



RELISH CATERING KITCHEN: THE TASTE OF SUCCESS

Acclaimed chef Julia Child would often remark how no one is born a great cook, but rather that one learns by doing. It's a sentiment that's equally applicable to entrepreneurship and led John Eggert, CEO and Executive Chef at Relish Catering Kitchen in Schaumburg to join Next Level Northwest's (NLNW) Business Accelerator Program.

15% REVENUE GROWTH
AFTER COMPLETING PROGRAM

INGREDIENTS FOR GROWTH

John Eggert launched his company in 2013 with one employee and a mission to craft, prepare, and deliver the freshest menu items possible. Eggert, having since grown Relish Catering Kitchen to nearly 20 employees, had begun strategically planning for the future and discussing ideas for how to improve Relish Catering Kitchen's processes when he first heard about the free business accelerator program being offered by NLNW. Realizing the program's sizeable potential to benefit his company, Eggert signed up to make his case for why Relish Catering Kitchen should be awarded the business accelerator's 90-day business coaching engagement at NLNW's Pitch Night for local businesses.

PAIRED WITH AN EXPERT

Eggert's pitch proved remarkably impressive to NLNW's panel of judges. The NLNW Business Accelerator Program was specifically designed to enable companies, such as Relish Catering Kitchen, to solve business challenges, increase productivity, and expand their market share. The panel of judges saw the potential in Relish Catering Kitchen and awarded Eggert a free 12-week business coaching engagement. With his entrance into the accelerator program, a thorough assessment of Relish Catering Kitchen's business needs was completed to identify the company's strengths, needs, and opportunities for growth.

With the assessment completed, NLNW began the process of pairing Eggert with a professional business coach—someone suited to the unique needs of Relish Catering Kitchen and who would be in a position to help the company thrive. Veteran business coach Jeff Williams was vetted and hand-selected by NLNW to work alongside Eggert. Eggert, having identified his company's three biggest pain points as promotion, recruitment, and expansion, was delighted to be paired with Williams and his decades of experience in marketing and business promotion.

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John Eggert, CEO and Executive Chef

RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

For three months, Eggert and Williams worked hand in oven-mitt as Eggert learned about often neglected elements that business owners need to focus on in addition to a variety of marketing and recruitment methods to grow his customer base and staff. While there were some unique challenges due to Eggert's 70-80 hour work weeks, Williams and NLNW were able to adapt and work around his schedule to maximize the benefits to Relish Catering Kitchen. Under Williams' coaching, and taking his guidance to heart, it wasn't long before Eggert began noticing improvements in his business.

By the end of the accelerator program, Eggert had created two new jobs at Relish Catering Kitchen with a plan to hire an additional four at the start of the summer. Eggert had also expanded the company's existing facility and begun the initial planning for opening a second location. And thanks to the expert insights provided by Williams' marketing prowess and promotional experience, Relish Catering Kitchen grew its revenue by nearly 15%.

When asked for his overall impression of the program upon completing NLNW's business accelerator, Eggert stated, "It's been a great experience." He continued, "I've been able to increase sales, I'm adding employees and it's just overall been a great way to grow and expand my business. I would encourage other businesses in the area to apply to the program. It's a great way to jumpstart an existing business and get you to the next level."

ABOUT NEXT LEVEL NORTHWEST

Next Level Northwest is a not-for-profit business accelerator program that supports existing local businesses. The program was founded by five Northwest Chicagoland municipalities—Elk Grove Village, Hanover Park, Hoffman Estates, Rolling Meadows, and Schaumburg—as a public-private partnership to support regional and local businesses through collaborative and innovative initiatives to help grow local economies. To learn more about Next Level Northwest or to submit an application for your company to join the next class of companies in the business accelerator program, visit www.nextlevelnorthwest.org.

THE PATH TO SUCCESS STARTS HERE



To get started, visit NextLevelNorthwest.org and/or contact your local Economic Development Director for more information.

Josh Grodzin, CEcD
Elk Grove Village
Interim Executive Director
& Director Business
Development and Marketing
T: 847.357.4005
E: JGrodzin@elkgrove.org

Martha H. Corner, AICP
Rolling Meadows
Business Advocate
T: 847.870.9004
E: cornerm@cityrm.org

Shubhra Govind, AICP
Hanover Park
Director of Community and
Economic Development
T: 630.823.5781
E: sgovind@hpil.org

Matt Frank
Schaumburg
Director of Economic
Development
T: 847.923.3853
E: mfrank@ciscaumburgil.us

Kevin Kramer, CEcD
Hoffman Estates
Director of Economic
Development
T: 847.781.2662
E: kevin.kramer@hoffmanestates.org