. So basically, I mean, everything is different. That's, you know, I, I guess that kind of goes without saying, but every, every company is at slightly different stages of maturity or immaturity. But the key thing is, I mean, it is about the people I usually am. I've got a, I've got a good read on character, talent, capacity limitation, whatever that might be. And I have run into multiple situations where, you know, that chemistry of the key players is critical. Mm-Hmm <affirmative> to the success or the failure of, you know, where they are going. And I mean I only get involved and am involved with, with really good people. I mean, I genuinely like the different people in groups that I work with, but it's interesting that if you just make some tweaks and when the, the level I come in in, which is usually at the top after observation, just tweaking in terms of whatever that organization's structure might be or the, the reporting structure of those people, or just being there to mentor, coach listen, mm-hmm <affirmative> to, to different people. It makes a difference. Yeah. And so it really makes the difference in their behavior, how the organization just might feel more relieved and confident in what they're pursuing and how they're going about it. So, I mean, I know I'm talking about a lot of subject subjective stuff here, but I can just say that it matters a ton in terms of cultural impact and which translates to performance.

Pete Moore:

Gotcha. So when you get involved in a company, you're either technically, you know, a board member or chairman of the board, maybe an advisor to the business, how do you, and, and this is probably for, for the segment of the audience here, that is either they're thinking about going on somebody's board, you know, what, what role do you try to play and how do you kind of eloquently insert yourself without being like a change agent or, you know, a bull in a China shop?

Peter Barbaresi:

Right? So the key is not to be threatening mm-hmm <affirmative> and I'm, you know, it's not my style. I mean, my personality, if anybody he knows me is that I'm, you know, I'm a good listener. You know, I'm not an I, I show up and I really I'm here to do good to, to help people to coach. And so earning the trust of the board of the ownership of the executive team, and that's not just the, you know, I don't, I don't sequester myself just to that, you know, each executive level because, you know, you got the troops and the troops do the work and the troops need to know who you are. And so I'm good at talking to the troops as well. Mm-Hmm <affirmative> and I like it. So having that trust throughout the organization is absolutely critical to what I do mean. I don't care what my title is. I am, I could care less, but you do have to have some kind of title this, then they honor, well, who is this guy? And what's he really doing? So ultimately how long is he going to be here for, yeah, you got to get, I have to self assign myself, or I have to find something that, you know, works with whatever it is, but so whatever it is it is, and, and, and we just kind of go from there. Gotcha.

Pete Moore:

So let's talk about a couple of the companies and we're familiar with and, you know, pretty well. You know, let's talk about UpperHand software out of Indianapolis from, by Kevin, you know, talk about how that, how you got involved there and how you're helping guide that business, which is, you know, on, you know, running Liz a tiger by the tail or this point with the, with the growth.

Peter Barbaresi:

Right. So upper hand is, is a, is an affiliate partner with another company that I, I work with. And so that's kind of with athletic Republic, so we can talk about them at some point as well. Mm-Hmm <affirmative>, but it's basically upper hand small growing at inflection point type of software CRM company. And I was asked by the private equity group that owns them to come on board and work with Kevin mm-hmm <affirmative> is a super good guy, very smart, very charismatic CEO, but young. And he hasn't run a lot of companies, quite frankly, but very capable. So I am on board with them now and I've been with them for several months, mostly you know, working for the board, working for the private equity group, but working closely on a day basis with Kevin and less so, but somewhat.

Peter Barbaresi:

So the, the rest of his executive team. So I've been involved, not so much in the product. I'm not really a software expert, mm-hmm <affirmative> at, at all, quite frankly, but, you know, I know structure, I know positioning of companies and brands and really how to, you know, and I know finance <laugh>, mm-hmm, <affirmative>, you know, all that stuff is part of the ongoing you know, insight that I provide to, to that entire group. So that's how I got involved with that group. And there's a lot of exciting stuff going on upper

Pete Moore:

End. So, and, and, and with that company, there's obviously explosive growth going on in every segment of sports training, especially with kids, there seems to be new concepts coming up all the times, whether it's, you know, batting cages with, with DBA or whether it's, you know, like iterations of, of top golf. How do you kind of your network, whether it's from velocity, whether it's from yoga to kind of mm-hmm <affirmative>, you know, like you're, you know, kind of not a bad way, but like you know, the, the guy who's got different arrows in his quiver and he is like, Hey, I got upper hand for you. I've got athletic Republic. I'm on the board of this company. I'm trying to like, you're like a business development guy at the same time. Like, you're the board member.

