

the **PROUTY PROJECT**

Bigger Goals • Bolder Strategies • Better Collaboration

Executing with a People Lens and a Business Lens

How Prouty Project helped Star Exhibits instill structured execution and build capacity for growth

Star Exhibits & Environment's founder and leadership team have created an incredibly unique company culture. The leadership team sincerely cares about the people in the business and they have a deep desire to build a business that is a fun, healthy, and an enjoyable work environment where people are encouraged to do and be their best. Two of their values reflect this: open, honest and respectful relationships and nurturing growth of employees.

Presenting Challenges:

- Key obstacle: The leadership team tended to run its discussions and decisions through a people lens first and then a business lens. By choosing to run the business in this manner, the leadership team recognized that it needed real structure to drive meetings and dialogues to maintain a balance between people and the growth of the business. There was a desire for greater attention to ensuring execution of their strategic plan to grow the business without losing the people centeredness of the culture.
- Star Exhibits was looking to create a strategic plan for both the near-term (1 to 2 years) as well as the longer term (5 to 8 years) to grow the business 12-15 percent year over year.
- Due to several years of external, customer focus, the company had outgrown much of its internal processes. To highlight a few such processes, there was a need to refine the business development process, elevate human resources department, enhance people processes, and clarify roles among several levels of leadership and departments.
- Additionally, the founder was seeking to transition from an operating president role to a CEO/founder role by promoting an internal leader to president to manage the daily operations of the business.

Bigger goals: Build framework for execution and long-term growth

To help realize their goals faster while building capacity, Star Exhibit's managers invited the Prouty Project to bring strategic planning and organizational performance expertise, along with outside objectivity, to the table. Having a neutral person provided guidance to their discussions, offered suggestions on process and infrastructure improvements and helped to steer the execution of their strategic plan. In doing such, the company has instilled a solid capacity for growth, the leaders, the teams and the entire organization.

Bolder strategies: Create and track new business processes

A new strategy to transform the business came about with the help of a focused SWOT (strength/weakness/opportunities/threats) analysis, environmental scan, and imaginative visioning of the business - In the Headlines - ten years in the future. As part of the process, Star Exhibit's values, vision, and mission were refined. Monthly accountability sessions, with structured agendas, were facilitated by Prouty Project to inject "rhythm and ritual" into the execution phase by tracking progress of the company's strategic plan. Along the way, a refined business development process was developed to elevate the sales teams' efforts to prospect and up-sell. With a more thorough hiring process, a strategic HR professional was hired to enhance and improve people processes to compliment the unique culture of Star Exhibits.

Better collaboration: Greater Role Clarification

To better collaborate as a leadership team, the Prouty Project applied the Myers-Briggs (MBTI) tool to stretch their awareness of people's different working styles. The leaders recognized how to share information, offer suggestions, and explain decisions in a more productive and efficient



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manner, given their colleague's individual working styles. Additionally, they clarified their roles and by learning how to integrate them better, they now accomplish more together. They are more closely attuned to how one person's success translates into everyone's success.

Results and Next Steps: Hit revenue and customer satisfaction goals

Working more effectively together, combined with the business development process and up-skilling of key positions, the Star Exhibits leadership team was better able to forecast sales and revenues. The company hit its revenue and customer satisfaction goals in 2008. Execution on several strategic goals also contributed to a reduction in costs.

For 2009, with an emphasis on building capacity, the leadership has instituted a refined template and agenda to run their business reviews. A new financial dashboard was developed and deployed to provide a window into crucial metrics. These efforts allow the team to discuss progress on key goals and initiatives, keep the leadership team on track towards growing the business, and compliment Star Exhibits unique people centered culture.

