



MPB
Leadership Accelerated

CASE STUDY 1

FACTS

- Ahlbeck - 2 partners, 20 staff, \$3.5mm in volume. No concentration.
- A downtown Chicago firm split up. We picked up 2 partners and a staff of 20, also \$3.5mm in volume. Focus is on real estate and restaurants.
- SLSF, a Skokie firm. 6 partners, staff of 40, doing \$6mm in business, concentration in restaurants.

BACKGROUND

Between 2010 and 2012 SS&G merged in 3 CPA firms in the Chicagoland region.

Combined firm - 10 partners, 80 staff, \$13mm in business. 3 offices: 2 suburban, 1 downtown.

From 2010-2015 when we sold to BDO, SS&G had explosive growth in Chicago - predominantly in the restaurant space. Chicago practice grew to \$25mm with 125 staff. Top 20 Firm in Chicago.

As part of our merger strategy we moved several staff to Chicago. This strategy was employed in all mergers. We did not necessarily send leadership, but rather it was an effort to transfer culture.

From day one, in Chicago, SS&G struggled with Chicago leadership.

We ended up appointing the Managing Partner of SLSF to become the local leader.

The fit was terrible, the MP's focus was on his original firm. He showed no interest in the other offices and total favoritism to the SLSF practice. He was not able to lead or resolve any Chicago problems.

The other 9 partners were all extremely busy adjusting to the larger firm and absorbing the incredible growth. All the partners were doing a nice job of managing their practices and growth.

None of the partners had the proper or correct skills to lead the Chicago effort.

The Ahlbeck practice had an exceptional young lady as their firm administrator. She was young (early 30s), bright, savy, and coachable.



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QUESTIONS

1

What would you plan to find the right leader for the Chicago practice?

2

What option would you consider?

3

What type of diligence would you do?

4

What do you think SS&G did?