Peter Barbaresi:

Right. I thought you were going to say arrows in my back. <Laugh> no, no,

Pete Moore:

No, no, none in your back. Unless they were like those Nerf ones that my five year old cousin has or think like he could shoot 'em at anybody who's come to the house.

Peter Barbaresi:

Yeah. so I mean, we're all, we're all in the, in this same space and it is so interesting. I mean, being here and walking, walking the halls, walking the, the, you know, the aisles it's so stimulating. And so yes, it is very valuable for well, it's valuable to me to have the different companies that I work with. And there's lots of, a lot of synergy, maybe an overused word, but it just is mm-hmm <affirmative>. And so the, the cross conversations that I do have, they they're, they're pretty meaningful. Mm-Hmm <affirmative> and they're valuable. And so anyhow, I mean, I think to your point, yeah, there's a lot of being part of and involved with so many different companies to me. I, I, I see that there's a lot of you know, ways that they, they complement each other.

Pete Moore:

I want to take a minute and tell our audience about two awesome workout recovery products I've been using for the last 18 months from higher dose.com leader in infrared technology for athletes. Like all of us are, we're an investor in the company. That's not why I'm telling you this. I'm telling you this because it works. You got an infrared sauna blanket. I hop in there, I listen to some podcast, burn, 800 calories, get a mad detox and a P E M F, which is a post electromagnetic field crystal mat that I lay on. And I recalibrate my cells to the normalize level, the earth. If you got somebody you like, and you're looking for a pretty awesome gift, they will love it. You could use this code halo 75, get \$75 off, and you will not be disappointed higher dose.com promo code KLO 75. And now let's get back to our regularly scheduled program. Let's pivot over to, to athletic Republic, you know, some, somewhat of the DNA of what velocity was doing to an extent I'm assuming, but probably much more optimized business model. So talk about what that company's doing and, and there's probably some listeners on here that could become a franchisee or might want to take some space in their health club and, and

Peter Barbaresi:

Retrofit for this. Yes. Please call me if you're

Pete Moore:

Interested. We're going to give you a self-member at the end. It'll be in the show nuts. <Laugh>

Peter Barbaresi:

Go ahead. Thank you. So yeah, so I, I came to know athletic Republic from my days of velocity sports performance, because they're direct competitors, but always friendly. And so, you know, just another point that I'll make to anybody is I, you know, I, you know, I love to compete, but I'm also a, I'm a, and I'm a very I'm a fierce competitor, but I'm a respectable one. Mm-Hmm <affirmative>. So athletically public was a brand that, you know, came on my radar as soon as I stepped into the role velocity. And so got to know them and Charlie graves, who's their CEO and owner at this point. And he's a super good guy, very smart. And now he's a very good friend, but so when I left velocity, after I sold it, stayed with it and left it, you know, Charlie and I have always maintained good relations. And so that's when I came on board with Charlie, which was about five years ago at this point, so I've stayed close to Charlie and his excellent team management team, and worked with them on a, on a very close basis, weekly, daily basis on, you know, stuff. And, you know, maybe not every day, but I'm always accessible to, you know, things that are going on, you know, in that business. So remind me of your question. Cause I started to rambling.

Pete Moore:

No, just, just, just taking, you know, being able to take that experience and maybe some of the lessons from, from one business that was effectively a turnaround and that, you know, you were able to, to sell after you turned it around mm-hmm <affirmative> and saying, Hey, look I see where this is going. Let me tell you what, what didn't work and, and why, and, and it maybe times are different, but typically they're not. So, you know, want to talk about like how you maybe help CEOs or come companies kind of mm-hmm, <affirmative> stay on, you know, if we were going bowling, you know, for my six year old nieces bowling, you know, they'd put up the guardrails, right. So there'd be no gutter balls. So how do you think about what you bring to the table and kind of drawing on all these different experiences and interject and say, look, I did this, let me tell you what happened. Right.

