

## LISTENING

## A successful company



Susan Barratt

## CD1 TRACK 18 (I = INTERVIEWER, SB = SUSAN BARRATT)

**I:** Can you tell us about your company?

**SB:** Nature's Way Foods is a food-manufacturing company based on the south coast of England. We put chilled product, the majority of which is lettuce and fruit, into various types of packaging for the major retailers and various food-service companies in the UK. Examples of retailers would be Tesco's, Morrison's and Waitrose, and in terms of food-service companies, our biggest customer is McDonald's, which I'm sure most of you will be familiar with.



**A**  CD1.18 Listen to the first part of an interview with Susan Barratt, the Chief Executive Officer of Nature's Way Foods, and correct the six mistakes in this paragraph.

Nature's Way Foods is a drinks-manufacturing company based on the east coast of Ireland. They put chilled product, the majority of which is milk and cheese, into various types of packaging for the major retailers and various food-service companies in Ireland.

**CD1.19 Listen to the second part, where Susan talks about the reasons for the company's success, and complete these notes with one word in each gap.**

First reason for success: the .....<sup>1</sup>

- Health – desire to eat healthy .....<sup>2</sup>
- Convenience – .....<sup>3</sup>-poor
- Sustainability – low level of food .....<sup>4</sup>
- Indulgence – diet Monday to Friday, but have several pieces of cake on Friday night

Second reason for success: the way they .....<sup>5</sup> the business

- High-.....<sup>6</sup> business
- Produce hundreds of .....<sup>7</sup> of units
- Need to be very .....<sup>8</sup> in the way they produce them
- Invested heavily in .....<sup>9</sup> and processes



**CD1 TRACK 19 (I = INTERVIEWER, SB = SUSAN BARRATT)**

**I:** What are the reasons for the company's success?

**SB:** There are various reasons for the company's success. I think one of the major ones is the markets in which we operate. There are some, what we call 'big marketing themes', which are: health, convenience, sustainability and indulgence. We think the products we produce in both leaf and fruit fit a lot of those themes. So a majority of the UK population have a desire to eat healthy products. They tend to be what we call 'time-poor', i.e. they haven't got much time in their lives for creating great food, so they want to be able to buy a convenient product of good, healthy food.

There was also a theme for sustainability, so people want to feel like they are contributing towards a sustainable world, and a lot of our product has a fairly low level of what we call food miles and therefore is fairly sustainable.

Some of our products also have a fairly indulgent feel, so the UK population, er, has a habit of wanting to be indulgent at certain times. So they might diet on a Monday to Friday, but when it gets to Friday night, they will have several pieces of cake and maybe a few drinks.

I think the other reason for our success is the way we run our business. We are a high-volume business, so we're producing hundreds of millions of units, so we need to be very efficient in the way we produce them. So we've invested heavily as a business in systems and processes, to make sure we are very efficient in the manner in which we produce the products for our customers.

## C 420 CD1.20 Listen to the third part and answer these questions.

- 1 What two things has Susan enjoyed the most when running a company?
- 2 What does she not enjoy about running a company?

### CD1 TRACK 20 (I = INTERVIEWER, SB = SUSAN BARRATT)

**I:** When running a company, what have you enjoyed most and least?

**SB:** I think most is achieving what you set out to achieve. So when you're running a company, one of your key objectives, or key roles, is to set the strategy for the company, and then make sure the building blocks are in place to achieve that strategy. And that I find very satisfying – to set a clear goal for the business and then watch the business, and help the business go and achieve that goal.



I think the other thing which I find very satisfying is creating a team ethic and watching the people grow, and watching people develop and work towards the goals that you set as a business, and work as a team and get enjoyment out of that, and develop as people and as businesspeople within the organisation.

**I:** And least?

**SB:** I think least is probably the relentlessness of the role as a chief executive. You're never actually off duty, and a business like ours, which is a food-manufacturing company, it's running 364 days a year, so there's always something to be responsible for and something that's happening within your organisation. So I think that can be quite tiring. And also, the other thing that sometimes can be wearing, is it is quite a lonely life. You know, you have to make decisions, sometimes you can't talk to other people about them, and they have to be your decisions.

**D****CD1.21 Listen to the final part and complete this extract.**

I've learned a lot of lessons from the companies I've worked for. I think the key thing is that you have to make sure your .....<sup>1</sup> in the organisation are engaged with the organisation and have a clear .....<sup>2</sup> of what that organisation is trying to .....<sup>3</sup>.

If you can get that clarity of .....<sup>4</sup> and .....<sup>5</sup> from the people within the organisation, then that will help move the business forward in itself.

**CD1 TRACK 21 (I = INTERVIEWER, SB = SUSAN BARRATT)**

**I:** What lessons have you learned from the companies you've worked for?

**SB:** I've learned a lot of lessons from the companies I've worked for. I think the key thing is that you have to make sure your people in the organisation are engaged with the organisation and have a clear understanding of what that organisation is trying to achieve. If you can get that clarity of direction and enthusiasm from the people within the organisation, then that will help move the business forward in itself.

**E**

**Discuss this question in pairs.**

Would you like to run your own company? Why? / Why not?