

FOCUS ON FRANCHISE

The best business opportunities to become your own boss



Franchising...

a safer route into business start-up

with WHICHFRANCHISE.COM expert Johnny Sellyn...

THIS month we will look at how to identify if franchising is the right route into business start-up for you.

You need to be aware that franchising isn't for everybody. It involves a particular mind-set and attitude, like willingness to work to someone else's system. It also requires a degree of management ability.

Here are some questions which will help you to decide if it is the right choice for you. Some of these questions will involve discussing the idea with your partner and working out your financial position.

■ **Is your physical health good?** Have you had any problem that would prevent you obtaining a life assurance policy, for example? If you are not in good health then franchising is not for you.

■ **Calculate the financial commitments you have at present – mortgage, rates, etc. Could you afford the drop in income that usually occurs in the early life of a new business?** During the early months of new business cash flow problems may result in income from the business being lower than expected. Are your financial commitments such that you could manage on less income than you have now?

■ **Do you think your partner will be willing to give you full support?** There are always problems and difficult periods even in a successful franchise, and it is during these times that you may need a bit more family sup-

port than usual. You should also ask yourself whether your relationship would stand the strain of the sacrifices, which are inevitably involved in starting your own business. Be sure your partner is not going along with your ideas just to make you happy; make sure he or she is as committed as you are.

■ **How many extra hours above a standard 40 hour week would you be prepared to work as a franchisee?** As you will be aware, running a franchise could involve you in much more than a 9am to 5pm, weekday job. You may have said that you would be willing to work 20 or more hours extra. Is this realistic – what would you give up in a week to work those extra hours?

■ **What reaction would you have to receiving strict guidelines by the franchisor on how to run your business?** If you value a high degree of autonomy and want to make your own decisions on how to run and develop business, then franchising is possibly not for you. The franchisor is in ultimate control and resentment of this in your part will make the relationship very difficult.

These are just some of the questions you need to ask yourself, we have a full list of questions on www.which-franchise.com under the section "Is Franchising Right for You?". You can also take our self-test to get indication to your suitability to franchising.

In next month's article we will look at how to choose the right franchise opportunity for you.

William Little

Managing Director and Franchisor
Cleaning Doctor

Enniskillen Cleaning Guru William Little talks to **Sharon Yearl** about how he grew his business from a part-time hobby to a franchise operation with 51 outlets throughout the UK and Ireland...



Q: When did you first start your business and when did you launch the franchise?

A: In 1985 I was working in a pretty routine civil service job in my hometown of Enniskillen when I decided to supplement my income with a part-time job. I investigated many ideas and was eventually attracted to a cleaning operation. I sourced some machines from a company in England, bought a marketing book and started my part-time hobby business of cleaning carpets and upholstery in homes around County Fermanagh.

I soon discovered that working for myself was much more satisfying than being a civil servant. My business developed from part-time to full-time. The English company that supplied my equipment asked me to become their distributor in Ireland, which I took on, and in 1985 my business expanded further to a cleaning equipment company called Hi-Tec Cleaning. Out of Hi-Tec, in 1998 Cleaning Doctor Ltd was born. With the guidance of Gordon Patterson, of Franchise Development Services, Cleaning Doctor was developed

and fine-tuned into a fully-fledged franchise operation.

Q: What are the main distinctive features of The Cleaning Doctor?

A: We have a distinctive brand name which is easy to say, easy to remember and easy to translate into a website domain name. Although a distinctive brand is a very powerful marketing tool, ultimately people are happier buying from a person that they know or recognise and that they can trust. For this reason, every franchise outlet is promoted as a business that is independently owned and operated by a dedicated franchisee that is up-front with his or her identity. In addition, every one of our franchisees offers their customers a 100 per cent risk-free, money-back guarantee on every job. This really attracts customers.

Q: What kind of package do you provide to franchisees?

A: We provide a fully-operational turn-key business. A suitable vehicle is fully liveried in the distinctive Cleaning Doctor corporate colours and fitted out with shel-

ing and a comprehensive equipment package. A two or three week one-to-one intensive initial training course is run at our head office in Enniskillen. This covers every aspect of the business from using the equipment to marketing and sales, and delivering services to customers. After returning to their territory and embarking on their business, new franchisees are 'hand-held' by an experienced mentor for as long as necessary.

Q: What one piece of advice would you give to others considering buying or setting up a franchise?

A: Thoroughly research the market in your local town or county. Look at who is already providing the service and/or the product and how well or how badly they are doing it. Could you do better? Examine your finances; have you enough cash or can you raise enough to invest in the business and keep it afloat during the early period. Examine yourself; establish if you have the motivation and the drive to run the business, and that you are prepared to follow the system provided by the franchisor.

Q: Who inspires you? Have you a role model?

A: My ideal role model would be Richard Branston. He started with nothing, lived on a river boat and was always up for a challenge. Yet, he is a plausible individual.

Q: Where does your main source of motivation come from?

A: Ultimately, seeing the satisfaction of clients and the success of my franchisees gives me great pleasure and the motivation to continue. Even after 23 years in the industry it's great to experience the wow factor when a client sees how we have cleaned or restored their home or business. As a franchisor, it's a great feeling to train an individual, that often knows absolutely nothing about the cleaning industry, and in a few weeks he or she is phoning in full of joy at winning a contract or the success of a particular job. This is the real buzz of business.

If you would like to appear in this section, you can contact me on 028 3839 5589 or email sharon.yearl@newsletter.co.uk

**TO ADVERTISE
YOUR BUSINESS
OPPORTUNITY HERE
ON 26TH JUNE,
PLEASE CONTACT
JONATHAN OR KATIE
ON**

028 3839 5535/5542

jobs today
.co.uk
real jobs for real people

Precautions are taken and references are carried out on all ads, however Johnston Press (NI) cannot guarantee the services offered by advertisers on these pages. Legal advice should be taken before entering into any binding contract.

Any monies should be held by your solicitor if you are in any doubt / or until transactions are completed to your satisfaction.

"It was the best decision I ever made."

Cleaning Doctor is recruiting a limited number of franchisees to fill vacancies in its network in Northern Ireland. Men and women who have a burning desire to run their own business should examine this unique opportunity. As a franchisee of Cleaning Doctor you will immediately tap into a proven, high-profit business that will have cash rolling in from day one.

- Low start up costs
- Work from home
- Full training and equipment
- Dynamic marketing systems
- Complete ongoing support from Head Office

For more information visit the website and/or call William Little.



**Felim Mulligan
Cleaning Doctor**
"I joined Cleaning Doctor as a franchisee in March 2006. It was the best decision I ever made."

Cleaning Doctor
www.cleaningdoctorfranchise.net

Tel: (028) 6634 1288

Licensee Business Opportunities with MAXOL

Do you want to work for yourself in the forecourt retailing business?

Maxol is Northern Ireland's leading oil company with a network of 93 service stations, including 33 company owned and 60 dealer owned stations. We are now seeking individuals interested in pursuing the profitable business opportunity of working for oneself as a licensee of a Maxol Service Station, convenience store and car wash business in Northern Ireland.

Applicants should be fully capable of running their own business and be committed to delivering first class standards of presentation and customer service. Access to unencumbered working capital in excess of £60,000 is essential.

If you feel you are suited to the challenges of today's service station and convenience store business sector, you should complete an application form which is available for download from our web site at

www.maxol.com

or by request from the Retail Sales Office,
Maxol Oil Limited,
48 Trench Road,
Mallusk, Co. Antrim, BT36 4TY.
Tel: 028 9050 6000 or email opportunity@maxol.ie

Fuel for all Engines



www.maxol.com

