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5 Plumbing Contractors Share Their Stories

CertainPath makes businesses more profitable and lives more enjoyable with field-proven technology and expertise that puts contractors on the path to success.

The contracting world can be tough. It's not often others in your trade are willing to offer advice, let alone actually sit down and talk about their experience, including what's working and what's not. Whether that's because they view you as their competition, or perhaps like most contractors, they're too busy worrying and working.

CertainPath comes with a community of thousands of contractors who've walked in their shoes before them, our Plumbing contractors know they know they'll never feel alone in the process.

Check out these 5 stories from Plumbing contractors just like you!

- **Story of a Plumber Experiencing Dramatic Growth - Page 2**

Mike and Brenda Counsil Have Seen Their Business Grow 700% Since Joining CertainPath at an Incredible Profit Margin!

- **Story of a Plumbing Contractor Dominating His Market - Page 4**

Raul Rodriguez Became One of the Largest Residential Contractors in LA with Revenues Exceeding \$20 Million Part Due to the Winning Edge They Found with CertainPath.

- **Story of a Plumber Finally Able to Get Out of the Truck - Page 6**

Mike Moffett Was Running Himself Ragged, Losing Money on \$850K in Sales. Today, that Business Generated \$3.2 Million—Highly Profitably—and He's in the Office Working On the Business, Not Out in the Truck Every Day!

- **Story of an Plumbing Contractor Making Real Profits - Page 8**

Devastated by the Recession & an Employee Embezzling Hundreds of Thousands of Dollars, Chris and Christina Carter Have Grown Their Business by 30% Every Year Since 2012 to Pay Off Huge Debts and Save Their Business!

- **Story of an Plumber Enjoying Freedom of Time - Page 10**

Mike and Mary Ellen Meares Are Enjoying Living Life at Their Own Pace After Building a \$6 Million Residential Division!



While all of these stories are different, they all share one common bond—all five contractors found success with CertainPath's comprehensive business solution that is built by contractors, for contractors.



Story of Dramatic Growth

Bay Area Contractor Sees Highly Profitable 700% Growth Since Joining CertainPath

Owners Mike & Brenda Council Work Today, Not Because They Have To.
They Work Because They Love Their Business—& They Love How It's Changed the Lives
of Their Employees



Mike Council was an established general contractor, but as his career progressed his impression of his field began to sour. Mike started looking for a new way to make a living and ended up getting back to his roots—new construction work.

Looking for a way to enhance his new business, Mike discovered the value of residential field service work. It was so much different from construction—and it was exciting.

But the systems he implemented weren't quite complete. Years later Mike Council Plumbing was bankrupt. Making matters worse, people he trusted were taking advantage of him and the company.

From 2002 to 2005, Mike dug out of over \$1 million in debt. It was a grind that motivated more change. He wanted to finally have a company that made money—and it was a place where he wanted to be.

It would be his new focus.

The first change needed was to eliminate bad seeds and bring in good people. Patty Loza, who has since risen to general manager, was hired on as a CSR (customer service representative). She started her training with CertainPath's Call Taker Training through Learning Alliance.

Through CertainPath, Mike realized the importance of working with the right people if he wanted his business to grow. He attended special sessions during the bi-annual Expo led by CertainPath's President, Rebecca Cassel, called Building Culture in Your Company. He recognized the improvements he needed to make in himself to lead the company to success.

More changes came. They transformed how everyone would communicate. They would have an open, constructive dialogue. Mike brought in a communications expert to assist with the transformation. And they now have an open-door policy and twice-a-week training sessions. A willingness to communicate has also helped avoid lingering problems or inefficiencies at Mike Council Plumbing.

The approach to communication has made its way into the planning process at the company as well. Every month, management and the field team gather for strategic planning. And even though the trucks bear his name, Mike doesn't dictate the annual plan—he simply sets goals and a budget.

A Group Effort

The well-being of his employees has also become a priority. Happy employees benefit the bottom line, as well as provide a great atmosphere. In turn, Mike has become a much more discerning hirer. As with everything else, the process involves input from several people and departments.

