

# Best Year Yet™ yields results time & time again

**B**efore Best Year Yet™ was implemented at Landmark Graphics, Gary McKinney, Vice President of Human Resources, and his team were struggling to keep up with the human resources demands of the large global software development and services organization.

In just five years, Gary had watched the company grow from less than 1,000 employees to more than 2300. His leadership team found itself stretched as the business expanded and more people were brought aboard. "We were bombarded with requests, had conflicting priorities, and knew we needed to make a more powerful contribution," says Gary.

Then Meredith Kimbell, a Best Year Yet partner and coach, stepped in. "Meredith and I had known each other for quite some time," explains Gary. "Knowing my style, Meredith suggested I try out a simple system that could help my team gain control of our explosive situation."

After completing a one-day Best Year Yet for Business session with Meredith, Gary and his team began to see results. Immediately, their focus, coordination and communication about the priorities within their department and the rest of the organization improved dramatically. And, within four short months, the group had met more than 25% of its annual goals.

"Best Year Yet guided us to a common understanding about where we wanted to go and the steps we needed to take to get there," says Gary. "At the end of the day, we felt a tremendous sense of accomplishment and the feeling that we were all on the same page."

#### **What is Best Year Yet?**

The Best Year Yet system is a proven method that uses a simple, straightforward approach to help individuals and businesses, such as Gary McKinney and Landmark Graphics, achieve their goals and produce results year after year.

Jinny Ditzler, a corporate trainer and entrepreneur, developed the Best Year Yet system twenty years ago in the UK. Initially, the program was designed to help individuals attain their best year yet. Ten years later, Jinny and her husband Tim launched Best Year Yet for businesses, teams, and workgroups.

Today, their extensive client list includes organizations that span the globe, such as NatWest Retail Bank London, the United States Air Force, Cox Communications, Cable & Wireless Optus Group of Melbourne, Australia, Royal Bank of Scotland and hundreds more.

#### **Why Does the Best Year Yet System Work?**

"The Best Year Yet system works because it is so simple," explains Jinny. "It provides a safe, yet meaningful assessment of an individual's or organization's past experience, then provides the tools that help identify how

achievement has been inhibited or prevented."

Best Year Yet helped Christopher Cribari, Director, Phoenix Learning Center, Cox Communications and his training staff discover the paradigms that had been limiting their success. Christopher's team had always been under the wing of the central office in Atlanta, but had recently shifted to the Phoenix Learning Center. As a result of the shift, morale was shaky and the 14-member team was unsure of the direction the department would take.

While the team was in the midst of this uncertain transition period, Best Year Yet partner and coach Victoria Crawford stepped in. During a one-day workshop, Victoria asked the team a series of simple questions, including:

- **What did you accomplish last year?**
- **What were your biggest disappointments?**
- **How do you limit yourself and how do you stop?**
- **What roles do you play in your life?**
- **What are your top ten goals for next year?**
- **How can you make sure you achieve those goals?**

By the end of the day, the group walked away with a simple, one-page plan that would produce results and lead to their best year yet.

During the 12 months following the introduction of the Best Year Yet process, Christopher watched his group, who started out operating just above average, develop into a team that now performs at an exceptional level.

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# Best Year Yet has helped produce results in industries across the board.

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"Perhaps even more exciting than the improvements in our operational effectiveness, is the positive impact the program has made on our team spirit," says Christopher. "The impact of the Best Year Yet program on our overall performance has been nothing short of spectacular!"

## **Best Year Yet Produces Results**

Lawrence Churchill, CEO, Unum Limited, Dorking, Surrey, UK, has experienced first-hand the power Best Year Yet can help to unleash in a business. Just two years after he came to Unum Limited, a small niche insurance company and subsidiary of a US giant, its profits increased by 60%.

"Best Year Yet uncovers new wisdom about how to work together and how to focus, align and motivate your busi-

ness and its teams," says Lawrence. "It is not a product or a system, rather it is a focused process that changes behavior, culture and performance, time after time."

