

## Case Study

### Stellar Europe

**Location:** Irvine, Scotland

**2015 Revenues:** £13 million

**Employees:** 300

**Industry:** Telephone Call Center

## Highlights



### Challenge

The business was booking heavy losses following global financial crisis and was in need of an urgent turn around.



### Solution

Kick off financial literacy training, manage the numbers that count at daily huddles, share business performance company-wide at monthly town hall meetings, and give employees a stake in the outcome through incentive programs.



### Results

After implementing the GGOB, Stellar Europe delivered 13 consecutive quarters of year-over-year growth in revenue and a dramatic turn-around in EBITDA. Employee engagement is also now off the charts.

---

*“We needed something to rally around that would bring everyone together. The answer was the GGOB.”*

---



*Based in Scotland, Stellar Europe is a leading business process outsourcing (BPO) company in the U.K.*

### Company Background

Stellar employs 4,000 people worldwide with contact centers in the U.K, Australia, Philippines and North America. Many of Stellar Europe's customers were from the U.K. banking and insurance sectors, which were left in turmoil in the wake of the global financial crisis and widespread regulatory breaches. Stellar was hit hard as a result of the reduced work levels from clients. The business was under financial stress.

In 2012, when Michael Lumsden moved from Stellar Australia, which was practicing open-book management, to become CEO of Stellar Europe, he brought the GGOB with him. “We were booking substantial losses and facing a possible shut down,” says Lumsden. “As CEO I needed to give people hope. Something people could embrace to give us a common direction. I reached for the Great Game of Business.”

## Playing the Game Together

As a way to kick off their embrace of the GGOB, Stellar employees were encouraged to read the Great Game of Business book. The company then hosted several off-site GGOB staff meetings to share the game plan and cover the basics of financial literacy. Next came the implementation of daily huddles as a way to better keep score of financial results and KPIs.

"The huddle has evolved but it still happens every day at 2:00 p.m. and is a major part of our turnaround," says Lumsden. "Before the huddles we commonly missed our monthly forecasts. After month end we would do a review as to why we missed our numbers. There were excuses and reasons, some reasonable some just excuses. After we introduced the huddle, suddenly we started, as if by magic, to hit our monthly numbers more often. Today we hardly ever miss them."

The team also began playing MiniGames designed to increase KPI performance which in turn resulted in better client retention and renewal rates. "Mini-games are so powerful in that they encourage the right behaviors while solving problems where we aren't performing well," says Lumsden.

Stellar also began holding monthly town hall meetings with employees at all levels as a way to share company results, celebrate successes and to recognize employee anniversaries.

"We shared the poor state of our financial performance, educated our people on the numbers and discussed how we could create rapid change and improvement together," says Lumsden. "The business became more self-healing once we got things under our control."

An annual awards party is held to recognise the star performers from the previous year. Award nominees and employees with greater than 10 years service are welcomed to the party with a flourish of bagpipes.

An annual dinner at an up market hotel was also introduced to celebrate employees with 10 years or more of service. "Over 30 people attend this event each year," says Lumsden, "and it is a great way of highlighting and celebrating the contribution made by our long serving employees."

*"The GGOB creates strong demand for information. The more people learn, the more engaged they become. They act intelligently, and with integrity, honesty and transparency."*

## Rapid Financial Results; Lasting Cultural Change

Lumsden credits the strengthened engagement levels of Stellar's employees for the firm's dramatic financial turnaround. When the company conducted a survey of employees in September 2015, 88% of Stellar's employees reported being either "satisfied or very satisfied working at Stellar" while 97% of Stellar's employees responded that they were "committed or very committed to helping Stellar succeed."

Another outcome from embracing the GGOB is that Stellar was recognized as the "Best Open-Book Management Company in the UK" for 2013 and 2014. That's helped draw attention from other businesses interested in learning about Stellar's GGOB practice – which has led to the company hosting "Great Game Days", where more than 100 people, representing a variety of sectors from across the UK, have visited Stellar to watch and participate with in playing the GGOB.

*"It used to be that only a handful of people were looking at the numbers and worrying about them. Now we have more people who look at the granular level and take responsibility for them."*