

# Coffee Break

## Tim Starr, President and CEO of The Starr Group

by BizTimes Staff

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### What was the smartest thing The Starr Group did in the past year?

“The addition of sought-out talent in group benefits allowed us to complete the design and implementation of ‘Engage Café,’ a unique product allowing paternal businesses to control and reduce their health care costs.”

### What’s new at your agency?

“1. The further refinement of Engage Café.  
2. Bringing definition to ‘why’ we exist: To improve the total risk wellness of those we partner with.”

### Do you plan to hire any additional staff or make any significant capital investments in your agency in the next year?

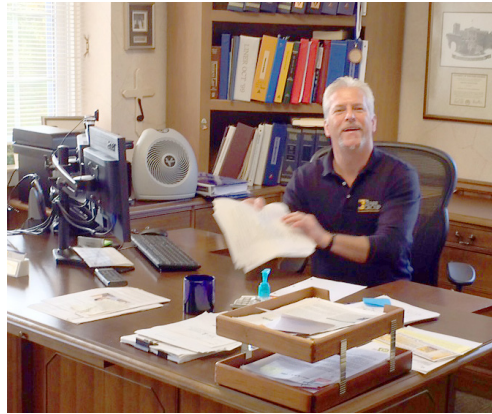
“We are always looking for good athletes to add to the team. In addition, we are seeking to fill positions in our growing group benefits department.”

### What will be your agency’s main challenges in the next year?

“The main challenges in the upcoming year will be properly allocating dollars between adding human capital versus marketing initiatives.”

### What competitive edge does The Starr Group have over other agencies in the market?

“We desire to work in complicated arenas, whether in group benefits or commercial insurance. As an example, in commercial insurance we have recently started providing continuing legal education to attorneys in a complicated arena that helps them balance provisions in leases to insurance policies. In addition, the group benefits product of Engage Café provides unique data analytics that allow businesses to make better decisions in health care, thereby reducing costs.”



### How do you promote workplace wellness at your agency? How did you manage to capture 12th place on Healthiest Employers LLC’s 2014 list of the Healthiest 100 Workplaces in America?

“Wellness is hardwired into the overall fabric of The Starr Group by being incorporated into our core values, vision and strategic business planning. At the time that we began to roll out our initial wellness programming, we also placed a great deal of focus on rebuilding and redefining our culture. We were intent on building a culture by design and not by default. Our current culture is built on trust and provides a clear and shared vision. This culture of wellness is intent on providing an environment where healthy choices are the easy choices. We provide an extremely robust wellness program that uses WELCOA’s seven benchmarks as our guide for best practices. Our employees are our competitive differentiators, and by investing in their health and well-being, we realize that we are creating a stronger organization overall.”

### Do you have a business mantra?

“Indeed: Despise mediocrity. In our striving for excellence, The Starr Group ONLY has three pillars on which we focus: Commercial insurance, group benefits and auto/home insurance. We have demanding educational requirements of our teammates. Preference leads to compromise; conviction

### Tim Starr

President and CEO

### The Starr Group

5005 Loomis Road, Greenfield  
www.starrgroup.com

### Industry:

Insurance and risk solutions

### Employees: 34

**Family:** Wife, Mary, executive vice president of The Starr Group; three children (one in sales with The Starr Group)

leads to conformity!”

### From a business standpoint, who do you look up to?

“In business, I admire anyone who has excelled via the self-initiative of learning and education. My father, Robert Starr, who founded the company in 1956, was an incredible example of this, thereby promoting differentiation in the marketplace.”

### What was the best advice you ever received?

“There is never ‘better’ when comparing people or businesses. Rather, there is only different. This mindset is helpful to and respectful of others, and that differentiates us in the marketplace.”

### What do you like to do in your free time?

“In my free time, I like to advance myself via reading and spending time with family. I enjoy playing the piano and participating in physical activities, such as volleyball, kickball, golfing, running and lifting weights.”