

*I sat down with one of my long-time clients, Charlie Johanson-Adams of Leading EDGE Consulting, to hear why she chose to begin working with an administrative consultant and why she continues that partnership today. Charlie and I have been working collaboratively together since 2001 and I appreciate her perspective on questions that I'm frequently asked of potential clients.*

*Based in Chugiak, Alaska, Charlie is a consultant specializing in enhancing leadership skills and success. Her business focus is on organizational development, executive leadership skills, policy and projects management, and planning and strategic development.*

## **What made you decide to team with me back in 2001?**

My business, Leading EDGE Consulting, began in 1999, so I'd already been spending precious time on administrative tasks such as typing up notes and reports from planning sessions that I'd facilitated. I was spinning my wheels on tasks that took me away from the work that I loved to do which was working one on one with my clients.

I'd had it in mind to find someone to help with the administrative aspects of my business since I was falling behind as I was growing. Honestly, your reputation preceded you!

## **Why have you continued your partnership with GBSS?**

I don't think I could do my business without you. I'd tried working with others but the outcomes weren't nearly as successful. My clients, in turn, weren't feeling as successful during those times.

You know who I am, how I write, how I think and are truly an integral part of my business success. The beauty is that you get to keep your own identity and grow in your own direction. A goal of Leading EDGE Consulting is that whomever I work with grows exponentially as our businesses grow.

## **Doesn't it take more effort than it's worth to delegate tasks?**

I learned over the years that I wasn't very good at delegating tasks, so I had to look at it from a different perspective. Now I see delegating as offering an opportunity for people to grow. If I don't do that, then I'm not living the core values of my business.

*"I see delegating as an opportunity for people to grow."*

And by delegating, I don't mean the tasks I don't want to do, it's tasks I can't do on my own, I don't have the capacity. I'm always thinking, "How can we do this together?"

## **How can you work with someone not physically in the office with you?**

I've worked with people physically in my office and I don't work well that way! At one point in my career, I worked with 7 people in my space and it was a nightmare. I could not do effective work. I tend to organize myself better when I'm alone and I really feel you have better choices and options of the types of connections you make this way.

I certainly don't feel not being physically in the same space (or even state) has affected the quality of the work. We've worked very effectively thousands of miles apart as well

as in the same location. When I look at efficiencies in the workplace, I really feel when you have one or more people in the same office or general area, you're not as efficient. Humans are social creatures by nature, so you tend to spend more time socializing and off task than on, which is more costly. The amount of work we can accomplish is probably 10 times more than if we shared an office space.

### Isn't it expensive?

*"What do you pay for the reputation of integrity?"*

Absolutely not! What's the price of quality? What do you pay for the reputation of integrity? I think it's more expensive for me to

do a lot of the work myself. If I didn't have an administrative consultant, like you, I would be spending the majority of my time getting my deliverables out instead of the work I should (and want to) be doing which is focusing on providing amazing results for my clients. That's priceless.

### How did teaming with an administrative consultant transform your business?

It provided a real sense of security in that I know and feel very confident that we've covered communication and connection on every project, and I know in a moment's notice we can produce something. I've taken on projects that I otherwise wouldn't have if I'd have been on my own because I know I have the right person to team with.

I've been told that when people hear Leading EDGE Consulting, they're waiting to see what's next and I feel much of that comes from them knowing that you're an integral part of my business. I've actually gone beyond the vision that I initially had

for Leading EDGE and have had to refresh the vision to where it's completely changed and expanded out. I know I can provide results and services to my clients that are above and beyond many other consultants thanks, in large part, to you.

I know you stay up on current practices and on the latest technologies, which offers Leading EDGE Consulting the opportunity to connect with people in ways not thought of before. You help provide the next degree of clarity for my clients.

And clients like us because we're FUN! Our collaborative relationship allows us to choose our projects and who we're with. That's the transformation I love. We align ourselves with those who share our values.

Besides the administrative and technical support you provide, I appreciate how professional you are. Very seldom do I run into someone as professional as you. You have high integrity; you listen and provide valuable feedback to me. You are truly multi-dimensional and can take the small tasks and interchangeable parts and put them together to build them to a high degree. Together, can accomplish more than either of us individually.

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#### About Jeanette Gardiner

*Jeanette helps busy consultants wrangle Word documents, shuffle surveys, and organize the administrative details of their business so they can sit back, relax, and focus on what they do best: produce amazing results for their clients (and of course, generate revenue).*