Interview with Ray Fabik: President, The Growth Coach

The Growth Coach has been making an impact in the lives of small business owners for over 20 years. Born from founder Dan Murphy’s passion for helping small businesses succeed, The Growth Coach now offers an award-winning proven coaching system with a focus on business and sales coaching. Imagine making an impact in the lives of small and medium size businesses while enjoying the independence of being your own boss with the backing of support from the world’s largest provider of group coaching workshops.

In this Success Story Interview, we get to hear from The Growth Coach President Ray Fabik. Ray’s background in working with large corporations gives him a forward thinking perspective in providing the resources businesses need for continued momentum. He utilizes this knowledge to assist small and medium size businesses. Read on to find out what sets The Growth Coach apart from other strategic coaching businesses, what being a business coach looks like and how The Growth Coach stays ahead in a highly competitive industry!

Can you tell us a little about the history of The Growth Coach and the role you play in the franchise?

The Growth Coach began over 20 years ago by our founder Dan Murphy who grew up with a respect and adoration for small business owners. In fact, Dan refers to small business owners as his heroes. Dan started out as a CPA and was working with small business owners but was unable to go beyond the numbers even though he saw these owners overworked and burdened by the business. Dan made the leap that many don’t have the courage to do and ventured out on his own and started his own coaching business. Through trial and error, Dan perfected a model and systems that was designed to support business owners in reaching their goals and dreams. Dan had several breakthroughs and innovations which included group coaching and ever evolving product based on what he heard from business owners. The Growth Coach now has services that focuses on business owners, managers and sales teams.

13 years ago Dan decided to bring the business to the masses and franchise. The first franchisee started in Cincinnati and is still a major thriving part of the network today. 6 years ago the company began Master Franchise partnerships and we are now in 15 countries including Latin America and as far reaching as Singapore which was added in January of 2016. We are finding that coaching is universal regardless of where you are in the world.
We look at ourselves as a GPS. The owners, managers and sales teams tell us where they want to go (destination) and we help them get there and let them know when they are a little off course. They are experts in their field or business so we don’t take their hands off the wheel, we are simply in the passenger seat keeping them on track and holding them accountable to where they said they wanted the destination to be.

My role in the organization is to ensure we have a strong network of coaches providing coaching to business owners, managers and sales teams to make a difference in their businesses and subsequently their lives. We support the coaches to give them the resources, training and support to reach their goals and at the same time continue to grow the Growth Coach brand around world to impact as many lives as we can.

Small and Medium size business owners need a hand. I have been with large corporations for the majority of my career and I had so many coaching resources that included an executive coach, constant leadership development and peer group accountability. Most small and medium size businesses don’t have those resources. The Growth Coach is there for them. People don’t need coaches just because the business has taken a downward trend and they need help, they need coaches to continue to improve and make a good business even better. Think of the top athletes who are great at work they do but are always looking to improve and use a coach to do so. We are that coach for business owners around the world.
What demographics is The Growth Coach franchise best suited for?

Our franchise owners come from backgrounds and careers that span the spectrum. There is not a common career path that links them all. What links them all is they have had highly successful careers and have a passion to give back and share the knowledge, mistakes and wins they have had over the years. It doesn't matter if they come from the medical field, retail, oil industry or have been business owners themselves, all of them have the skill to work with business owners using the program to help business owners find better balance, better results and better life.

The Growth Coach clients share a similar pattern in that they come from all businesses as well. A Growth Coach may be working with a business owner in the medical field and then that business owner refers them to a friend who may be in a totally different industry. The great news to that is that our process applies to all owners, managers, and sales team, regardless of the specific business.

How competitive is the business coaching industry? How does The Growth Coach set itself apart from the competition?

Coaching continues to become more common place and is spreading across the world. The risk is that anyone can call themselves a “coach” so it can be confusing in the market place for owners to choose the right coach for them who has the experience and systems in place to support them. Being coached by a “Growth Coach” allows the client to have the confidence of being coached by a certified Growth Coach from a brand who has successfully coached thousands around the world.

We set ourselves apart by the fact that we are a world-wide brand that has been around for 13 years and has served thousands of clients. We have a track record of success and back it up with a money back guarantee. We focus on the small and medium size business owner. There are a lot of executive coaches out there. We focus on the businesses that make up over 95% of the businesses in the US.

While we do one on one coaching, we focus on group coaching. Not only does this make it more affordable for the client, they benefit from peer group input and accountability. The power of group coaching is second to none. Even if you have a group of owners from different businesses, they quickly realize they are facing similar issues and realize they are not alone out there.

What can you tell us about the day-to-day experiences of those operating The Growth Coach franchise?
What I hear on almost daily basis from Growth Coach Franchisees is how rewarding it is to work with business owners, managers and sales people from all walks of life and experiences. What a privilege it is to meet so many fascinating and talented people who simply need some guidance and support to continue to improve. Franchisees also appreciate having the balance they are helping many of their clients find. They have gotten off the corporate treadmill and are in control of their own destiny. They serve as a model for the business owners they are supporting.

**How much business and sales experience does a franchisee need to be successful?**

There is not a hard and steadfast measure. We have many in depth conversations and an in person meeting to determine fit on both sides, candidate by candidate. Experience and passion for coaching and supporting business owners is a necessity. Our proven coaching system goes a long way in setting the franchisee up for success.

**Can you tell us about the training and support The Growth Coach provides to franchisees?**

Once a franchisee joins the brand, they begin an on-boarding process called Jump Start. This aids them in learning even more about the brand and setting up business basics prior to coming to training. Franchisees spend a week of on-site training covering all aspects of the business which includes role playing and hearing from and working with all the departments responsible for supporting the franchisee. They also learn from current franchisees. The training week also culminates in the franchisee delivering a business plan. Post live training, the franchisee is assigned their own personal coach to continue to guide them through running their business.

On an on-going basis, the franchisees have peer support coaching session’s available, regional meetings, monthly phone meetings where all coaches are invited to share ideas and various forms of communication such as a newsletter and marketing tips of the week.
How long does it typically take for a franchisee to get their business up and running?
Business networking begins day 1 and the goal is to attain clients within the first 30-60 days.

What has been the biggest challenge The Growth Coach has faced? How did you overcome it?
One of our challenges when I arrived was balancing International expansion and domestic growth. I receive calls daily from entrepreneurs in other countries who want to start a Growth Coach franchise and are anxious to begin right away! We have expanded into 15 countries over the past few years and the demand is growing. We continue to put people in place to ensure we can keep up with the demand and ensure our support for our network stays at an all-time high.

What are some trends to keep an eye out for within your industry segment?
- What role will technology play in coaching going forward.
- What are the next big coaching topics? What do owners need support with? One emerging topic for 2016-17 in the industry is supporting owners and teams in working with each other due to generational gaps. For example baby boomers working with millennials.
What’s the biggest mistake you see from your incoming franchisees? How can it be avoided?

Our franchisees come in years of experience and leadership. There is a tendency for them to want to come in right away and want to add their own twist on the business. We encourage them to follow the system at the outset and learn the product and the brand before branching out. Working with their own coach and following the process first will set them up for success.

What’s next for The Growth Coach in terms of expansion?

We continue to spread across the United States and internationally we plan to continue to grow in South America and move more dominantly into Europe in 2017.