

## 360 Solutions

# Make Money Helping Others Succeed

By Joan Plotnick

**W**e all know the statistics: 57 percent of new businesses fail in the first year; 80 percent after five years.

Chip Wilson, CEO of 360 Solutions, says the reason is not lack of passion or poor products. The reason is that many people lack the business knowledge needed to succeed — especially in the areas of employee development, customer relationships and cash flow management.

He should know. Prior to starting 360 Solutions, Wilson worked in both Fortune 500 companies and business startups. In 1995, he opened his own training and consulting company, which he sold slightly over a year later for a six-figure profit. He was vice president for sales and marketing for a Web-based company in Texas when the entrepreneurial bug hit again.

Wilson's passion to help other entrepreneurs succeed was the driving force behind 360 Solutions. While 360 Solutions trains strategic partners (distributors) how to teach others to successfully run a business, it simultaneously shows them how to use the same skills, systems and strategies to grow their own personal consultancy business.

From the start, Wilson put together a team of experts with more than 30 years of experience in training, consultation and organizational development. The team then tailored the strategies its members used to help large corporations (such as Amoco, Colgate and IBM) to meet the needs of small and medium-sized businesses and independent consultants.

360 Solutions focuses on training people in three core business areas:

- **People Development** — Hiring the right people, sales training, building high performance teams and leadership development.
- **Customer Relationship Management** — 360 uses its exclusive Touch Points Web-based system to keep up with customer desires and demands, including highly customizable automated

action plans.

- **Cash Flow Management** — 360 Solutions has developed two proprietary software systems that fully integrate with a business' financial systems.

Strategic partners can focus on any one, or a combination, of these areas.

Wilson believes in giving his strategic partners the same type of support they give their clients. As such, he has created what he calls a "High Tech-High Touch" teaching program. It starts with an intensive three-day boot camp on how to start, build and grow a business.

People leave the training with detailed action plans, broken down into six-week, six-month and 16-month increments. These action plans include weekly "accountability" conference calls with boot camp classmates to help retain focus, at-home Web-based trainings and annual learning conferences. A full-time marketing director is even assigned to each 360 Solutions partner.

"We teach them everything they need to know about how to run a successful consultancy business," Wilson said.

Over the past 10 years, there has been a tremendous surge in franchises, driven by people who want to run their own business but minimize risk by using proven products and systems. Wilson says 360 Solutions has the risk-sharing benefits of franchises without being a franchise. Strategic partners, for example, are free to use the 360 Solutions product line, or any other products they feel are valuable. They select their company's name and can private label all 360 Solutions products with their own names, slogans and logos.

"We're almost invisible to clients," Wilson said. "This creates a larger value when our consultants try to sell their busi-



360 Solutions CEO Chip Wilson and his dog Hoss

- **Opportunity:** Management Consulting
- **Web site:** [www.360solutions.com](http://www.360solutions.com)
- **Phone:** 1-800-374-2879

ness. We are there to support our partners, but not to promote 360 to their clients."

People also can select their level of investments. Right now, the full list of services, classes and systems is about \$39,000, but people can begin for as little as \$5,000 with a few products and training classes.

"Your growth is self-paced, from becoming a home-based business with a few clients to a full-fledged, multi-location firm," Wilson said.

The most successful consultants, Wilson said, are those with leadership skills — not necessarily the ones with the most education.

"Have you ever managed, coached or been in leadership roles in the past? Do people take your advice? Do they follow you?" Wilson said. "Those are the characteristics of a good consultant." ☺