

Smart CXO awards

SALUTING YOUR EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM ALL-STARS

Most CEOs will tell you that they can't do it all alone – and if they say otherwise, that's hubris talking. The best companies not only have a visionary, goal-oriented CEO; they also have a dedicated team of executive professionals working together to carry out the vital operations of a company. Finance, operations and technology are just a few of the most important facets that a company must address and execute with precision and accuracy; otherwise, the CEO's vision will never become a reality. The inaugural SmartCXO awards recognize executives who have gone above and beyond to support their organizations' initiatives in the categories of CFO, COO, CIO/CTO and executive management teams.

COOs

PARA-PLUS TRANSLATIONS, INC.

Robert Santiago III, COO
Industry: Language services



WRITING IT DOWN

Prior to Santiago's arrival at Para-Plus, tasks such as daily book keeping entries were still being done with a number-two pencil, so he implemented the necessary processes to bring the company to a level that gave a "true" indication of how the business was functioning.

FOCUSING ON THE CORE

Santiago realized that the business was capable of operating in many markets, but saw that it needed to focus on its strongest – healthcare and education – so it would not dilute itself. He implemented a new industry-specific accounting system, which allowed the company to focus its efforts.

CREATING A FOLLOWING

Santiago believes it is critical that staff feels a part of the direction and achievements of the organization because staff must be able to relate and buy into the objectives of the organization, whether they are limited in scope, such as daily tasks, or as far-reaching as year-end target objectives.



Santiago at his real full-time job as a dad.

CULTURE OF RESPECT

At the end of the day, Santiago wants to create a great work environment for his staff where everyone treats each other with respect and individuals feel as if they are effectively contributing to the success of the organization. "You only know what you know, which is why it is critical to surround yourself with bright and dynamic individuals and encourage thought and creativity on a daily basis," he says.

ADVANCING INNOVATION

Over the last year, Santiago has taken a close look at everything from financial reporting metrics to establishing standard operating procedures (SOPs) for all Para-Plus's departments. The willingness to innovate and look for new opportunities, even in a down market, and an effort to diversify and adapt its business model so that the organization's success continues for future generations was critical in the transition of leadership.

"I want those under my leadership to always see me in control. The challenge is to never overreact and to separate the intensity of the moment from the facts and make decisions accordingly."

smart **CEO**

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