

2019 Highlights



Challenge

When President and CEO, Kathy Steele, split from her former business partner, the business was in dire straits. She was looking for a different way to run her new company by embracing transparency and through a high-involvement culture.



Solution

Steele learned about The Great Game of Business[®] (GGOB) through her involvement in the Small Giants Community. After a visit to Springfield, MO, she decided to begin playing The Game inside her business. After a false start trying to self-implement, she made the move to hire her coach, Kevin Walter, and playing Great Game[®] in full in 2018.



Results

While the company struggled in 2018 due to a slump in sales, they did adjust their Game play by changing their Critical Number to something that everyone on the team could see how they could impact—which opened up conversations across the team about ways they could overcome their slow sales. “Playing the Great Game got everyone involved in the financial decisions we were making and gave the team a sense of ownership and understanding of why those decisions had to be made,” says Steele. “There is a much greater sense of understanding and accountability today. A lot of lightbulbs have gone on since we began playing The Game.” To that point, by having the team own expense lines on the P&L, they’ve been able to actually uncover thousands of dollars of revenue from clients they might have otherwise missed out on.



Company Background

Red Caffeine is a growth consultancy that uses strategy, branding, technology, and marketing to fuel meaningful impact for mid-market and enterprise organizations.

“After having zero financial transparency in my last job, learning that Red Caffeine is open-book and plays GGOB was a huge selling point in deciding to join the team. Best decision I ever made!

Information is power and now I am in control to help drive our company's future & profitability. GGOB makes us smarter employees, which in turn drives a better experience for our clients.”

~ Amy Anderson, Director of Client Services

MiniGame™ Spotlight

The team has been slow to implement many MiniGames to date, but they have had success with a few including one with a “Candyland” theme designed to get team members to enroll in GGOB’s e-learning course, with food-related prizes as a tasty incentive. Another MiniGame had a baseball theme with a goal to encourage team members to track their time on a more accurate and timelier basis—with a food truck serving ballpark fare as a prize for winning the game.

“To me, The Great Game of Business has provided the tools needed to educate our team on the company financials. By opening the books, our team has started to understand how their individual contributions really do affect the bottom line, and in doing so has begun to create change. GGOB has also made it easier for me to show the team the importance of financial decisions leadership has made by including them in these decisions. By having team members own expense lines, we have been able to uncover some cost savings on unused software, and generate revenue from un-billed client tools. The Great Game of Business aligns perfectly with one of our Core Values - We play to win and we win together. That is what GGOB is all about - winning as a team.”~ Heather Carbray, Director of Finance and Administration

What's Next?

While Steele admits that their business hasn’t had optimal financial success in their first year of playing The Game, they have learned to persevere, to look to data to help drive decisions, and to celebrate the small wins that will ultimately lead to large ones. Up next, she’d like the team to get more involved in setting their strategic direction through the High-Involvement Planning™ (HIP) process and to find ways to use MiniGames to make more subtle shifts in behaviors. “Having the entire team understand the financial aspect of the business is already dividends,” she says, “as we look to rebuild who we are and where we want the future of the company to be.”

“I’ve never worked at a company before that’s truly been transparent about the financials. They’ve always been ‘someone else’s job,’ so while I focused on what I needed to do, it was easy to forget that my actions had an impact on the company’s dollars and cents. With Red Caffeine playing GGOB, every day I’m given the opportunity to make sure what I’m working on is lining up with our financial goals. Having a weekly huddle to see how our revenue is comparing to cost of goods, celebrating financial victories, and explaining why we’re doing a certain activity because of its bottom line impact makes me feel like I truly have a stake in how our business is being run vs. just being another cog in a machine.”

~ Lisa Behning, Account Manager
