



ELITE

Spring Edition 2024



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The Start

Firstly, let me welcome you to the first edition of ELITE for 2024, I would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition, and I hope that anyone who does pick up a copy can find an article or even a piece of information that will help them in their career in 2024.

I always find it so interesting at the start of any year, lots of people setting new goals, new targets that they wish to achieve in the year ahead, either personally or in business. Just like lots of other people I also set goals and targets for myself and my business for the coming year. Setting and hitting those targets, however, are two very different things. I believe that most goals are made with good intentions and set with a positive outcome, of who we want to be, where we want to be, and how we wish our lives to play out throughout the year.

As mentioned before, setting, and hitting though are two very different things, it's easy to dream, easy to set goals, and easy to write them down. What is it though that separates the dreamers from the doers and the goals from being reality? Firstly, let's understand what's trying to stop you, no path to accomplishment is smooth, there will be challenges, sometimes external; market shifts, outside peer influences, and sometimes internal; a loss of drive or motivation. Other times we can become distracted from our goals, other choices seem more appealing, and in some cases, it may just seem easier in the short term, and these can also take us off track of where we wish to be or where we wish to go.

Just for the record, I don't achieve every single goal or target that I set, but I make every effort to achieve more than I miss and to hit the targets that will make the biggest positive changes to my life and business. I often focus on two things, firstly; discipline, the ability to do what is right for your goal even when you don't want to. As mentioned before there will be times of lack of drive or motivation to do what's needed, have the discipline to do it anyway. Secondly, remember the good intention, the reason, and the feeling you had when you set the goal. Most goals and targets are set with a positive outcome and good intention, tap back into that, remember your reason, remember why you set the goal, and remind yourself of how you would feel if that goal became real.

I do hope everyone has a fantastic year both in business and personally and I look forward to more editions of ELITE in 2024 where we can highlight all the individuals who hit their business goals to help influence, educate, and motivate everyone else to be able to do the same in the future.

Thanks

Chris Rudge



UNLOCKING SUCCESS: 6 Strategies to Become a GREAT TEAM BUILDER

- *Dan Thompson*

In the dynamic landscape of sales, success is not merely determined by individual prowess, but by the collective strength of a well-aligned team. As a sales leader, your ability to foster cohesion, motivation, and collaboration among your team members can make all the difference in achieving outstanding results. Here are six indispensable strategies to elevate your team-building skills and drive unparalleled success in the world of sales:

1. *Cultivate a Visionary Environment***:** Great teams are built upon a shared vision that inspires and unites individuals towards a common goal. As a team leader, it's essential to articulate a compelling vision that resonates with each team member's aspirations and values. Encourage open dialogue to refine and evolve this vision collaboratively, ensuring everyone feels invested and motivated to contribute their best efforts towards its realization.

2. *Embrace Diversity and Inclusion***:** Diversity breeds innovation and resilience within teams. Embrace diversity not only in terms of demographics but also in skill sets, perspectives, and experiences. Foster an inclusive environment where every team member feels valued, respected, and empowered to bring their unique strengths to the table. Emphasize the importance of active listening, empathy, and mutual understanding to harness the collective intelligence of a diverse team.



3. *Promote a Culture of Trust and Accountability***:** Trust is the cornerstone of effective teamwork. Cultivate an environment where trust flourishes by leading with transparency, integrity, and consistency. Encourage open communication, constructive feedback, and mutual support among team members. Foster a culture of accountability where everyone takes ownership of their responsibilities and commitments, holding themselves and their peers to high standards of excellence.



4 . **Encourage Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing:** Sales success is a team sport. Encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing among team members to leverage collective expertise and insights. Facilitate regular brainstorming sessions, cross-functional collaborations, and peer-to-peer learning opportunities. Create platforms for sharing best practices, success stories, and lessons learned to foster continuous improvement and collective growth.



5 . **Provide Opportunities for Development and Growth:** Invest in the professional development and growth of your team members. Identify their individual strengths, aspirations, and areas for improvement, and provide tailored training, coaching, and mentorship opportunities. Empower team members to take on new challenges, stretch goals, and leadership roles that align with their career aspirations. Celebrate achievements and milestones to reinforce a culture of continuous learning and achievement.

6 . **Lead by Example:** As a team leader, your actions speak louder than words. Lead by example and embody the values, behaviors, and work ethic you wish to instill in your team. Demonstrate humility, resilience, and a relentless commitment to excellence in everything you do. Show genuine care and appreciation for your team members, recognizing and celebrating their contributions and accomplishments. By setting the standard for excellence and fostering a positive, supportive team culture, you will inspire greatness in others and propel your team towards unparalleled success.

In conclusion, becoming a great team builder in sales requires a combination of visionary leadership, inclusive collaboration, trust-building, continuous learning, and leading by example. By embracing these six strategies, you can cultivate a high-performing team that thrives in the face of challenges, achieves remarkable results, and leaves a lasting impact in the competitive world of sales. Emotional intelligence and mindfulness are key to personal development. They help you understand and manage your own emotions and empathize with others. Cultivate self-awareness, regulate your emotions, and enhance your interpersonal relationships. Mindfulness practices like meditation can help you stay present and reduce stress.



