

Profiles of
SUCCESS
in Business

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**ROCK SOLID
Business!**



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By: Peter Wood

In May 2001 John Cameron had sold his business, and planned to take the rest of the year off. A month in, John was up a ladder cleaning his gutters when his wife Karen came and told him an old business partner, Bruce was on the phone. He took the call. Bruce knew John wasn't doing much and spoke about a friend whose business was in trouble. The bank had done risk assessments and was considering pulling the line of credit, the staff voted to unionize and production was behind schedule. He called to sell John on the idea of helping his friend out. John politely told Bruce he was taking time off, thanked him for thinking of him and went back up the ladder... It took about 10 feet for John

to become a business coach. He couldn't get past the fact that he was enjoying the rewards of building and selling a business and someone else was experiencing the opposite result. Not to mention... he was getting a little restless! John climbed down the ladder and called Bruce agreeing to take a look the next morning. That was the start of ROCK SOLID Business Coaching Inc. Speak to John, and you'll understand what's at the heart of his company... "We help real people build ROCK SOLID Businesses." Until then, small businesses had little available in effective, affordable coaching to the market segment that needs it most. As he continues, "ROCK SOLID Business Coaching is designed for that need. We

believe Small to Medium Enterprise (SME) businesses should have access to good coaches when they need them... and that's where we come in.

"Business coaching at this level is more difficult than Executive Business Coaching because the demands on SME owners are wide ranging." John gives a few examples of what the owner faces, "Here are some areas that must be covered; sales, marketing, sales management, and human resources. Then over to budgeting, forecasting, financing, time management, strategic planning, pricing strategies, insurance, taxes, leases, organization and process development. Now remember these are tied into cash flow, product development,

effective meetings, a positive corporate culture, teambuilding, good delegation, conflict resolution, motivating employees, customer service, and on and on." Coming up for air John smiles and says, "And that's for starters!" Ouch!

Building a business is a complex project. Frequently, the owner has most of the puzzle together and there are just a few pieces needing work. It's amazing how quickly it all comes into focus. Then, the results of the hard work put in can start to flow. ROCK SOLID offers free initial consultations to qualified businesses (call (604) 888-3471 for more information).

One area John would like to share as an example is found right under the owner's nose... sometimes quite literally! "Financial Statements are typically created for the taxman and the bank. They look in the rearview mirror. By the time the owner reads them that game is over and they're just looking at the stats. We advocate looking out the windshield. Creating financial projections puts the owner into the game and focuses attention on getting results they want. Business is essentially a numbers game and we teach our clients how to create useful information systems that help them make good decisions and run the company effectively.

Another part of ROCK SOLID's unique plan is in their delivery, much of which is accomplished through innovative use of the Internet to help coaches mentor and train business owners.

"The web platform we've designed is completely unique to the industry, and with over 70 modules covering all areas of business development and effective organizational processes. I challenge you to go to www.rock-solid-business-coach.com and see for yourself! The expertise showcased in this site is powerful. It accesses decades of

solid research and insights from some of the best coaches in the country! "You'll be able to see that there is a lot of interesting and innovative material clients can use, at their own pace. It makes coaching affordable because owners don't need to pay a coach to be with them all the time. It's on-line and available 24/7." Therefore an Automotive Shop in Kelowna, B.C. has the same access as the manufacturer in Heart's Delight, Newfoundland. Their web platform brings together coaches worldwide, so the high-powered talent and business acumen can be shared and honed cross-country.



owner's life. That means that as coaches we don't come in and tell you how to build the business we'd personally own. What do you want? How can we make this business a ROCK SOLID foundation for the life you want to lead? It's been our experience that there is usually some work to do, but often you are closer than you think. Once you are clear about the results you want, then coaching moves on to an open and honest discussion about the elements that are missing or need improvement. Hiring a coach is not a sign of weakness instead it's an indication you are serious about getting results. It's common knowledge that the world's most successful people have mentors and coaches.

"You can't evaluate the success of the business apart from the quality of the owner's life. Often we're brought in because while the business looks successful from the outside they don't enjoy going to work anymore. Businesses have the potential to

create great lives and the opposite is also true. Our focus is on making business enjoyable and enriching. When it comes to life, you only get one lap around the track!"

Initially John designed the ROCK SOLID Program and web platform to deliver high quality professional business coaching to his clients. Pretty soon it became clear the fast growing coaching industry could benefit from using his system, so the business evolved into a true coaching support company. ROCK SOLID is not just another coach training school. It's actively involved in the delivery of world class business coaching. It's available for use by coaches and individuals considering becoming business coaches. To protect the brand name there are quality control processes in place.

Another perspective, often overlooked, but is dear to John's heart is family. "We believe that it's not all about the business." He adds, "The business has to serve a purpose in the

If you've got a well-balanced business and family life, then you can do things that really make a difference, and John certainly puts his cards on the table when it comes to social responsibility. He is one of 24 business leaders appointed to the B.C. Small Business Roundtable formed by the B.C. Government to make B.C. the most small business friendly jurisdiction in Canada, John also was Construction Budget Coordinator and chaired Fundraising for the \$350,000 NLDS Baseball Training Centre which opened in 2006. He volunteered over a thousand hours to that project.



Pictured in our profile are some of ROCK SOLID's clients. CM Plumbing has 5 vans on the road and developed software for running his business. It's his way of addressing the shortage of skilled trades. The CMP software is great for operations; it integrates with cell phones out in the field. Corry wants to have his plumbing company run efficiently without him and turn his attention to marketing and building the software business. Corry is pictured with Bob Attfield his ROCK SOLID coach and John.

4th Dimension Design and Drafting have changed over 90% of their client base in the past year. When they took a good look at the business they realized their clients wanted them to provide drafting for other designers. Joel Marples is a talented residential designer and wanted to focus his energy so they developed and implemented a marketing plan and now design homes for individuals and prominent builders. Ania McLaren is really enjoying the role of business manager. They are doing work they enjoy, putting in less hours, have

given themselves raises and the company profits are going up. Joel, Ania and John are pictured meeting with Bob Bailey, a ReMax Treland agent and another ROCK SOLID client.

Perry Niehaus and his team at Laser Valley Technologies built a great business servicing laser printers and toner cartridge remanufacturing. Their factory is ISO 9002 audited and CGSB qualified. Now they're expanding into the Multi Function Printer and Photocopier business and want to maintain the same corporate culture and high level of service as they grow. Perry is also one of 5 successful business owners on the ROCK SOLID Board.

So our final question to John is how to get started? "We hold presentations on building a ROCK SOLID Business where we encourage discussion around 4 questions:

1. How do you recognize a ROCK SOLID Business?
2. How do you recognize a struggling business?

3. What are the root causes of this?
4. What is at the core of a ROCK SOLID Business?

"Owners really enjoy these 2-hour discussions. We get them together in groups of 10 to 14 and watch the ideas come to the surface... that's rewarding because we help real people build rock solid businesses," John concludes, "... and we all know deep in our hearts, we're never too old to rock!"

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