

Small Business Owner Interview



I had an interview with a couple, which ventured to start their business years ago. They overcame many difficulties and made huge efforts to achieve the results of their job. Now they are the well-off and successful owners of a small business. They handle it confidently and firmly. During the long years of managing labor issues and dealing with different problems, my interviewees learned how best to adjust the labor processes. Nowadays their business brings a steady income. It has also been further developed and improved constantly. I have been interested in all the angles of their job since the time they started to the current situation. My interview report displays the information I got from the business owners and some conclusions I made from this conversation regarding my plans to start my own business.

The business owner's name is Alberto N. His wife's name is Elisabeth N. They handle the business together and it seems they have equal rights to make decisions regarding the management and maintenance of it. The N. have a paving service, which has a friendly name Amigo Paving Inc. It is situated on 300 Reina Esther Drive, Brownsville, TX. Years ago, when the N. have been just planning to open their own business, they thought



about buying the franchise. However, they weighed up all the pros and cons of the franchise in the light of its advantages and disadvantages and refused to buy it. Besides, some years later, when Amigo Paving Inc. became profitable enough, Mr. and Mrs. N. came up with an idea to open one more business location. However, for a number of financial and administrative reasons they had to abandon this prospect. Thus, the family has only one business location founded on their idea and built with their own arms.

Amigo Paving Inc. has already been in existence for twenty years. The N. began to work on it when they were quite young and inexperienced. Although both Mr. and Mrs. N. was the novices in the management of the paving service, they had to settle all the working issues themselves, without anybody's help. They worked hard all days long. Mr. N. was dealing with suppliers of materials, while Mrs. N. negotiated with customers and answered the incoming calls. The owners had no opportunity to resort to the help of an experienced manager or administrator because the business was not profitable enough then, and the N. just could not afford to hire employees. It took them eight years to make the business generate a stable income. Now their business is financially profitable, so the N. can pay the competitive salaries to their workers. Today the N. have two administrative employees in Amigo Paving Inc. They work in shifts and assume various responsibilities. Mainly, the managers keep accounting records and provide financial statements. They meet customers, communicate and correspond with them by e-mail. In addition, once or twice a year the N. hire from six to ten



seasonal laborers, depending on the number of clients and the workload. However, Mr. N. settles all the important working issues, solves the arising problems, and makes all the decisions himself. The N. always conclude deals with clients themselves. Even twenty years later, they treat their business with all the responsibility and attention. Not surprisingly, today the N. have many regular customers, established linkages, and strong partnerships with suppliers.

Alberto and Elisabeth N. owned the Amigo Paving Inc. for twenty years. During that time, they achieved success in the development and maintenance of their business. Although the N. started from scratch, they were able to make Amigo Paving Inc. financially profitable. Nevertheless, both Mr. and Mrs. N. say there is no universal key or secret that could make the business successful without any efforts from the owners. Among the factors contributing to building a financially lucrative business, Mr. N. highlights hard work as the main factor. He recalls that in the beginning he and his wife were working for weeks without any days off. They had no experience, but they compensate it with the help of the great efforts and hard work. Today the N. are still paying huge attention to their job. They are focused on providing quality construction services. Mr. N. says that high quality of performing work is the main reason for customers to utilize the service again. In addition, he notes that the owners should choose and hire their employees very carefully. Mr. and Mrs. N. had a bad experience with some unscrupulous laborers in the past. Now they hire only qualified professionals and treat them strictly and fairly. Mrs. N. is sure that professionalism, devotion, and efforts of



their employees made Amigo Paving Inc. successful.

Today all the working processes in Amigo Paving Inc. function in an appropriate way. Mr. N. controls it every day. He has several management responsibilities. He not only supervises the laborers but also works at the construction site by himself. As the owner, Mr. N. exercises supervision over the projects and checks the quality of accomplished work. In addition, he secures the equipment and provides the materials. It can be said that even being the boss, Mr. N continues to work very hard. Nevertheless, he notes many positive aspects of being the business owner. For Mr. N., the most important thing is being the own boss. It enables him to decide what to do and when, to set the income level, and to determine the amount of time and efforts he puts to achieve it. Being in charge of making important decisions regarding the business is one of the positive aspects, too. In addition, there are also some negative aspects. Being a business owner involves taking on the responsibilities for performing work. Mr. and Mrs. N. often have to work overtime. If clients complain about the quality of the performed work or something else, business owners have to face liability claims. Besides, sometimes they have problems with the staff. From time to time unpleasant things happen, but the N. have emotional and financial satisfaction. Being a business owner includes getting financial rewards. The income from Amigo Paving Inc. is high and stable. Moreover, sometimes the N. have additional profits from large-value transactions.

At the end of the interview, I asked Mr. and Mrs. N. to give me some pieces



of advice as for becoming a business owner. They told me to pay huge attention to the business location because it is one of the main factors affecting the number of customers. In addition, the owner should treat the staff very carefully and choose only responsible and honest employees.

My overall impression of my interviewees and their business is very pleasant. Mr. N. is a very energetic and positive man. Mrs. N. is a smart and active woman. They both look like the persons enjoying their job. Amigo Paving Inc. is an established business that provides high-quality service. The example of this family encourages me to become a business owner. I believe that my own business can make me happy. According to Longenecker, Moore, & Petty (2009), "In a Gallup Poll of over 100,000 working adults, researchers examined the relationship between work and happiness. Most small business owners report satisfaction in their careers". Alberto and Elisabeth N. started from zero and now they have the developed business that compensates them emotionally and financially. They overcame all the difficulties with the help of each other and reached success. For me, they are a positive and inspiring example to follow.