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Key Focused Questions to Keep Companies Healthy

An interview with JELD-WEN and EnergizeGrowth

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Cascade Business News sat down with Jerry Andres of JELD-WEN Development and Lisa Nirell of EnergizeGrowth LLC (www.energizegrowth.com) to discuss how regularly asking certain key focused questions can keep companies energized and vital. Here we address what it means to practice 'preventative health care' within JELD-WEN Development (JWD).

What does EnergizeGrowth LLC do for clients?

Lisa Nirell: I work with successful entrepreneurial companies who are struggling because they are working with too many unprofitable clients and have reached a plateau in their profitability goals.

Jerry, you constantly monitor the health and long-term growth in your company. When did you notice things were not on track?

Jerry Andres: Last year, Jeld-Wen Development faced new pressures to sustain growth. Within just two years, we launched several key initiatives: Three new communities in the Western United States and Mexico, a new brand and a re-organization.

We began experiencing unsteady progress toward our five-year, multi-million dollar "Big Audacious Goal" (BAG) profit targets. That's when we took a step back to ensure our current leaders were prepared to face these changes.

How did you and Lisa work together to address these changes?

Jerry Andres: By conducting interviews and surveys with Executive Council members, Lisa quickly identified the Council's leadership strengths, limiting beliefs and blind spots. The Council was then able to re-evaluate what talent and leadership styles they were lacking to fulfill their profit targets. In addition, Lisa facilitated planning sessions with the Executive Council. She rapidly discovered a lack of clear understanding of the company's core values. This was causing some costly project communications breakdowns for new employees and managers.

How was your company's health re-energized?

Jerry Andres: Lisa demonstrated with



Jerry Andres and Lisa Nirell

each Executive Council member how their leadership styles and strengths linked directly to JWD's "BAG." She also helped us refine core values and build a strategy to get the entire organization to adopt them. We once had 23 of them; now we have 4. Today, the company's four key values are responsibility, quality and value, golden rule and relationships. Everyone can remember and recite them.

One of the EnergizeGrowth focused questions is, "What rituals help us to stay focused and energized?" Jerry, what other rituals do you practice to achieve that at Jeld-Wen Development?

Jerry Andres: This year we started a daily 'signature seven-minute meeting' at all our locations. Each department meets and conducts a signature, or

motivational, meeting for seven minutes at the beginning of each day. It gives the employees the option of recognizing signature moments for our company where either someone got some praise from a customer or went above and beyond what their expected responsibilities were. Basically, it revolves around identifying positive experiences and sharing them with others. The meetings actually take place at the beginning of every shift because some of our departments operate on a 24-hour basis.

We also employ monthly rituals which includes an employee recognition party hosted by a different department that takes place at all our locations. We recognize employees for doing great things and we also nominate an employee

of the month for the entire company. They receive a recognition certificate and \$25 as a thank you gift. This comes from the belief that if you recognize a person for doing something good, then another will be inspired to do the same. By the way, it really works. Our company does not have high turnover. For example, 60 percent of the staff at Brasada came from the resort here at Eagle Crest.

Another focused question from EnergizeGrowth is, "What percentage of your team can consistently and clearly explain what you do?" Tell us how you monitor that at JWD.

Jerry Andres: Our mission statement says, "We manage great places to live, work and play." You're going to find the live, work and play all over this company - it's on our stationery, it's an integral part of our seven-minute meetings and everywhere else within the company.

Our customer service philosophy is: "We're in the business of putting smiles on people's faces." Sometimes the most rewarding smiles you ever get are from those people that may come in with a problem or are upset with you. If you can change that situation around by giving them a free dinner or getting them set up at the sports center, it's worth it. Changing the customer's perspective is what it's all about.

What is your formula for success?

Jerry Andres: To lead a successful company you've got to be patient and persistent. You also have to articulate as clearly as possible what your vision, mission and core values are. Have a passion for your work. I used to be a coach, so I like to tell people I'm still coaching, except the game is different.

Lisa Nirell: I have the privilege of working with successful organizations that need a "shot in the arm." In every case, two things must be mastered to achieve a vital company and culture.

One is to have a vision and a plan for growth that is documented and ingrained in your culture. The second is to constantly conquer your limiting beliefs as a company and as an individual. These healthy habits separate the chronically fatigued from the energized performers.

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