

Stepping Back To Lead



A true leader has the ability to step back when required. He has the strength to let go of his power and let his team take charge. Gary Yogan is one such leader. After assuming the role of Vice President and General Manager of the Light Gauge business unit, Gary was selected to assume additional leadership of the Specialty Products Business.

The Specialty team had recently adopted a new ERP system, and were having serious issues with its implementation. It seemed like the technology was managing the team rather than the other way around. Experience had taught Gary that empowering his team would be the only way to long-lasting change and success. He set out on a mission to collaborate with the right partners to create enhancements and improvements in the systems. Pressures were high and hurdles came thick and fast but the team kept their cool and worked

hard towards higher productivity. Finding solutions that created positive impacts for customers and internal stakeholders alike bought a fresh enthusiasm to all on the project.

A strong leader knows that issues don't go away in the long run without addressing them. They can't be brushed under the carpet or plastered over. The team had to go back to the basics and restart. Gary took on the challenge, driven by a passion for excellence. He encouraged the team to stop, take a step back, and look at things with a widened perspective. Just as he had when he was assigned to lead the Specialty team. He had the support of his team and the customers. Most of all, he had the strength of his knowledge and experience. His approach was to encourage and trust his team to create and implement the right solutions.

With each step, the team began to feel more confident and in control. They felt emboldened by his support and glad that he trusted them to find the right solutions. After 7 months of relentless hard work and undying passion, they set a new commercial sales record.

By stepping back, Gary had a clear view of his team's problems; the need to truly learn the system. He took them beyond a conceptual understanding of the new system to a deep practical understanding. And like education does, it not only lifted the sales, but also everyone's morale.

Risks needed to be taken but they had to be the right ones. Gary wanted to preserve the customer's trust even at the cost of losing frequent interaction. Once again proving that leading

from the front can mean taking a back seat. His passion has inspired new partnerships within the internal teams and allowed the company to regain the confidence of existing customers while at the same time acquiring new ones.

The ERP system has now been implemented with success and will launch in other regions with greater understanding because of the work Gary and his team have accomplished.

It is Gary's belief that collaboration and understanding of the business as a whole rather than as single streams creates an environment for true leadership and prosperity. The success of the empowered team stands tall as a living proof of this belief.