

## Developing Objectives Case Study

Harry had two business ideas; both seem to address perceived gaps in the market place. However, the ideas were very different. One was clothing design and manufacturing and the other was a counselling service. The ideas were based on his personal experiences and the difficulties he had in solving problems that he had. Some preliminary research had been undertaken that suggested there was a market for both businesses. Harry was unable to undertake both businesses at once and initially felt that his best option was to undertake market research and based on the results start the business that looked the most profitable.

Choosing the most profitable business based on initial market research may at first appear a reasonable approach. However, there are some serious issues that could profoundly affect the viability of the chosen business if the decision was based solely on the perceived profitability of one business over the other. The market research would identify a predicted profit based solely on external information. It would not take into account some of the personal aspects of running a business that is the internal aspects of the proposed business. These personal aspects can significantly affect longer term outcomes of a business. While market research may show that the business could be profitable, the operation of the business would almost certainly be affected by the personal aspects of the business owner.

One of the key internal personal aspects are the owner's personal objectives. These objectives are the answer to the question why am I going into business, instead of working for someone else. This is not an analysis of the positives and negatives of owning and running a business but a list of outcomes that the owner would like to achieve using the business as a tool. Furthermore, in Harry's case defining his objectives could also help determine more accurately which business idea would be better for him.

In helping define Harry's objectives he indicated that a key objective was to be able to help people who had been affected by similar circumstances as himself. It became quite obvious how important this was to Harry as we looked at how he wanted to feel about himself as a business operator. Furthermore another key objective for Harry was to be in a strategic role rather than a hands-on role after five years. Below is a table of Harry's objectives:

5 YEARS	2 YEARS	1 YEAR	6 MONTHS
Have a practice employing 3 to 5 counsellors for a range of services	Employing 1 support staff and 1 other counsellor	Employ part-time counsellor	Working at least 50% of my time in the business
Recognised as one of the first choice for referrals	Broaden relationships to include wider range of health workers, support from various agencies	Established recognition with local referring health workers	Developed good relationships with health workers
Publishing articles in journals	Complete first article	Collect data for article	Learn how to research and write professional articles
Seen as an expert in specialised counselling by health workers	Established reputation with high level of client satisfaction	Completed counselling programme	Started developing counselling programme
Financially independent with growing assets in investment fund	Start an investment fund	Self supporting, with all costs covered	Own wages covered