

As consultant, David Golub teaching companies to get past ‘pain point’

By [John Cropley](#) August 18, 2016



After three decades in the family's supermarket business, David Golub has set up his own business, Golub Consulting Solutions. (Photo provided)

The lessons learned in three decades in the supermarket business don't apply just to supermarkets.

David Golub, who retired this spring from the grocery company started by his great-grandfather, has gone into business as a consultant specializing in helping mid-sized to large companies — in any industry, not just grocery retail — improve their operations and efficiency.

The Niskayuna native began at Price Chopper as a teenager in the late 1970s, stocking shelves, and left the Golub Corp. in April after a series of executive roles — vice president of operations, senior vice president of administration and finally senior vice president of e-commerce and government relations.

Along the way, he earned bachelor's and master's degrees, became a registered lobbyist, and took seats on the boards of Albany Medical Center and the Ayco Charitable Foundation.

But an early achievement — winning two world roller dance championships — would also have a lot of influence on what he's doing now. The roller disco and roller-skating fad was already fading in the United States when he and his partner won their titles in 1983 and 1984. But it was still strong overseas, and Golub got an offer for a one-year teaching stint in Australia that was too good to pass up.

Life lessons

“Skating really taught me a lot of life lessons,” Golub said Tuesday, such as “learning how to push past what I thought were my limits, how to be part of a team.”

The details could hardly be more different, but coaching roller dancers entailed exactly what he wants to accomplish as a consultant — teaching people a new way to see and do things.

“I really got a lot of satisfaction seeing that spark . . . that epiphany,” he said. “There was a lot of satisfaction with helping others, seeing them develop.”

The one year of teaching in Australia became two years, but when his visa expired Golub returned to the United States. While earning a graduate degree at New York University, he made his way back to the Capital Region, for an internship with the family business.

“I thought I knew about the supermarket business from working in high school,” he said. But he learned a lot more as an intern, and it became his career.

Early this year, turning 55, he looked ahead at the remainder of his working life and decided to form Golub Consulting Solutions.

“After a successful career and a lot of background and learning and experiences . . . I’d like to use that experience and background to try something new.”

The something new is helping companies find ways to save money, improve operational effectiveness, streamline themselves, improve their customer focus and boost their bottom line results.

“I help companies develop strategies to work through their pain point,” Golub said.

These generally will be larger companies, he said, both because of their economies of scale and because they are at a point in their evolution where they have an established business model that works but could probably work better.

“I can help startups,” Golub said, “but I think my sweet spot is the midsized to larger companies that are established. . . . I guess it’s scale. I’m able to diagnose and set strategy that gets more of a return for the organization as you see larger scale.”

It is in these established operations that the “pain point” Golub mentioned occurs: The company and its people have a way of doing things that has evolved over years or even decades, and they are reluctant or afraid to try something different. Sometimes it’s hard from an internal point of view to even see things that can or should be improved.

“The organizations don’t see the inefficiency. They see only parts of it,” Golub said.

One thing he says sets him apart is that some consultants will present the client with a series of ideas and recommendations at end of the process. He offers the ideas, then offers the expertise to make them happen, from his years of being in charge of operations for 120-plus supermarkets — “mini-businesses,” he calls them — with 20,000 employees.

Golub is running his new consulting firm out of his Niskayuna home office and is a solo operation at this point.

“I didn’t want to go too fast, I didn’t want to take on a lot of overhead,” he said. “I want to get a sense of my capacity, too. Any clients that I take on I want to give a high level of service.”