

Highlights

Rapid Financial Results; Lasting Cultural Change

Before playing the Great Game of Business, WEBIT's founder and President Eric Rieger was looking for help. "I didn't feel like our team was fully engaged," he says, "I also believed it was due to our top-down management style, which didn't give our team the full picture."

But when his coach suggested that he read Jack Stack's book, it had an immediate impact, since Rieger's grandfather had worked down the road from International Harvester in Melrose Park, IL - the same company SRC and the Great Game of Business spun out of. "I remember going to pick my grandfather up from work. I know the area very well, and the whole message and story of SRC and how they saved the company and turned things around really resonated with me." he says.

Rieger guided his team to start playing the Great Game of Business in August 2016, and the results have been exciting in two areas. The company blew away its financial projections in the first year, which included the highest net profit in the company's history. This in turn helped fully fund the team's bonus program.

Just as importantly, Rieger says, the core members of the team bought in to achieving their goals, and connected to how they individually could make an impact. But the shift to opening the books didn't come without speed bumps, as 4 of his 9 employees decided to leave the company because the open culture no longer suited them. Those speed bumps turned into jet fuel as new members joined the team, who were fully aligned with financial transparency and the accountability that comes with it.

"Playing the Great Game of Business has helped us attract and retain the right people, who align with our vision and who want the accountability and transparency that GGOB brings," says Rieger. "It's like having a brand new company in 8 months."



Organizational Background

Founded in 1996, WEBIT Services specializes in providing secure, reliable, and efficient managed technology solutions for businesses in the Chicago-land area.

"The change that I am most excited about that has come about because of playing GGOB is the fact that we all know exactly how our role affects the profitability and success of the company. This helps us make decisions and act in the best interest of WEBIT at all times, without having to come to a higher up with every tough decision. I think it helps all of us do our jobs more effectively in order to better serve our clients and ourselves."

~ Nick Pieczynski, Field Engineer

Playing the Game Together

While Rieger had some accounting experience from his college days, he admits that opening the books and teaching financial literacy through weekly huddles was the biggest eye opener for both him and his team.

Providing financial literacy training and opening the books also gave Rieger's team deeper context about why certain decisions were being made – or not made – based on protecting the bottom line. "We always had a knee-jerk reaction to hire more people if we landed a few new clients," says Rieger. "Now everyone understands how we need to be more efficient if we want to hit our bonus. We're thinking more like a team. It has created a deeper sense of respect and appreciation among all of us."

The WEBIT team has also taken quickly to playing MiniGames to address threats and weaknesses in the business. For example, one game helped them get caught up on the documentation they create for their clients, while another, which was targeted at identifying potential new hires, netted them their new CIO.

"The GGOB has taught me so much, including how every small percentage impacts our daily lives both personally and professionally. It makes you think about what is most important in our lives. We can accomplish anything with a set plan, and knowing what area in our career we can make the most impact on. It also showed me how to count on my teammates to direct our goal in the same direction, as a team. In the process we are also breaking down those secret walls that should not be up in the first place."

~Omar Ortega, Sr. Field Engineer

What's Next?

Getting more team members trained and involved in the company's High Involvement Planning process is a key priority for WEBIT heading into next year – though Rieger is excited about how the team has already improved the accuracy of its forecasts, especially when it comes to managing expenses.

"It was a missing piece of the transparency puzzle," says Rieger. "We realized there is no power in just showing people historical numbers. Those have already happened and we can't do anything about them."

What's also exciting is how the Great Game has cemented its place at the core of Rieger's plan to transition WEBIT into an ESOP within the next 5-7 years.

"The Great Game of Business has brought us closer together as a company, by allowing us to openly communicate where we are today and where we aim to be in the future. There is something special about working with one another with a clear perspective on how our metrics impact our success."

~ Eric Zuidema, Field Engineer
