



Randy Rowe

Farrell Bros. Inc.



Success Magazine: Randy, how do you define success?

Randy Rowe: Success to me is a measurement of accomplishments you have achieved and hurdles that you have been able to get over in your business and personal life.

SM: How did you enter into the plumbing contracting business?

RR: I graduated from Albany Business College in 1984 with a degree in accounting and business administration. My goal at that point was to find a challenging position within any type of company. That company happened to be Farrell Bros. and I joined shortly after graduation.

SM: Why plumbing over other contracting opportunities?

RR: It really wasn't an industry that I was looking for; it was the challenge that interested me the most.

SM: When did you acquire Farrell Bros?

RR: I became 100% owner in 1995. Before that, I was partners with David Farrell (grandson of Martin Farrell who founded the company in 1921).

SM: Why did you acquire Farrell Bros. rather than start your own business?

RR: The opportunity to own a company with over 75 years of customer service and goodwill seemed much better than starting a new company.

SM: As an entrepreneur what is your greatest challenge?

RR: There are many challenges in today's business environment, but one of the greatest is keeping well trained and reliable employees. This is why I believe it is so important to treat your employees as team members and compensate them fairly.

SM: You have a commitment in your message to your clients online with regard to excellent customer service and cost

guarantees. How do you compare to other plumbers in the region?

RR: We guarantee an appointment window so our customers don't have to sit home all day waiting for the plumber to show up. We also use a flat rate pricing guide so we can give our customers upfront pricing with no surprises after the job. This way they can be sure of just what their invoice will look like.

SM: Your labor force is very specialized. How do you keep your laborers consistent?

RR: I treat my co-workers like family members, and that is how we are able to



perform at a customer service level that is above and beyond expectations.

SM: With the advent of ever increasing gas and oil prices, how do you help clients save energy?

RR: We are recommending higher efficiency heating and cooling equipment and proper maintenance of existing systems.

SM: What program do you have in place to ensure that your clients will maximize their energy efficiency by using your services and equipment?

RR: We can show our customers energy saving products that are new to the industry, and state of the art technology that can be added to existing systems that will save up to 15% in fuel costs.

SM: Is there any particular area that you specialize in that separates you from other plumbers with regard to energy efficiency?

RR: We specialize in 95% plus efficiency boilers and furnaces with comfort control systems and state of the art controls and accessories.

SM: Do you provide an analysis service that demonstrates the possible energy efficiency that a client can achieve by using your service and products?

RR: We can show customers how our systems save them money on a daily basis, and in most cases pay for themselves in only a few years.

SM: What product lines do you use that help you achieve that energy efficiency for your clients?

RR: We use Triangle Tube high efficiency hot water heating systems and Bryant or Trane high efficiency warm air furnaces.

SM: How do you train your installers and service personnel in order to maintain the increased knowledge for these new energy efficient products?

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RR: All of our suppliers have training and product development classes on a regular basis. Education is very crucial to maintaining customer satisfaction.

SM: When should a client contact you in order to have the energy service done?

RR: Right now is the best time to schedule your fall maintenance appointment.

SM: You are working every phase of plumbing, HVAC, emergency services, bathroom remodeling and additions. How do you manage all of this?

RR: We have technicians that specialize in certain fields but we also do cross training so that all of our employees are familiar with all aspects of our business.

SM: If your dream comes true and you don't have a second of wasted time or money in the day, how will you have time for anything but work, or achieve some balance in your life?

RR: Well, that's a good question. As I grow older, and hopefully wiser, I realize that time is much more important in life than money. You can always get up in the morning and make more money, but you will never have yesterday back to spend time with your children and watch them grow.

SM: What do you do to achieve that balance now?

RR: To achieve that balance I spend as much time with my children as possible, but I also make sure that my customers are being taken care of.

SM: Has your family been involved with your business?

RR: My children are too young to be involved in my business at this point, but anything is possible down the road.

SM: Where do you see your company in five years?

RR: I believe we will be a leader in the market of high efficiency heating and cooling equipment. Staying on top of the ever changing products available to us is one of the reasons that we will continue to grow.

SM: At what point did you feel that you were a success in life?

RR: There was no one particular point. I feel successful every day, when I receive phone calls from clients praising my employees and the work that they have performed.

SM: What advice can you give to new entrepreneurs, especially contractors, in starting their own business?

RR: Treat every day as if it is your first day in business and you will succeed. When you get too comfortable and think you don't need to watch every aspect of your business – that is when you start to lose control.

SM: If you had to live your life over again, what would you do differently?

RR: I would not change a thing. I am very happy with my life, and just look forward to the next day's challenges.

