

# Case Study

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“ We’re now confident we can achieve our dreams ”

Cotswood are a London based business supplying high quality timber doors. It is owned and run by Peter Rose, Geoff Beale and Andy Beale and has been in operation for over 30 years. The business had performed well over time with a highly professional team and a reputation for excellence in products and services. However, they wanted to grow, open a new retail store, and become London’s leading timber door company.

Peter and Geoff spent time and money trying to build the business and realise their goals. However they found it very difficult to build any momentum and had limited impact on revenues. As they said “It began to feel like we were taking one step forward only to take two back.”

This obviously led to frustration and affected their motivation. They knew things needed to change but didn’t know what direction to take. They decided to have a look at business coaching as a solution and approached a number of London coaches. However, they felt that it was ActionCOACH who clearly offered the best opportunity to make a real difference.

They began having weekly meetings with their ActionCOACH business coach where they discussed objectives and defined key actions. One of the first pieces of advice their coach encouraged the Cotswood team to take on board was that they need to take an objective look at the long established processes within the business. As they said “We learned that you shouldn’t rely on something just because it has always been like that.”

Their coach challenged many of the processes and systems that were in place. Often these had been used for that last 30 years and were now inefficient. Although some technologies had been implemented there were many underlying systems that were out of date. As they said “Underneath the shiny 21<sup>st</sup> century veneer was a creaking 30 year old business.”

A key method that was employed was utilising the ActionCOACH ‘5 ways’ model. This looks at the business in relation to the most important elements that drive profitability. These include leads and conversions through to sale value and margins. All of these metrics were looked at and plans put into place to improve them. For example they managed to renegotiate and reduce supplier costs and implemented robust financial controls that maximised cashflow. The results of this were clear, monthly net profits increased from a negative position to 20%.

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## COTSWOOD

They also worked on understanding Cotswood's strengths and unique selling point in relation to the competition. This clearly highlighted the high quality workmanship of their doors. From a position of increased confidence in the quality of their products they felt able to put up their prices. This had an immediate positive impact on profitability as their average sales value increased by 126%.

Another major area they worked together on was the entire sales and marketing process. Again their coach challenged long held beliefs and processes. She also encouraged the team to make sure they measured all activities and tested new strategies. This enabled them to spend their money on marketing that worked. For example, before coaching, they spent £30,000 per year on Yellow Pages, but had little idea on whether it actually worked for them. So they developed plans that were better tracked and measured. This increased leads into the business. They also worked hard on refining the conversion process. As they remarked "Its' been completely revamped and scripted so that we target clients who are in a position to buy. This has increased our conversion ratio to 50%."

With ActionCOACH coaching the business has gone from strength to strength. Increased orders have meant they have needed to recruit more staff. For this they have used the ActionCOACH recruitment process which has enabled them to get the right people for the right roles at minimal cost. Additionally they achieved one of their key goals "Working with ActionCOACH has enabled us to open our brand new Cotswood South showroom in Cheam!"

In conclusion the team at Cotswood have clearly embraced the ActionCOACH approach and benefited hugely from coaching. As Geoff said "To anyone who is sceptical about coaching, I would say that every business can benefit from it. Monthly planning is crucial to success and our coach has enabled us to think more about our business - we are working smarter and more efficiently. The ActionCOACH approach is to skilfully encourage and push us to make improvements whilst leaving us in no doubt that it is, ultimately, our business."

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