

Spotlight on small business

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Jocelyn Coverdale

Ballantrae Organizing Solutions: Specializing in productivity training and workspace organizing services for individuals, work groups and corporations

Age: 53

Family: Ned Coverdale, husband



Education: University of Delaware

Business Focus: The focus is on three areas of productivity -- the workspace environment, productivity habits and coaching.

Location of business: Newark

Number of employees: Sole proprietor

Annual sales: \$50,000 on average over 10 years

Date business opened: originally in 1995; new direction/mission in 2003

How did you get started?

I've always looked for better ways to organize everything, especially my own thinking. I designed information systems for former employers, and struck out on my own when I certified as an IBM consultant and trainer in Lotus Software in 1995.

Who or what has been your biggest source of inspiration and why?

1. Barbara Hemphill, author of Kiplinger's "Taming the Paper Tiger" series, who developed the proprietary processes I often use, including the 8-Hour Miracle and the Paper Tiger Productivity System.
2. Personal productivity guru David Allen, author of "Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity."

Who is your typical customer?

Executives, managers, entrepreneurs -- people who typically feel overloaded and buried by their workload rather than on top of it.

What is the toughest business decision you have had to make?

To strike out on my own and to invest personal resources in building a business.

What are your business goals for the short term? Long term?

I'm launching a series of Web-based training workshops to help people improve their productivity skills in a cost-effective way from the convenience of their home or office.

Long-term goals? New products in the form of easy-to-use tools and an ironclad methodology for small businesses to implement records and information management policies and procedures to help clients keep and find exactly what they need -- when they need it.

What is the biggest challenge facing your business? Your industry?

My biggest challenge is letting go of the administrative processes that I shouldn't be spending time on and finding effective and trusted outsourcing solutions for those functions. For the productivity and organizing industry, the challenge is building awareness of what we can do to help knowledge workers thrive in the chaos of an information economy.

If you're an experienced entrepreneur who would like to share some secrets of your success, send an e-mail with your name, business and phone number to news assistant Ricardo Rodriguez at business@delawareonline.com. He also can be reached at 324-2351.