Staying Focused on Your Goal

- *Alessandro Gervasi*

Goals and dreams are two similar things. Everyone has dreams. Whether it is to be a successful entrepreneur, a famous movie star, or even to become the President. Dreaming allows us to escape reality and become whoever we want! The problem is dreams will remain dreams until action is taken. Successful people in all industries do not have dreams, they set goals. Here are a few steps on how to turn dreams into goals and remain focused on them:



WORK HARD
DREAM BIG
& NEVER GIVE UP

1. Dream big.

Before turning a dream into a goal, you must dream big. Take time to self-reflect and truly find out what you want out of life. Although other opinions are valuable, this should be a decision that comes from you. Do not let people fool you into believing that your dreams are impossible. Most of the time it's coming from a place of insecurity and jealousy. You can accomplish anything you set your mind to.

2. Set a time limit.

After you have decided on the dream you want to pursue, setting a timeframe is the first step in turning it into reality. For example, if someone wanted to purchase a brand-new car yet had no timeframe to do so, that is merely a dream and not a goal. It is important that the timeframe you set is realistic. Make sure you give yourself enough time, however you also want to put pressure on yourself because your goals are urgent. Often people will give themselves too much time and it suddenly is not a priority in the day to day.

3. Break down your goal.

Now that a timeframe is set, it's time to break it down. Personally, my goal is to become a successful business owner. Starting in this industry, I knew I would have to work my way up. If my end goal were to become an Authorized Provider, first I had to become a Sales Leader. Setting a timeframe to hit all of my promotions allowed me to stay on track. Always focusing on leveling up promotes motivation as well. This is the reason there are multiple levels in a video game. How boring would it be if there were only one level to accomplish? Set yourself up for success by setting multiple smaller goals that will keep you on track for your end goal.



4. Network with like minded people.

Although the saying is a bit of a cliché, you truly are who you surround yourself with. If my goal were to become a professional athlete, spending time with people after the same thing will keep me focused. Networking will also allow you to learn new skills. Learning from experience is great, however learning from others' experience is even better. Networking takes putting our pride aside and accepting that we do not know everything.

5. Obsess over your goal.

This is the most crucial step to remain focused on your goal. Be proud of your goals and your accomplishments. Celebrate them every chance you get. Speak to everyone in your life about them until you sound like a broken record. This way you will be held accountable. If no one knows what your goals are, motivation will easily fade. Being outspoken about them will put pressure on you to accomplish them. Pressure is great because it forces you to stay focused and disciplined. If there were no minimum grade to graduate school, how many people would have straight A's? Not many. Remember that pressure creates diamonds.

Building a Sales Culture on Your Team

- *Trey Mazza*



Building a Sales Culture on Your Team

Building team culture requires working on yourself first before anything. By this I mean having a clear vision of your goals and the examples you are setting as an individual as well as a leader. Building your team culture requires that you show your team what success looks like through demonstration such as work ethic, a positive attitude and discipline. When I

was building my team to hit my Team Leader promotion, I would have team meetings at least 3 times a week as well as a break off before heading to the field. In these meetings my team and I would set clear goals and expectations long term and short. I made sure I was on time every day, dressed properly, and even working weekends. The reason I would pay attention to doing these things is because your team will only do 2/3rds of what you do. When it comes to team culture you have to communicate on team objectives and individual targets. "It doesn't matter how much you know, till they know how much you care." As a leader my goal was to always support my team and help them develop whether they are simply here to pay their bills or become an owner. When you are in a leadership role, your goal should always be to train and develop individuals to their highest potential by providing ongoing training. Your decisions as a leader are crucial to your team's culture and growth. Encourage open communication and collaboration among team members. This helps with people's confidence in you and themselves as well as feeling a part of something they can exceed in. The most important part of building a team culture is organizing team activities/nights. This helps build relationships amongst each other as well as morale. Once I began to take team building seriously these are the steps, I used to take it to another level.



Become The Standard

In every aspect of life, I think it is important to live up to a certain standard. Not only does it bring structure but, it brings integrity to you and the others around you. As your team grows bigger, you start relying on your leaders to uphold that standard no matter what.

Lead By Example

It is extremely easy to talk big game but are you actually embodying the principles you're setting? Ask yourself "Are you someone worth following?", "Do I set the pace on a daily basis?", "Am I holding myself and those around me accountable?" Once you have that conversation with yourself, self-evaluate. What could you be doing more of whether it's staying out later, getting to the office earlier, dressing nicer, or hitting the bell consistently. Then you hold yourself accountable for those things.

Be Open

Your team should feel as if they could come to you for anything, whether it's advice, guidance, or concern. Maintaining that communication helps build trust amongst each other. There will be times when you must have those tough conversations with your team. Not only does this hold everyone accountable but it builds trust in showing everyone you are willing to be honest with them no matter what.

Encourage Networking

As great of a salesperson as you are, you are not going to have the answer to every question your trainee has, however there's others in the office who may know more about a particular subject than you. Just because your trainee is under you does not mean they cannot learn from those around them as well. Being a part of our network grants a huge number of individuals who specialize in different aspects of the business. I encourage all my employees to utilize that network to the best of their ability.

Seek Improvement

Invest in the development of your team. It is important that you foster a culture of continuous improvement. Utilize your past failures to learn and evolve. Take risks as well. Those risks could be the foundation of something bigger, or it could be a minor setback. No matter what, it's an opportunity to learn from it.