Peter Barbaresi:

So yeah, I mean, life is, is that it's, you know, it's history does repeat itself mm-hmm <affirmative> and there are lessons to be learned that get applied, you know, going forward that that's life. And so as it applies to from velocity to athletic Republic, and then with my experience with the yoga six, I mean, that's been massive mm-hmm <affirmative> I have between running yoga six EO selling it to exponential fitness in 2018 mm-hmm <affirmative> and then being a franchisee and being part of the exponential family has been, I mean, a significant experience, just understanding that the expo playbook, the expo playbook is a plus. I mean, those guys are absolute pros. Yep. And so just being part of that to run the yoga six business, of course, you know, to me as an operator and an influencer of sorts, you know, that education, you know, as is appropriate only. And I'm, I want to make sure that I'm, I'm always respectful of relationships and information, but as it pertains to me and my knowledge base it there's lots of cross pollination, you know, amongst brands as it pertains to my experience and my knowledge that I, you know, bring forward.

Pete Moore:

So just to kind of recap or encapsulate, you know, someone else, someone on this call someone listening here is going to say, Hey, I'm taking on this board position. Mm-Hmm <affirmative>, you know, and they, they said, you know, Peter, give me the, like the top three things I should do, right. When I, you know, get into my first board meeting, what should I ask for before I even join this board?

Peter Barbaresi:

Well, I was, I would say, you know, first of all, it's, it's really a listening, learning is, you know, always step one. But in terms of before joining a board, I would, you know, I mean, you got to see the numbers. Yeah. So sorry, but the numbers are in the structure of those numbers. And once you, once you have the ability to assess them intelligently and thoroughly, mm-hmm <affirmative>, then I think, you know, understanding the position in the health of the company is, you know, then, then you understand kind of what you're, what you're walking into. Then it's the people, you know, you, as, as I, as I said before, establishing the trust is one thing, but it's trust is two-way, you've got to have, it's a two-way street. And if you don't get that, then something's being withheld. And you're like, well, what's going on here. And, and that's not a healthy situation. And I think one can be compromised or be wasting their time by not having that kind of a forthcoming situation, which I don't, which I don't have in any situation, by the way. But if that was the case, then I would I would be a little bit concerned. Gotcha.

Pete Moore:

So, you know, pivoting over to what we're working on together on the on the yoga and Pilate side, exponential is now a public company club. Pilate's very well-established brand and unit economics, yoga, six kind of getting to that, you know, maturity, you know, trajectory or, or plateau, or at least people could say, Hey, look, if I build this, this is pretty much what it's going to look like if I pick the right location. Why don't you just give a little preamble on why you got back involved or stayed involved, where you see the opportunity and, you know, from your experience, from our experience from Ben's experience and Emily and, and Brandy the cohort here, you know why this is a good business idea.

Peter Barbaresi:

Yeah. So basically it, it does start with, with exponential. Yeah. So they are our partners and I, you know, I like them, I respect them for what they've built across all now, 10 brands, congratulations. But you know, they do have the proven a book for success. So I would not be embarking on this with you and my, my kind of foundational partners. Yeah. If it wasn't for my belief and trust in them. And when I say them, it's Lindsay, it's Ryan, it's Sean, it's Anthony mm-hmm, <affirmative>, it's mark, you know, at the top. I mean, those guys are, are good, smart. And you know, I, I, I respect them very, very, very much so therefore that gives me kind of mental permission to go forward. And so what we're doing if you want me to mention that, yeah. Let's talk

Pete Moore:

About it for a couple minutes. Yeah.

