

The story of Junior Chamber's Galway Young Entrepreneur 2004

Arabica boss Declan Garry describes what it was like to be named Galway Young Entrepreneur 2004.

"I love the atmosphere around coffee shops," says Declan Garry of the industry he enjoys most. "From a retail point of view you can do a lot of imaginative stuff with the space in them and create a good atmosphere. If you're working in one you can approach it in two ways: you can come in in the morning and keep looking at the clock until you go home, or you can interact with the customers and enjoy it."

Declan's work in establishing the chain of Arabica coffee shops around the city was recently rewarded when he was named 2004 Young Entrepreneur of the Year. "I was delighted and very surprised to win it. It's a young business: just over two years old and we are still learning. Winning the award has raised the profile of Arabica to the extent that we have received very positive reactions from the public including landlords, developers, and banks. They are more willing to discuss developing business relationships with Arabica which in turn has opened a lot of doors for me."

"It's also great to see an independent body like Junior Chamber International Galway recognising new and upcoming enterprises and having the ability to promote them in the business community in a way financial institutions are unable to."

How Arabica has evolved and its future

The first Arabica opened up on Merchants Road in March 2003. Others followed in Barna, Salthill, and the newly opened shop in Liosban. There are also plans afoot for its new development beside Joyce's supermarket in Knocknacarra.

"It was always my dream to develop an international brand, but at the moment I am looking into developing Arabica nationally through franchising," says Mr Garry. "The plan for 2006 is to have a franchise or be in the process of opening in locations such as Ennis, Sligo, Castlebar, Athlone, Oranmore and other city wide locations."

Since opening two years ago there has been much change in Declan Garry's business environment. With the backing of city council, Galway is trying to become a Fair Trade city. People are more discerning in their choices. Fair Trade has evolved in the past couple of years and so has

its awareness. All Arabica's coffees are certified Fair Trade.

"What that means is that the people who produce the coffee, be it in Indonesia or Africa or wherever, are guaranteed a fair price for their product," says Mr Garry. "At the moment coffee is trading at a 30 to 40 year low. Most people's wages go up but those people have seen their prices go down for decades. Fair Trade guarantees them a decent price. Arabica is the only coffee shop chain in Ireland that I am aware of that supports Fair Trade totally."

Mr Garry believes that a lot of other outlets could offer their support without seriously damaging their margins.

"Every restaurant, pub, and coffee shop could support Fair Trade, it wouldn't hit them hard. Hotel chains could switch to Fair Trade in the morning. With their buying power and the amount of coffee they consume it wouldn't have a big impact on them."

In the near future he expects more business will follow the Arabica example by supporting Fair Trade. "I think it is bound to become more prevalent. Every week you hear some rock star talking about it and there's more emphasis on Third World debt."

Mr Garry researched what other coffee chains were doing before he opened Arabica. He also ran a coffee distribution business and had a good idea of the types of cafes he wanted. "I would have gone to London and Dublin and looked at the chains there. While I was distributing coffee I was all the time watching, and I felt that there was definitely a niche for a good quality chain in the west of Ireland," he says.

"We also operate a loyalty card scheme whereby a customer receives a free coffee after every 10 purchased. In terms of target market for this chain of coffee shops, Arabica encourages all people of all ages to come into its shops and as a result has a wide spectrum of customers. Mr Garry says he relishes every day in the business and is determined that it will

continue to get bigger. In building this business the most difficult part was trying to obtain capital from the financial institutions. The banks all look for security, personal bonds, guarantees, and sometimes even that is never enough. When a business is running well you are able to receive more financial support from the various financial institutions.

"For me, the most rewarding thing is seeing the business well run which makes it all worth while. The success of which is due to my dedicated staff and management team," Mr Garry says, acknowledging his wife Majella and his

operations manager Eithne Geery for their constant support and encouragement in forging ahead with his business plans.

Galway Young Entrepreneur of 2005

The competition is open to people between the ages of 18 and 40 years, who are owners/managers and are primarily responsible for the performance of their business. The nominated business must also be operational for a minimum

of one year and located within Galway county

If you feel you would benefit from the experience this prestigious competition has to offer then contact Gina Kearns at 086 3451996 or Celine O'Donovan (087) 6920033 for more information. You can apply to Junior Chamber International Galway, Young Entrepreneur Competition, PO Box 99, Galway, for an entry form, or visit the website www.juniorchambergalway.com/gye.

Closing date for receipt of applications is Friday October 28 at 6pm.



Declan Garry of Arabica, winner of Galway Young Entrepreneur 2004.

BUSINESS & CAREER CLINIC



BY GER COLLERAN

The Change Model

We are living in a world of constant change - you don't need me to tell you that! In any business, change is survival material, if you don't know what your competitors are doing, if you don't know what your customers are expecting next or what is the next improvement you can do to your process / product / service, then you will be left behind with your organisational days numbered!

I assisted a gentleman recently who was preparing a presentation as part of an interview process. The presentation focused on what he would do if he got the job. He included a change process model developed by a guy called Koher from The Harvard Business School in the presentation, which I'd like to share with you this week. It has 8 essential elements:

1. Establishing a sense of urgency
2. Forming powerful coalitions
3. Creating a vision
4. Communicating a vision
5. Empower others to act on the vision
6. Planning for and creating short-term wins in projects
7. Consolidating improvements & producing still more change
8. Institutionalising new approaches

Change is an on-going process. People need to buy into your vision. The only way they will buy into it, is for them to witness your passion, your enthusiasm by the way you share it with them. You need to consider their concerns and reassure them. Get them involved, delegate parts of the change process to them where they are making it happen, not just observing its implementation. More and more organisations are realising the importance of their people in their success and survival - they are their greatest asset!

Make them part of your every decision, every concern, every change process and observe how better off you, your employees and your business will be in the long term!

Ger Colleran is Director of Talent Fusion who help people identify and source their ideal career and help organisations manage the training and development of their employees. ALL CONSULTATIONS IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE



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