



Case Study:

Having another perspective can make all the difference

Twelve employees, four routes with over 50 stops, and over 1,000 students: that's the nuts and bolts of the business Don Ware and Martin Rothman purchased when they bought Flip Flop Associates two years ago. The business is one of the largest providers of enrichment services to daycare centers in the Raleigh area. Their mobile gymnastics studios, called "Tumblebuses", bring gymnastic lessons right to the door of the daycare centers on their routes, making it easy for the centers to attract parents with a fun enrichment activity for their children.

Don and Martin purchased the 15 year old business two years ago from Don's sister, after they had both worked in the business for several years. They soon found that "being an owner is a lot different than being an employee," says Don. One particularly tricky issue for the pair was suddenly becoming the boss of employees who a few days before had been coworkers. "We had employee questions, we had partnership questions, we had questions about financing. Some days it just felt overwhelming," Don adds.

That's when they heard about the Team Nimbus program from a friend who had already experienced the Team Nimbus difference in his business. Don and Martin decided to join the Team Nimbus Owners Circle program. One of the first things they worked on was a One Page Business Plan, a short document that helps business owners to capture their goals and put them on paper in a way that is easy to implement.

"Before we began working with Team Nimbus we were just flying by the seat of our pants. Putting things down on paper helped us to think about our goals and set ourselves on a path to achieve them," Don says. "It's been a big help in our business because it is easy to take it out and look at it and remember what our plans were few months ago, see where we are now, and what we may need to change." In fact, Don and Martin saw so much value in the One Page Business Plan that they now insist that their directing teachers, who act as the Flip Flop sales force bringing new students into the program at each of their daycare stops, also make up their own one page plans.

Another part of the Owners Circle that Don and Martin have found valuable is the Mastermind group, a small team of business owners who meet monthly with a Team Nimbus facilitator to discuss their problems and goals. "Working with a group of other business owners can put a whole new perspective on what you are thinking," explains Don. "Sometimes having fresh eyes look at a problem makes all the difference in the way you see things. You come up with new ideas."

It also helps, he adds, to hear about other business owners' problems and realize that "we are all in the same boat. My problems aren't unique. Other people have had the same experiences." Whether working in one-on-one coaching sessions with their Team Nimbus facilitator, Bill Davis, or in a group, Don and Martin have found the entire experience "invaluable" in helping them to grow their business. "It's a great way to get focused on where you really want your business to go," says Don. "I highly recommend it to every business owner."