Accept Criticism

Listen to your team. This helps you gauge the direction you are going in, whether it's what you're doing right or wrong. Listen to the concerns that are brought to your attention. Digest them and figure out which changes need to be made to adhere to those concerns. Showing your team that you are willing to listen and take into account their suggestions will do more than you realize.

It is important as you start to establish a culture, you have to realize it's an ongoing process. There will be ups and downs in this industry but remember to stay true to yourself and those around you and I promise you could take it however far you want to.



BEING *consistently* CONSISTENT

- *Sheldon Townsend*



Hi folks, I hope this article finds you in great spirits and a buzzing part of your career journey. And if it does not, don't worry, rough patches don't last, in the words of Dory, "*Just keep swimming*".

I started in the industry in 2015, shortly after I migrated to the US. Like every young person seeking a job, I applied to everything and then some. In the mix of it all, I got a call from V3 Advertising in LA and decided to give it a shot. This was my first face to face sales role, and I had no idea what was in store for me. I thought it was going to be a complete "*cake walk*" as I wasn't a shy person; boy was I in for a surprise. I wasn't naturally good at most of the aspects of this industry and had to learn everything step by step. If I were to give you 4 main principles that have worked for me for the past 8 years in this field, that would also guide you to achieve the things that I have, should you be interested?

Furthermore, if I told you these principles were so simple to follow that it would require minimal strain on your part, would you be onboard? If the answer is yes, read on, in the next few paragraphs I will explain what has helped and guided me throughout the years.

In order to be good in this industry, I had to be consistent in the basics:

- *Being on time.*
- *Always being present in attendance.*
- *Being willing to try.*
- *Being willing to put in reasonable effort.*





1 . Being on time is important for many reasons. Punctuality means order, discipline, respect, responsibility, positive attitude and much more. Punctuality is, in essence, the soul of politeness. This is why being on time is so important. Arriving on time matters a lot and that is because it gives others an insight into how you view them and yourself. It could be seen as a small thing, but eventually being late can have a bad effect on your career.

2 .Being always present in attendance has really helped me a lot in my career. I have a deep paranoia that if I miss too many days of work, it will set me back in a very vital way. When I was very new, and probably somewhat still to this day; I craved learning new things in the office and in the field. So, I tried my hardest to never be absent as I knew every day of missed work would be a missed day on the journey to business ownership.

3 .To succeed in any industry, you must first be willing to try. The way I look at it is advantageous in a few ways.

- **You keep your skills up to date:**
It allows you to learn new skills and abilities that evolve as work techniques change. By learning new skills, you're showing that you're dedicated to staying on top of industry trends.
- **You'll be a motivated and quicker learner:**
Being a quick learner is a desirable trait for most people who want to get ahead, more importantly, it's a desired skill for the people who can assist in getting you to the next level.
- **You're a good long-term investment:**
Owners, managers and trainers feel comfortable promoting you to higher positions because they know you're willing to learn how to complete more complex and big-picture tasks that will improve the organization's performance.

4 .Reasonable effort is a very important concept that I live by. It is very logical and something that even the biggest cynics find difficult to argue with. Reasonable effort means that whatever you require in this world, you have to be willing to put in the right input to get the required output. Let's look at some examples.

- If you are going to buy a burger that costs \$20, you can't give them \$15 and get the burger, reasonable effort needs to be put in.
- If you want to lose weight, you cannot eat more calories than you burn, reasonable effort needs to be made.
- If you want to do four sales, you simply cannot stop 3 people and obtain that goal. Reasonable effort.

Those 4 foundational practices are what has brought me all the way from field representative into being a good Authorized Provider. In order to be consistently consistent, the principles had to be very simple and easy to follow. If it were difficult to follow, then we would struggle to keep consistency. Being consistently consistent means being the person that people can rely on to be present, helpful, and dependable. It means that if you deviate from the (good) path, people will notice.

I'm grateful I could share these principles with you all. If I could leave you on one final word of advice, it would be a quote from Winston Churchill; ***"To improve is to change, to be perfect is to change often."*** My interpretation of that is that change, especially positive change, will take you within touching distance of perfection. On second thought, I will leave you on another quote, ***"Just keep swimming."*** -Dory



the LAUNCH

KAILEY DUKES



“When was the last time you dedicated time to working ‘on’ your business rather than just ‘in’ your business?” has always been a quote that has registered with me. My mindset in this profession switched at an early stage in my career.

Into my second week of working for the company, there was a high question of whether there would still be an office in Charleston. During a time of uncertainty or doubt, I realized that there was an opportunity to step up, take control and lead myself into a position that others would traditionally take years to work for. So, for me, from just about my second week in the business, I decided that if someone was to launch into a management position, why not me and why not now?

Through all the growth and training I have learned in the past year of being in position to run and manage a small company, I have learned what I would consider the best characteristics of running a business, and what I implement every day with Mako Solutions. These are what I consider to

be the pillars of my company.

It all starts with strong and positive leadership. The difference between a good company and a great one is the leaders that are influential when it comes to steering the company’s goals and objectives. A solid and strong leader knows how to build foundational relationships and provide open communication with their fellow teammates. These leaders motivate and cultivate their team, but most importantly hold everyone to high standards of responsibility and accountability.

