



IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY WITH THE 5 CHOICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a company that provides technology services to the US government, InnovaSystems International LLC's philosophy is to prepare employees and help them discover better ways to meet new and ongoing challenges. CEO Chris Wallerman began offering the 5 Choices® work session to qualified employees to increase productivity and help employees become more efficient in their work. Employees were not required to join the program, but instead must apply and be accepted into it. As a result, the employees have been committed to the program and have expressed that the 5 Choices has become a way of living.

BACKGROUND

InnovaSystems International LLC provides software-engineering and information-technology services to the U.S. government. It is headquartered in San Diego, California, U.S.A., and employs 300 people at 18 offices and support sites. Its CEO is Chris Wallerman. By late February 2012, InnovaSystems' second group of 5 Choices participants had passed the 5-Week Quickstart post-training mark.

IMPLEMENTATION

Wollerman notes that "employees are not required to take this; they must apply and be accepted into the program. At this point, we've reached a tipping point where most employees are begging to get into the class, based on the buzz from our 75 employees who have been through it." As part of the employees' commitment, Wollerman asked them to share their experiences in letters.

RESULTS

This letter expresses appreciation from an employee who works in Software Quality Assurance.

"I would like to share with you briefly my experiences over the last five weeks, adopting the 5 Choices philosophy and using our local application to support the 5 Choices.

"Leading up to the 5 Choices work session, I had been very much in need of a system of organization for both home and work. Having previously gone through the FranklinCovey FOCUS training, I remembered feeling very inspired to adopt

“MOST EMPLOYEES ARE BEGGING TO GET INTO THE PROGRAM.”

—CHRIS WOLLERMAN, CEO

the system, but found it very hard to do. So when the *5 Choices* was offered, I was eager to give it a try. I found the *5 Choices* program, in conjunction with our company app, to be invaluable for me to become more organized and productive.

“This system worked for me. Spending time evaluating my various roles, and developing statements got me thinking of my responsibilities toward those roles. After, I was able to align meaningful goals to those roles. Having the reminder that my tasks and goals ultimately served my own mission statement motivated me to be true to completing my weekly tasks and staying on track. I also quickly adapted the 30/10 planning guideline and followed it daily. However, for me, what I discovered was that I needed a 60/25 planning guideline. So every Sunday night, I spend an hour planning my week, and I spend close to 30 minutes every night with our company app. This also keeps me on track with scheduling my weekly Big Rocks as well as remembering all my various appointments and tasks. Up until *5 Choices*, I worked off of my memory and several handwritten lists I had floating around. This system was not working for me as I was dropping the ball on some very important tasks. With the iPad®, I maintained my Master Task List in one place and was able to manage it. I had my main calendar right there, and easily scheduled my tasks. Those two things, along with having our local app right there, provided me with one large effective working system.

“I knew when I began the work session that I was overwhelmed at home, managing all I had to do. Through *5 Choices*, I became more productive in my roles outside of work. Using our company app helped me manage those roles more effectively because it forced me to come up with my tasks for my weekly goals, so I pre-planned better. I became a more organized person at home; I stayed on top of things. And this transferred into my work life, for I could concentrate better, not being distracted by things I had missed at home. And as a result, this allowed me to be more organized at work.

“At work, I wasn’t overwhelmed with tasks or emails, but I didn’t have an organized approach to my week. Using our

company app to track my WIGs [Wildly Important Goals] kept them visible to me, and I was able to work toward them more frequently as a result. I also began using the Tasks feature in Outlook®, which is what I used for my Master Task List. Before *5 Choices*, I never used Outlook Tasks. Once I started, I used those Outlook tasks to conduct my daily and weekly planning for work, and I got more accomplished.

“Last, I found it helpful during the past five weeks to have an accountability partner, and to send the weekly planning report to the *5 Choices* facilitators and my partner. This was an added step of accountability, which helped keep me on track and honest. I remember hearing through the *FOCUS* work session that you had to do something consistently for three weeks in order for a habit to become lasting.

“Having an accountability partner and being required to send weekly planning reports was an excellent incentive to stay engaged in the program. That aside though, I could see the rewards within the first week of the program. Evaluating my roles and dedicating myself more to my roles became incentive enough. When I felt the sense of accomplishment, organization, and productivity that first week of the program, I wanted to continue the trend.

“At the close of these five weeks, I will continue to execute the *5 Choices* philosophies. It’s become a way of living. I’ve started sharing pieces of the *5 Choices* with my two children—my daughter in college for planning her week, and my son at home so he can start a system of organization that he can be responsible for. If I am able to keep my iPad, I most certainly will still use the company application and continue to sleep with my iPad at my side. The *5 Choices*, along with the company app, has worked for me and is exactly what I needed to take more control over my tasks both at work and home. I’ve taken ownership of things instead of those things owning me, and I am a happier, more productive individual. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the program and for investing in your employees.”

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PRO140920 Version 1.0.2