

# READING EAGLE

SEPTEMBER 13, 2010



Michelle D.S. Smith, chief executive of The Growth Coach franchise in Tilden Township, and her husband, Herbert L. Smith, chief financial officer, right, help client Steward J. Willman with employee evaluations at his firm, Willman Advanced Cleaning Inc., Lenhartsville.

READING EAGLE: LAURIN A. LITTLE

## Finding work-life balance

BY DAVID A. KOSTIVAL  
READING EAGLE CORRESPONDENT

**A**TILDEN TOWNSHIP couple have started a business where the goal is to improve the lives of those in the business community.

Herbert L. Smith, 43, and Michele D.S. Smith, 35, actually started The Growth Coach as a means to remain in Berks County.

Having recently married with a new blended family, Herbert Smith was offered a promotion at Behr Process Corp., where Michelle also worked until 2009.

The promotion required relocation to Atlanta or Chicago.

The Smiths decided not to uproot their new family and instead decided to work together by opening The Growth Coach.

The Growth Coach is a business system designed to help business clients examine the status of both their business and personal lives.

The Growth Coach franchise has offices throughout North America, with about 100 coaches in all.

The Smiths' area includes Berks, Chester and Montgomery counties.

"We did research in businesses focused on life coaching, and we were fortunate to find The Growth Coach," Michelle Smith said. "We wanted to find something that was nationally recognized."

Herbert Smith said that starting the business was not as simple as buying into the franchise.

"We went through an evaluation process which involved looking at our credentials," he said.

Michelle had been human resources director of operations for Behr, where she had started a coaching process with employees.

As director of distribution for the East Coast, Herbert had opportunities to work with Michelle on dealing with employee

### What the clients say

**Steward Willman, owner of Willman's Advanced Cleaning Inc., Lenhartsville:** "The reason I chose the Growth Coach was to find ways to put new ideas into effect and show my employees ways to expand the business and focus on what we are doing. ... Michelle has the insight and vision as to what will be taking place in business and what direction our company should be moving toward."

**Skip Butler, director of sales and marketing for Network Partners, Emmaus:** "I've gotten a lot out of this. I didn't realize some of the issues I was dealing with in both my job and personal life. I was always focused on work. ... I am now taking time for myself so that I can be more relaxed and enjoy my life a little more."

feedback.

"It's all about our clients and helping them to achieve their goals," Herbert Smith said.

There are a variety of coaching styles and price points for clients, including quarterly workshops, manager workshops, one-on-one coaching, sales coaching and special project coaching.

The Growth Coach is meant to keep a client motivated and on track to reach professional goals, Michelle Smith said.

The process helps people take time to analyze what's important in their lives and in their business in order to set them in the right direction, Michelle Smith explained.

An ideal client might be a business owner who is overwhelmed.

"It's someone who has been in business for two or more years and is now exhausted," Michelle Smith said. "We help that person find balance in their lives to grow their business."

### The Growth Coach

**Address:** 24 Scenic Drive, Tilden Township

**Phone:** 610-400-8452 or 610-421-4431

**Website:** [www.thegrowthcoach.com/michellesmith](http://www.thegrowthcoach.com/michellesmith)

**Owners/coaches:** Michelle D.S. Smith, chief executive; Herbert L. Smith, chief financial officer

**Founded:** June

#### Objectives:

- Sharpen vision, goals and productivity.
- Refocus attention on the big picture to take necessary action for continued success.
- Create business management strategies.
- Create an ongoing 90-day strategic action plan.
- Assessment of strengths, talents and limitations.
- Learn methods to leverage time, talent and resources.
- Have an effective way to learn the best practices from peers.
- Implement strategies in areas of leadership, employee management, business planning and business systems.

"I like to call it pulling someone out of the weeds," Herbert Smith said.

"We have to listen to our clients," Michelle Smith said. "We generally want to learn about their business so that we can determine the best way to help them. We help people discover what is stopping them from achieving their desired goals."

The Smiths said the coaching is meant to help people find balance in their lives.

Starting the business also has helped the Smiths to find that balance by allowing them the time to be available to focus on their family of four children, ranging in age from 8 to 23.

Contact David A. Kostival: 610-371-5049 or [money@readingeagle.com](mailto:money@readingeagle.com).