

Knowing the Key Executive

Marshall Shovein is VP, Business Development & Delivery for Rulesware LLC. Rulesware specializes in delivering results-generating Pega Business Process Management (BPM) implementations for large financial services, insurance, healthcare and manufacturing organizations who understand that seamless processes lead to happy customers. He holds degrees in business administration, with a focus on finance.

Marshall Shovein,
VP, Business Development & Delivery



Driving the Cycle of Success through Quality: **Rulesware LLC**

“If you build your business around quality first, you’ll create a machine that does a lot of the work for you.”

Founded in 2005, Rulesware LLC has always specialized in one thing: the on-time, on-budget implementation of world-class BPM solutions that

enable peak operational performance. *“We are passionate about BPM. It’s what we do. Our ability to cultivate the very best thought leadership in BPM delivery truly sets*

Rulesware apart” says Marshall Shovein, VP of Business Development & Delivery.

BPM work is by nature, a collabora-

tive process that calls for real-time cooperation between everyone involved in its implementation and support. Rulesware offers a unique combination of skilled on-site and near-shore teams, all working in the Central Time Zone. The company's US and El Salvador-based teams work seamlessly together, to efficiently meet each client's time and budget targets.

MORE FROM MARSHALL SHOVEIN ON WHAT SETS RULESWARE APART:

The Right Support: Building a Solid Structure

I'm a big believer in doing things differently. Why? It's simple: In my experience there's almost always a better way to get things done. So when faced with the challenge of creating a new business model for Rulesware, I began by looking at our organizational structure.

The biggest challenge I see in

professional services organizations is the hand-off between sales and delivery. Typically, in delivering any solution, there's a lack of alignment among three very important groups: the sales team, the delivery team, and the customer.

We addressed this with a simple change: we created a single organization that would both listen to and serve the client. Now the group that sells the services to the client is the same group that's responsible for delivering those services. This common-sense structure eliminates any over-selling or over-promising, and sets things up for a quality transition that's seamless, from the client's perspective, from sales to engagement.

The Right Tools: Incentive Models

Organizational structure sets the stage, but incentive structures drive everything in business. And until this point in my career, I'd never seen them done correctly in an organization. All too often incen-

tive structures have a short-term, tactical goal that comes with a very long-term strategic sacrifice.

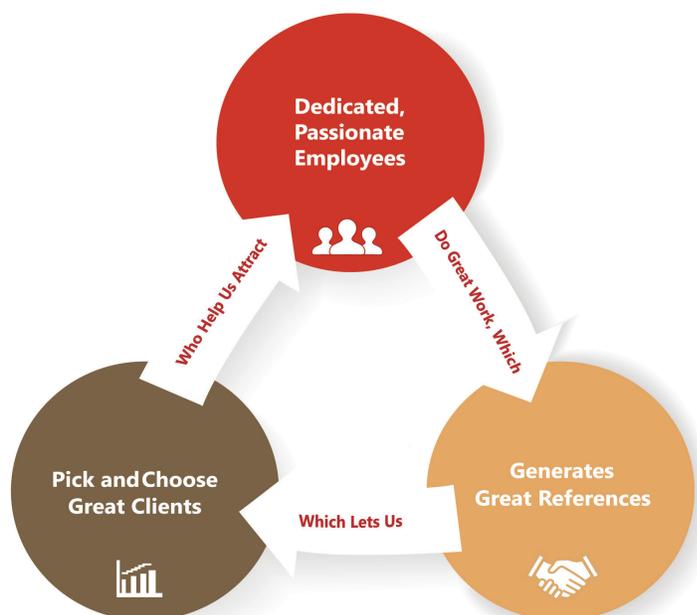
Today there are no commissions paid in my company. Period. At Rulesware, we work on a bonus structure that's based on satisfying company needs, maintaining quality delivery and "referenceable" clients. Yes, that is less measurable than your typical salesperson may like, but we don't hire typical people.

My reasons are simple. First, quality can be compromised if growth is too fast - which means I may, from time to time, need our sales to slow down a bit. If we had a commission structure in place, it would cost the Account Executive money to slow down, which isn't fair. A second reason for not using commissions as incentives is that I want Rulesware to be able to walk away from business that we shouldn't take. I call it "bad revenue"—and there is a lot of it out there.

My philosophy is this—given the typical "80/20 rule"—where 20 percent of your clients account for about 80% of your pain, why not simply try to avoid the "20%" and stick with the "good" clients?

"Good clients" are the ones that have a good understanding of what they want to accomplish and have a reasonable plan and approach to get there. They are willing to work WITH us to find, define and cross the finish line.

I can tell you from experience that this approach sure makes for less headaches and a lot less work! It also makes our revenue more predictable and reliable. And again, I haven't found a commission structure that allows someone to walk away from business, without costing them money.



Cycle of Quality. © Rulesware LLC

The Right Environment: Creating Strong Teams

With a quality structure and incentive model in place, I knew I needed to be able to count on quality people to deliver our projects. This is foundational to Rulesware and inherent in our culture, as it should be to any company looking to build a business around quality.

What we define as quality is different than most companies. We don't, for example, look for the MBAs or the big resumes. Sure, we look for good experience but we are far more closely looking at the people themselves: at who they are and what they are all about. What drives them? Is it money or is it being on projects that are successful? Do they like being a part of a team rather than serving as an individual contributor? Do they want to win a race or would they rather help their friend get across the finish line at the same time?

We have found that if you build teams comprised of what we call "Good Guys/Gals," the teams themselves thrive, and feed on each other, and the outcome is a quality product. These very good people deliver very good quality, all while having fun—and the energy that they bring to our clients is addictive. We now have a reputation that is attracting more of these great people.

The Results

Okay, so now you've got a great organization structure, the right internal incentive models, quality clients and a great group of people to deliver a terrific product outcome. What does all of that bring next?

References and repeat business!

Our sales pipeline is now filled with references and repeat business. And our cost of sale is probably the lowest out there because we don't have to do any cold calling. We typically

have more business available than we can handle—even after we've done our cherry picking to weed out the bad stuff.

As I said earlier, it isn't that hard. Think out of the box. If you build your business around quality first, you'll create a machine that does a lot of the work for you.

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