

Case Study: How an accounting firm almost lost a client.....

My accountant friend John is the most senior partner in a medium sized accountancy practice and over the years has provided sound advice to his clients.

One of his larger clients (let's call him Fred) had, without advising John, consulted a business coach as his business was experiencing rapid growth and he needed support beyond what he felt John could deliver.

This is not unusual and until recently, many professional firms felt they should “stick to the knitting” (compliance services) leaving the door open for consultants, and particularly business development consultants, to deliver commercial advice despite the fact that accountants have been trained to provide such guidance.

What Fred was impressed with was the approach of the consultant. He had never been exposed to behavioural style analysis nor given any attention to any tools that helped him deal with human resource issues. The first thing the consultant did was obtain a behavioural report from Fred, which gave him immediate and vital information on how best to communicate with his client and revealed some emotional issues that Fred would otherwise have been reluctant to disclose.

But more than that, Fred was so impressed with the process, which was really only part of the overall plan the consultant had developed for him, that he arranged to have his whole staff profiled! Where necessary, the consultant obtained Open 360 reports and conducted surveys that provided information that Fred would never have known about. The outcome led to an increase in productivity following a reshuffle of responsibilities.

But that is all another story.....

At the end of the financial year Fred told John about his experience with the business development consultant, and how he had been recommended to change from John's company to another firm who were using Extended DISC methodology.

John realised that the consultant had provided a service that he should have been capable of delivering and even more importantly, he was at risk of losing Fred as a client. He decided that one of his team should be trained in Extended DISC methodology and he subsequently attended a course conducted by one of our Master Trainers.

John knew of course, the importance of HR issues, but had never had the tools to administer or advise on “people matters”.

By coincidence, within a month of the team member attending training, John was consulted by another of his clients who wanted advice on the purchase of a competitor. Both businesses were labour intensive and John realised that, as part of the due diligence process, understanding the personnel involved was critical.

The first thing he initiated was to obtain behavioural reports from both company’s management teams. This way he could identify any communication challenges and emotional issues, understand their relative strengths and motivators, and using specifically selected competencies that related directly to the specific roles, obtain reports that were meaningful and practical.

Both business owners were impressed! And John not only provided a “value added” service, but generated an additional income stream from the sale of hundreds of reports as both management teams decided they should profile their entire staff!

Obviously the use of FinxS methodology was not the main focus of the due diligence process, but it was an important element. Employing the right people in roles that suit their style is a fundamental requirement for success. And understanding the relative strengths and styles of individuals ensures good communication, especially when two separate teams are thrown together. Accountants often focus on the financial aspects without giving the attention to the importance of personnel.

John knows this and he is now an advocate of FinxS reporting understanding the commercial focus of Extended DISC and FinxS reports. He explained that his clients are impressed with the information contained in the reports and the fact that FinxS reports can be tailored to focus on an unlimited number of specific aspects of an organisation, be it sales, management, customer service, recruitment or even for diagnostic purposes (See our February 2015 newsletter).

The team at HR Profiling Solutions on 1800 764 432 (Australia) or 0800 333 668 (New Zealand) would be pleased to explain the various reporting options, and a copy of our booklet *Applications for Extended DISC and/or FinxS Reports* is available free by simply emailing us on enquires@hrprofiling.com.