

Case Study



Exact Case Study

“Now there is nothing to stop my business becoming world class”

Exact Business Taxation Services is based in Cambridge but has a national network of associates working from home. They specialise in a very niche market claiming tax back based on property ownership. It is owned by Arthur Kemp and, although it's always been profitable, he worked long hours, with little time off, and was in a constant state of disorganisation. He had an office with three staff but was often out visiting clients and was completely exhausted.

It was when Arthur was doing a talk at an event in Hammersmith that he met Christina Jackson a business coach from ActionCOACH. Initially he dismissed the idea that a business coach could help him as his business is so specialised. As he said “I thought; how could she possibly understand my, very niche, business.” However, Christina clearly explained how Arthur could take control of his business and, importantly, could have some time off to relax. This convinced Arthur and they began meeting every week via Skype. As he remarked “I've come to realise now that the business of doing business is the same the world over, it's only the product that is different.”

The first thing that they worked on was establishing what Arthur wanted from the business on a professional and personal level. This involved setting the vision for the business over the short and long term. As Arthur said “I now realise what my personal goals are. The reason why I am in business in the first place, and more importantly what I need to achieve in order to meet those personal goals.”

When Arthur and Christina meet they set clear goals and targets. These goals cover all areas including time, money, holidays and family. Arthur is very goal orientated and with Christina worked out a forfeit for not achieving these targets. He pledged to write out a cheque to charity for £500 for every goal not achieved. As he said “Having the forfeit really motivated me. I've achieved 86 goals over the last six months from reading more business books, doing more exercise to writing a systems manual.”

Christina has also helped Arthur with his marketing. As he said himself “I didn't do marketing before working with Christina.” She helped Arthur to develop a marketing plan and encouraged him to educate himself about marketing. Importantly Christina ensured that Arthur was measuring everything so he could test new strategies and tactics. He also now has team meetings where they discuss ideas for marketing. For example the team came up with an idea to reach out to the neighbours of their clients. This has been very successful. Especially as the team developed the idea and so completely ‘buy in’ to it.

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Arthur with a reward he gave himself for reaching his targets

Developing the team around Arthur was an area that they worked on carefully. Before working with Christina, Arthur struggled to recruit the right people. He now uses the ActionCOACH recruitment approach to find the people he needs. Additionally they used profiling to understand exactly who they needed to have in each role. As Arthur said “It threw up some mismatches with the current employees. But we now know exactly the type of person we need in each role.” This clarity has led to Arthur confidently employing two new staff members.

Christina also helped Arthur to master his time management. He performed a time analysis on his working week and used this to restructure what he did. They also developed a ‘default diary’ which laid out the tasks he should be doing and when. This enabled Arthur to focus his energies much more productively. Another important result of this for Arthur is “I now have weekends off!”

The time management techniques that Arthur learned from Christina have been beneficial for everyone in the business. For example, one of the employees was very reactive and disorganised. So Arthur passed on his new knowledge to her and saw huge improvements. In fact he has also now enrolled one of his staff members onto Christina’s group coaching programmes called ActionCLUB.

Arthur feels that he has gained in so many ways but the business results are clear cut. He has a 2012 target that is a 325% increase on the previous year. As he said “We have already met all the targets and have everything in place to achieve our goal for this year. And that is after only eight months of coaching. We have seen an increase in turnover, client retention and profit many times more than the cost of the coaching.”

Arthur now has a very clear vision for where he wants the business to be and a clear path to achieving it. As he says “I now know that my job is to prepare the business for growth. With Christina’s support I am gaining confidence that there is really nothing to stop my business becoming world class.”

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