

CASE STUDY



Interview with Kirk McLaren, Founder and CEO of Foresight CFO

Kirk W. McLaren is the founder and CEO of Foresight CFO, a nationwide CFO and accounting service organization based in the Washington D.C. area.

Foresight provides a CFO-level strategic financial manager on a part time basis to companies with \$2 million – \$20 million in annual revenue. Small companies need strategic financial advice and a skilled person to implement financial actions but rarely require it on a full-time basis, which is one reason the appetite for Foresight’s services has been growing quickly. In addition, Foresight provides accounting services to ensure that business owners have and use the financial information.

“A lot of business owners we work with find completing the Value Builder questionnaire to be really helpful in thinking through their business in a different way.”

McLaren made the decision to add The Value Builder System™ to his client offering in 2015 and earned his Certified Value Builder™ designation in the same year. Then in 2016, Foresight fully integrated the Value Builder system into the sales process and service delivery to help business owners thrive. Ironically his first attempts to market The Value Builder System™ failed miserably.

His first strategy was to buy an email list of 20,000 prospects and send them all emails inviting them to complete the questionnaire. McLaren got a dismal response rate and declared the test an abject failure.

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Working with his account manager at Value Builder, McLaren devised a new plan that focused on having one-on-one conversations with business owners, breaking insights into smaller steps, following the systematic process below.

Foresight CFO's Systematic Process

Step 1 Prospecting on LinkedIn

McLaren starts his process by prospecting on LinkedIn, where he finds most of his new clients. He analyzes his existing clients and identifies their first level LinkedIn connections (in other words, his second level connections), then asks his first level connections for an introduction.

Step 2 15-Minute Call

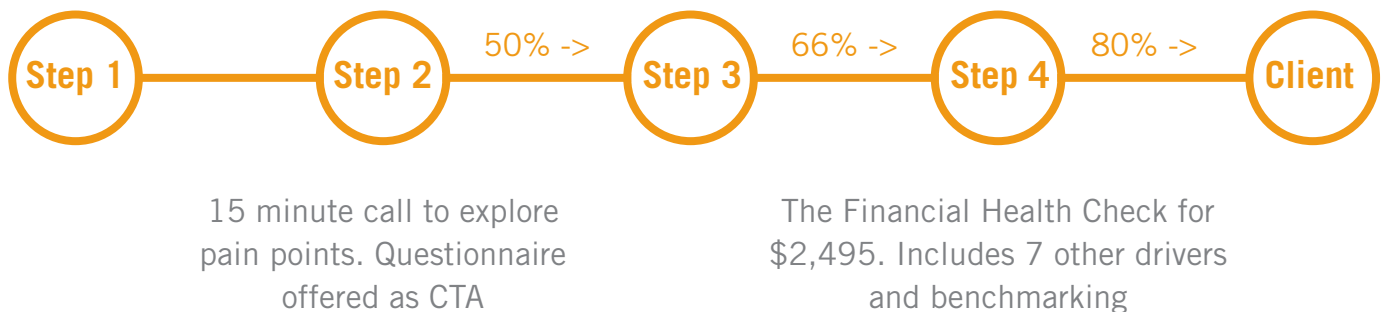
During a five-message nurturing campaign on LinkedIn, McLaren proposes a short, one-on-one phone call with the business owner. During this 15-minute call, McLaren spends the bulk of his time trying to identify a pain point the business owner is experiencing. McLaren probes around the common areas of pain for business owners such as a lack of time, cash flow or stalled growth.

Systematic Process Leads to 80% Conversion for Foresight CFO

Prospecting on LinkedIn

55 min. call. Deep dive on 1 of 8 drivers. CTA is Financial Health Check

Prospect signs up for services



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Once McLaren zeroes in on the owner's greatest pain point, he proposes that the owner complete the Value Builder questionnaire. His pitch goes like this:

"A lot of business owners we work with find completing the Value Builder questionnaire to be really helpful in thinking through <insert pain point>. Would you be interested in taking 13 minutes to answer the questionnaire and then 55 minutes on the phone with us for a consultation?"

McLaren's conversion rate from step 2 to step 3 is approximately 50%. Some of the prospects don't match their criteria or are not interested.

Step 3 **The 55-Minute Call**

McLaren invites the owner and one of his CFOs, who work with clients part-time, to a three-way conference call. On the call, McLaren and his colleague choose one of the eight sections in the Value Builder Assessment to focus on, corresponding with the owner's greatest pain point. They discuss the owner's performance on that section of the report and possible ways to improve.

At the end of the 55-minute call, McLaren offers the business owner a complete Financial Health Check for a price of \$2,499.

The Financial Health Check includes a comprehensive analysis of the owner's performance on the other seven drivers along with an on-site operational assessment and financial statement analysis. This way they combine operational insights with the number story. The analysis includes examining prior year trends, forecasting various "what-if" scenarios, and creating an estimate of value using a discounted cash flow approach to valuation. The owner also receives some benchmarking data about how their company performs relative to other companies in the same industry to identify and calculate profit opportunities.

Two thirds of the owners who do the 55-Minute Call buy the \$2,499 Financial Health Check

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Step 4 The Foresight Financial Health Check

Similar to an annual physical, the Financial Health Check is a comprehensive analysis of how the business is performing on a number of dimensions. It also gives the business owner the chance to see what it's like working with a Foresight CFO.

After the Financial Health Check, Foresight will offer one of its plans for either a weekly or monthly CFO and/or accounting services.

Eighty percent of prospects who do the Financial Health Check sign up for services.

McLaren sums up how Value Builder fits into his process: “The questionnaire and consultation are an integral part of our sales process and the 12-month Value Builder Program is fully integrated into our delivery solution. It’s one complete system we couldn’t live without.”
