

Leader Development, Executive Coaching, Strategic Planning Facilitation, Training Development, Business Processing and Staffing Services for the DoD Federal and State Government Agencies across the United States



Barbara Stankowski
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Interview conducted by:
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor
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“We are a very mature and capable small business that can deliver high quality services with great professionals who are passionate about the work they do every day.”- Barbara Stankowski

CEOCFO: Ms. Stankowski, what is the focus at AMTIS?

Ms. Stankowski: The focus is continued growth. We have been incredibly successful over the last year. This is our tenth year; and we had dynamic growth for the last five years, moving from about 1.5 million to over 20 million today, from a handful of people to around 180 people, located in 20 locations across 12 states, so very diversified. Our market is the government services industry. We look forward to continued growth and prosperity.

CEOCFO: Would you tell us the range of services you provide?

Ms. Stankowski: Our services are pretty diverse. We have four core areas. The first one is leader development and executive coaching and strategic planning facilitation. We have an extensive network of certified coaches from the International Coaching Federation (ICF) who deliver coaching to our government clients. We do strategic planning facilitation as well as deliver Ken Blanchard leader development courses across the country. That is one major area. We develop training products and services. We build training products, whether they are web-based, instructor-led or a blend of learning solutions. We do all of the components of that from analysis, design, development, implementation and evaluation of those training products. The third is professional services where we hire very talented, white collar employees to serve within government facilities.. For example, we have an individual doing all the IT strategic planning for HUD OIG, but it is a similar kind of work across the country, again providing professional services. The last one is business processing services, which I would say covers scanning, printing, courier services, mail room operations, records management and those kinds of functions.

CEOCFO: Do many of your clients turn to you for more than one of the services? Is there crossover?

Ms. Stankowski: Certainly. For example, we may be doing work within an agency in the area of professional services, and they realize that we do leader development and executive coaching, and they reach out to us to provide those services as well.

CEOCFO: Are there particular government agencies you would prefer to work with, given a choice?

Ms. Stankowski: We support the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and many of the organizations within Health and Human Services. We support the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Center for Tobacco Products (CTP), the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Office of Minority Health (OMH). We support the Department of Veterans Affairs, both the Veterans Health Administration and the Veterans Benefits Administration, and the VA Construction Facility Management Group. We support HUD OIG and the EPA. It is a very diverse number of clients including U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) with executive coaching, and other services at the Department of Labor, Army and Navy.

CEOCFO: *How do you decide which projects to consider?*

Ms. Stankowski: We know that our greatest success comes from either knowing the customer or having a partner that knows the customer, so we really rack and stack what we go after, based on whether a team member has a relationship with the customer or our own personal relationship with that customer. That is where our greatest success is.

CEOCFO: *How do you address the training coaching in a way that is meaningful, and are people turning to you because they understand the difference?*

Ms. Stankowski: We provide training programs or curriculums. For example, we might build a retirement seminar that is delivered by the government trainers, but we pull together the information and build instructionally sound training that is then delivered. We might develop a master training course to teach people how to be effective trainers within an agency. We build that course and then demonstrate to them how they would deliver it in house themselves. We might build web-based training that runs on their internal learning management system.

CEOCFO: *How do you assess the right methods throughout your engagements? What do you understand on a basic level about working with agencies and about the various services you offer that set you a step above competitors?*

Ms. Stankowski: The government marketplace is not an easy place in which to operate. I would say that the AMTIS advantage is the fact that we have multiple socioeconomic statuses that help to narrow the competition in some areas. We are a Service-Disabled, Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB), 8(a), Economically Disadvantaged Woman-Owned Small Business (EDWOSB). All of those qualifications help us be competitive within certain areas with lesser competitions.

CEOCFO: *When you are assessing a project, what do you look at that less experienced companies in your industry do not realize is important to take into consideration?*

Ms. Stankowski: If we are talking about executive coaching and leader development programs and assessments, I truly believe that to change and improve performance requires not training alone but training coupled with assessment and coaching. My belief is that I do a better service for the client if I am providing a learning opportunity coupled with coaching so that they apply that learning in the workplace. We also use assessments to measure the pre- and post- performance of those individuals so the customer gets the biggest return on investment.

CEOCFO: *What surprised you about working with the government?*

Ms. Stankowski: It surprised me how long it takes. It takes great patience and persistence.

CEOCFO: *Are there particular plans for the new administration, or how do you see a change of administration affecting you?*

Ms. Stankowski: Typically, where democrats tend to make government larger and bring work into the government, I find that most republican administrations tend to contract out more work; so, I think there may be a larger number of opportunities for contract work.

CEOCFO: *What are the intangibles you look for in your staff?*

Ms. Stankowski: Intangibles are passion for the work they are going to do and commitment to the customer. We have a great staff. I think the thing that sets us apart is the staff and their commitment to the client and their passion for the job. I do not want anyone coming to work thinking it is just a job.

CEOCFO: *How do you know when someone is right? How do you keep in touch with what your employees are doing?*

Ms. Stankowski: I visit them. I travel extensively and spend time with them. It is easy to sit in an office. Here in Orlando, I have our instructional design staff and I/O psychologist along with our back office support, our payroll, invoicing, CFO, recruitment and HR. The rest of my folks are scattered around the country. I spend a lot of time on the road visiting clients and my people who are supporting those clients.

CEOCFO: *Did you realize that was important in the beginning or over time, that it is important to be there?*

Ms. Stankowski: I think that after 28 years in the Navy, leadership is crucial; that leaders have to be seen, and that you cannot underestimate the impact that you have in being present with people.

CEOCFO: *Would you tell us about how you decide where to give back when there are so many worthy choices?*

Ms. Stankowski: We try to focus on veteran kind of events. We typically support the Navy League and their Lone Sailor, Wounded Warrior efforts each year where we sponsor and also put together a team for their 5k efforts. We have done

Operation Give Back. We support various veterans, small business organizations, and I spend an awful lot of time personally coaching and mentoring small business owners, particularly women or service-disabled, veteran-owned, small businesses. In addition, I have established endowment support Veteran Scholarships at Penn State, Mont Alto Campus.

CEO CFO: *How do you keep up the pace, and what do you anticipate for the next year or two?*

Ms. Stankowski: To give you an example, part of winning government work is all about doing proposals. Last year, we probably did over 50 proposals. This is a small staff that puts together and responds and we probably have a 30-40 percent win rate, which is pretty darn good. I think the success is in the dedication of my small staff and their commitment to going after work, writing proposals and getting them done. We have one proposal manager. I have four vice presidents, one for each of the four core areas, myself, our CFO and Contracts Director. Together we write all those proposals and go after the work.

CEO CFO: *Why choose AMTIS?*

Ms. Stankowski: We are a very mature and capable small business that can deliver high quality services with great professionals who are passionate about the work they do every day.

