



An Australian Government Initiative



CASE STUDY:

BUSINESS REVIEW – Copamate Products, West Heidelberg, Victoria

Copamate Products Pty Ltd manufactures and supplies hard-to-source products for the pipeline, rail, mining, and building and construction industries. The company has been operating for 16 years and currently has 20 staff.

With Copamate Products just emerging from an ownership / succession planning transition, General Manager Jo Hocking was keen to energise her team and seek out opportunities for the business to move forward.

“The timing of the Business Review program was great. We’re a fairly young team and we know that it’s up to us to create our future. Having an external expert like Paul Smarrelli, Business Adviser for Partner Organisation NORTH Link to help us at this time was a fantastic opportunity.

We heard about the program from one of our suppliers, who’d had a very positive experience. Paul came out to talk with us and explain the program, and we decided to give it a go. The process started with giving Paul background material and a site visit, so that he got to know all about our business. Our team then had to collate management reports, financial reports and other information that Paul required to complete the benchmarking exercise. He was great to work with, very supportive, and he followed up on every detail. The whole process was made very easy for us.

Paul presented us with a comprehensive report that benchmarked us against other businesses and gave us some key recommendations to improve. All our managers and team leaders are keen to get involved with our new strategies and we welcome that. We don’t want to dictate from above. We want to move forward and tighten everything up.

Even though we had processes, nobody knew how to follow them. We are going to employ an external

agency to write our processes up for us. They will come in with an entirely different mentality and hopefully give us some more new ideas.

Before, we’d spent a lot of time and effort on research and development, but not so much on sales. So we had great, innovative products that not many companies knew about. Now, in line with Paul’s recommendations, we are planning to focus on new markets for our patented valves - and that’s any company that has abrasive slurries in its pipeline, for example gold or coal mines.

We also found that we need to introduce stronger control measures in finance and administration, as well as key performance indicators in operational areas.

Through this project, we found out about grants and assistance available to SMEs like us. In our sort of company, everyone is busy doing the daily work and so there isn’t the time to research that sort of thing.

We are strongly committed to developing new products, new markets and diversifying into other contract manufacturing and engineering services. The Business Review program gave us a real opportunity to improve, to step up to the mark and to go international. We have some really good products and we want the world to know about them.

We were very happy with the Business Review. It was very informative. Paul’s recommendations will expose us to external assistance that will help our business to grow and succeed.”

Copamate Products was provided with a Business Review during 2009 by Enterprise Connect Partner Organisation NORTH Link and Business Adviser Paul Smarrelli.