



## **An Interview with Jack Riley, VP Consulting at DFS Solutions**

By Toby Gelinias

Recently, I had an opportunity to sit down with Jack Riley, one of our team members here at DFS. Along with John Higgins, Jack is heading our consulting services division. Jack has great experience in leading organizations through change, and I wanted to know what makes him tick and get some insights from him on helping businesses succeed. Here's that interview:

**In helping other businesses, what core principles do you apply regardless of who you're working with?**

Trust, integrity and transparency. The relationships should be open and honest in order to ensure accuracy of information and that even the tough stuff can be communicated when needed.

**If you could share one essential tip with a business owner, what would it be?**

Communication is critical. Keep your teams informed and engaged and show them that you are engaged. Let people know their contributions are valued and valuable.

### **How do you think equipment dealerships will change in the future?**

I believe that technology has already made a significant impact on dealer functionality as well as it has changed the required skillsets of dealership personnel at most levels. Customers' operations are also more sophisticated today than ever before. I think this will continue to advance as we see more environmental and economic pressures to provide products and services cleanly and efficiently. We will also see many newcomers around dealer principal tables as the next generation comes forward in succession.

### **What do you love about your work?**

My favourite part of what we do involves facilitating integrations. The dynamics between people, process and performance expectations are numerous and intricate, and this work can be incredibly rewarding when we help get everything moving together following an acquisition or major project implementation.

### **What was the greatest success in your career, and how did it change you?**

A very prominent career success point for me was to have the entire executive leadership team of a very large organization I worked for selected me to lead the planning, development and execution of several major change management projects for the enterprise as part of our growth strategy to exceed \$1 Billion in revenues. As a result, I was in a position that directly impacted the lives of over 1800 employees through each initiative and was able to deeply refine my influential leadership abilities.

I led our teams in strategic and cultural acquisition integration projects, worked to develop a total rebranding initiative for 75 stores across four divisions in three countries, I co-developed marketing and communications programs and tools that still remain in use today, and led initiatives to improve sales effectiveness, margins and profitability across divisions and departments.

To be selected at this level reflected the trust and confidence I had built with our leadership teams around my skills and competencies.

### **When you're not working, how do you like to spend your time?**

I am generally a creative thinker and like to experiment with designing and building mechanical and electronic items. Much of it involves the use of CNC motion control hardware and software. Also, I must have been born with diesel fuel in my veins so I almost always have a machine rebuild project on the go in my home shop. The current project is a wheel loader.

## What advice would you give to young entrepreneurs that are starting out?

Investigate all things that you enjoy, and all things related to what you are setting out to do. Learn all you can and don't ever be afraid to surround yourself with people who you think may be smarter than you. With that said, you rarely have to go it alone. A great team makes a great dream come to life.

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