



Theresa Valade

Coaching experience leads to entrepreneurship

BY LU ANN FRANKLIN

Theresa Valade exudes positive energy. Bringing that energy to the business environment has become her life's work.

As CEO of Success Trek, Valade provides coaching for individuals, small businesses, corporations and non-profit organizations through a division of her business called The Growth Coach®.

"Coaching is a long-term thought process," says the 37-year old resident of Porter "We are asking the right questions so that individuals and organizations can make better decisions."

Too often, Valade says, employees are "bossed" or told what to do. Coaching allows employees to "sharpen their focus, realize their potential and leverage their time, talent and resources," she says.

The Growth Coach® clients "learn to build an action plan that focuses on specific issues and to identify personal limitations that inhibit their productivity," Valade says.

For example, she says, employees can become overwhelmed when facing large projects. Valade and her staff coach clients to break those projects down into manageable parts. They also encourage clients to set goals and become accountable for their own progress and success.

"Our clients create their own solutions rather than someone imposing a structure," Valade says. This, in turn, increases

productivity in the workplace, she says.

Each type of coaching is individualized, Valade says.

"We offer a range of services for any budget and schedule that includes a complimentary business assessment, group coaching, real time coaching, on-demand coaching, the speaker's briefcase and motivational speaking presentations," she says.

Group coaching provides day-long retreats every 90 days for teams of employees. Modules covered include selling, marketing, leadership, employee management, business planning and implementation.

For real-time coaching, The Growth Coach® meets clients on-site at the business to provide assistance in such areas as strategic planning, time management and leadership assessment. The Growth Coach® offers on-demand coaching by phone, e-mail or in person.

Seminars and the "Lunch and Learn Series" are part of the Speakers Briefcase. Among the topics coaches can present are leadership, management, communications, sales and marketing, customer loyalty and human resources.

Motivational speakers offer talks on such topics as "The Power of One – Mastering

the 5 Key Areas" and "Imagine the Possibilities – Eliminating Sabotaging Words from Your Vocabulary."

Coaches have played an important part in Valade's own professional development, she says.

"I attended the Institute for Innovative Leadership at IU Northwest," Valade says. "There were three coaches who were instrumental in helping me identify my own talents."

Valade also holds a bachelor's degree in hotel & tourism management from Purdue University, an MBA from Indiana University Northwest, is an alumnus of Leadership Northwest Indiana and a certified coach in the Strategic Mindset Process by The Growth Coach®.

For most of her professional career, she has been engaged in coaching activities in various management settings. The Growth Coach® franchise allowed Valade to pursue her own dreams of being an entrepreneur while continuing her interest in coaching.

She began looking for a suitable franchise while working as director of the Duneland Health & Wellness Institute.

"I quit my day job in October of 2005 and launched my franchise of The Growth Coach® in May of 2006," she says.

Now Valade is rebranding her business as part of the Success Trek franchise.

"We identified that not all business needed coaching," she says. "We didn't want to sell them coaching if they didn't need it."

Success Trek will help businesses with strategic planning, work flow, time management, team building, conflict resolutions and emergency preparedness using such techniques as motivational seminars and workshops for employees.

To rebrand her business, Valade has been developing professional relationships with other entrepreneurs to help solve clients' business challenges, she says. This arrangement allows each entrepreneur to work together and maintain their own businesses.

"It's very cost-effective," Valade says. "It also allows us to customize programs for our clients."

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