

## Problem

Edison Schools is the country's leading private manager of public schools, with 133 public schools under management, including contracts with local school districts and public charter school boards.

While Edison Schools was continuing to grow through new school contracts and the expansion of existing contracts, the Company was interested in learning more about what drives the decisions of current, former and prospective clients when selecting or partnering with an educational management provider. With this information, Edison's goal was to more clearly understand the needs of its target audience and establish a more effective development program.

## Solution

Edison commissioned Zer0 to 5ive to conduct a primary research study designed to address its business development process and the perception of Edison Schools within its key target markets. Specifically, the study was to determine the critical decision drivers and motivators of current, former and potential new clients; provide insight into the variables that impact the decision making process; identify why clients have, or have not, selected to partner with Edison; assess Edison's development efforts from the perspective of the target audience; and provide alternative development strategies and tactics for consideration based on the results and analysis from the study.

Zer0 to 5ive developed and executed the research-based study through a

series of executive interviews with key target audience segments in eight categories, including school superintendents, teachers, and board members from current, past and prospective clients. The research enabled Zer0 to 5ive to gain insight into the drivers and motivators of key decision makers, and helped to identify the opportunities for Edison's development effort to succeed. Edison learned that while the Company is regarded highly among current clients, it must approach prospective schools as partners in education reform, immerse itself into the community and facilitate open communication with parents and teachers in order to gain the trust of educators.

## Benefit

Following the conclusions of the research findings, Zer0 to 5ive presented actionable development strategy and marketing recommendations for Edison Schools. Edison then utilized the findings and Zer0 to 5ive's recommendations as a launching pad for developing a more effective development program and introducing new initiatives into the development process. Additionally, Zer0 to 5ive was asked to present the findings at Edison's annual sales and development meeting, and again to Edison's executive board.

Zer0 to 5ive continues to be engaged by Edison Schools for ongoing communications support and new business initiatives, including recent recruitment campaigns for the 2003-2004 school year.

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