

Article from the Arizona Business Gazette, June 12, 2008, by Patricia Bathurst

Phoenix-based RMG Training Company has global impact Bank experience helping founder

Bob Brown never imagined when he started 30 years ago that his little consulting business would become an international concern – then with just four employees.

RMG Training Company trains companies to maximize their internal strengths and enhance their culture to nurture employees. Brown started the company after a long stint as the director of training for The Arizona Bank, a former regional banking leader with more than 70 branches across the Valley. His experiences with the bank, Brown said, helped him develop a philosophy of learning that profoundly influenced his decision to turn training on its head, so to speak.

"We would put on these traditional classes," he said, "and everyone loved them. They'd finish, go back to work - and when we surveyed them three or four months later and asked what new skills they were applying, many, if not most, reported they couldn't change anything because their managers wouldn't support any changes."

He left the bank in 1980. "It was a great time for this decision," he recalled. "We'd just purchased a new home, had a new baby - our first - and I said to my wife, 'I think I'll start my own company.' "

While at the bank, he explained, yet another study showed that the most successful branches had managers that spent quality, one-on-one time every few days with employees to provide specific skill reviews and training. "It was usually only 10 or 15 minutes, but it made a huge difference in results."

The system Brown devised is deceptively simple. It's based on employee empowerment and rooted in clear management direction and training. Executives, managers and supervisors are trained as employee coaches while employees are provided with self-directed training materials. Employees work through the materials, meeting regularly with managers or supervisors to review progress and skills applications.

"Empowerment has been the foundation of our company," Brown said. "We provide easy-to-use training tools so that managers and supervisors become the 'heroes' of the training. "Our clients have found that managers and supervisors become leaders."

RMG focuses exclusively on three areas - service quality, sales and leadership training for executives, managers and supervisors. "We saw these three areas, for virtually every company, as keys to success. We also have specialized in the financial industries," he said, "but within the past year has developed a product allowing us to go beyond those industries."

The company's SERVICE PLUS program offers online training that employees work on at their own speed, at any time. The simplicity of the approach, and its cost, make it possible for smaller companies to also take advantage to the programs, Brown said. RMG is currently testing the system in the Phoenix market.

"If employees in services industries don't receive good training initially, it can lead to negative customer contacts and employee frustration. SERVICE PLUS will help companies help their employees to be immediately successful from Day One," Brown said.