

**WORLD-LEADING IDEAS AND INNOVATION, FOUNDED  
ON ENGAGED SCHOLARSHIP, FROM RESEARCH TO APPLICATION**

# Suncream

## Business Background

Suncream is an ice cream manufacturing business established in 1967 by the father of the current MD, Rebecca Manfredi.

The business combines the rich heritage and tradition of Italian ice cream with 21st century manufacturing techniques. Their primary customers are foodservice wholesalers and cash and carries, whose end users include pubs, restaurants, contract caterers, schools and care homes.

The business has four cornerstones of their operation: quality, service, heritage and tradition.

Based in Wilnecote, Tamworth, they employ around 50 members of staff during peak summer production.

## Introduction to The Transformation for Growth Project

Traditionally the business has found accessing business support challenging as the seasonality of the business (with sales concentrated in the summer) mitigates against lengthy commitments to programmes.

The MD was initially contacted by the project and initial impressions were positive, as it was serendipitous: she was planning to develop the strategy for the business, and the programme would fit into their less busy months.

## Activity within the project

The business is currently undergoing substantial change having recently moved to a new factory with much of the content of the work carried out with the Business

Engagement Adviser focussing around the developing needs of the business to accommodate this growth. The programme has provided feedback to help her develop her ideas – ‘when you’re MD, having never worked anywhere else, it’s great to have a sounding board... you don’t know what you don’t know’ – and signposted her to relevant things to consider.

It was felt the Receptivity for Change questionnaire was more suited towards employees of larger businesses, rather than small business owners.

The owner was aware that it was a four stage process, but two stages were focussed on: ‘it was more like a two stage process... we’d already done a lot of things already, as we’re not start-up, so we concentrated on establishing what the business needs were, and trying to deal with it’.

## Impacts

- The support provided has been extremely helpful in a variety of ways – how the owner approaches recruitment and retention as well as the setting up of the processes.
- The MD has begun to step away from the business again. Some years ago, there was more delegation of responsibility to staff than there has been more recently. As the business grew, the MD moved towards a more hands-on operational management style. She would now like to increase again the level of delegation in the organisation, and has appreciated the support to help her clarify which elements she can let go of, to allow her to take a step back to focus more on strategy.

## Summing up the impact

‘It has been a worthwhile experience that has helped me to evaluate and consider elements of my leadership that I probably hadn’t done before’.

## Find out more

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