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Recipe for Success

Chesapeake Bank delivers **superior** service by investing in human capital, playing the long game, and maintaining deep **community ties**.

Since 2007, Chesapeake Bank has been recognized as a top community bank by *American Banker*, and since 2013, it has been named one of the best banks to work for in the nation by the same publication. Chairman, President, and CEO Jeff Szyperski summarizes why the bank is successful: “People, people, people.”

In an increasingly automated industry, Chesapeake Bank invests in technology but understands employees are its biggest asset. Built on a business model that emphasizes good people on the front lines, its employees shine best when interacting with customers.

“Sometimes people look at our industry in a binary fashion, believing what’s good for the community is disassociated with being a high performer,” says Szyperski. “We see those as integrated: We support the community, and the community supports us.”

Serving both rural and suburban markets, Chesapeake Bank offers a unique line of services, like its trademarked “The Buck Stays Here” program, which is based on the notion that two-thirds of every dollar spent locally recirculates locally. The institution also sponsors an annual campaign that subsidizes the cost of gift cards to local businesses to help “boost” their businesses.

“We say, ‘Shop local; your community depends on it.’ And it does,” he says.

Steady Service

Since 1900, Chesapeake Bank has remained resilient and community driven by branching out into alternative lines of business. Its Flexent program provides short-term financing on a national scale to profitable, growing businesses. Its merchant services program offers systems and expertise to small and midsize businesses to help with payment processing, customer management, inventory tracking, and more. The bank’s wealth management arm offers financial services, including

portfolio management as well as trust and estate planning. These offerings, and more, are coupled with a strong support staff to allow businesses to better focus on their own customers.

“We’re successful through organic growth and developing people over time,” says Szyperski. “We’re not beholden to quarterly earnings reports, which means we will make decisions from a long-term perspective, even if there are short-term negatives.”

In a sometimes volatile industry, Chesapeake Bank produces consistent results in commercial, small business, and mortgage lending services alike. “We’re the ‘steady Eddie’ when it comes to a return-on-equity perspective,” says Szyperski. “We’re hitting a single every year; we’re innovative, but we’re not swinging to the fences.” It’s a baseball analogy sure to bring Chesapeake Bank a steady stream of customers for years to come.



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