Another important aspect is staying focused on your strengths and the ability to focus on the main mechanism that got you to this point in the first place. The opportunity to expand and widen your possibilities is endless in this company is endless, but never forget the simple basics that got you here in the first place. A simple **“if ain’t broke, don’t fix it”** mindset.

One of the most crucial aspects I have learned over my time is not only inspiring a positive company culture, but also encouraging a healthy work environment. Among all the qualities of a great company, one of the most important is to do more than to simply achieve financial success. Whether the team is powered by the love of the business and opportunity, or the love of the product/service we are providing, they also need to get enough out of the business to want to continue through the tough times. This inspiration to do better and to be better is fundamental to my company’s culture.

I have always loved my job through every stage in my progression because it is a chance to make a difference on a global level through our work, and it is truly fulfilling to see the impact I can have on others on a day-to-day basis by helping them reach their goals in whatever their aspirations are; this to me means I’m contributing something meaningful each day. I cannot wait for what 2024 has for Make Solutions and the team I am building with it.

assistant owner *PROMOTIONS*

KENNETH DEANGELO – ORBIT

It all started with a zero March 23rd, 2023.

I'll be honest, my first day wasn't the best. At first, I did not even want to try and call people over because I was thinking what am I doing right now? This is crazy and out of my comfort zone. So, I said to the leaders who I was with that I would observe for a while so I could see how they got it done. Eventually they told me I had to start calling people or it would not work out for me. Once I got comfortable, I called a guy over and he agreed to a monthly donation. Only issue was once I got him to the iPad, he had a Canadian card and address so I could not sign him up. Went home defeated. I woke up the next morning and almost did not come back in, but I did because I had a goal set up for myself. I showed up at the office the next day wearing my grey jeans and a white T-shirt which was my typical attire and I got roasted for it by Syed every day, but I didn't care at the time.

Initially I had planned on learning as much as I could from this industry and using it as a steppingstone to move onto something else. Then after a while realized I felt good connecting people to charities and could go home feeling like I accomplished something each day. Another thing was that everywhere else I have worked, the people in management positions always treated people poorly so I never stayed at those places. With Syed, he treats people fairly and everyone gets a chance at becoming the best version of themselves, which was part of why I stayed.

When it came to building a team, I wasn't focused on it much after hitting sales leader. I was still trying to get better at selling and learning more about how everything worked in the company. Three weeks in and I come into the office on a Monday after high rolling a road trip to OKC, Syed tells me that I am training the new guy, he says "are you ready?" I'm like "sure, that's fine." The first person I trained (Kannon) who is still with us, was the spark that started the avalanche and got the momentum rolling.

Hitting Team Leader took almost 8 months and that seemed like forever after going through the Texas summer. Being from Minnesota, I did not want to be outside working in the heat, but I knew it had to be done and had some struggles. Around September/October our team started picking up steam, I dressed sharp and came into the office on time. In November, Team Leader was hit after getting some great people that joined. Three weeks later, we had a road trip go out to Lincoln, Nebraska and some people on our team put up crazy numbers and we did 100 sales that week. The next week I decided to go out and lead a road trip to Tyler, Texas where I put up 20 sales in the week and two others from the team had 20 together. Everyone else back home took care of the other 40 during the week and we made sure the 80 sales were secured by going out the Saturday morning after the road trip.

Going back to my first day, the Canadian gentleman I tried signing up told me "You can be anything you want to be" and it stuck with me ever since. At that time, I knew what I wanted and that was to have my own company. Just did not know what or how it would happen.

I want to finish this off by saying a huge thanks to Mayte, Sheldon, Trevor, Tae, Jas and Syed for all the help and advice they have provided me with since I started.

My plans are to open my office and to keep elevating to new levels.



assistant owner *PROMOTIONS*

DEREK HARRIS – IGM

Originally from Tallahassee, FL, I pursued college football at Hutchinson until a car accident abruptly ended my career due to injury. Moving to South Florida for recovery with family, I sought job opportunities, eventually finding IGM in November of 2022.

Initially, I sought a long-term career path and was drawn to IGM for its promise of leadership development, sales skills enhancement, and the potential to eventually run my own business. Attending my first AP meeting in March 2023 altered my perspective, prompting me to focus intensively on training upon my return. Eager to learn and align my vision, I often arrived at the office before Melissa.

A key aspect of my journey involved foregoing road trips to prioritize training and nurturing leadership within my team. Achieving the Team Leader role in September 2023 was a significant milestone, albeit with challenges in budget management, team retention, and patience. I addressed budget concerns by cross-training my team, leading by example, and eliminating excuses. To enhance team retention, I fostered personal connections, staying attuned to their lives beyond IGM.

As someone with high expectations and ambitious goals, I've learned to value patience and consistency in the journey toward success. Looking ahead, I aim to open my own office in August 2024, maintaining a staff of at least 20 members, generating \$1 million in revenue, and promoting an Assistant Owner within the first year of ownership.



assistant owner *PROMOTIONS*

DANIEL ARIAS – V3

I have always been passionate about sales. Prior to working at V3 and pursuing this career, I worked in insurance sales in Irvine, California and quickly became one of the top-performing reps at the company. While I relished the invaluable experiences afforded to me, I found myself yearning for avenues that offered greater prospects for professional advancement. It was this innate desire for continual progress and the allure of entrepreneurial pursuits that drew me to this dynamic field.

