

If Something Is To Grow, It Needs to Change

Small Business Advocate Takes on Healthcare Burden



Name: Colleen Knighton

Title: Owner and CEO

Company: Beaverton Plumbing

Industry: Residential and Commercial Plumbing

Employee Count: 16

"It's nice to be able to call my Aliat HR staff, explain my scenario, and get real help. HR is where you guys are priceless to me. It's a liability thing. You protect us."

-Colleen, Owner and CEO

Background: Beaverton Plumbing, Inc. is a locally-owned, full-service plumbing company that has served communities in Oregon and Washington for over 40 years. They are experts in both residential and commercial plumbing and are known for their prompt response, attention to detail, and unsurpassed quality of work.

Challenge: It was that time of year again - time for Colleen to meet with her business' health insurance broker. After the rates presented to her came with a 30 to 40 percent increase because of medical conditions within her family, she felt it was time to for a change. A year prior, when Colleen had first heard of Aliat, she was not interested in a packaged benefits, HR and payroll solution. In fact, she thought the program was ridiculous. Colleen was primarily looking for a better healthcare solution, and as a small business owner, she felt that partnering with Aliat meant giving up control: "It was very hard for me to trust to a company

Those Who Adopt Change Often Find The Greatest Rewards

Change is never easy, but it is often beneficial to embrace it - not to mention necessary when it comes to finding solutions in the changing world around us. The ever-rising costs of healthcare make it harder each year for small businesses to offer competitive benefits to their employees, and often risk losing talent to their larger competitors. In the case of Beaverton Plumbing, positive change came in the form of a PEO partnership. Outsourcing healthcare and receiving the administrative assets of a big business - such as first-class HR and payroll services - allowed Beaverton Plumbing to be competitive and growth-focused.

"Now that we've gotten into our second year with Aliat, it has taken 80 percent of my workload off of my plate."

-Colleen, Owner and CEO

that I didn't really know with my payroll and HR administration." Since one of Colleen's many roles was also being HR manager, she began giving it more thought. Colleen knew that the workforce isn't the same as it was 25 years ago, and people are sueing-happy. "Was I an expert at HR?" Colleen asks to herself. "No. I needed somebody to help solve that piece of the puzzle and manage our HR."

Solution: Colleen decided to partner with Aliat. Aliat advocates small business owners who have been burdened by the small group healthcare marketplace by pooling them together, and working directly with leading healthcare providers to bring small businesses richer benefits at a better price. While comparing to health plans acquired through a broker or bought direct, Colleen found that by working with Aliat she could get lower rates for the exact same coverage. The best news was that with the added assistance of payroll, compliance and HR included in her package, for the first time in 25 years Colleen has been able to focus less on administrative tasks, and more on improving and growing the business.

What's next for Colleen?

She has gone from just daydreaming about retirement, to actually planning it.

Colleen bought this business from her father. He asked her, "When you retire what are you doing to do?" and she said "I just want to volunteer to help people at VA or at home with the elderly. I want to give back with all of the knowledge I have learned over the years. That's the way I want to spend my retirement."

