

# VISTAGE

Private advisory boards for CEOs,  
executives and business owners.



**Jerry Cahn, Ph.D., J.D.**  
Vistage New York Chair

## Success Stories #2 from our Vistage New York's "CEO Game Changers"

Vistage Worldwide's 4-part service ecosystem (e.g., Peer Advisory Board, executive coaching, access to 1000+ subject matter experts, and ability to share information with the 22,000 CEO members) is a powerful executive learning opportunity. Members learn how to build companies that avoid mistakes and capitalize on opportunities. Here are some additional success stories.

### 1. Colleagues Help One Another: Saving a Company \$100,000 in Tax Payments

- A. Challenge: The CEO of a midsize manufacturing company is buying out his partner and looking to find hidden money within company.
- B. Issue: How do I see what's right now "invisible"?
- C. Solution: Each Board meeting is sponsored by a member who gets extra time to dive deeper into her/his company. During the conversation, he talked about clients in other countries; one person asked if his accountant was using IC-DISC – a federal program that reduces taxes paid by US exporters. He wasn't sure, but felt it was small. We introduced the member to another (group's) Vistage CEO who is a specialist in this area and helps companies maximize the opportunity. After a free introductory meeting, he was hired.
- D. Result 1: The recipient CEO reported to the group that he saved \$100,000 in taxes.  
Result 2: The vendor CEO reported that the fee paid for this year's Vistage "tuition"  
Result 3: The vendor received two additional referrals in the next month, one from his client!

### 2. Mid-Size Company Grows Without Adding Complexity.

- A. Challenge: The CEO of a midsize design company has taken on a partner and needs to develop an effective corporate structure which supports the incentive compensation system.
- B. Issue: Do what my Accountant suggests?  
The CEO's accountant recommended a corporate structure involving a holding company and separate corporations. During the coaching session, the Chair realized this was unnecessarily complex and suggested speaking to a CEO member who was an Accountant and a Businessman.
- C. Solution: After a free review, he recommended a much simpler structure for the company and compensation system.
- D. Result: The CEO switched accounting firms, followed the new advice, and saved money!

### 3. Smaller, Fast Growing Firm Needs to Work With Great Clients.

- A. Challenge: What do you do when a very large, prestigious company offers to hire you with a one-sided contract?
- B. Issue: The CEO of a company who provides communication services was approached by a well-known company to become a vendor. After reviewing Procurement's documents, it was clear that this agreement included the risk of not getting paid and losing the rights to their work! The CEO brought the issue to the Peer Advisory Board for their input.
- C. Solution: After exploring the offer and the Company's current marketing/sales plan, the Board advised offering a fairer, two-sided alternative and structuring it to meet Procurement's SOW format needs. If not accepted, they recommended passing on the deal.
- D. Result. The prospect refused to budge and said they would consider the offer in the following year. In the meanwhile, the CEO double-downed on current sales options. By the end the next (first) quarter, the CEO reported that the company had already booked 70% of the revenue it booked all of the prior year with other clients. And everyone is sleeping well at night!

#### **4. CEO of a Great Turnaround Wants to Capitalize on Success**

- A. Challenge: How do you negotiate staying with a company sold by one PE firm to another?
- B. Issue: A CEO was brought in to turn around a company in a tough industry. The CEO exceeded expectations, raising EBIDATA 20% more than expected. The buyer wants to the CEO to remain. What future compensation plan makes sense.
- C. Solution: A negotiating position for the CEO was discussed by the Vistage group – which increases the leader’s values by emphasizing the limitations on personal growth by staying.
- D. Result: The CEO received an offer better than initially expected!

#### **5. CEO is Richly Rewarded at First Vistage Meeting.**

- A. Challenge: How to get a client without having the Court trial, after filing the lawsuit?
- B. Issue: CEO of a training company sued a client for non-payment. If case goes to Court and wins, he will pay the attorney who represents him \$20,000. Issue: With 6 days to go, how can he persuade the client to settle thus having him \$20K in legal fees?
- C. Solution: On the first day attending a Vistage meeting, the CEO uses our Issue Processing technique during the Executive Session to get a different perspectives on possible solutions. Two key possibilities emerged and he told the group he would use one. Three days later, the client calls the CEO to say it will settle for almost the entire bill.
- D. Result: CEO told members that thanks to their insights, he saved more than a year of Vistage fees! Moreover, nine months later, he told the group that the client called him for more work! (We all told him to make sure he gets paid upfront this time (☺)).

#### **6. CEO of a small firm enters new market with goal of taking on a Unicorn – and beat them!**

- A. Challenge: After a few years of business and no vacations, how do you re-oriented yourself and the company to take on larger, more profitable clients and get vacation time.
- B. Issue: As an engineer, the CEO bootstrapped his company by providing technical education to small companies and introducing his RPA (Robotic Process Automation) company. This led to a stable of smaller projects, where he managed business development and operations. How could he catapult his company, with its high-tech capabilities service, to serve bigger, more profitable companies?
- C. Solution: He decided to take the plunge and make changes. He challenged his BizDev process and client-focus; he committed to expanding his staff’s capabilities to support the new vision – which included a goal of eventually competing a larger contract that normally would go to an industry Unicorn, He discovered bigger opportunities, created new sales partnerships, restructured the job responsibilities of his engineers – always using the wisdom of the Vistage team & Chair to serve as “guardrails”.
- D. Results: Within a few months, he was awarded a large contract by a health care company, where visibility could generate more lucrative business opportunities. And he started taking vacations!

For more information, see [Vistage](#), [Case Studies](#), [Member Benefits](#), [High ROI Investment](#), and [Reasons to Join Peer Groups](#). Then, contact me.

Jerry Cahn, Ph.D., J.D.

**Phone: 646-290-7664**

**[Jerry.Cahn @ Vistage . com](mailto:Jerry.Cahn@Vistage.com)**

10 Grand Central (155 East 44 Street) (6<sup>th</sup> floor) NY, NY 10017

**Use our members’ services: see [VI-NY . com!](#)**