Reflecting on my journey, these three essential principles have been instrumental in my journey to becoming an Assistant Owner:

1. Mastering the Art of Sales: the understanding and application of a structured sales process comprises five fundamental steps...

- a. Introduction
- b. Presentation
- c. Storytelling
- d. Closing
- e. Follow-up/Rehash

One can streamline the sales process and enhance customer satisfaction by identifying the problem/cause and providing a solution to it upfront. It's essential to make people aware of the difference they are making when they agree to help the cause you are presenting them with. Teach your team to be passionate about the product they are presenting, make sure they know what they are presenting, and be capable of answering any questions and setbacks they might be faced with.

2. Cultivating a Talent Pipeline: Effective recruitment lies at the heart of organizational growth. It's important to employ strategic methodologies in conducting interviews and utilizing the power of social media to optimize the visibility of career opportunities. Spending time training your team is one of the key factors as there should always be an emphasis on quality and proper sales etiquette. The goal is to constantly replicate the best version of yourself in your team.

3. Nurturing a Culture of Learning and Development: Central to fostering a thriving team is the implementation of efficient and comprehensive training programs. By discerning the unique motivators of individuals and aligning training initiatives with their professional aspirations, one can cultivate a conducive environment for growth. Having the one-on-one experience with every person in your team to further perfect their skill—working on their strengths and weaknesses, and better understanding their goals and achievements is crucial as the objective is to inspire a growth mentality in your team. Work hard towards your goals and you will achieve them through discipline and consistency.

Looking ahead, my overarching ambition is to expand my footprint and establish my office in Florida by the third quarter of 2024. Through steadfast adherence to these guiding principles and a relentless pursuit of excellence, I am confident in our collective ability to realize our vision of sustained growth and prosperity within this network.



assistant owner *PROMOTIONS*

JOAQUIN ANDRADE – PONO

My path from brand ambassador to assistant owner has been incredibly fulfilling, and exciting, but more than anything, a lessons-layered adventure. I went from just seeing if I could sell, to the cusp of opening my own business, financial flexibility, and professional success. I've had help along the way, my reasons WHY are: my family, my faith, and my future. I've accomplished many things that I am extraordinarily proud of in my life. My greatest accomplishment is still a work in progress, being a great father.

Like many of you, this was my first sales-based position. It took me 10+ years until I bet on myself and my ability to learn and master the art of sales. Our promotions are criteria-based, but the trap is to focus solely on the numbers and forget to chase the skill sets required. Your capabilities and desires drive you to success, but it's your discipline and consistency that allow you to finish the job and remain at the pinnacle.

When I stopped looking around at everyone else and started to look within, I found the answers to what was holding me back. Me. Having a strong mind was my best asset and biggest detriment. I set aside my pride and stubbornness allowing my mindset to evolve, adapt and grow. Once I did, I was able to see that the only person that you need to be chasing or competing against is the best version of yourself.

What my journey has enlightened me to is that professional success begins with personal development. You become the best salesperson by first striving to become the best person. You become the best teacher by first becoming the best student. And you apply the same level of discipline, passion, and fun into teaching to pass along the gift of personal and professional development to your team.

My success isn't mine at all, but rather the result of the collective efforts of everyone I've learned from, engaged with, and taught along the way.

The best part of my journey is that I am just getting started. I celebrate by knowing that each promotion is an invitation into a larger arena, into a larger game where nothing is handed to you. The best players will stake their claims, but only the great ones take what they want. Looking forward to saying less and doing more!



assistant owner *PROMOTIONS*

TALISHIA LANIER – LIMITLESS

In July 2022, I took a leap of faith and joined the business, drawing on my background in mental health. My work has always been deeply fulfilling, particularly when I'm able to help clients with intellectual and developmental disabilities. These individuals, whether nonverbal or struggling to understand their emotions, have always held a special place in my heart. Essentially, that is what this field of sales has allowed me to do be able to advocate for those who are voiceless. Transitioning into sales was a significant shift for me, one that didn't follow a linear path.

However, every twist and turn has been crucial in shaping my journey. One particularly memorable moment was when my trainee was promoted an assistant owner before me.

This taught me invaluable lessons in leadership and resilience, preparing me for the challenges that lay ahead. Throughout this journey, one piece of advice has remained constant: never tire of training. This mindset has been instrumental in building and retaining a strong team, which I believe is the cornerstone of any successful business. Every day, I look forward to stepping into work and showing my team how they can turn this opportunity into a fulfilling career. My goal is to help others achieve their dreams and build a future for themselves. I want to inspire my team

to be excited about their work, and to see the potential in what we're building together. I believe that by creating a positive work environment where everyone feels valued and supported, we can achieve great things together. As I continue this journey, I am reminded of the importance of perseverance and passion. I am grateful for the opportunities that have come my way and excited for what the future holds. I hope to create a business that not only works but also inspires and empowers others to do the same.

“never
tire
of
training”



assistant owner *PROMOTIONS*

JACOB SELLERS – COUNTERPOINT

For most of my life, I've lived without much meaning. I know meaning isn't necessary. But something is. There were things to pass the time. Things I enjoyed doing. People I enjoyed being around. But it wasn't enough. I could go without those things, and I did. And it was okay. There was nothing that drove me. I knew I wanted something more, but I didn't know what. I determined that the things I enjoyed the most were the people I spent my time with. The relationships we build are the foundation of our lives. People are things that matter. That was my first step.

