



MICHELLE TOMALLO, ADAM TUBBS AND JESSICA SHARP

FIT TECHNOLOGIES

LOCATION: Cleveland

EMPLOYEES: 80

WHAT THE COMPANY DOES: Managed IT services firm providing IT support, functioning as a tech department.

WHY IT'S A GREAT PLACE TO WORK: At FIT Technologies, employees are learners and teachers who are given the chance to pursue particular areas of interest. It also is one of 7,000 companies in the U.S. that provides an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP).

LARGE AT HEART

FIT TECHNOLOGIES STRIVES TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT FILLED WITH OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN, GROW AND GET INVOLVED.

IN A FLAT ORGANIZATION, team members can approach managers with ease, and transparency rules. “Flat is great in terms of access to leadership — everyone is aware of the projects we are working on,” says Michelle Tomallo, chief people officer, who co-founded FIT Technologies with Micki Tubbs, president and CEO.

The downside of being flat?

“Sometimes employees struggle to see a clear career path, or they don’t see a potential for promotions from a title perspective,” Tomallo says. So, FIT Technologies finds ways to show opportunity. “One thing we know that is important for retaining our employees is the idea of creating stretch assignments and special client projects, so they have opportunities to learn and grow,” Tomallo says.

FIT Technologies also designated subject matter experts for various specialties in the business, such as phone engineer, service engineer and client manager. “That way, if a team member is exceptional in a particular resource or tool, or if they have interest in pursuing one of these specialties, we can guide

them on that path,” Tomallo says.

Leadership is tuned in to team members’ capabilities so they can identify ways to grow their knowledge. “We seek out people who have the mindset of being flexible and adaptable — we think that is critical,” Tomallo says.

In turn, FIT Technologies provides an environment where team members are learners and teachers. “They learn from each other, and from our clients, as part of the work we do — and they act as teachers, helping clients navigate through processes.”

In the competitive tech space, there are more job openings than there are qualified professionals to fill the roles, so FIT Technologies knows, “We have to put our best foot forward,” Tomallo says. That’s not always easy as a smaller organization of about 80 employees competing with corporate players that can provide different pay structures. So, that’s not how FIT positions itself.

The company can now offer team members a chance to “own it” with an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) in place. “We are

excited to make this a reality for our people and be part of a somewhat small fraternity of companies in the U.S. that are ESOPs, and there are about 7,000 of us,” Tomallo points out.

In this space, Tomallo also hopes FIT will be a learner and teacher. “We want to share the programs we put in place or the success we have as an ESOP to educate our North-east Ohio market about how companies can make a positive impact — that’s how we’re approaching it,” she says.

And, the company still has a lot to learn about operating as an ESOP, Tomallo acknowledges. “We are continuing to expand what this means for us, and we have been leveraging suggestions and input that leaders and our employees are now making as owners of the company,” she says.

Listening and acting are integral to the culture in general. And, FIT Technologies’ adeptness at this helps explain why the organization has remained flat despite its growth in the last 20 years. “There is a connection we all share, a kind of ‘we’re in this together,’ and that goes a long way to having people feel like they belong, and they are part of what it is we are doing here,” Tomallo says.

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