Using the principles taught with CertainPath's Blue Chip Recruiting, the evaluation of an applicant starts the minute they walk in the door. The call center observes and notes certain characteristics. That first impression is very important because that's often the same impression a homeowner gets. There are several interviews with the operations manager, field managers, trainers, and eventually Mike.

The Sales Force

Mike has always gravitated to making sure his team was trained well. Through CertainPath's branch of training, Learning Alliance, he has been able to make it a priority because they cover it all. The move has helped close jobs big and small at a higher rate. Having a talented salesperson who can properly communicate value has made Mike Council Plumbing more competitive.

Operationally, call-taking has been separated from dispatching. In order to give themselves the best chance to close, dispatching responsibilities have even been given to the lead salesperson and field manager. Another new practice that's helped boost sales is the Whole-Home Inspection Checklist, provided by CertainPath. "We'll do an inspection in every home," Mike said. "It's proven wildly successful for us."

An Extra Push

These changes and many more have happened since Mike Council Plumbing started with CertainPath since 2010. The investment of time and resources has built one of the largest and most successful and respected residential-contracting businesses in the Bay Area. "When we started with CertainPath, our sales jumped immediately from \$2.3 Million to \$3.2 Million in just six months. We did \$5 Million the next year at 15% net. Today, we generate over \$14M a year. CertainPath has helped show us the way," Mike said.



We've done so well being members of CertainPath. that my wife and I don't need to work anymore. We run the business because it's fun now. We get to help our customers—and our employees. Our employees make more money today than I did for many, many years. It's changing their lives. That gives me such an indescribable feeling. I encourage anyone looking for that extra push to help them become a great company—or anyone who is truly struggling—to become a part of CertainPath.

— Mike Council, Mike Council Plumbing
Member since 2010



Story of Market Domination

How Raul Rodriguez Became One of the Largest Residential Contractors in His Market

Power Pro Plumbing's Revenue Has Pushed Beyond \$20 Million in Part Due to the Winning Edge They Found with CertainPath and Part Due to Raul Willing It to Happen

"When I try to do something that I have set in my head—a vision—I go after it. I don't see anything else. It almost always turns out how I imagined it," he said. "That's why I always just go after what I want."

Those are the words of Raul Rodriguez, owner of Power Pro Plumbing. He started the business in 2002 with nothing but a grand vision. He's since fulfilled that vision, as the company has grown into a \$20 Million operation with multiple locations throughout Southern California.

Raul had a background in residential service plumbing. He knew the importance of uniforms, wrapped trucks, and standing behind his products and service. These were core elements of his business since day one, and the importance was only amplified after joining CertainPath.

In 2010, while searching for a new third-party financing institution, he stumbled upon CertainPath. The only way to access this deal on financing was to join the group. Raul quickly realized, the financing options through the CertainPath Partner Network, were just one nugget in a gold mine of other essential systems and processes that came with his membership.

Improved Understanding of the Numbers

With CertainPath, he gained access to its Key Performance Indicators, created based on 20 years of working with successful plumbing contractors, which allow him to measure his business' numbers against the industry standard. "We became more accountable knowing the industry standards for what the most successful plumbing companies were doing."

Constant Training

Power Pro has formal training at least once, if not twice, a week. Raul believes in constant communication with his field team, always having a pulse on what's going on and helping his techs improve every day. CertainPath's Learning Alliance All Access option makes this cornerstone of his business easy to implement.

There are new training topics weekly, thousands of recorded trainings, and both in-person and virtual training courses he can use to train his team.



Hire Good People & Train Them

Power Pro will hire people with the right personality from outside of the plumbing trade and teach them the business. Roughly 20 percent of his techs never worked in plumbing previously. CertainPath's comprehensive Technician Onboarding Program has been massively well-received not only by the new hires but to the managers in charge of bringing a new person on. Retention of talented team members starts the minute they are hired.

Always Self-Evaluate

Raul meets with his management team at least once or twice a month to evaluate goals and challenges. He believes improvements cannot be made if everyone isn't on the same page and working together.

