

Case Study



Double award winning Business Owner celebrates with his ActionCOACH

“*Learning all the right moves with ActionCOACH*”

Gary Livingstone from Basingstoke has never believed in doing things by halves. So when the opportunity to expand LG Motion Ltd came along he jumped at the chance.

Gary started LG Motion six years ago, working out of his front room buying and selling motion technology products. Then in January 2005 a Basingstoke-based engineering company he had formerly worked for, Time and Precision, went into liquidation. Gary decided to buy it and LG Motion Ltd grew rapidly overnight as he explains:

“I basically bought it lock, stock and barrel – all the products and design. The prospect of buying the company was a fantastic opportunity and one that I couldn’t pass up. But I created a monster. From working out of my front room I now had a business, a team and a design and manufacturing operation. LG Motion was now a much more complex business.”

Within weeks of this acquisition in February 2005, Gary was invited by a German industrial engineering firm MiniTec GmbH to set up its UK division – MiniTec UK Ltd.

For most, this would have been a bridge too far but Gary again felt this was an opportunity that was too good to miss.

So, he started up MiniTec UK in April 2005. The Company produced modular aluminium profile systems, originally for industrial use in work stations and safety guards but now the systems are used by the film and IT industries. On paper, setting up MiniTec was a sound move with great potential but Gary found the first three years unexpectedly hard.

However, after this time the business began to grow and with growth came recognition. Gary went on to win two business awards within the Hampshire district - Business of the Year 2008 and Entrepreneur of the Year 2008. Ironically it was at this time Gary turned to ActionCOACH for help. Gary explains:

“Although I had two successful businesses and had just won these awards I felt fed up but in a nice way! Both businesses had achieved beyond my expectations - but I couldn’t see the next step. By chance, my coach sent me an ActionCOACH e-shot and it struck a chord with me. I realised I needed to cut out the clutter and re-structure and re-direct the businesses.”

“My business coach came in and basically he listened to me and picked the bones out of the mess so I could see what I had and what I wanted to do with it all.”

Alan Verrinder

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“We put a fresh business plan in place covering growth, employees and investment. I now had a structure so I could move both businesses forward and see where I wanted to be in 5 and 10 years time.”

Gary is clearly an entrepreneur and so is very self-reliant – but his coach helped Gary place a much higher emphasis on individuals and his team. More training plus new techniques for problem solving

were brought in. This ‘new’ positive attitude towards staff has created a different mindset in the companies and has really helped individuals develop and unlock their potential.

ActionCOACH also got Gary thinking about his customers and putting them at the heart of the business’s development.

“We looked at everything from a customer’s perspective and in each area we asked were we ‘delivering’? If the answer was ‘no’ then we reassessed and changed things.”

One area which came in for this tough assessment was customer contact. Gary again:

“Customer contact and lasting relations are key; if you have no customers – you have no business. We recognised we were not speaking to our customers enough. So we now have a strategy in place to contact our customers more often and we even send regular gifts plus automatic e-shots with tips and advice, which are really well received.”

This change in approach has driven lots of new business – but because Gary’s team are really customer focused and are better than ever at looking after customers, they are importantly retaining and growing business with their old customers too.

“When I first started, I was aware my customers were paramount, but I didn’t have a structure. We now have an average of 50 new customers a year and still retain our long-term ones.”

As a result both businesses are employing more sales people and growing at a phenomenal rate. LG Motion Ltd turnover has trebled and MiniTec UK Ltd has increased its turnover a staggering 10-fold since its launch. Gary has moved the businesses into a bigger factory and has invested in better IT. He has also bought new machinery which in turn has increased productivity. Despite this immense amount of growth and change, this time Gary feels far more in control.

“What’s fantastic about ActionCOACH is they don’t push or tell you – they work with you, helping you find the solution that’s right for you. The breadth of my coach’s business experience is excellent; he is like our non-executive director – just a really experienced and reassuring person to have on your side.”

“I had one good business before but now have two great businesses. I know where the businesses are heading and how we’re going to get there. I just wouldn’t have this without ActionCOACH.”

To see what ActionCOACH
can do for your business
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