

Trans Equipment

—Brad Plank
Ephrata, PA

I own a truck body and trailer dealership in Lancaster County, southeast of Harrisburg. It's similar to a car dealership in that we have both sales and service, except we do it on a bigger scale. We sell truck bodies and Raven-brand trailers. We make aluminum dump trailers for big dump trucks – we build the part that actually hauls and dumps the load.

I've owned the business for about 4 years, but I've been in the industry for 25 years as a salesman. I'm completely on my own. I don't have any partners and have 14 employees, and sometimes that's a pretty lonely feeling when you're just out there by yourself... you wonder... what am I missing? Am I doing things right?

The need for an outside perspective

I expressed those feelings to my banker and he suggested business coaching. I met with **ActionCOACH** Brian Dombach, and he came and started looking at my business. I felt very comfortable on our initial visit.

Brian has proven to be a good person to work with and evaluate me. Any coach needs to put in significant time with you to see your strengths and weaknesses. He or she needs to be able to understand how your entire operation works. I was a bit concerned about that going in, but after I met with Brian and starting working with him, he is definitely that guy.

Before working with **ActionCOACH**, we weren't really systemized in anything we did. Now, we have a focus on who we want to be and what we want to accomplish. We've also systemized our quoting process and put a system in place to measure our efficiency in our shop. We benchmark our labor hours, and track our conversions from calls we get, quotes we do and how many of those turn into jobs.

Learning about those metrics has been instrumental in our growth, and when we're not getting the results we think we should, we can now go back and figure out why. Having that kind of information and

feeling of control over our operations is very motivating, and gives us the tools we need to make better decisions.

A new focus on marketing

ActionCOACH also helped us get some marketing materials together and we are now marketing our strengths and establishing an identity. We're also finding ways to create repeat business with our customers.

I've also hired a full time sales person who's on the road targeting specific customers and getting our message out.

Since **ActionCOACH** has been on board, we've increased our sales each year, this in spite of a down-turn in the dump truck market. We've also increased our service business which has helped us cover the other costs of our growth.

The benefits of business coaching

To me, having a Business Coach means having someone who works along side of you in your business, a person who will hold your feet to the fire, challenge you, push when you need to be pushed and keep important things in front of you.

I think this differs from a consultant who looks at things from further away – someone who gives you principles and ideas. Coaching works more on the level of what you're really doing day-to-day in your business.

ActionCOACH, as I've experienced the organization, is very professional, knowledgeable, and understands different businesses well.



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To have an outside person look and evaluate what you're doing is very valuable.

You gain a lot of knowledge and materials you can keep for life. Plus, you can establish a relationship with someone you can call on to guide you with questions and advice.

ActionCOACH knows my business well. I can sit down and meet, and I feel like I have a “sounding board” who can really listen to me and who can always come up with some really good ideas that we can implement in our company that has a positive impact on our business.

I would definitely recommend business coaching to other business owners looking to improve every aspect of their business.