



TTI SUCCESS INSIGHTS®

# No Winging It With These Professionals

When this bird removal company looked to reach new heights, they needed more than a wing and a prayer





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## Being Prepared for Opportunity

David Brugh is the CEO and Co-Founder of Meridian Bird Removal. Not one to rest on his laurels from early successes, Brugh was feeling the pressure. His Roanoke, VA based company was growing fast and had a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to take their bird removal business to entirely new heights. A major retailer was considering Meridian for a lucrative contract, which meant Brugh had but one chance to make it happen. He and his company had to be prepared.

Meridian is in the bird removal business, having a patented process to humanely

capture and release birds into the wild. They work with big box stores such as supercenters, discount and grocery stores and even airports. There's a high demand for their services since birds find their way into large venues such as these quite often.

The company's successful sales team was bringing in leads faster than Meridian could staff them and they were growing almost beyond what they could deliver. And now they looked to expand significantly. While Meridian had much early success, their turnover rate was higher than desirable, on both the sales and tech side.

Bringing in the right type of people to the tech side would be the key to their success. Since there is no predictability in when a store will have a bird problem, much of their workforce consists of part-time employees. The biggest issues they encounter is not only finding the people who find the job rewarding, but identifying those who would be a perfect fit culturally. Since there really isn't a hard skill set in the marketplace for bird retrieving, the company needed to focus on a candidate's soft skills to ensure they'd be a proper fit for the company.

## The Opportunity

Meridian grew rapidly by consistently landing new accounts. Now, they were under consideration to be the official bird removal company for a large mega-conglomerate with stores all over the United States. To be able to land the new series of superstores, they needed the right people in the right positions so they could operate as a well-oiled machine. It was necessary to identify what type of workers were most successful so they could seek more of the same.


## Focusing on Your Strengths

Realizing the potential for great scalability with rapid growth, David Brugh wanted – and needed – to do it correctly. He wanted to hire good fits. The company didn't

have time to train people and have them leave; they were hiring people rapidly and needed them to be the right hires.

Meridian originally tried to handle hiring in-house, but their success was hit or miss. Some workers were great while others were not. Still others showed potential but left to pursue other opportunities. Brugh soon realized that seasoned hiring professionals could get him in the right direction faster.

When Brugh learned his company was in the running to land this potentially business-changing account, he knew he couldn't do it alone. While he may be the expert in bird removal, he needed the help of seasoned veterans in the hiring field to help him identify and then find a staff that could grow quickly yet productively together. Enter The Metiss Group.



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## Expertise in the World of Hiring

The Metiss Group are human behavior experts based in Detroit, MI and Charlotte, NC specializing in helping companies with their talent concerns. While Cyndi Gave acted as The Metiss Group team lead in working directly with David Brugh, the entire Metiss staff worked hand in hand with the entire leadership team at Meridian to ensure maximum engagement and results.

Meridian's leadership team consists of David Brugh, President and Co-Founder; Amanda Witt, Director of Administrative Services; Jeff Kuhland, Director of Finance; Earl Blanchard, Director of Operations; and Brian Burke, Director of Service and Co-Founder.

The Metiss Group quickly identified that there was a twofold need to continue the company's upward growth into the coming years. They needed to find the right candidates both on the sales side as well as the Bird Retrieval Technician (BRT) side. The sales team was charged with servicing current and landing new accounts while the BRT team were the people in the field who were on call ready to retrieve birds at a moment's notice.

## Creating the Job Benchmark

After doing some extensive background information and talking with the leadership team at Meridian, The Metiss Group honed in on a job benchmark for both positions. There was a very specific type of person that fills these particular roles quite well. Meridian needed to find more of these ideal candidates.

For the BRT position, the benchmark identified the ideal behavioral style favors people over tasks and a reflective, rather than a direct, approach. This job benchmark was also able to identify that ideal candidates are motivated by efficiency and return on investment, gaining knowledge and information, and helping others.

For the sales position, the benchmark for success was someone who is a motivated self-starter. This sales role required someone who mixes well with people and has a higher sense of urgency. These people are often motivated by having a strong breadth of knowledge, maximizing their resources and wanting to have control over their day-to-day experiences.





## The Plan

Brugh turned to the Metiss Group to create processes to help Meridian get results. Meridian simply didn't yet have a team in place to do that. The Metiss Group benchmarked key roles across the company, including the sales and tech roles. One of the roles benchmarked was a Director of Marketing position from which they hired a solid candidate.

The Metiss Group worked closely with Brugh and the rest of the Meridian team to define the benchmarks quickly yet thoroughly and began to hire against those benchmarks. While Metiss eventually trained the Meridian human resources staff to manage these processes on their own, they had about six months to get prepared for the big meeting with the mega-superstore chain.

The meeting was fast approaching and the outcome could change the fortunes for Meridian virtually overnight. Landing a contract with a chain with this many stores would guarantee regular, steady (and

lucrative) business. They needed to be ready. Brugh and his staff at Meridian gained so much confidence through the process, they believed they were ready to wow a big box store, with the right people in place.

## Internal Changes

One of the tools The Metiss Group employed was the use of assessments to gain valuable insight into the behaviors and motivators of the staff. The assessments brought clarity to the company and each person's roles within it. They had many of the right people in place, but some were in the wrong seats. After shifting people around into different roles, they became more productive. It was discovered that some techs were better suited as salespeople and they thrived in their new roles.

One great example is their former Director of Sales, Jeff Kuhland. A talented employee, he was moved to a job best suited for his talents. Being analytical and introverted, he was much better suited for a position of Director of Finance. The assessments uncovered this valuable insight. While Jeff was a decent Sales Director, he now thrives in his new role as Director of Finance.



## The Big Meeting

Knowing he was competing against a few other worthy competitors, David Brugh went into the meeting with the conglomerate prepared and confident. One of the first questions they asked Brugh was this: “The competition does what you do... what makes you different?”

David confidently replied, “Our people are what makes us different. We really invest in our team.” He explained how they had thorough processes and resources in place to ensure they were hiring the right people and putting them in the right roles. Brugh demonstrated his dedication to the potential partnership with the superstore chain by explaining how he and his company invested in the skills of a professional consulting firm which positioned them for healthy growth. He talked about their successful onboarding program and the team synergy. The superstore chain was impressed. The contract was awarded to Meridian.

## The Success

Brugh believes landing that huge account happened because they brought clarity to the roles and hired the right people to fill those roles.

Since the first meeting between The Metiss Group and Meridian, Meridian has expanded its staff approximately three-fold. They continue to service the large supercenter chain, along with several other major accounts. Their success was due to being prepared in the short, medium and long term.

Once they had been properly trained, Brugh and his Meridian staff used, and continue to use, many assessments to ensure their success. These assessments have been used for both the company itself and its employees. An assessment regularly employed by the Meridian team is known as the TriMetrix® HD Legacy. This assessment measures behaviors, motivators, acumen and skills/DNA for

all external candidates and is used as part of the hiring process to find the right people for the right positions.

With a solid workforce now established, The Metiss Group now does more short term developmental sessions with Meridian rather than long term coaching.

Using the various assessments for internal development continues to this day because they always prefer to promote from within. Brugh makes it a company goal to create a path for growth for his employees, trying to develop good employees and helping them advance. He wants his team on the right path to success so Meridian uses a lot of developmental reports to groom its employees for their next role.

