

Sunbelt

the world's largest franchised business brokerage

Meet Our Office Owners

The following questions and answers are excerpts from our recent interview with Matthew Ashburn, co-owner of Sunbelt of Cedar Rapids.



Q. Matt, what were your career experiences before joining Sunbelt?

I have been a business owner for over ten years, beginning with owning a business during high school. After college, I developed a business of brokering services for the technology industry.

Q. What attracted you to Sunbelt?

My involvement in the Sunbelt network developed from a long-time association with Roger Hutson, the Des Moines owner and now, Cedar Rapids co-owner. After meeting with Ed Pendarvis, the company's founder, I learned about all the great benefits the Sunbelt network had to offer.

Q. What is unique about the Cedar Rapids market?

Iowa has been traditionally difficult for franchise sales; however, there have been positive changes that allow for new methods for growing our franchise sales and resales business. In addition, Iowa has a sizeable population of retiring business owners who will be searching for someone to fill their shoes in coming years.

Q. What services do you provide to set yourself apart from competitors?

Despite having a small office, we are able to provide more services for our buyers and sellers to create a more comprehensive package. We also offer business valuations, targeted acquisition searches for buyers, and a highly confidential, yet effective, business transfer program for business owners. Our of-

fice also prescreens all potential buyers to successfully match them with a business that meets their goals and interests.

Q. What criteria do you have for hiring brokers?

When hiring brokers, I do not look for salesmen, but rather valuable experience. For example, prior business owners are able to relate and understand business and financial statements.

I also look for people with positive attitudes and ethical standards. This business also requires a comfort level with the many flexibilities of being an independent contractor.

Q. What trends do you see in the future of business brokerage?

The many changes in corporate structure and outsourcing will cause an increase in the number of small business owners. In addition, we will also see more women owning businesses.

With more educated individuals owning businesses, business brokers will be expected to have higher levels of professionalism and knowledge. Buyers will also expect complimentary services, such as valuations and business advising.

Q. What have you enjoyed most about owning a Sunbelt office?

Sunbelt has the greatest collection of professionals in the industry. The collective offices provide support to small offices, which allows you to learn the business as you earn business.

Sunbelt of Cedar Rapids

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