

“At the end of the day...the salesperson makes the difference.”

Former EVP Could Have Gone Anywhere – He Chose Miller Heiman

After ARAMARK went public in 2001, Rob West, one of its top-performing sales and marketing executives, finally had the financial freedom to branch out on his own. An early retirement was out of the question for the former Stanford soccer player and hard-driven competitor. After considering a few lucrative job offers, he decided on something completely different: “For years I had wanted to be self employed,” he says. “And ARAMARK’s IPO was the impetus for me to do just that.”

Since Rob was already a Miller Heiman client associate – certified to deliver its training, and a true believer in its methodologies – becoming an independent Miller Heiman sales consultant was the logical next step. “I had a high degree of confidence in the Miller Heiman process,” says Rob. “It had always worked well for me and my sales organization.”

An ‘epiphany’

Active all his life (“My youth consisted of sports and study, sports and study” in addition to pumping gas at his dad’s service station in Los Angeles) after college, Rob was attracted to a career in sales. “It’s the thrill of the hunt that drew me,” he says. He enjoyed competing and excelling as a national sales leader at Fidelity Capital and Budget Rent a Car before joining ARAMARK in 1996.

One day when Rob was in his early 30s, he had what he calls “an epiphany” about sales. Here’s how he describes it today: “I realized that increasingly, customers define potential suppliers as no different from one another. So, how a salesperson distinguishes himself is often the difference between success and failure. Over time, every organization is confronted with competitors who bring their customers and prospects compelling alternatives. When the company’s offering in and of itself is not sufficient enough to the ‘winning difference’, this creates an ideal opportunity for the sales professional’s performance to tip the scales.”

As a Miller Heiman consultant, Rob helps his clients develop strategic platforms from which to align their

products and services to their customers’ needs. While a strong methodology is important, he always advises his clients to get out into the field and learn their customers’ business processes. “It’s a discovery process,” he says. “You should understand your customer’s decision making process and value drivers before you offer a solution.”

Exuberant winner

Rob credits preparation as a key to his own success: He describes himself as “relentless” about conducting discovery before meeting with new clients. “I call sales leaders, spend a day with a rep in the field, I try to understand the customer’s decision-making process and the competitive environment,” he explains. “If you want to be positioned as an expert in sales effectiveness and productivity, you have to get in their space.” Naturally inquisitive, Rob enjoys working in a variety of industries and in different markets. He helps companies in the financial, software, manufacturing, and wholesale sectors develop and execute Miller Heiman’s sales methodologies.

When meeting with a prospective new client, instead of talking only about what a fine company Miller Heiman is, Rob takes it a step further. “I talk about what our stuff looks like in their space,” he says. For example, he shows Miller Heiman tools with their data worked in – to show specifically how Miller Heiman methodologies can work for their organizations.

“I take pride in helping customers drive the behavior and culture changes we collaboratively identify as essential in improving sales performance.” says the former college athlete and current tennis player, skier, and coach of his children’s basketball and soccer teams. “Now I get a kick out of a great solution for a client!”

If you’re responsible for a corporate sales force, and you’d like to talk with a Miller Heiman consultant in your area about how to build your own top team, call David Pearson at 775-827-4411.