The next step came when I considered what I was good at. From personal introspection, I had a significant knowledge of psychology and self-development. This is why I had then decided that I would pursue a career in psychology. Although for the entirety of my life up until then I had been quiet, awkward, and solitary, I decided that I could help people, and I knew they needed it. What else was I supposed to do?

I enrolled at my local community college and finished a single semester. I liked it. But it wasn't enough. I had spent the past year at the height of my current round of self-development and had felt for the first time: Good. So, I impulsively enlisted in the Army National Guard as a behavioral health specialist. I wanted to push myself further mentally and physically through military training, gain schooling and experience in psychology, and continue to be a service to others. Also, the college money of course.

A year later I returned from training and enrolled in college to continue my civilian education. I finished one semester. But it wasn't enough. A friend called and we talked about things such as world hunger. He mentioned how much money it would take to end. I looked it up to double-check. Then I looked at how much money is floating around the world. I realized it was entirely possible to end all that suffering. Then I looked at how much money some individuals already have. They could do it. I repeated that to myself. They have the power to end suffering. Then I realized that if they could have that, so could I. If they can end world

hunger, or in other ways ease so much suffering, so could I.

I learned in the Army that there is no such thing as a bystander. If you see something, you say something. By letting suffering continue when you have the power to change it, you become responsible for it. You have enabled that continuation. I knew then that I had the power to change the world. I have the power, and as a human being, I have the responsibility. That was the most exciting revelation of my life. For the first time, it was like I found myself. Everything flipped. But psychology wasn't going to get me there, so I dropped out.

Sales is where the money is. I floated around through various positions until Caitlen brought me here. Once I realized the potential of this opportunity, I knew there were no other options. My journey to AO was the journey of my why, and my how. That journey was complete the moment I found it. I've faced many challenges since, but they don't matter. I don't care if I'm the fastest, or the strongest, or what challenges I must face. I refuse to stop.

What's next is opening my office in Pittsburgh. I will be splitting the city with Caitlen for now. I will continue to grow relentlessly. I will not change the world alone, but I will grow wealth to fund the change, and I will grow a network of compassionate and relentless leaders who will impact the world together. One day I will die regardless of what I do. But to spend my life to better others, and to work to end the suffering of everything I can reach; there is no greater meaning I could ever give myself. This is my Equivalent Exchange.



TEAM LEADER PROMOTIONS



CAROLINE GARCIA – MERIDIAN

What interested you about the business development program?

I was interested in the promotional structure within the company and the ability to elevate my skill set. As well as knowing my growth was dependent on how far I decided to take it and how I dedicated myself to reach the requirements. At KAI everyone had a go-getter mentality that I related to, which continued into Meridian.

What is the biggest challenge you have faced?

The biggest challenge I faced was deciding to move two states away for the opening of Meridian just three months into the business, without complete faith in my ability. I overcame these challenges by focusing on developing my skill set, having a student mentality, and staying consistent.

What attracted you to the industry?

I have always wanted to work with non-profits and have the potential to be my own boss. This industry made it possible to combine both. I love the opportunity to make a positive impact while elevating my skill set and giving others a chance to do it. Kai/Meridian had a competitive and family atmosphere which made me feel very welcome.



ERIC HOBSON – MERIDIAN

What is your expansion plan?

In terms of expansion, I want to open my own office within North Carolina and continue the growth of the Meridian organization and take this as far as I can. Overall being the best leader, I can for others and expanding my skill set as an entrepreneur/business owner.

What is your top tip?

My best tip would be to fall in love with the journey. Understand that the path to ownership and success as any business owner is not easy. Achieving great success at times requires great failure. Embrace your challenges and obstacles with open arms and understand that these walls you face are all a crucial part of your development as an individual. It is easy for many to enjoy the highs but being able to understand your lows and be happy at the fact that you're learning and growing as an individual is much harder. Being able to push through challenges and shift your mentality on the negatives of life and this industry are what I feel most people struggle with, including myself at times. Having a positive mindset, especially during the hardest moments are what will push you through to success, and the most rewarding parts of this job. Change your perspective from the idea that things are hard, working against you but that life and God is preparing you for everything you asked for. Whether that be ownership or just goals that you want to reach in this.

What do you feel separates you from other training managers?

What separates me from other training managers is my compassion and care for other people. In my eyes one of the most crucial aspects of building any team is your genuine care and compassion for those that follow you. Being able to put other people's goals and aspirations first is what develops people's respect and shows your real commitment to their development. I have always been big on lifting and pushing others in the right direction which is why I typically find ease in gaining the respect of others and being someone that they know they can follow, at times I am ready to put their best interest before my own at times.

TEAM LEADER PROMOTIONS



DEMARCUS KING – MERIDIAN

What interested you about the business development program?

Everything, I fell in love with the business as soon as my mentor explained it to me. I knew If I put in the work and effort, it would pay off. Which is amazing because nobody is in control of my future except me.

Tell us about your best day in the industry.

My best day in the industry would have to be my first day. Which is crazy to say, because I've done more than five in a day. However, it was exciting and amazing to learn a different sales technique. But the culture in the office was different and I knew I wanted to be a part of this for a long time.

