



J.D. Creaghan Group Inc.  
Performance Solutions  
for the Human Side of Business

Case Study:

## Automotive Parts Manufacturer

# Rebuilding a company starts with rebuilding leadership's thinking.

### The Business and its Environment

Marwood Metal Fabrication Ltd. is a Canadian family-owned company in the automotive industry, focusing on automotive-parts manufacturing and metal stampings. The firm was founded in 1990 in Tillsonburg, Ontario by Chris Wood, Henry Spanjers and Erwin Hawel. "Today, Marwood Metal Fabrication Ltd. is a world-class leader in supplying large parts to the automobile and light-truck manufacturing industries," according to the Canadian Business Journal (Jun. 14, 2014). "Marwood employs hundreds of skilled workers, operates 23 presses, and works alongside some of the biggest names in the international automotive market."

"Staff see a difference and wish to be involved."

- Chris Wood, *President*,  
Marwood Metal Fabrication Ltd.

Marwood handles all facets of manufacturing from packaging to the material that goes into the part. "We build the tooling, build the process, build the equipment to support that, launch on time at the customer's expectation of quality level, and do the whole thing safely," says Chris Wood. Marwood has received numerous business and community awards and is an ISO 14001 company.

### The Company's Goals in Undertaking the TotalLeader<sup>®</sup> Programme

"Everyone wants to do the right thing," says Chris Wood, "but everyone has pride, and a sense of correctness of what they ought to do; it is difficult to express that sometimes. This sense they have can sometimes impede the team. If you don't have cohesiveness at the top, that cannot be hidden and sets the tone for the whole company. Any dysfunctionality has to be addressed first. If there are hidden agendas and discontent, you as manager can actually make things worse. People have an inherent ability to sense the pulse of the organization a long way from the leadership."

## J.D. Creaghan Group's Approach with the Company

Jonathan Creaghan, president of J.D. Creaghan Group Inc., in his pamphlet, “5 Foundations of Total Leader”, talks about the importance of awareness, honesty, trust, openness and truth. He believes that leadership needs to set an example and live out by their actions the type of behaviour they hope to see in their employees. Creaghan starts with the company leadership and coaches them to be the kind of leaders the company needs. In developing this leadership potential, he acts as a partner with management.

The key is working with the ownership to let the leader conduct himself on a day-to-day basis that shows these values. It is hard to do - reshaping the leadership mind to make it more effective.

“We learn to function with the aware mind and not become distracted by the chattering mind,” says Chris Wood. “That is where Jonathan is my most valuable asset. We had a number of early meetings, and his toolbox of the aware mind made sense. He is able to add context to how the world works.”

Creaghan believes that any person who is in leadership needs to understand those tools before anything else, as they set the tone for how everything works.

“People who want to be successful need to understand at a deep level how the world works. Jonathan is able to help you with this desire and help you build your own understanding, which is different for every business and every organization,” continues Chris Wood. “Many people have no desire to understand how the world works, but only those who understand the world, can succeed in it.”

Creaghan believes that any person who is in leadership needs to understand those tools before anything else, as they set the tone for how everything works. Having a sense of responsibility is one of the most important necessary ingredients for a leader, whether for the company, the staff, the customers, the community or the environment.

Without that sense you tend to not understand how things work and to not care; selfishness is the direct opposite of responsibility. If you are selfish everyone will see it and go the same way. On the other hand if the leaders think responsibly that too is contagious. Otherwise something will catch up to them, perhaps as a surprise that will hurt you.

In an organisation with challenges it can take time to implement change. Chris Wood says, “The staff see the boss has been talking to Jonathan, and the boss is now a different guy, easier to work with; then they say I want to talk with him also - let's embrace what is going on. It has to start with the top at the beginning.”

The company started with the core principles. The programme was not mandatory, but voluntary. “People make their decisions,” says Chris Wood. “Don’t be afraid of letting them go if they are not willing to adapt and grow. As leader you have to have the strength to make those hard decisions.”

## Benefits Seen by the Client

“Jonathan’s tools are brilliant, and you come to make the right decisions, not second guessing yourself. Knowing how to act has strength; by not letting ego and greed get in the way, by getting everyone on the proper side, you are going to have success,” says Chris Wood. “If you stay consistent with it you will sleep at night.”

“Staff see a difference and wish to be involved. It takes a leader to make that happen and Jonathan helps people be leaders.”



## Company Website

[www.marwoodmetal.com](http://www.marwoodmetal.com)

## NAICS Codes for Marwood Metal Fabrication

3363 – Motor vehicle parts manufacturing

336370 – Motor vehicle metal stamping

## Case Study Author Information

**Murray E. Hunter** (MA Social Research) is widely published in the area of business process and design.

## For More Information

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