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Frequently Asked Questions About *Point B* and *Strategic Execution*:

Q: What does Point B do?

A: Point B is a management consulting firm focused on strategic execution. We help companies refine their strategy or idea, translate it into structured, actionable initiatives, and lead those initiatives to successful outcomes. Point B associates are experienced leaders who help clients turn their strategy into reality.

Q: What is project leadership? Why is it needed?

A: Simply stated, it's the ability to take on tough business problems at any level and successfully solve them in the fastest, most cost-effective way possible.

Each week a project lasts, it burns through more cash. At the same time, the business suffers as some important outcome has yet to be achieved. Unsuccessful projects are usually attributable to weak leadership. Point B clients have found that paying for professional project leaders helps to shorten projects and achieve desired business results more quickly.

Q: Why can't companies just hire their own leaders?

A: Even the largest and best-staffed organizations sometimes lack specific pockets of expertise or experience needed to execute certain initiatives. Point B provides a great way for these organizations to gain access to the best talent available on an "as needed" basis without having to hire new employees or get locked into big retainers or contracts often required by larger professional service firms. Point B's professionals complement internal project managers just as outside counsel complements internal legal staff in many companies.

In addition, Point B brings an outsider's perspective to an initiative. Internal staff can often have trouble seeing across an organization or through murky internal politics. We see things with the filters turned off. We're also able to work outside the organization chart to make sure the right people are dealing with the right issues at the right times.

Q: What are some examples of typical initiatives that Point B works on?

A: Generally speaking, projects fall into one of three categories: consulting, interim management and executive services, and business solutions.

A good example of our consulting work might include leadership of the integration effort when one of our clients completes a merger or acquisition. Other scenarios might include getting a new enterprise system up-and-running for a mid-sized company, turning around a project for a start-up, or simply stepping in to fix or improve an existing process within a company of any size.

In regard to interim management, we have associates that can seamlessly fill the role of a key manager or C level executive that's left a company or unexpectedly needs to go on leave. Often, we may structure our involvement in an interim role as a project, with the goal of making necessary changes to the departed employee's organization before a successor is hired.

Business solutions include helping clients achieve “quick wins” that get behind-schedule projects back on track and build momentum. They might also include initiatives that lead to enhanced revenue, such as helping get a new product launched. Or they might include developing a business case to support a major business decision. We’ve even begun to help other companies learn how to operate their businesses more like ours by becoming better at attracting and retaining great people.

Q: Who works at Point B? What are their backgrounds?

A: Point B has built a culture that attracts the best and brightest leaders who have worked in a wide range of industries – each possessing unique skill sets and experience that enable our clients to successfully tackle any business problem.

Our associates all have years of leadership experience, large project experience and come from settings that include successful startups, large corporations and leading professional service firms. They are, by and large, regarded as “the best of the best” in their areas of expertise and actually enjoy taking on tough challenges and getting meaningful business results.

Point B employees are also people that know when to turn off their laptops and enjoy life. In fact, the company is well-known for its flexible work schedules and commitment to keeping employees close to home – working locally, with local clients.

Q: Who are some of Point B’s clients?

A: Point B provides leadership to dozens of organizations ranging from startups to Fortune 100 companies including: BECU (Boeing Employees’ Credit Union), Seattle Children’s (Seattle), The Children’s Hospital (Denver), Alaska Airlines (Seattle), Mentor Graphics (Portland), Microsoft (Seattle), Premera Blue Cross (Seattle), Kaiser Permanente (San Francisco), Rush North Shore Medical Center (Chicago), Activision (Los Angeles), CIGNA (Denver), PetSmart (Phoenix), and ON Semiconductor (Phoenix).

Q: How is Point B any different than the big five consulting firms?

A: First and foremost, we are focused on Strategic Execution and provide unbiased leadership to transform strategic visions into results. The big firms may have great project managers on staff, but this is not their focus. Their focus may be on technology or outsourcing or partnering – but it is not on strategic execution and experienced project leadership. Point B does nothing but lead projects to a successful conclusion. That is why we attract the best project leaders from these firms – they want to go where project leadership is the focus.

We’re also local. Meaning that all of our clients are serviced by leaders in their own backyard. This not only creates better lifestyles for our associates, it saves our clients money by eliminating the cost of travel and other expenses incurred when working with out-of-market consultants.

We work exclusively for our clients. In other words, we don’t enter into alliances, agreements or other relationships with vendors that could ultimately compromise our objectivity. Our focus is on creating the highest ROI possible and assuring each client’s success; not making commissions from vendors.

There's no second team. At Point B we only hire established business and technology leaders with proven track records of success. Some consulting firms bring in their "A Team" to pitch business, only to hand it off to more junior-level account teams that are learning as they go. This doesn't happen at Point B. What you see is what you get: senior-level leadership at every point of contact.

Clients turn to us on an "as-needed" basis: Unlike the bigger consulting firms, Point B clients aren't required to commit to a long-term contract or retainer. We only bill for the work we do – whether it's a project that takes a few hours or one that takes several months.

We don't fit the Big Five stereotype – by design. Big firms are great. In fact, many of Point B's associates have worked in these environments and produced wonderful results for clients. We're just better.

Better because we don't work within a setting that's deep in bureaucracy and have a culture that promotes flexible work and lifestyle opportunities for our employees. Clients can count on our attitude, as well as our aptitude, to create a positive culture that gets great results.

Q: How long has the company been around? How's business?

A: Point B was founded in Seattle during 1995. Since that time, the company has steadily grown from three to more than 365 employees, opened practices in Denver, Phoenix, Portland, San Francisco, Chicago and Los Angeles and has \$78 million in revenue (2009).

Q: What markets does Point B serve?

A: Geographically, Point B currently serves clients representing a wide range of industries in the Seattle, Phoenix, Portland, Denver, San Francisco, Chicago and Los Angeles markets.

Q: What are the company's plans for expansion?

A: Our goal is to steadily expand into new markets around the U.S. In the year ahead, we hope to announce more details as they take shape.

Q: Who are some of Point B's competitors?

A: Point B's exclusive focus on strategic execution is unique in the consulting industry. That said, many "full-line" consulting firms such as Accenture, Deloitte, and Bearing Point offer project managers as part of their other offerings and compete with Point B for some opportunities. Also, Point B encounters sporadic competition from local or industry-focused consultancies, as well as staff augmentation companies that are attempting to go "up-market" with their offerings.

Q: Who founded the company? What was the perceived market need?

A: Point B was founded in early 1995 by three Seattle-area entrepreneurs and former Accenture managers named Jim Hodge, Tim Jenkins and Darran Littlefield.

Their decision to form Point B was built on a belief that most organizations were being under-served by traditional consulting firms. Inexperienced work teams, over-reliance on methodologies, potential conflicts of interest and inability to execute seemed to be consistent problems.

From its inception, Point B has set out to do things differently by:

- Focusing specifically on strategic execution – helping clients solve problems and achieve desired outcomes without a lot of fanfare.
- Providing flexible access to the best project leaders in the business: versatile, pragmatic professionals with broad experience executing complex projects on every level across a wealth of companies, technologies and industries.
- Eliminating “big firm” overhead and passing this value on to clients.
- Avoiding formal alliances, reseller agreements and other entanglements that might compromise objectivity and alignment with client interests.

Q: How is Point B funded?

A: Point B is an employee-owned company.