

# CASE STUDY

## Easing Executive Pressure



### Background

Altimus is a consultancy specialising in helping its clients to bridge the gap between technology and business improvement. **Rob Edmonds** founded **Altimus** in 1996. Since its inception Altimus has achieved an unbroken record of profitable growth, expanding its services to meet an increasingly diverse customer base.

As an IT specialist, Rob's business background was firmly based in the technical aspects of his industry. As Altimus expanded he recognised that developing his range of marketing techniques would help him to reach a broader spectrum of clients and ensure that his business grew from strength to strength.

### Challenge

As part of Rob's business development strategy, he attended exhibitions and seminars in order to network and promote his company. It was the lead-up to one of these exhibitions, which prompted Rob to seek professional advice on his public speaking and networking skills. In order to distinguish himself within his industry, Rob wanted to cultivate his personal development and so he asked The Aziz Corporation to help him achieve these goals.

*"I found the session on Pressure Management the most valuable of all. It has aided me in fostering an environment in which my team feels valued."*

Rob commented:

"When you first start a company you obtain business through established contacts. I decided that it would be useful to gain some professional advice to enhance my presentation skills – particularly as my own background was in IT and not Marketing."



### The Aziz Programme

Rob took part in five half-day sessions including an initial diagnostic meeting and sessions on Performance & Presence, Image and Pressure Management. This bespoke approach ensured that Rob's individual needs were met whilst the comprehensive range of sessions meant that Rob was able to give attention to areas of his personal development that he had not primarily considered.

## The Aziz Programme

As CEO of his company a large part of Rob's role is to supervise and inspire those who work with him. Whilst it was presentation training that initially attracted Rob to The Aziz Corporation, it was actually the session on Pressure Management that he found the most beneficial to the day-to-day running of his company.

Rob commented:

"I found the session on Pressure Management the most valuable of all of the training that I received and this is not even the session that prompted me to seek training! It was really worthwhile, making me think about the impact of what you are saying and doing on both yourself and those around you."

Rob continued:

*"It sounds a cliché, but the session really helped me focus on looking at the positive rather than the negative. For instance when you are providing constructive feedback to a colleague and you use the style of, X was good and Y was good, but Z could be improved on all that the person you are feeding back to hears is everything after the 'but'...*

In other words the congratulatory part of the statement becomes overshadowed. This can be very de-motivating and builds pressure and stress in colleagues. Now I try to ensure that I separate out the praise from the constructive criticism by allowing time to elapse before broaching 'improvements'. This allows the praise to truly settle in. Then a day or so later, I phrase the 'improvement' as a question, such as 'by the way have you thought about this?'

In this way the person is much more receptive to the suggestion and the praise for their hard work is not lost in the aftermath of a 'but'."

*"The session taught me better ways of constructively aiding staff development."*

*"It was really worthwhile, making me think about the impact of what you are saying and doing on both yourself and those around you."*

## Benefits

Rob commented:

*"The impact of my training on my personal development, and those who work with me, has been excellent. The pressure management session has aided me in fostering an environment in which my team feels valued. This has also had the knock-on effect of improving staff creativity. In terms of the other training sessions I undertook, I personally now no longer worry about networking and approach potential new business leads with greater confidence."*

Rob added:

*"I have received positive feedback from peers, which has served to reinforce the success of the training."*

*"The combined impact of the various sessions has made me much more confident about many aspects of my day-to-day business approach and I feel that I have developed both myself and my company tremendously."*

*"I found the Pressure Management session the most valuable of all. It has aided me in fostering an environment in which my team feels valued."*