



Simon Banks

Sampson Products Ltd

West Yorkshire

Member since: May 2013

“A growing and changing business needs TAB.”



If you are looking for a business turnover story, Simon Banks of Sampson Products has one to share.

After 25 years working with the same timber company in Yorkshire, Simon needed a new challenge. Although he was a shareholder and member of the senior management team he felt there was nowhere left for him to go in his career.

At this time, one of their competitors was on the verge of going bust and Simon thought this could just be the challenge he'd been waiting for. Together with 3 other shareholders, Simon took on the failing business. He began work on the new business venture on a part-time basis, keeping his existing job at the same time. He soon realised that he needed more help and, despite being slightly cynical about it, he joined The Alternative Board (TAB). The enormity of the job required to turnaround the failing company dawned on Simon, and in 2014, with the help of his TAB Board, decided to take it on full-time.



The company, was in a terrible state – no health and safety, poor financial controls and a negative culture amongst the employees. The whole company needed to be stripped back and re-built – changing customers, suppliers, staff, controls, general processes, as well as improving the whole culture of the business. Simon said “it was actually worse than starting a business from scratch because there was so much to undo and put right”.

Continued over...

It's no coincidence that Simon now has a committed workforce who look like they actually want to come to work. He looks after his people, gets to know them and takes time to find out what they want.

Simon had lots of experience and was making a great difference to Sampson Products, but in order to move to growth and profit, he felt he needed that bit extra. Being the only decision maker is a huge responsibility, and Simon found it useful to be able to take his challenges to his fellow TAB Board members. Their knowledge and input combined with the calmness and respect that a TAB Board brings was something Simon had never experienced. "No vested interests" he said "which is a refreshing change from my previous career. I now feel I can make good decisions and be influential – TAB has helped with that."

It hasn't all been about business for Simon. His TAB facilitator, Dougie Brown, and Board has helped him get the business to the point where he doesn't have to work crazy hours. He now uses his weekend "properly" with his family which he didn't have time to do previously.

Currently at £1.6m turnover, and having reached a position where he was able buy out two of the shareholders, it is clear that Simon has done an incredible job turning around Sampson Products. Simon has aspirational growth plans for the business in coming years and sees TAB very much as having a continued role in that. "I wouldn't be where I am without TAB and the amazing people on my board."

Simon's summary: "What has TAB done for me? Removed my defensive behaviour, shown me it's ok not to have all the answers, taught me to listen, and generally be a much more positive person."

“ For people who say they don't have time for TAB, I say in that case your business isn't structured properly and you need TAB!”



Simon (right) being presented with the 'TAB Member of the Year' award.



About The Alternative Board

The Alternative Board (TAB) believes that every business owner deserves for their business to deliver for them what they want out of life. Through a combination of peer advice and business coaching we help our members achieve this. Members meet monthly to learn from one another's successes and mistakes to grow their businesses.



Docking Mills, Ings Road
Batley WF17 8LT
Tel: 01924 478474

<https://www.facebook.com/sampsonproducts>