

# Case Study

## BSSEC Case Study



“Turnover has doubled. All the strategies have paid off”

Building Services, Sustainability and Environmental Consultancy Ltd (BSSEC) is a Bath based energy and carbon consultancy. It was started in 2005 by Paul Bennett and saw good initial growth. The company grew to ten employees by 2008 but this led to its own problems. As Paul said “We had grown but not to the extent or direction we felt fully comfortable with.” The result of this was that Paul wanted to inject some fresh ideas that would lead to sustainable growth and renewed enthusiasm.

In late 2011 Paul met an ActionCOACH business coach at an event organised by Lloyds bank. He liked what they had to say and was drawn to the ActionCOACH approach. Although he was initially wary of the cost of taking on a business coach he knew he needed to do something to change his business. As he remarked “My coach allowed me to have a bespoke arrangement with him that kept my costs lower. However as I gained in confidence and could see a clear return I increased the investment.”

The first area that they worked on was clarifying what Paul wanted the business to look like in the short and long term. Paul and his coach began to explore what the core values of the business were by gaining feedback from clients, colleagues and suppliers. They used techniques such as SWOT and did lots of research into the market. This enabled them to get a clear view of where they wanted to be and then work backwards to set the path to achieve it. As Paul said “It was an intensive period, but once we had the strategic mission and vision right everything else seemed to flow from it.”

These initial strategic sessions enabled them to develop a clear 90 day plan. So they knew exactly what they needed to get done to achieve the vision. This meant that his coach’s role changed. As Paul said “At first he was wholly strategic. A business ‘shrink’ if you like. Then he rolled up his sleeves and got to work on how we would get things done.”

One of the first areas his coach encouraged Paul to get more visibility on was the finances. As Paul said “He made me do proper cashflow projections. Although I resisted, I am pleased he pushed me!” The increased ability to plan for the future gave Paul confidence in what he needed to do and that included employing new staff.

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His coach helped Paul to understand himself and his team better through DISC profiling. This enabled them all to get a deeper picture of how they reacted to situations and how to get the best out of each other. He also used the profiling to decide what sort of people he should recruit. For example they recruited a sales manager early on as they wanted to drive increased turnover. The profiling helped them to do this effectively.

They have also been able to recruit more people with a clear view on how they would fit into the team. Over the first six months they recruited four new people, including creating a whole new delivery team. The new team leader was given the profiles of their team and a clear idea on what everyone needed to achieve.

The recruitment of the new delivery team members was all aimed at elevating Paul out of a purely delivery and operational role. His coach showed Paul the benefits of spending more of his time on running the business rather than just working in the business. This was a big structural change but the results have been clear. As Paul enthusiastically remarked “Turnover has doubled over the last six months working with ActionCOACH. All the strategies have paid off.”

His coach’s hands-on approach has benefited the business in numerous ways. For example he has helped negotiate with suppliers and suggested innovative ways of structuring the deals that have increased profits. He also helped them to develop relationships with strategic alliances that have driven new business.

Paul says that his coach has helped the business in every aspect. “He is like an additional board member that questions everything we do. He doesn’t tell me what to do but makes me think about the issues until I find the answers. The business feels entirely different now.”

Not only does Paul see clear benefit for his business but coaching has helped him personally to feel more in control and even support his spiritual beliefs. Paul is now in a position where some of the profits can be given to a Catholic charity which gives him great satisfaction.

In conclusion Paul is very positive about the future and enjoys working with his coach. As he said “He is a great coach. I now have a clear mind, a quieter soul and can see exactly where we are going. I would highly recommend coaching to anyone.”

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