Offer Carefully Constructed Extended Hours

Power Pro doesn't offer 24-hour service. It stops offering appointments after 10 pm. He staggers his techs' shifts to meet that demand. He's always tinkering with how many techs to have on each shift to maximize dollars while not burning out his team.



A small company's biggest problem is they don't believe in themselves. I've always been the opposite. If you want to be successful, just adjust your mentality, work hard, follow the CertainPath roadmap, and good things will happen. Our membership with CertainPath has helped magnify our success.

— Raul Rodriguez, Power Pro Plumbing Heating and Air
Member since 2010



CertainPath has provided Raul another winning tool in his entrepreneurial toolbox. But it's been his "no-fear" mentality that's lead to his success. "Most people have the mentality that, 'I'm not willing to do this or step beyond my comfort level,'" Sherri explained. "That's not how Raul operates. When he is determined to do something, he doesn't mind taking the risk. In his mind, it's not even a risk because he knows he's going to make it work. He's fearless."

Story of Finally Being Able to Get Out of the Truck

From Running Ragged & Losing Money Every Year to Running a Highly Profitable Plumbing Operation

Mike Moffett Has Grown Tom Moffett Plumbing from \$850K to a Highly Profitable \$3.2 Million while Removing Himself from the Field—Now, He Works ON the Business Not IN the Business

Painted on a wall inside the offices of Tom Moffett Plumbing, in Anaheim, California, is a simple phrase: “For the Benefit of Every Client.” Owner Mike Moffett explained: “It’s our responsibility to take care of every client. The only way to do that is present everything possible that could benefit them. That’s what doing your best for the client is. All of that other stuff—the average tickets and big sales—happens on its own.”

The large tickets certainly happen. The company’s average ticket increased by \$726 this past year. Not long ago, that seemed nearly impossible. Although making customers happy has always been an aim for Tom Moffett Plumbing, it wasn’t always the primary target...staying in business was.

Mike’s father Tom started the business, and Mike took over as owner/operator in 1997. The company had several trucks and was generating upwards of \$850K in revenue, but it was losing money. Even worse, Mike was working nonstop. Looking for a change, he attended an event put on by CertainPath to explore everything offered. He made the decision to join that day. He immediately went to work, making changes, which included:



Change Your People or Change Your People

After attending CertainPath’s Executive Perspective for all new members, Mike quickly realized he didn’t have the right team. Several techs unwilling to change and adapt to the new systems and processes had to go. At the time this took Tom Moffett plumbing from five trucks down to three. Mike also removed himself from the field so he could focus on growing the business.

Increase Your Prices

Having a network of contractors to talk to, Mike came to realize he wasn’t charging nearly enough to make his business profitable. He was charging enough to make ends meet. He steadily began increasing his pricing.

Now, he uses CertainPath’s patented StraightForward Pricing book and he also implemented a service fee. Low and behold, service fees are well-received when call takers are trained on the presentation. All of that was covered in CertainPath’s Call-Taker training course through Learning Alliance.

Improve Your Scheduling

In the old days, Mike would give each tech six calls; then, he'd give them three or four more in the afternoon. Each tech felt rushed. Understanding the strategies taught through CertainPath's Dispatching for Profits Program, his techs now get one job at a time. They're trained to slow down. One tech will never go on more than four calls in one day.

Tech Development Dictates Growth, Not Call Volume

Tom Moffett Plumbing has four apprentices that ride with Mike's eight trucks. Only when one has proven himself ready will Mike give him a truck. Not sooner. The process may take a year, and Mike is just fine with that.

Train Every Day

Tom Moffett Plumbing trains every day—usually just 30-45 minutes. The topics they cover and what they discuss radically changes to keep it fresh. Learning Alliance even offers online weekly training which provides options for his team.

Market Aggressively on Radio

Mike spends 12% to 14% of company revenue on advertising with much of that going to a Christian radio station. "Being on a Christian station wasn't my goal, but it was what best fit my market share and demographics." The station has proven huge in generating new leads for the business.



