

Take Back Your Life Case Study



TR International Inc. Clarifies Objectives and Improves Internal Communication

"We get tremendous value out of the system because it allows us to easily prioritize and divide tasks according to what's urgent and not urgent."

— Anthony Ridnell, Chief Executive Officer
TR International Inc.

Customer Profile

TR International Trading Company, Inc. (TRI) is a global chemical distribution company with a staff of 26 located in four US regions and Shanghai, China. In 2009, TRI transacted close to \$60 million in sales.

Business Situation

The Chief Executive Officer wanted a system for storing and processing information that would enable him to take on more projects, align his team, and create work/life balance among the staff.

Solution

The Take Back Your Life™ (TBYL) session provided tools and processes for the CEO and his staff to conduct more effective one-to-one meetings, prioritize and plan tasks on the calendar, and create systems for managing e-mail and information. As a result, they became more focused on priorities and improved communication.

Benefits

- Learned a pragmatic approach for managing e-mail and information
- Established a system for having effective meetings
- Incorporated a structured Weekly Review process into their business rhythm for managing priorities and holding people accountable

TR International Trading Company, Inc. (TRI), founded in 1994, is a global chemical distributor providing sourcing solutions and quality alternative products. Ranked in the top 60 of *Purchasing Magazine's* "Top 100 Chemical Distributors" in 2009, TRI transacted \$60 million in sales with four US offices and one in China.

Motivated by the idea of improving his personal productivity and the effectiveness of his team, the company's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) engaged McGhee Productivity Solutions (McGhee) for personal coaching and to facilitate a group session. The methodologies transformed how he and his staff track project status, prioritize actions, and process information. It also established a uniform approach for how they work towards accomplishing long-term goals. Many paradigm shifts occurred for those at TRI which improved accountability and sense of control.

Situation

The culture at TRI, according to the Founder and CEO, Anthony Ridnell, had a tendency to get frantic and out-of-control at times. The staff would react and become stressed, which often escalated, creating more reactivity and urgencies. It was difficult to predict what was going to become an emergency situation and when those situations arose, there was no system for handling the unexpected. Additionally, many at TRI were overwhelmed with e-mail and wanted a system for getting organized.

Solution

Ridnell participated in a customized, hands-on coaching session delivered by Jennifer Wilmot, McGhee Consultant. During the Executive Personal Information Management (EPIM) session, Ridnell identified and refined his objectives, projects, and next actions. It soon became obvious that unclear objectives were contributing to the company's reactive culture. Through the paradigm shifts he experienced, Ridnell realized he needed to set the example as a leader and communicate more clearly to reduce uncertainties within the group.

Using McGhee methodologies, he emptied e-mail and voice mail inboxes, planned meetings, and developed strategies for aligning his team. "With this system, I am able to clearly see what needs to get done and how those activities will fit into my calendar," said Ridnell.

Everyone at TRI learned these same methodologies in an eight-hour Take Back Your Life™ (TBYL) group session. They worked cooperatively and made decisions regarding shared challenges, and together addressed issues such as e-mail volume, message relevance and clarity, and interruptions. Each developed an Integrated Management System (IMS) in Outlook for effectively collecting, processing, and prioritizing information and actions.

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"I believe all companies, and its executives, are facing increased demands for information management, especially e-mail volume. Take Back Your Life™ creates a simple, yet comprehensive solution to handle these demands."

— Anthony Ridnell, Chief Executive Officer
TR International Inc.

For more information about McGhee products and services, please call the McGhee information line and leave a message at 1-866-400-9948 or send an e-mail to info@mcgheepro.com.

To access information using the World Wide Web, go to www.mcgheeproductivity.com.

McGhee Productivity Solutions, Inc. (McGhee) provides consulting services, tools and education to increase productivity and work/life balance. Based in Denver, CO, McGhee integrates its proven methods and protocols with Microsoft technology to deliver innovative action-management strategies to individuals and organizations worldwide. From the boardroom to the knowledge worker, the McGhee approach maximizes technology investments, improves job satisfaction and drives sustainable productivity throughout an organization. CEO Sally McGhee is the author of the popular book series Take Back Your Life! Using Microsoft Outlook to Get Organized and Stay Organized.

Benefits

The CEO and staff at TRI gained confidence and a sense of control over their personal and professional lives. They now have a systematic approach for prioritizing and executing actions to drive objectives and reduce overwhelm, interruptions, and emergency situations. "When you run your life based on the e-mails coming into your inbox, you are just playing defense," said Ridnell. "With this system you are running your life based on tasks that need to get accomplished to produce results."

People rarely walk through the office interrupting each other. When they have questions, they schedule meetings and send supporting information in an Outlook calendar appointment so that others can prepare. "The key for me is, I've gone for over a year without blowing up people's lives, because the *right* things are getting done," said Ridnell.

This training has created a higher degree of accountability among people at TRI, because they know their co-workers have a system for holding themselves and others accountable. Additionally, it has allowed individuals to free up time for the things that are most meaningful to them. "I'm able to take on more projects with my family, at work, and also philanthropically," explained Ridnell.

As a standard practice, McGhee collects both qualitative and quantitative data prior to and after the consulting session to measure impact and return on investment. This group experienced the following results:

Qualitative Results

- Improved communication and accountability
- A process for effectively managing and tracking information in Outlook
- A strategic, proactive approach to reduce the number of interruptions and urgent requests
- Improved confidence and sense of control within the organization
- Increased bandwidth for managing the tactical day-to-day work

Quantitative Results

- 37% decrease in time spent on urgent or unexpected matters
- 33% reduction in time spent in e-mail each day
- 60% decrease in the number of e-mail messages stored in the inbox