

Constant Contact Newsletter 2011-01-20

History of NxLevelL

Greetings, Everyone!

In maintaining my commitment to keep you informed of NxLevelL News, I would like to answer a few questions that I get asked when out providing certification trainings, mainly: how did I become the CEO of NxLevelL, and who am I? I am not one who finds it necessary to tell my personal story, but recently I've been reminded that since I don't teach all the certification trainings there are many people in the network who do not know me or my affiliation with NxLevelL.

First I want to acknowledge that NxLevelL is entering its 17th year. I am very proud of this program and everything the NxLevelL Training Network continues to accomplish. Together we have helped hundreds of thousands of people realize the dream of small business ownership. We have brought a brightness of hope to those who have lost their jobs and can't find work. It's through our efforts that our economy will see an accelerated recovery. NxLevelL is committed to offering the very best in entrepreneurial education and providing our national network with the most up-to-date materials reflecting the successful strategic dynamics of entrepreneurship and small business development.

Now for the history lesson!

NxLevelL was founded in 1994 through a sponsorship by the US West Foundation at the University of Colorado at Denver. A team of writers under the direction of Bob Horn was recruited. Approximately 18 curriculum writers were assembled and given the task of writing a comprehensive business plan-writing curriculum. These writers were unique individuals who came from a variety of disciplines including academics, entrepreneurship, and small business ownership. Initially, the NxLevelL Program was marketed primarily to the Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), but ultimately it is being used by a variety of organizations that support entrepreneurial training.

In 2001, Mr. Horn decided it was time to retire. At that time, I was the State Director of the Utah SBDC program and was having considerable success using NxLevelL. At the end of 2001, I was contacted by the NxLevelL Board of Directors and asked to submit a proposal to take over the operations of the program. In July of 2002 I was awarded the program and began my tenure as President. As you can imagine, operating a national publishing company requires a variety of skill sets. Day-to-day responsibilities include knowledge order processing, website development and maintenance, printing, inventory and warehousing, shipping, and account receivables management and collections. It also includes strategic planning skills for new product development, pricing and distribution, and adult learning. Over the last eight years, NxLevelL has seen a great deal of success. Under my direction, NxLevelL operates as an independent non-profit corporation and has developed several new products, opened new markets, solidified a

national network of independent administrators and instructors, trained tens of thousands of students, and done it all while remaining debt-free. NxLevelL operates primarily from the revenue generated through book sales. The business model that was developed in 2002 has stood the test of time and continues to reflect the entrepreneurial spirit of everyone who is involved in this program.

And more about me: I'm a third generation entrepreneur, my family having successfully run their businesses for nearly a century. My grandfather owned a welding and metal fabrication business for 60 years. My mother owns a ceramic doll shop. My father owns a custom hatchery. My brother owns a construction company, and my brothers-in-law own an automotive mechanics garage and welding and metal fabrication company, respectively. I have started and owned several businesses including a custom woodworking shop, a financial consulting practice, and a debt management and collections company. I am also the inventor of a product that sold nationally in the big game industry. In addition to my entrepreneurial endeavors, I hold a Bachelors Degree in Finance, a Masters in Business Administration, and, most recently, I earned a Masters in Education emphasizing adult learning.

In 1991, I became a Regional Director for the Utah Small Business Development Center (SBDC). I held that position and eventually worked for two different institutions of higher education as a regional director. In 1996, I became the State Director for the Utah SBDC and held that position until 2003. For over a year, I worked as the State Director for the Utah SBDC and the President of NxLevelL Education. I eventually made the decision to dedicate myself full-time to the NxLevelL program as its President and currently hold that position.

For the past 20 years, I have been involved in entrepreneurial education. I developed and taught entrepreneurship courses for colleges and universities. I served as small business counselor and trainer and have administered small business programs funded by both federal and state governments. I have researched entrepreneurship and its importance to our economy. I have

Well, now you have the whole story!

Mike