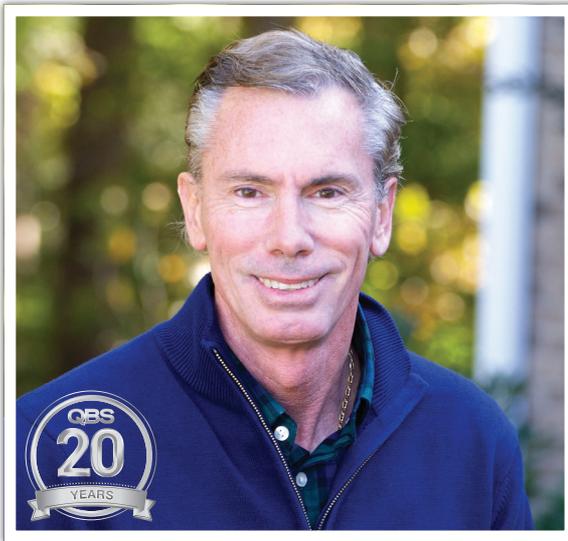




Our “Coffee With...” page features an Upstate business executive sharing insights about their business, the industry in which they work and the community in which they live. Where’s the coffee, you ask? Well, that occurs in an accompanying video. We sit down with the executive – over coffee – to see what else is on their mind.



Today, we’re “having coffee” with David Evette, QBS President. You can check out David’s video on GSA Business Report’s YouTube channel or on one of our two e-newsletters, Morning Blend or GSA Daily (Monday – Friday).

YOU’RE IN THE BUSINESS OF HELPING OTHER PEOPLE TAKE CARE OF THEIR BUSINESSES. BEFORE I ASK YOU HOW BUSINESS IS GOING FOR OTHERS, LET ME ASK: HOW IS BUSINESS FOR YOU?

A big part of my job, in addition to leading the company, is business development. As you can imagine, it’s been a bit more challenging to get out and meet new people and talk face-to-face. The good news is that we have a really loyal client base. They’ve not only stuck with us, but have also continued to refer others to us, which has kept us going during this challenging time.

HOW HAVE YOU ADJUSTED WORKING CONDITIONS FOR YOUR STAFF DURING THIS PANDEMIC?

Due to the nature of our business, QBS has always needed a back-up plan where our people could easily transition to working from home on short notice. When you deal in payroll, if there’s an ice storm or other incident, you still need to take care of your clients. At the onset of the pandemic, we made quick adjustments to limit the number of people physically reporting to work. Since there are some items we can’t complete remotely, a minimal number of employees have continued to come into the office.

When folks do come in, we are following all the recommended procedures. We have a daily temperature check upon arrival and team members must wear a face mask when not seated at their desks. We’re also cleaning and sanitizing throughout the day more frequently than before. Overall, our staff has been incredible in terms of flexibility and understanding. We’re doing everything we can to provide the best service to our customers while keeping our employees safe.

NOW, TO YOUR CLIENTS: OVERALL, WHAT IS THE MOOD OF THE PEOPLE AT THE BUSINESSES YOU SERVE?

Much better than you might expect, actually! Everyone understands that we all have to work together to keep the spread of this virus controlled. We had a large portion of our clients take advantage of the PPP [Payment Protection Program] loans, and we worked with them continuously to make sure they have the most up-to-date information. We believe it’s our role to ensure that our clients are fully informed on all aspects of the pandemic that impact their businesses and employees.

AND, HOW HAS QBS HELPED YOUR CLIENTS TO NAVIGATE THIS PANDEMIC ON A BROADER SCALE?

In the beginning, we focused mainly on helping clients understand and navigate the unemployment process. We provided guidance they could disseminate to employees relating to the complex tasks associated with filing for unemployment and how to get checks as quickly as possible. We also helped business owners understand that placing employees on unemployment during this pandemic wasn’t necessarily hurting them as much as it could otherwise – providing additional expertise on protecting their investment by timely placement, before using up any, or all, of their reserve funds. We knew it was important to our clients that they had something for employees to come back to as soon as they could restart operations.

QBS also shared numerous webinars, training calls, and memorandums to help clients understand new information and changes coming from both the Federal and State levels. Overall, communication was key for us to best support our clients, as well as any prospects we were working with.

OF THE VARIOUS ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES THAT YOU OFFER, HAS THE PANDEMIC CAUSED A SHIFT IN DEMAND (UP OR DOWN) FOR ANY OF THEM?

Definitely. Besides the overwhelming increase in demand for our HR Administration service and expertise, we also had a renewed interest in benefits, particularly medical offerings. Providing affordable health care offerings continues to be a challenge for small to medium businesses. And with the added possibility of an employee or family member becoming ill with COVID-19, now more than ever, our clients are looking for creative ways to provide affordable benefit options for all employees.

IS THERE ANY ASPECT OF BUSINESS THAT OPERATORS SHOULD BE FOCUSING ON RIGHT NOW?

Compliance is a big one. While this is always important, it is especially relevant now for any organization that has taken advantage of the programs developed in response to this pandemic like PPP or Economic Injury Disaster Loans. Getting financial assistance was one thing, but now companies must focus on recordkeeping, as well as how and when to complete the paperwork required for loan forgiveness.

Beyond compliance, technology and innovation have climbed to the top of the priority list in our increasingly virtual world. There are a lot of offerings out there, but business owners need to be selective and choose partners who can keep their information safe.

GENERALLY SPEAKING, COVID OR NOT, WHEN YOU TAKE ON A NEW CLIENT, WHERE DO YOU TEND TO FIND THE MOST ROOM FOR BETTER EFFICIENCY – FOR SAVING TIME OR MONEY?

It’s been my experience that saving time almost always leads to saving money. We all know that the administrative management of employees generates no revenue, so QBS utilizes advancements in data collection, data processing and safe data storage – which have changed drastically over the last 10 years – to help our clients do this necessary work both efficiently and effectively. Innovation and technology have always been at the heart of what ultimately makes QBS and our clients successful.

YOU MENTIONED THAT PROVIDING AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE OPTIONS CONTINUES TO BE A SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGE FOR SMALL TO MEDIUM BUSINESSES. HOW DO YOU HELP THIS SEGMENT OF BUSINESSES?

This is one of the areas I enjoy most when working with clients. Every business in different and every business is unique in the way that they want to provide for their employees. Every business also has certain financial constraints.

While traditional health insurance is always an option, there are several new programs that have recently come to market. At QBS we are preparing to launch a new suite of Direct Care services as an alternative to traditional health insurance for those companies who want to provide some type of health and wellness benefit to new and existing employees.

In my almost 30 years in this industry, I’ve learned that you can never get too comfortable to think that what you have is good enough. If you don’t stay up to date on new ways to provide benefits to your employees, you will end up paying more than you need to.

INCLUSIVITY HAS BEEN SOMETHING THAT WE’VE ALL BEEN AWARE OF, BUT MANY OF US ARE SUDDENLY REALIZING WE ONLY THOUGHT WE WERE DOING ENOUGH. HOW CAN BUSINESS LEADERS ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INITIATIVES AND BEGIN TO TAKE ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT?

This is a great question. Over the past month, QBS has hosted a series of webinars including the topics of Unconscious Bias and Emotional Intelligence (EQ). We have also shared insights on how to create a more inclusive workplace, and we realize this is just the beginning. As employers and as Americans, we must all take a hard look at the status quo — within our companies and communities — and ask ourselves how we can move towards greater equity and equality.

