

Kitchen Kettle Village



Client Profile

Kitchen Kettle Village is a family owned and operated village of 35 specialty shops, restaurants and guestrooms built around our Jam and Relish Kitchen. For almost 50 years, people have come from all over the world to watch us “put up” over 70 varieties of jams, jellies and relishes while they also enjoy the simple pleasures of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Our shopkeepers are anxious to talk about their wares and let you in on how to make Pepper Jam or Chow Chow, decorating your own gingerbread man, cooking fudge, throwing some clay on the potter’s

wheel, stitching a quilt or tooling a leather belt. You can take a carriage ride around town or plan a sleepover in one of the guestrooms that overlooks the Amish farmlands in the back yard.

Challenge/Opportunity

We had already made the transition from the entrepreneurial stage to the second generation of a family business. The first challenge for us was creating a company that allowed for different profit centers, policies, and all that structure that comes with growth. Then we ran into labor shortages, the need for a level of management sophistication we hadn’t experienced before, sales flattening, and the erosion of the Lancaster County brand as a vacation spot. By the time we went to Seattle, we had made progress in those issues, but we weren’t “there” yet and we wanted to prepare for whatever was next. We had started on the road to having fun at work by using the FiSH! video in our customer service training. But we wanted to “dive deeper.” We wanted

to know what really made Pike Place Fish tick. We knew it was more than having fun at work. We wanted to know how to make our Village as much fun, as enticing a place to work and as financially successful as that fish market.

Approach

In April 2002, my two top managers and I participated in bizFutures’s **Creating a Vital Workplace**. We thought this course would allow us to experience the fish market rather than just read about it - and it did. But it also opened our minds and our hearts to the power of personal responsibility, of creating intentions, of listening and of commitments. In the words of Michelle Rondinelli, Director of Marketing:

*The course was a life altering experience. The ideas explored can be applied professionally and personally. This whole new way of thinking, or rather **being** has changed*



our company forever! It gave us all the confidence to declare and be accountable for exactly who we are being - and that is "Simply... World Famous!"

According to Lisa Horn, Retail Sales Manager:

*The **Creating a Vital Workplace** course provided by **bizFutures** rocked our "corporate world"! We definitely had some major breakthroughs prior to completing the seminar. The **listening, being there and language** (we learned from the course) have all become an important part of who we are being at Kitchen Kettle Village...It is truly amazing – since we returned from Seattle and declared ourselves as being "Simply... World Famous" – the possibilities that have shown up around us.*

Results

After completing the course, we at Kitchen Kettle Village committed ourselves to a new vision—to be "Simply... World Famous." We conducted a managers' retreat to enroll the whole team, set up a "Training Camp" for over 300 employees, declared the vision on Village signs, logos and advertisements to hold ourselves accountable, and set up fun plans which included financial goals for each department in the company. **This year we increased sales by 15% and increased profits by almost 45%; just recently, the first Saturday of October, 2003, we were 61% ahead of the same day last year (which was a very good year); were named the 6th Best Place to Work in Pennsylvania based almost entirely on a survey by our employees.**

We start every meeting with an intention, which makes them shorter and more focused. We restructured the management of the company

with no turnover in positions and those who were "displaced" to what could be construed to be a lower rank were excited about it because they now felt like they were where they belonged. For me, work is once again a great place to be - full of people who are productive, smiling and part of a larger purpose.

Joanne Ladley
Co-Owner, Kitchen Kettle Village