

**Ser Movil | Saul Contrares, owner**

Mentoring Guide | Prepared following the January 2012 visit by Evan Keller (author)

**Strengths:**

Saul has a large personal network of connections.

Saul is willing to make necessary changes to grow his company.

**Weaknesses:**

The company has a low revenue stream for a company its age (est. 1998) and is not yet profitable.

Saul is not yet aggressively pursuing new clients on a daily basis and has no salesmen.

There is no system in place to nurture recurring business from previous clients.

**Opportunities:**

Saul is considering branching out into swimming pool cleaning - a small but growing sector.

Saul is considering branching out into interior and exterior building cleaning.

Saul is open to starting a follow up program (see recommendations).

Saul is refining his branding (see recommendations).

**Threats:**

Excessive diversification of services before a strong clientele is established could dilute his efforts.

Anything that diverts Saul's time from increasing sales (to new and existing clients) is a dangerous threat, including valuable activities such as strategic planning!

**2011 Improvements:**

Saul considered closing Ser Movil, but because of its potential to create jobs, he has re-engaged with new energy to build it into a strong company.

In response to Entrust's advice that he invest more of his time in this business (especially in lead generation and sales, but also in training and supervision), Saul now spends Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays on the business.

Saul is offering regular training and accountability for his three employees (technician, telemarketer, office manager). He does some of the training himself (sales, integrity), brings in suppliers for technical training, and utilizes INFOP (a government business training agency).

After some serious conversations with them, his employees have agreed to have a better attitude and be more focused in their work.

### **2012 Goals:**

Break even. To do so, he needs to average 120,000L/6,316USD. To have a reasonable profit, 165,000L/8684USD is desirable. He now averages 80,000/4211USD. Several of the below recommendations are practical ways to increase revenue.

Contact a certain number of potential major clients each week. How many?

He plans to offer training on six major topics, plus a monthly training on attitude.

### **Questions:**

Are you looking for a new or used grease trap?

How many major potential clients will you contact each week in 2012?

What results are the telemarketing efforts producing?

Can we discuss your progress on each of the following recommendations?

### **Business Recommendations:**

Implement a Six-Month Check Up program in which a free inspection is scheduled 6 months after each job. When completing a job, the technician should inform the client that he will come back in 6 months to make sure everything is okay. Have the technician write the month and perhaps the week (on the specified part of the form) that the client should expect a call from Ser Movil to schedule the appointment. Make sure the technician informs instead of asks the customer about this. Make sure the technician's attitude shows that this is a valuable service that he is offering at no charge! The office staff should schedule these inspections on one or two days per week and fill up a route to maximize the technician's use of time and fuel. Although this is an additional cost, it will prove to be a valuable investment. It will build relationships with your clients, which is paramount in business – especially to service businesses. Getting clients used to using your services on a regular basis is very important as it is far harder to gain a new client as compared to making additional sales to existing clients. The two keys to this program will be: creating expectation and following through.

At each service visit, have your technician identify which other service that client could use the most and have him offer to give a free estimate for it.

Given the frequency of complaints about the quality of service, I recommend that you spend more time in the field with your technician to model what high quality service looks like. Especially with new clients, you should go on the first appointment or two. This is how Jesus led: he gathered followers who watched him teach and minister to people. Then they did it with him. Later he sent them out on their

own and debriefed with them afterwards. This is the most reliable way of communicating your expectations and making sure your technician is representing your company well.

Continue to help employees grow toward reaching their daily work capacity. Help them to see that attracting new clients and keeping current ones happy are the keys to preserving their jobs.

Follow through on your employee training plans.

Identify the top three sources of financial waste and work to reduce it.

Continue with your plan to create to separate divisions of Ser Movil, each with its own name and logo to showcase your two main services: pest control and water tank/septic system (cisternos/piscinas) cleaning. Names we discussed were Plagos-X, Control-X, Pro-Limpio, Sistemas de Limpieza and Limpiadores. Limpio-X may not be as strong a name as Pro-Limpio, but it would show its relation to Plagos-X (if you chose that name). In choosing the two new names, remember that customers are more interested in the result (pest-free home, clean water) than the process (chemicals, cleaning). One effective strategy in choosing a name is to touch on a desirable feeling that your industry can elicit in a person.

Hire 1-3 salesmen who are well-connected with business leaders in Tegucigalpa. Since you can only offer commission at this point and you don't have lots of leads to give them, it would be best to start with part-timers who have other sources of income, but have 1-3 days per week to devote to Ser Movil. Train them to leverage their own networks, showing them how you are doing this yourself, as my next recommendation outlines.

Identify the various segments (contacts from school, church, business, soccer, basketball, etc) of your personal network. I don't think you realize the high value in the fact they you know so many people! List everyone you know in each segment, then identify which of these are potential clients and which can connect you with potential clients. Decide which 50 have the most potential and seek meetings with each one to share what's new in your business and to ask for their help.

Find all the new residential communities being built in Teguc and build relationships with them.

Research the number of residential and commercial pools in Tegucigalpa. Compare these figures with past years to discern the trend. This information may be hard to find. You may have to rely on informal polling of pool builders, construction companies, pool chemical dealers, etc.

Design a client referral program that rewards existing clients for helping you to find new ones.

### **Mentor Recommendations:**

Share names of pest control companies in the U.S.

Share examples of logos and whimsical mascots for U.S. pest control companies.

Offer logo ideas once Saul has decided on the division names.

Share the Spanish version of the National Swimming Pool Foundation's Certified Pool Operator's Handbook.

Connect him with Lynn Walter who owns Clear Advantage Services (which cleans pools, driveways and windows).

Have a Skype conference call with Entrust mentors (including Maruxa, a branding expert) to discuss potential names for his two divisions.

Find a source for an 18 gallon (minimum) grease trap.

Bring Evan's postcard on Tree Work Now's "Six-Month Check-Up".

**Notes:**

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The August 2011 report has further background information on Ser Movil.