

Case Study: Noodle Manufacturing, Alberta

Situation

A manufacturer of Asian style noodles was facing several business challenges. To retain key retailers and in response to changing legislation, they needed a new facility and equipment. Implementing this was time consuming for the business owner, who was also concerned about the need to stay ahead of competitors but didn't have clarity on how to do so.

Task

Sheepdog Strategies were retained to provide business coaching and advice. We quickly identified several key risks and opportunities. To add the most value, we agreed to develop a report of strategic and marketing recommendations, in addition to coaching through the change process.

Action

Our approach was to facilitate discussion with the business owner around strategy, planning, production, and marketing. Through our discussions we articulated and refined business objectives, then outlined how they could be achieved. We also identified risks and gaps in the business, as well as opportunities that hadn't previously been considered.

Throughout the process Sheepdog helped the business owner consider the implications of changes. We emphasized that to maintain compliance with regulatory change and consistently produce a high-quality product, there would need to be underlying changes to culture in addition to new processes and systems, as success would hinge on employees 'buying in' to the more rigorous processes.

We also spent considerable time on the importance of marketing for the new product lines. In the past discount promotions run by supermarkets were relied upon to increase sales. With the help of one of our marketing associates, we outlined how the company could create 'pull demand' by investing in marketing that broadened product appeal by identifying new consumers and their drivers.

Results

We added value throughout the process, helping the business owner to think about their business differently and identify where to focus efforts. We worked to articulate goals for the organization, think through how to achieve them, and consider possible implications and scenarios.

From this process, we identified three key objectives to focus on. Being successful in these areas would lower the likelihood of losing a critical customer, reduce reliance on critical customers, while also increasing profitability.