What was your previous job?

Before this job I was furniture mover for a company called American Rental in the Tennessee. After my wife graduated college, we decided to move to Charlotte because the job market was great for what we wanted to do with our degrees.



KANNON JONES – ORBIT

What was the biggest challenge you have faced?

The biggest challenge I have faced in the business is learning how to manage people and different personalities. Everyone comes from diverse backgrounds, and it was tough relating to people at times. What I did to overcome this was ask questions and pay attention to how my owner managed the office culture.

What do you feel separates you from other training managers?

What I believe separates me from other training managers is my ability to build a friendship with the people I train. Being there for your team is the most important thing you can do. Not just in the office but outside of it. People do not care what you know until they know how much you care.

What was your best day in the industry?

My best day in the industry has to be my first day. It was a humbling experience and something I wasn't use to so I had to prove to myself it could be done. Ever since then it has been an amazing experience and opportunity and all I have seen is growth.



TEAM LEADER PROMOTIONS



MICHAEL TORRES – TAKSU

What is your expansion plan?

My expansion plan is to continue to hit my team leader criteria every week so that I can work at getting to Assistant Owner. I would like to continue to learn all I can under Mayte here in Houston, TX and eventually open another Taksu office in the Galveston (Houston) area before the end of next year!

Tell us about your best day in the industry.

My best day as a trainer was when my boss still had faith in me even when I had given up on hitting my Team Leader promotion before 2023 ended. It was when she helped get two of the members on my team to go on a road trip, they took me to team leader and I was extremely grateful and ecstatic that we made it. I would have never thought that we would have hit the criteria, because we went through many obstacles, but we made it happen and I will never forget the struggle and how great it felt to overcome it.

What was your previous job?

Before working at Taksu Connections, I had recently graduated with a degree in Culinary Arts and was working as a chef in the high-end country clubs around Houston. I have done multiple other types of jobs before becoming a chef as well, but I can honestly say I found a place I want to stay and grow in.



HANSON TEAH – KPM

What is the biggest challenge you've faced?

The biggest challenge so far is overcoming the mentality of the employee to employer, and understanding that it's not all about you anymore it's more about the people that you train.

What do you feel separates you from other training managers?

What separates me from other leaders is I like to be myself have fun in the process and just understanding that everything is a learning game.

What attracted you to the industry?

The biggest thing that attracted me to the organization was Laura, just explaining to me how if I did all this I have an opportunity to be able to open an office and be my own boss. Just giving me the stepstool to be able to do that and that was it!



TEAM LEADER PROMOTIONS



ADRIAN LOPEZ – MAGNIFYDE

What Is your Expansion Plan?

My plan is simple. Seek those who are open to growth and opportunity. Share not only the necessary training and resources but also our team culture. From what to say to how to say it, our goal is to grow the team and expand our culture. Lastly, reach the office we desire, in Tucson, Arizona!

What do you feel separates you from other training managers?

What does it mean to be a leader? A Coach!? A Guide!? A Teacher!? With this role, one must also remain a student while being the architect of their path, a path that is ever evolving. Because of it, I'm in a constant state of observation, learning, and growth; not for myself... But for my Team and Others. Being a Leader means they come first, their learning, growth, and goals. Therefore, I give them my all, from connections to learning material and experiences. I tailor my teaching, and my guidance, condensing everything I've learned in and outside the industry to each learning style while still following the structure given to us, however sometimes one is not the right person to teach. If this is the case. I will find someone who is. Not just limited to my team, my teaching, experience, and resources are also available to those who seek growth if I can help you. I will. All You must do; is ask. What separates me from the others you ask? My ability to Experience, Adjust, And Accomplish! My modo is simple! "Show Me Once, and I'll Try It. Show Me Twice, and I'll Do It. Show Me a Third Time, and I'll Perfect It!"

What attracted you to the industry?

This industry provides many skills. From management experience to communication and people skills. While I was provided these skills in another industry, the uncapped growth potential; is what stood out the most, "One must remain a student while being the architect of their path" One is only limited is oneself.



MICHAEL ROBERTSON – VIKING

What interested you about the business development program?

The one thing that interested me most about this entire structure is how fast you can own a business. Now the feeling goes like this, you become a brand ambassador and you think these people are crazy for what they do. You work with someone pretty fun and good at the job then, you're inspired. Work hard on getting the structure down and next week you can become a sales leader. After that, you either want to train people or focus on your own sales. If you do both, the structure in place works consistently! Especially if you say yes to the possibilities this career puts in front of you, like moving to Cincinnati.

Tell us about your best day in the industry.

My best day in the industry was when one of my first BAs on my team understood the whole structure of the business. When you find someone that looks at the business the same way you do, it is what really proves the process works. The sales are easy, people always want to sell for you, but people who want to trust the whole structure and make a huge impact are game changers.

What was your previous job?

My best day in the industry has to be my first day. It was a humbling experience and something I wasn't use to so I had to prove to myself it could be done. Ever since then it has been an amazing experience and opportunity and all I have seen is growth.

TEAM LEADER PROMOTIONS



ZAC SUTIKA – PONO

What is your top tip?

My top tip is simple, embrace the journey, not the destination. Your dreams and aspirations are yours and only yours, so don't let them just drift away, get after them.

What is the biggest challenge you've faced?

