

eHub Member Spotlight - June 2012

We are excited to introduce a new monthly series called the eHub Member Spotlight. The short interview will hopefully allow you to get to know and possibly be inspired by one of our eHub members.

eHub Member: Brian Graham, VP Manufacturing, Sea Link International

Years in the business: 25

What is the most valuable lesson a professional mentor taught you?

Slow down and Listen! This was something I learned a few times, most recently from Jabil CEO Tim Main. Tim is a very smart businessman and his skill in working with customers at the very highest level is well documented. He once told me almost in passing that the best way to understand what the customer really wants is to close your mouth and listen!

Tell us about your current project/venture/business.

I am currently working in a great growing company which is headquartered in Largo, Florida. We are a custom manufacturing company with a dual focus. The first is on automobile lighting components and the second is on custom sub-assembly of products for the automotive and light industrial industries. We run a factory in China using western manufacturing techniques and controls which give us an advantage over our competition. This methodology also helps ensure that we can devote our team effort to earning customer loyalty and trust in everything we do.

Where do you get inspiration and new ideas?

I am an avid reader and now listen to podcasts to get inspiration and new ideas. I like to read updates from the Harvard Business Review - I use a RSS feed and get updates from them regularly. I really enjoy TED. If you have not got this in your regular reading/listening I highly recommend grabbing it. I have an iPhone app for this. Also on my iPhone I use a free app called "Instapaper". It allows me to download articles and read without Wi-Fi. I usually travel about 14 hours to get from Tampa to Shanghai when I visit our factory. Instapaper gives me all I can handle from my favorite sources: Inc.; Wired; Business Week; the New Yorker; Wall Street Journal; China Daily; Fast Company and others.

Who are your heroes in the business world and why?

My heroes in the business world are those people that have a vision with a sense of a higher purpose than simply making money. Philanthropy is necessary in my opinion and should be part of every business leader's daily work. Not just giving money, but giving time to support causes. The majority owner of the Tampa Bay Lightning Jeff Vinic is a good example.

What book has had the most impact on you in business?

I like the series from Eli Goldratt on the basics and uses of the theory of constraints: ["Theory of Constraints"](#) and ["The Goal: The Process of Ongoing Improvement"](#).

All eHub members are eligible to be featured in our monthly spotlight. Click [here](#) to share your story.