

Sybron celebrates 20 years with six industry insights

3 years ago



Cleaning, hygiene and catering products provider [Sybron](#) is celebrating its 20th anniversary by offering the industry six business insights and wisdom for business owners.

Founder and retired CEO Stephen Henwood looks back on the last 20 years' experience as a business owner, and brings the next generation his six top tips for the next 20 years:

1. You don't have to fit the typical 'entrepreneur profile'

"Looking back, I could have started Sybron ten years earlier. I'd been in the sales side of the supplies industry all my working life, but I had never thought of myself as an entrepreneur. I didn't really fit the profile, but customers kept hinting that they would buy from me if I did my own thing - and so, with my brother Trevor, we started Sybron in 2003. It hasn't been plain sailing, but my advice would be to stick to the brief and hard work will pay off!"

- Treat everyone like family - and say thank you

"I am so proud of what we have achieved over the past 20 years, but so much of that success is down to employing good people and building a home for them at Sybron. We adopt a very flat organisational structure, and everyone is treated like family and knows the importance of their role - no matter what it is. Our annual Employee of the Year Awards is just one way we show our appreciation for our teams' hard work. And to celebrate our 20th anniversary we are taking all our staff, partners and suppliers out for a boat party - to say thank you."

- Don't be afraid to be radical

“Our biggest breakthrough and best achievement was around eight years ago when we discovered and then embraced biotechnology cleaning products. It was a genuine game-changing moment. At the time, the whole idea was so innovative, and I don’t think any other distributors were recommending it, as they were still focused on traditional chemical solutions. It was a risk, but when we saw the innovation and the potential we did not hesitate. Seven years later and we launched our very own range of biotechnology cleaning products known as SyBio which is the most significant milestone in Sybron’s story – so far.”

- Don’t just say it – do it

“Whatever you chose to be your point of difference, make sure you lead by example and do as you say. When we say that we aim to provide sustainable products – that is what we will do with 100% focus. Biotechnology based products under the SyBio brand is now our biggest range, and while many others have now gone down the same road, we still feel that we are ahead of the game, particularly in categories such as the catering industry. Since the launch of SyBio, the business has released a new sustainable toilet paper range [SySoft] and a sustainable packaging range [SyGreen].”

- Never lose sight of what you stand for – stay true to your vision

“Time marches on and the world can change in an instant – but we have never lost sight of what is at the heart of our business. We are amazed how many people actually enjoy hearing that we are not just saying yes to everything, but ensuring that as Sybron develops, it will maintain its focus on providing unrivalled service. We will never lose sight of what Sybron has always stood for and have several strategies in place, including a differentiation programme, to ensure Sybron and its products continue to stand out.”

“I was recently asked to describe the business from my perspective as founder in just three words, and without hesitation, my response was: ‘The Best Company’. I truly believe that nobody does what we do, better than Sybron – and I am proud to say that our employees and our customers would agree.”

The next 20 years...

“We are now firmly focused on the future, and one particular thing that resonates with our customers, both new and existing, is our controlled growth strategy, which sets a steady trajectory for Sybron’s next steps. Growth is an aspiration of every business but it shouldn’t be at the detriment of your core values. Too often you watch companies grow too quickly and lose their market differentiation, but I am proud to say I wholeheartedly believe this isn’t going to happen at Sybron and the future looks bright!