



Stanford eCorner

Prodding Small Companies to Think Big

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Davis discusses how Unitus helps transform small non-profit companies into large profitable companies. Unitus makes the companies think bigger and expand their vision. They try to paint the picture of a possibility of a bigger future, he notes.



Transcript

So the role we play is an adviser, coach, consultant, and a prod. We try to prod the thinking and help raise the thinking, talk a little bit about how we formally structure our engagements. When we first start working with them, we formed a partnership and we used that term intentionally and the partnership is to reach a certain growth goal like the India example is to reach 350,000 clients that's the goal, and their investment components that will bring to that and then there's the capacity building plan, the growth plan that you're talking about. We then do an institutional diagnostic. We have a tool that we've developed to help identify growth constraints in their infrastructure. Whether it be management information systems or human resource issues or financial management or internal controls. There are about 17 different categories that we look at and a great deal of depth. And we do this diagnostic test if you will, it takes about a week, a team of three or more people. And come up with an assessment that if you were to try to go through the type of growth that we're talking about. These would be the pinch points.

And we do that collaboratively. It's not imposed, it's through discussions with management, with senior management the testing systems, etc. And then we agree collectively sitting on the same side of the table Olsen, the representative of the institution. Yes, this is what the institution looks like. These are the weak points. If we are to double, it'll go a hundred percent the next year, these are where the pinch points would be. And then we say, here are some things we can do to address that. Whatever it might be in this information systems. Here are some information systems that we know about that can be put in place to help fill this need, fill this gap. We agree on what the plan will be and then we coach and help them as planned and with most of the plan gets implemented by them.

And on the prodding side, we are constantly pushing them to think bigger and to expand their vision in essence when we commonly say we can put together the financing package then we can help put together build the infrastructure for you to think big with that faith. What it really does is give them permission to think much bigger so it's not imposed. It's not something we come in and say this we have to do. All we try to do is paint the picture of the possibility of a bigger future.