



DANNY SLESWICK

CEO, Image Cabinets

Industry: Manufacturing

Number of Employees: 30

Annual Revenue: \$5 Million

AT A GLANCE



Improved Value Builder Score from 42 to 65



Increased Company Value by 83%



Primary Key Driver: Customer Satisfaction



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VALUE BUILDER BUSINESS OWNER STORY:
Business Owner Went from Working 65 Hours a Week to 5 Hours While Increasing His Company's Value by 83%

BACKGROUND

In 2008 Danny Sleswick decided to join his brother-in-law's company, Image Cabinets, a cabinet manufacturing company specializing in home renovations. Sleswick brought 17 years of experience managing manufacturing companies, while his brother-in-law was a tradesman, making for the perfect pair to grow the business. With Sleswick at the helm, Image Cabinets has since expanded to manufacturing cabinets for multi-story developments, diversifying their offering.

Image Cabinets had doubled from a \$2 million company in 2008 to generating \$4 million in revenue in 2015. Seven years into their partnership, Sleswick decided to buy out his brother-in-law and took over full operational responsibilities. Once on his own, Sleswick grew an additional \$1 million in revenue.

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

Despite experiencing success, Sleswick began noticing operational inefficiencies. It was normal for Sleswick to work 65 hours a week, leaving little time for vacations and leisure for himself. Image Cabinets had grown to become dependent on Sleswick, with his heavy involvement in decision-making and the business's day-to-day operations.

Sleswick stumbled upon a post on LinkedIn by Rohan Wood, a business advisor known as "The Exit Guy." The post discussed an essential theme for all business owners: the notion of choice and having the freedom to choose what to do with your business. Upon reflecting on this, Sleswick noted, **"I was still working 65 hours a week. At the end of the day, I wasn't really free to choose what to do with my business."** Despite not being interested in exiting his business quite yet, Sleswick did want the option of selling his business when the time came. Together Sleswick and Wood embarked on a journey to make improvements to Image Cabinets that would positively impact Sleswick's quality of life.

WORKING WITH A CERTIFIED VALUE BUILDER™

Known to many Australian business owners as "The Exit Guy," Rohan Wood utilizes The Value Builder System™ and has helped hundreds of business owners make a successful exit. Specializing in exit planning and value building, Wood knew these same strategies and tactics would also apply to Sleswick and Image Cabinets. Using The Value Builder System™ methodology, Wood aimed to improve processes within Image Cabinets and reduce the company's reliance on Sleswick.

Sleswick and Wood had an instant synergy. When discussing his approach, Wood asked Sleswick, **"Rather than improving the bottom line, what if we improve the 65 hours per week that you are working?"** Impressed with Wood, Sleswick said, **"Rohan (Wood) wasn't talking about dollars and cents but rather focused on giving the ability or freedom to sell if I chose to."**

As a Certified Value Builder™, Wood first leveraged the Value Builder questionnaire, a short survey that provides business owners with a report on the business's current state. Once completed, the business owner is given a Value Builder Score based on the 8 Key Drivers of Company Value. Shocked by his Value Builder Score of 42 out of a possible 100, Sleswick confessed, **"It showed me that we still had huge room for improvement. It allowed me to see business in a new way."**

Sleswick and Wood decided the key driver to focus on first was Customer Satisfaction. Upon reflection, Sleswick said, **"We drilled to identify where people weren't that happy with the interaction. Our time to respond to tenders was too long; clients felt abandoned as it took three weeks to submit pricing. Clients had low confidence from the start."** Sleswick and Wood realized that at the root of the customer satisfaction problem was an inefficient sales process.

Immediately, Sleswick and Wood established sales scripts and trained other team members to learn the new and improved sales process. The new sequence included documented communication sent throughout the entire tendering process, all the way until a project was complete. This new system enabled Image Cabinets to answer any questions customers might have



ROHAN WOOD
CEO, The EXITGuy



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and resolve issues instantaneously. Happy about this improvement, Sleswick said, ***“With this new data, we are able to respond, make adjustments, and avoid lumpy sales so much quicker.”*** As a result, Sleswick improved his customer satisfaction score, won more repeat business, and gained more referrals from happy customers.

With the sales operations now fully optimized, Sleswick realized he had set off a domino effect of business improvements spawning 30 new efficient processes across the organization. When discussing how these processes worked together seamlessly, Sleswick said, ***“Salespeople didn’t need constant coaching, because there was now a system to follow. Production-wise, the new systems in place were followed by installers, which took pressure off site supervisors. Because of this, operations managers were now fully aware of what was happening.”***

More importantly, Wood worked with Sleswick on delegating many parts of his job to reduce the company’s reliance on him. To create alignment, Sleswick and Wood created clear operational guidelines and detailed job descriptions for each employee to ensure everyone was held responsible. Within the first six months of implementation, Sleswick noticed these changes working and saw a net gain of free time for himself. Image Cabinets was now running smoothly even with less involvement from him.



With the help of Rohan Wood and The Value Builder System™, I was able to achieve my goal of being free to choose what to do with Image Cabinets.



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RESULTS

A few short years prior, Sleswick was close to burning out, tirelessly working 65-hour weeks and being involved in every aspect of Image Cabinets. Sleswick has since transitioned to only working five hours per week while relying on trusted managers and proven processes. Two years after leveraging The Value Builder System™ and retaking the Value Builder questionnaire, Sleswick was able to increase his Value Builder Score from 42 to 65. He also increased his business’s value by a staggering 83%.

When the COVID-19 pandemic escalated in early 2020, Sleswick found himself extremely prepared. With a reduced role in Image Cabinets’ day-to-day processes, Sleswick was able to turn his attention to applying new government regulations and quickly implementing mandatory health and safety precautions for his team. Sleswick was able to play the critical role of messenger, relaying important announcements to his staff while ensuring that Image Cabinets remained operational and, more importantly, safe for all employees. Sleswick acknowledged that had the pandemic occurred years prior, he would not have been as well positioned to handle the situation effectively.

With the help of Wood and The Value Builder System™, Sleswick was able to achieve his goal of being free to choose what to do with Image Cabinets. With a Certified Value Builder™ leading the way, Sleswick successfully pinpointed a weakness within the business and made the necessary changes to improve it. Most importantly, Sleswick and Wood were able to reorganize roles and responsibilities among the staff, which allowed Sleswick to take a less active part in the day-to-day operations. Image Cabinets is now a well-oiled machine and continues to be a thriving business. Most importantly, it provided Sleswick with a healthy and much deserved work-life balance.