

Business Courier of Cincinnati - August 16, 2010  
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## BUSINESS COURIER

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# Coolant Control sharpened focus, beat recession

Business Courier of Cincinnati - by [Lucy May](#) Courier senior staff reporter

The past two years have brought big changes to **Coolant Control Inc.**, the Ivorydale-based chemical management company.

CEO Greg Battle has led the dramatic shift. Just two years ago, 65 percent of Coolant Control's sales were made in the automotive industry. Now that figure is 35 percent as the company has expanded its offerings to include such products as water treatment chemicals.

Battle, who played in the NFL in the 1970s before beginning his business career, is a Lincoln Heights native and Six Sigma Master Black Belt with two engineering degrees.

### Why do you have the career you have?

I have always wanted to reach my full potential so I am driven to do more. I have always been a leader, and I am comfortable in that role. Leadership allows me to stretch and grow. My career is me.

### What's the most difficult aspect of your job?

Downsizing staff means that our company is in trouble. Shedding people is only used as a last resort. The decision to lay people off means our business is suffering, and the suffering is being passed to our workers and their families. When you get to know your staff and their families, it is difficult even though you know survival of the company is the reason for your actions.

### How has the economy impacted your business?

We have lost scale but have gotten more focused and are a better team. Rowing together is important, and the down economy has blessed us and made us stronger. The down economy has forced us to examine everything. We have been able to find waste, eliminate it and reduce our cost to our customers. We review and re-review all processes and are getting better every week.

### Have you changed your business strategy as a result of the recession?

I believe that all the survivors had to change some things about their strategy. Those that didn't change maybe aren't in business today. You can't manage a successful business by default, and we decided to make our product offerings more diverse. Sixty-five percent of our business was invested in the auto industry. (Now) that number is 35 percent. We have more balanced offerings and we see growth. Water treatment chemicals and services is now a major business for us, and soon we'll have to hire more people.

### What advice would you give a new boss?

Use data and feelings to make decisions. Allow the existing staff to have some input. Keep in mind you are new. In time, seeing for yourself, being able to reference for yourself the strengths and weaknesses of your company's capabilities will be very important. Learn the difference between being right and being correct. You can be right 100 percent of the time and destroy the morale of your team. The way you make people feel will determine if you have to be there around the clock or if you can trust and empower your team members, thus allowing you to do your real job – manage. Remember your tone (voice, body language and actions) is what they look for to determine how good a boss they think you are.

### What's your definition of a miserable, unsatisfying life?

Being out of control without any means to stop yourself. Disliking the way you make your living and feeling trapped by what you do to maintain your lifestyle. If you can't feel good about what you are

doing while living your life, you shouldn't be doing whatever that is. Life is special, and everyday we have an opportunity to get it right.

**What is your favorite vacation spot?**

I don't have one favorite spot because our country has so much physical and cultural diversity that every new place I've traveled to has sparked interest in me and made me thankful for being in this country. Whatever you are and however you feel, you take that with you where ever you go. You can have fun and relax anywhere if you are the kind of person that appreciates fun and relaxation.

**Describe your perfect life.**

The perfect life for me is moving forward toward my full potential. Nothing is better than making progress no matter what. Feeling good is important, and no matter where you are and what you are doing, if you feel good in that moment your life is perfect.

**You've just been given \$100,000 to donate to charity. Which and why?**

I would give the money to the Boys and Girls clubs. \$100,000 can make a big difference to this organization. These young people are our future, and our investment in them ensures the future for us all.

**What is the best book you've ever read?**

That's hard because there have been so many. Books are time machines allowing us to experience the past, the now and the future. I love to read, and I generally read books about overcoming obstacles. People have over come astronomical odds to become great. Books allow us to see what is possible on all levels of our lives. Reading books makes me feel good.

**What trait do you most value in your friends?**

Having a friend is a gift. The traits I value most are openness and honesty. A true friend will help you see things around you that you can't see and won't worry about that truth ending your friendship. They want what's best for you in all situations.

**What scares you?**

I have lived my life being mostly unafraid. There are so many things in life that can happen that must be considered. Being scared of some of those things won't allow you to reach down within yourself and move your life forward. I believe in being positive – what you put in you can take out. I do have fears, but most of the time I talk myself out of them.

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