FOCUS 2013 Made Here

Getting with program pays

Entrepreneur Acceleration System helps Yellow Van Cleaning increase profits

BY SARAH ORLANDO

KEARSEY — Yellow Van Cleaning and Renovating has experienced higher customer satisfaction, an increase in sales and more employee engagement.

The company participated in Gallup’s Entrepreneur Acceleration System to help strengthen the 30-year-old business.

“This is just the tip of the iceberg for us,” said Donna Kerster, Yellow Van’s marketing and human resources director.

The Entrepreneur Acceleration System or EAS combines existing entrepreneurial development with Gallup’s understanding of human motivation, productivity, and behavior that correlates with faster and more sustainable business growth, according to the Gallup website.

The goal of the program is to give small- and medium-sized businesses owners the tools they need to grow their businesses.

Kerster said the Gallup model facilitated an understanding of the behavioral economics principle of scarcity.

Gallup has been conducting research for decades, she said.

“‘They have been able to pull out characteristics of the most successful businesses’,” Kerster said.

Yellow Van, which employs 45 full and part-time employees, participated in EAS last year.

They formed a leadership team of 12 employees who participated in workshops.

The company also created a plan to help improve the company.

The most important lesson from Gallup, Kerster said, was learning how to best utilize the strengths of employees.

While participating in EAS, Yellow Van made changes to the way they serve clients — a change that improved sales.

For many years, Yellow Van clients had to call the company to set up an appointment for a salesperson to come over and give them an estimate for the job.

After the salesperson gave an estimate, the work was scheduled, Kerster said.

The new, total call to completion of the job could take seven days or longer, Kerster said.

After participating in EAS, Yellow Van began giving estimates over the phone during the client’s initial call.

Jobs are now scheduled during the first phone call.

“That, of course, reduces the schedule by 75 percent,” Kerster said.

“We can serve clients a lot faster by not going through a lengthy process,” Kerster said.

Yellow Van Cleaning and Renovating increased their sales by 39 percent because the company was no longer spending time on sales people.

People were just happy to get scheduled immediately,” Kerster said.

The biggest change — an improvement in sales by 75 percent.

Gallup asked, “If you were to do one thing to improve your company, what would it be?” Kerster said.

“An answer they received several times was improving their service.”

Kerster added, “We worked on mission statements and shared it with the company. Now when we hire people and we’re training, we are utilizing the Gallup program for each stage of the business life cycle.

Gallup focused on strengthening the Entrepreneur Acceleration System to help increase employee engagement, leadership team building, and other considerations.

Next, the program introduces managers to behavioral economic management principles such as the importance of creating engaged workforce and recognizing, rewarding, and retaining high-performing teams.

Finally, the program focuses on enhancing individual talent by providing an environment for teams to learn from external experts and established entrepreneurs.

Gallup’s Support and Training — Gallup Knowledge Portal contains coaching and resources to help managers and employees be more successful.

The knowledge portal is available to all EAS clients.

The portal contains articles about the EAS system, videos, how-to guides, and training.

The portal also contains resources for managers and employees to use to improve their business.


The EAS program was created in 2012.

At the end of that year, Gallup organized an Impact Summit to highlight companies that excelled in the program.

Both Kendrick and Yellow Van were honored to be recognized.

For more information on Gallup’s EAS, go to www.gallup.com.

Donna Kerster

(803) 302-8080

keasrny@kearnseyhub.com

Q&A WITH DAIN SHINDOFF

Dain Shindoff, CEO of IntelliDirect shares his experience with the Gallup Entrepreneur Acceleration System.

Q: How did you want employees to get involved with the program?

A: As a personal that a number of companies, I saw this as a fantastic opportunity to involve our organization in this Gallup EAS Pilot program built around employee and customer engagement.

Additional areas of focus included how to leverage analysis to make the experience for our entire team. And maybe most important was the exciting issues of the program to drive economic expansion.

Q: How did your company change as a result of the program?

A: As we progressed through the program we immediately recognized that we were missing opportunities to engage more people in our strategic business goals.

We had to solve problems, improve our products and services, and create powerful client interactions. We learned how to measure these areas in our business, leverage strengths in teams and inventories and continuously improve the whole in the right direction. All of which has resulted in increased productivity and overall revenue.

Q: What makes your EAS guide so unique?

A: I think it’s the way you work with what you’ve got. You often complete the Pilot Program in 2011. I am proud to be able to provide the guide for the 2012 Cobalt.

I have the pleasure of working with three great companies and two finalists in the program.

Both Kendrick and Yellow Van have been thrilled to see their companies on the list, and it’s been an honor to be a part of this program.

For more information on Gallup’s EAS, go to www.gallup.com.

Shindoff, Dain

(703) 800-1000

dain@intellidirect.com

5/26/2013 12:32 AM