In addition to soaring profits, Unum has experienced other significant results since it started using Best Year Yet, including:

- **Increasing its Business Excellence 'score' by 50%**
- **Improving shareholder value by 75%**
- **Increasing its claims payments and reserves by 35%**
- **Liberating its managers and staff**
- **Increasing confidence of its team**
- **Awarding largest-ever bonus to staff**
- **Attaining alignment and strengthened entire team**
- **Shifting to a positive paradigm**
- **Projecting all-time record third year**

"I believe Best Year Yet is a catalyst - an ingredient added to a business that speeds up the result," Lawrence exclaims. "It instills psychological stability through a sense of direction, consistently lifting individuals so they can see the forest for the trees. It gives invaluable perspective that opens their eyes and shifts their behavior in powerful ways."

## **Success in Every Arena**

Best Year Yet has helped produce results in industries across the board, ranging from communications and education to pharmaceuticals and real estate. Small and large organizations alike have demonstrated a commitment to the people who work with them by using the Best Year Yet system.

Spring Board, a nonprofit board of Aspen Foundation in Aspen, Colorado is one of many examples of a small organization that has benefited from Best Year Yet. As a recently organized board, Spring Board's members floundered with the foundation's mission and had little motivation to make much of a change. Having fallen into the habit of accomplishing the minimum expected, the board members were frustrated because they felt they were spinning their wheels.

After completing the Best Year Yet process and dedicating itself to change, the members of Spring Board felt a renewed enthusiasm and energy that was widely recognized and appreciated by the rest of the organization. As a result of Best Year Yet, Spring Board:

- **Rewrote its vision and developed its first set of by-laws**
- **Achieved grant-making duties in half the time of years before**
- **Expanded its sense of purpose and motivation**
- **Developed community outreach that informed young adults about available opportunities to make a difference in the community**
- **Built a strong and effective committee structure for making things happen**

Best Year Yet has proven beneficial to large organizations as well. In 1992, the United States Air Force Aeronautical Systems Center and Research Laboratory at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton Ohio launched a broad-based organizational development and strategic planning initiative. By 1995, Best Year Yet

had become the cornerstone of the initiative.

More than 1,000 military and civilian personnel at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base developed individual Best Year Yet plans. Project teams also developed organizational and strategic plans using Best Year Yet™ for Management Teams or Departments. An adapted version of Best Year Yet was used by the entire Air Force Research Laboratory Directorates, comprising several hundred personnel, to develop multi-year strategic plans and initiatives to achieve crucial goals.

As a result of the Best Year Yet process, the Air Force Aeronautical Systems Center and Research Laboratory has:

- **Improved performance of all project teams**
- **Managed its margin more effectively than ever before**
- **Lifted energy and alignment of a six-person management team**
- **Increased sales over past years by 34%**
- **Adopted Best Year Yet as its annual performance review system**

Major General Richard Paul, Commander, Air Force Research Laboratory, attributes outstanding overall results to the Best Year Yet process. "The Air Force Research Laboratory's Strategic Leadership Program featuring the Best Year Yet process has transformed this organization to a more strategic and innovative research and development force," he says. "This is just what the Air Force needs in these challenging times."

# How to give your organization its Best Year Yet

For more than twenty years, the Best Year Yet system has helped individuals, teams and entire organizations from around the world produce RESULTS year after year. Best Year Yet is an annual planning and implementation system designed for leadership teams that want focus, alignment, accountability and breakthrough.

The program consists of three basic components:

- **Best Year Yet for management teams or departments** — A one day program that works with a group to create an annual plan.
- **Best Year Yet for individuals** — A half-day workshop where participants create their personal one-page plan.
- **The Follow-up system** — Follow-up coaching and monthly check-in to support the team in meeting the goals set out in their Best Year Yet plans.

To learn more about how the Best Year Yet system can move your team or organization to the next level ( or to find a workshop in your area, visit [www.bestyearyet.com](http://www.bestyearyet.com).