

# Strategies

By Carolyn Muse-Grant

## Built to Serve

**Advance Partners** is an independent, family-owned company serving the staffing industry. Their motto is “Entrepreneur to Entrepreneur.” The company’s goal is to help staffing companies achieve their goals with a simple mission—to help staffing firms grow.

**Jeanne Michaelides** is vice president of Client and Corporate Engagement at Advance. She has been with the family business for 23 years. “My background is hospitality and my experience fits perfectly with Advance.” While they work with clients and staffing, Advance is uniquely positioned to deliver a different kind service. “Funding is a key role, but what we really do is help entrepreneurial businesses succeed and grow,” Michaelides explains.

Advance’s solutions include payroll funding, commercial credit, back office support and a variety of strategic services. Their vision is achieved by “increasing numbers of extremely satisfied clients; attracting and empowering great people; and



Michaelides

continual process improvement.” And, they have been very successful in achieving that vision.

One of the services that Advance concerns itself with is helping clients get certifications in their businesses and corporate environments. They understand the importance of having those certifications and also realize that many business people simply don’t have the time to complete the application process and often miss opportunities because they didn’t follow through with their certification plans.

As a corporate member of the **Ohio Minority Supplier Development Council**, Advance is committed to providing opportunities for minority and woman-owned

businesses. The staffing firm’s clients include a great number of small, diverse, and/or woman-owned companies. The company recognizes the economic impact of supplier diversity, and has developed an in-depth program, **Advance w/Diversity**, to help its clients understand how becoming certified as a diverse or woman-owned business can help them grow. Advance partners with subject matter expert, **Heather Cox of Certify My Company**, a certified woman-owned enterprise, to provide certification assistance and coaching services to diverse business owners to help them navigate the process of becoming certified and achieve their certification goals.

Michaelides emphasizes, “The service mentality is my go-to position. When I meet a client, I want to know ‘How we can help you?’ Entrepreneurs don’t get to fulfill all of their goals; they wear every hat in their business and often times don’t have the time to reach out to organizations or certification organizations to get the advice they could

receive from them. That is our goal to fulfill that need, help them get their certifications and become their ad hoc advisor.”

The spirit of Advance’s motto is passed on to their clients. They are known for their service training program and client relations. Each client is serviced by a team that includes any number of Advance staff. Whether it’s customer service, team leaders, credit managers, risk management, or business development—whatever their clients need, Advance provides.

“Sometimes business owners don’t have sufficient business plans to meet their goals or sometimes to manage their staffs,” Michaelides adds, “and that’s how Advance comes to the rescue. They are always qualified and intelligent but don’t have the time. We want to help them achieve their goals and desires without taking them away from

actually ‘running their businesses’.”

**A**dvanice Partners works with start-up companies and well established ones, alike. They can have a client who needs funding to start up their temporary staffing business or work with clients for many years who incorporate Advance into their corporate plans. They focus on their values and pass them on to all of their staff and clients.

- Do the right thing: Integrity, trust, dependability and transparency.

- Make a personal connection: Reach out, be approachable, talk, listen, and with mutual respect work together as a team.

- Get committed: Accountability, ownership and loyalty.

- Be fast and flexible: People and process ready, willing and able.

- Be creative: Use your imagina-

tion, challenge assumptions, take smart risks, focus on solutions and *have fun!*

- Evolve—move forward: Understand, think, learn, teach, develop and delegate. Grow.

- Win: Do it right, keep score, get results and achieve goals.

As Michaelides says, “I am happiest when interacting with and helping others.” That seems to be the prevalent stance of Advance, their staff, and their day-to-day operations. And they’re good at it. ♦



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Minority Business Entrepreneur*

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