

Case Study:

Mom Made® Foods
Arlington, Virginia

PI Worldwide 

Predictive Index® Helps Mom Made® Foods Make Critical Executive Hire

Virginia-based Mom Made® Foods is the leading brand of frozen organic children's food in the Mid-Atlantic States with broad distribution through national retailers like Whole Foods, Giant Eagle and online magnet, Amazon.com. When the company began experiencing rapid business growth in 2010, former Sales and Marketing executive turned "Mompreneur" Heather Stouffer, sought to add a critical member to her executive team; a Director of Sales who would complement Stouffer's working style and experience.

Stouffer explains, "I was looking for someone whose strengths, expertise and experience would fill in important talent gaps and who would be the right 'fit' culturally." She continues, "As a small company, we cannot afford to make any mistakes in hiring. Not only is it time consuming but having the right person in such a critical role will have a huge impact on our team as well as the business."

Finding the 'Right Fit'

Stouffer recalls being flooded with resumes for the Director of Sales position. The candidate pool was impressively strong with experienced candidates—many of which looked like a good fit 'on paper.' When the search narrowed from 60 candidates to just three, Stouffer turned to the Predictive Index® (PI®) behavioral assessment tool to help with the final selection.

"As a growing company, we cannot afford to make any mistakes in hiring. The PI enabled us to identify the right Sales Executive who has increased sales by 1000%, in less than six months."

Heather Stouffer
CEO

Before each of the three front-runners came in for their first in-person interviews, each completed the PI assessment which provided Stouffer with unique insights into each candidate's work style, motivational drivers and behavioral fits and gaps in relation to the position.

With the help of Steve Picarde Jr., Vice President for PI Midlantic, a PI Worldwide® Member Firm, Stouffer developed focused interview questions for each candidate based on their PI profiles. "The PI provided a purely objective assessment of each candidate from a behavioral standpoint that could not be influenced by subjective factors like who they know, what brands they've worked with, and other elements that can often complicate a hiring decision."

Making a Smart Selection

Armed with a deeper understanding of the candidates' motivations, strengths and behavioral drivers, Stouffer was able to conduct the interviews with greater confidence, asking analytical questions of each candidate that mapped directly to her business needs and the job description. "The questions were geared at assessing their dominance, their attention to detail and their innate drive to achieve our business goals, which are all important behaviors the PI explores."

Throughout the interview process, Stouffer was repeatedly impressed with the level of accuracy of the PI assessments. She recalls that one candidate's PI indicated he/she would interview well due to strong relational skills and a charismatic personality but may be weaker in the ability to get down to the granular level of detail needed for the role. "Within minutes of meeting this candidate, I immediately recognized all these social and personable characteristics suggested by the PI. In the same respect, the PI gave me the opportunity to pause and ask questions that tested the candidate's ability to manage detail and complex processes. Sure enough, I realized this really likeable person might not be able to manage the amount of detail that goes into this role."

Right Hire = Real Results

Stouffer was confident in her decision to hire Jim Cleveland for the Sales Director position. As Stouffer describes, "Jim's Predictive Index results were most fitting with what we defined as the characteristics needed to fulfill this position." She continues, "We're a growing company, and we really needed somebody who could take a bird's eye view but who wasn't afraid to dig into the trenches. In addition to providing that balance, we were looking for someone who could manage and motivate our team of 100 brokers representing Mom Made Foods. As the PI helped reveal and the interview process then confirmed, Jim embodied these attributes."

Stouffer credits the PI and the support of PI Midlantic with helping Mom Made Foods bring a critical hire on board to help propel a booming start-up business even further. She concludes, "The Predictive Index is a great tool that served as a critical asset in providing

us true and reliable results that were instrumental in our hiring decision for the Sales Director position. It told us so much about Jim that I don't think we would have been able to decipher through just a normal interviewing process. The PI enabled us to find somebody who literally hit the ground running from the moment he stepped through the doors."

In less than six months since his hire, Cleveland increased sales by more than 1,000% and Stouffer and her team remain enthused about the decision. "All of us love working with Jim, and we've already learned a lot from him. He fits right in; it's been a great success."