When I look at what this company has become, I'm so very, very happy with my life now. I have a company that I created that I am so proud of. And I'm so thankful for CertainPath and the great team we have that's helped me reach this point.

— Mike Moffett, Moffett Plumbing and Air
Member since 2008



Moffett Plumbing and Air is enjoying more success than ever. It's first year after implementing the CertainPath roadmap, with fewer techs, it jumped from \$850K in sales to \$1.5 Million. It's continued to grow at least 15% each year, to \$3.2 Million, at a strong profit margin. There seems to be many more accomplished goals in the future of this well-operated company.

Story of Earning Real Money

From Devastated by the Recession & an Employee Embezzling Hundreds of Thousands of Dollars to Saving Their Business

Chris & Christina Carter Have Been Able to Profitably Grow Their Business by 30% Every Year Since 2012 to Pay Off Huge Debts

“Once we hit a million dollars, I thought we’d won the lottery. That was my goal when I opened. Just two years later, we hit two million. I’m going to be honest when I say I’m not sure how large we want to be. But I know this. I’m a family man. I don’t want to say in 10 years I wish I would have spent more time with them instead of working.” Chris paused, “I love what I do, but I keep what’s really important in perspective.”

Chris Carter along with his wife Christina own and operate Carter Quality Plumbing. While business may be very good today, the Carters joined CertainPath in 2008, during which time the entire country was affected by a recession. Making matters much worse, their office manager embezzled hundreds of thousands of dollars.

With the help of CertainPath, Chris and Christina refused to quit. Instead, they went to work implementing systems and processes they knew could help pull them out of their current situation of barely surviving, and back into thriving.

Here’s what they did:

Take Advantage of Every Call

Christina took every single phone call that came into the company, ensuring everyone who could be booked, was indeed booked. She learned the best practices of call taking and the importance of scripting from CertainPath’s Call Taker Training. At the same time, Chris jumped into the field and worked every call possible. From just September until December, which followed the fallout, he and another tech generated \$650K in revenue.

Carefully Grow Your Team

The Carters’ today are focused on growing. To get hired, someone must vouch for you. Even then, it’s not guaranteed you’ll get a position. “We’re very selective, even when looking for helpers,” Christina said. “Being a hard worker and showing up on time isn’t enough. If they can’t talk to a homeowner or struggle with customer service, it won’t work.”



Create a Tech-Development Process

Many of Carter Quality's techs started as apprentices. They learned the trade and business from Chris and Christina. Even after being hired, they must survive a two-week probationary period. Only if their senior techs approve can they become a full-time apprentice. That apprenticeship can last a year or longer.

Meet Every Day

Chris insists his entire field team meets every day. These huddles are never more than 30 minutes. They'll have communications or sales training. Often, it's just talking about experiences in the field. But they always make time to go over numbers.

Give Ownership to Your Team

Chris and Christina emphasize to their team that it's not just their business, it's everyone's. They ask their senior level techs to take leadership roles. "That way they feel ownership," Chris said. "It makes our family atmosphere that much stronger."



We're about lifting people up here. We take an interest in our peoples' lives. This isn't just about me trying to support my family, it's about all of us, working as a team, to support all of our families. That's really how I feel.

— Chris Carter, Carter Quality Plumbing
Member since 2008



The many changes Chris and Christina have made in their business have created some incredible returns. In less than five years after joining CertainPath, they paid off the hundreds of thousands of dollars they owed due to the recession and embezzlement. They managed to do it by growing top line by 30% every year since 2012. And that's only the beginning for this enterprising, young couple.

Story of Claiming Freedom of Time

Mike & Mary Ellen Meares Are Enjoying Living Life at Their Own Pace After Building a \$6 Million Residential Division

Meares Plumbing Survived Heavy Blows Dealt by the Recession & Was Made Stronger By Being Open to Change & Working Smart, Not Just Hard



“It’s another day in paradise!” Ask Mike Meares how he’s doing, and that’s the answer you’ll be given. Why wouldn’t he be ecstatic? Along with his wife Mary Ellen, he’s built the highly successful Meares Plumbing and works with their son, Travis, and daughter, Janine. And now, Mike and Mary Ellen are enjoying their success, keeping their own schedule, working whenever they want. Not because they have to, but because they want to.