The biggest challenge I faced was not letting my mind play tricks on me when times get tough. When you believe in yourself and know that no matter what happens I am going to continue to move forward and grow, then you're unstoppable.

What attracted you to the industry?

What attracted me was being able to see just how much you can learn from the business, whether it's being a better communicator, or if it's meeting people throughout the day from all walks of life. The type of possibilities in this industry are endless, have faith, continue to put yourself out there, and get after your goals... The world is Yours!



JOSHUA STEWART – ORBIT

What is your top tip?

My top tip is simple, embrace the journey, not the destination. Your dreams and aspirations are yours and only yours, so don't let them just drift away, get after them.

What do you feel separates you from other training managers?

What separates me from other training managers is my ability to plant and grow a vision of success into my trainee's mind. I help them identify their why and show them how this industry has the uncapped potential to make it happen.

What was your previous job?

I've had many jobs in the past. Although they equipped me with plenty of experience, there was rarely any room for growth. Now I get to take those past experiences and use them as fuel to achieve the growth this opportunity provides.



Scottsdale R&R

This past October, we hosted our first-ever R&R In Scottsdale, Arizona at the Talking Stick Resort & Casino: a beacon of luxury, entertainment, stunning views, and unparalleled hospitality. *Totally '23 Retreat* was the perfect balance of meetings & leisure, all while having the opportunity to network with some of the most Elite individuals in our industry.

The Retreat kicked off on the evening of Sunday, October 8th with an Arrival & Welcome Cocktail

at the Sun Watch Patio & Bar near the pool for networking, hors-d'oeuvres, and drinks. The evening was a beautifully planned introduction with great vibes and a true retreat feeling. It was perfect catching up with familiar faces and meeting new ones as well.

The new APs were up at 8 AM on Monday for the New AP breakfast at the Blue Coyote. What a great idea it was to bring all the new APs together to gain knowledge and network with like-minded individuals. The rest of the group met at 9:30 AM for a light breakfast before the meetings began at 10 AM.



The rest of the day was filled with meetings, breakout sessions, planning, and relevant and refreshing topics run by the top-performing APs in the country. A lot of new friendships were formed, and knowledge was gained. The content, topics, and networking were all on point. On Tuesday, the final day of the retreat, we spent the entire day by the pool and cabanas. The weather was beautiful, and the pool was so inviting. We enjoyed each other's time while we played volleyball, floated around the pool, sunbathed,



and had so much fun just chatting and relaxing together.

We joined together for one last meal at 6:30 pm at Degree 270 on the 14th floor of the resort! As soon as we walked into the room, we were greeted by a lovely violinist who was performing remixes to well-known hits and getting the crowd dancing. The view was breathtaking, and we were able to gather out on the multiple



balconies for photos and conversation. There was even face painting and balloon animals for those who brought their families with them. We shared a truly magical evening one last time before we parted ways to start Q4 of 2023 in a prepared and refreshed way. Special thank you to all involved in such a special getaway for all of us to network, plan, and develop, whilst also having the opportunity to relax, refresh, and prepare for Q4 in the best way!



A Guide to Professional Style *by* Melissa Lewis

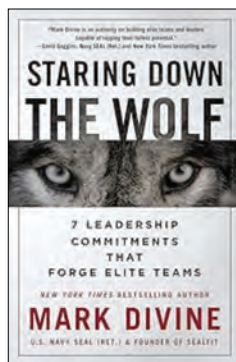
In the modern workplace, the lines between formal and casual attire have become increasingly blurred, giving rise to the concept of “business casual” attire. Business casual fashion offers professionals the perfect balance between professionalism and comfort, allowing individuals to express their personal style while still adhering to workplace standards. So, what exactly constitutes business casual attire?

At its core, business casual fashion embodies a polished yet relaxed aesthetic. For men, this often translates to a combination of tailored pieces and more relaxed separates. Think of pairing dress slacks or chinos with a button-down shirt or a polo shirt. Blazers can be incorporated for a more refined look. Shoes should be clean and polished, with options ranging from loafers to dress shoes and fresh white sneakers are trending, any of these options are viable depending on the vibe of the outfit.

For women, business casual attire offers a myriad of possibilities, allowing for versatility and individuality. Options include pairing tailored pants or skirts with blouses, sweaters, or stylish tops. Dresses are also a popular choice, as long as they maintain a professional appearance. Footwear options can vary from flats to heels, depending on personal comfort and style preferences, this excludes any form of sandal.

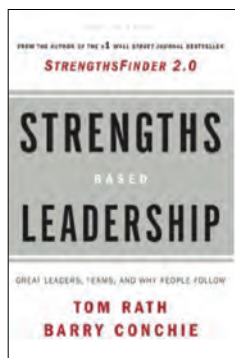
Key to mastering business casual fashion is understanding the culture and expectations of your workplace. Accessorizing plays a crucial role in elevating business casual attire. A well-chosen belt, watch, or piece of jewelry can add a touch of sophistication to your ensemble without veering into formal territory. **Ultimately, mastering business casual fashion is about finding the right balance between professionalism and personal style.**

GREAT READS



Staring Down the Wolf
by
Mark Divine

Strengths Based Leadership
by
Tom Rath



The Pivot Year
by
Brianna Wiest

The 1% Rule
by
Tommy Baker



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