

LEADERSHIP

Cirulli's Culture of Leadership

In February 2016, Forbes' acknowledged Gainesville Health and Fitness (GHF) and founder Joe Cirulli by naming GHF as one of the "Best Small Companies in America."

This honor required the company to meet a number of criteria, including being acknowledged as outstanding by those who know the industry best, being privately owned, and having the opportunity to grow, but instead focusing on being great, instead of just big.

"There is one other factor," said Bo Burlingham, the author of the Best Small Companies list for Forbes, in the article. "It's what I refer to as mojo, the business equivalent of charisma. When a leader has charisma, you want to follow him or her. When a company has mojo, you want to be connected with it."

At GHF, culture and a standard of excellence are everything. And this stems from Cirulli's leadership and guidance, which are the foundations of the successful company. A hallmark of Cirulli as a leader is that he never quits striving to improve.

If you too dream of one day being named a top small business, or any size company for that matter, Cirulli had this advice: "Make [employee and leadership] development a part of the culture."

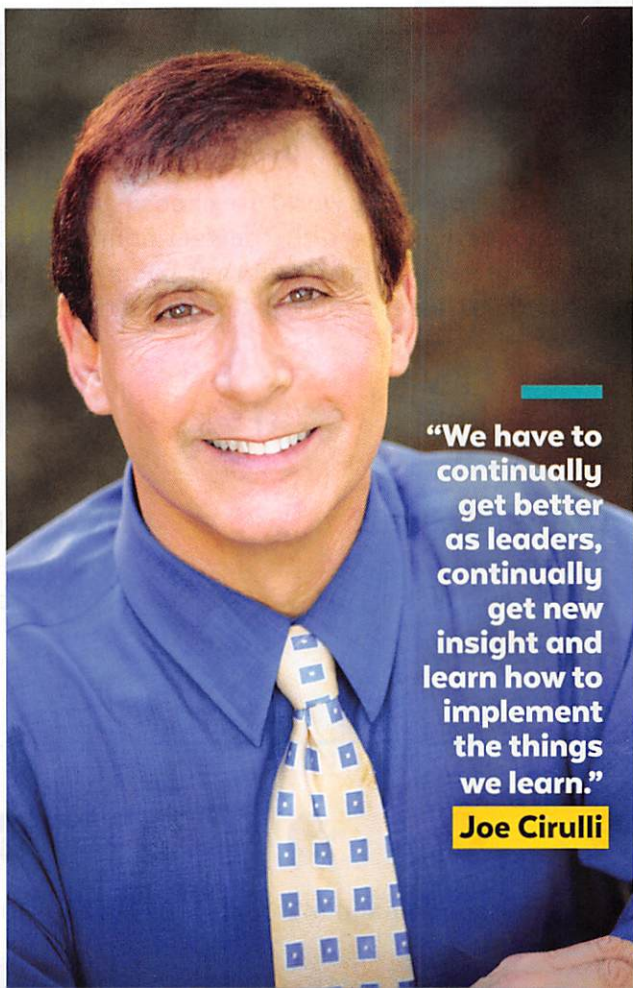
According to Cirulli, the development of GHF's leaders has been vital to its success. "Part of our culture is developing leaders, through programs, constant conversation, and it's important all leaders lead the way."

As as an example, Cirulli referenced Shawn Stewart, GHF's former COO who left

the company last year on amicable terms to join O2 Fitness. Speaking warmly about Stewart, Cirulli said, "When Shawn left I felt no panic, because we had a lot of leaders under him that could step in."

In addition to developing other leaders, Cirulli explained self-development is also vital to being a top company. He explained he's constantly reading and learning from others. "We have to continually get better as leaders, continually get new insight and learn how to implement the things we learn," said Cirulli.

As for the Forbes' honor, Cirulli stressed that Burlingham, the author of the list, also receive recognition. "I met Bo in 2008. He wrote the original Inc Magazine article on us. His life has been dedicated to showing America how important small businesses are, and he deserves recognition for that." • *By Rachel Zabanick*



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Joe Cirulli

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