In 2008, times were tough. The recession crippled the company, which was almost exclusively into new construction and commercial service. They had to cut back from 70 employees to 25.

The entire family was looking for answers. Travis recommended going to an CertainPath Profit Day. “It was like 10 years were taken off your learning curve. Everything made so much sense,” Mike said. “It was the kick in the butt I needed.”

Here are the changes the family made:

Start a Service Division

Previously, the family had only dabbled in service. Truthfully, the work frustrated them. With CertainPath’s expertise in residential service/repair/replacement, they had the direction needed to succeed in it: They implemented service fees and started using the DMER (Daily Management Essentials Report). Calltakers also began using scripts. The biggest change was by far, adopting the StraightForward Pricing® Guide.

Home Grow Technicians

Initially, the Meares’ struggled to find the right techs. Their new-construction guys couldn’t transition. They’ve elected to hire people with little to no technical experience and train them properly. “We know it’s an investment,” Travis said. “But it’s a worthwhile one.”

Make Training a Priority

Virtually every member of the Meares' family and team has traveled to experience some type of CertainPath training. Training is an active part of what they do in the office—every department trains weekly, at a minimum. They even built out their own training room in their offices.

Create Accountability

Throughout their training room, you can find Meares Plumbing Scoreboards. Black numbers are good—red numbers are not. Every week, during training, they openly discuss who's doing well and who's struggling, even asking those struggling what they could do differently. It seems direct, but it works. "You should see their numbers spike the very next week," Travis said.

Work on Creating Culture

The Meares' understand successful businesses thrive because people enjoy their workplace. It has a culture. At Meares Plumbing, they work on building a culture. Each employee is taken out to lunch on his/her birthday. They have family events throughout the year. And they've begun having Meares Plumbing Summits—daylong events where the entire company converges for motivational speeches, discussions, and bonding.



When you're open with your people, you get their attention. I want them to feel every bit engaged in their future with Meares Plumbing. It's up to them to decide how this company goes on. They're the reason for the success. Nothing we do is possible without them. I didn't realize how important the value of culture was until joining CertainPath.

— Mike Meares, Meares Plumbing
Member since 2008



Since the moment they joined CertainPath, the Meares' have built a \$6 Million residential service division that is highly profitable.

Travis and Janine have taken over running much of the business. Mike and Mary Ellen have plenty of time to enjoy their oceanside home, boats, and other watercraft. Indeed, every day is paradise.

This is just 5 out of our 1,000s of Plumbing contractor success stories from our over our 20 years of helping contractors better their businesses. We've seen all types of plumbing business owners looking to get a little something different from the CertainPath systems and roadmap for success.

Regardless of where they start or what they want to focus on improving, CertainPath puts every next goal in reach to make businesses more profitable and lives more enjoyable.



“ You can achieve a level of success in contracting you once thought unreachable. You can do it by using the same strategies and systems we've used to grow our company.

— Gus Antos, CertainPath Member since 2004

Success Made Certain.

CertainPath provides a comprehensive business solution that is built by contractors, for contractors. We understand what you need for your business to be a success because we've built it before. Our combination of professional coaching and technology solutions is tailor-made to meet the everyday business needs of contractors and make the challenge of running a business less of a challenge. That means building an office around a comprehensive system, advising workers on everything from the moment the phone rings to the day the truck rolls.

- Delivering better sales and profitability, not just better workflow.
- Find peace of mind and a sense of security in knowing your business is on the right path.
- A support system of contractors who have been in your shoes ensures you never feel alone in the process of change.
- Enjoy a greater work-life balance knowing your business is in good hands, even when you're away.
- Technology designed to simplify and solve the challenges facing your business, not just move them online.

Schedule a no-obligation call now with a CertainPath Business Advisor.

Discover what CertainPath can do specifically for your business. (866) 362-3455