Peter Barbaresi:

So, what we're doing is, is putting together a, a consortium of Pilates club, Pilates and yoga six franchisees to create a, really a, a large, super regional platform with the intent to raise capital and go and acquire other yoga six and other club, Pilate, franchisees, and possible other brands. So there's definitely that opportunity that's been presented and discussed. It is under serious, active consideration to add or to include another brand or brands, but probably another brand into that that effort. So we are actively involved in mostly west coast or Western us expansion and acquisition. We will be locked and loaded from a growth capital standpoint in the very near term, thanks to you. And you <laugh> to go forward and put together a very I'd say kind of SWAT team approach of, in terms of managing and over seen and expanding that, that business to be something that, from an expo standpoint, we will be

aggressively developing, generating, generating new units, more royalty, the whole thing. It's the proverbial, you know, win, win deal for all involved. Yeah.

Pete Moore:

So, you know, as you've seen the industry evolve, what you've seen of yoga six, you know, you see a lot of financials and also there's, you know, franchise disclosure documents. Yep. And you and I have talked about this, but you know, being able to take a member, you know, whether it's through this XPA or basically put a club Pilates at a yoga six and maybe another brand kind of, you know, as a, a, a three for, you know, inside of, you know, specialty retail strips center or free standing, how excited are you about being able provide that variety and not have people kind of, you know, be on your weekly, like, track, but actually like, I'm like, I have a relationship with this member and I'm going to give them what they need full stop.

Peter Barbaresi:

Yeah. I mean, it's huge. So whether we own the, you know, we might not own the, the cycle bar or the stretch lab or the rumble, or, you know, whatever it might be, but by being on the XPA platform, it's, it's massive. So I'm very excited for what is going to be, what, what is a very good idea? It's, it's being expanded right now and it's coming to store near you very, very soon. And in fact, it's in a bunch of our stores already. So, I mean, I think it's a really smart idea. And so as, as you know, mark and Anthony expand their portfolio, it just gets more attractive.

Pete Moore:

Yeah. You know, when, when you look at some of these businesses and, and obviously you and I have done the work together on this, the ability to run an area developer with pretty limited corporate overhead, because of all the benefits that you get from the franchisor, you know, and you've got the technology platform with, you know, with club ready and you've got great general managers, assuming you have, as things, you, you kind of look at the corporate over here, like, are, are we underestimating this? Or is it just kind of what, what you need? Like, it's, it's interesting when you're kind of like in this middle of a franchisor that's robust, that has real support systems and has really good technology. And then I got really good people and it's almost like I just need like a slim very of, of corporate overhead, which you don't really see in a lot of businesses. So maybe just talk about, as you were going through it and thinking about what team do I need to manage this type of operation and maybe have like, maybe pinch yourself and be like, yeah, well, what am I missing?

Peter Barbaresi:

Well, so it does start with, with Ben. So Ben Tucker is the president and he is a rock star great guy, very smart guy. And so he's the, he's the day to day, you know, leader manager of this business today mm-hmm <affirmative> and, you know, we'll be going forward. So Ben is, he's a plus. So thank thankfully for him. And then in terms of you know, the rest of the, the crew that we're going to to have we don't need a lot of people. I mean, it's really people managing people and just making sure that there's proper coverage you know, there's corporate development stuff, which, you know, I'm going to be, you know, single handedly, you know, doing, but again with, with, you know, in tandem with everybody else on the team. So we don't need a lot of people. That's kind of where you're going, because, because expo's got such good support in terms of marketing, in terms of, you know, just the general playbook that they do provide that we subscribe to in practice, we run those plays. So it allows us to be very lean and me and effective.

Pete Moore:

Yeah. So if there's any private equity groups out there that are looking for a platform inside expo, or are thinking about how that unit economics in that for heads set up I think you'll be intrigued with how you can potentially roll this out and the scalability of the model. So in closing, why don't you give us like a business quote or a, a sports quote or something that that you think through and, or maybe something that shows up on your bulletin board or on your screensaver, if you got anything in

Peter Barbaresi:

That? Well, my screensaver is my kid, so that that's boring, but you know, I think I use a Reaganism trust and trust, but verify that's great.

Pete Moore:

I'll go with that. So all due diligence should be, I trust you, but you got to show me. Yep. So show me the data. Cool. Well, it's great to have you on your first halo talks. Yeah. Look forward to working with you likewise, and appreciate everything you're doing to get into the industry and helping mentor some of these companies that are helping solve obesity, loneliness. And I have, so we're just going to solve those three problems and then we'll go play tennis.