



2009 SUCCESS STORY

Kitchen Tune-up



Owners	Jim and Arlene Phillips
Nature of Business	Interior home remodel projects
City	Wichita
County	Sedgwick
Phone	316-558-8888
Business Structure	www.kitchentuneup.com
Website	S Corp
Business Began	2005
Employees	6
KSBDC Consultant	Ken Elliott

“The KSBDC provided good technical help with a business plan and cash flow, but more than anything the moral support was probably more helpful to us than anything else...”

Jim Phillips, Co-Owner

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It wasn't long after 9-11 when Jim and Arlene Phillips found themselves looking for a new direction in their lives. Since both had had stable careers for many years, it was almost accidental that they “stumbled” across the idea of being their own boss for a change. A franchise broker introduced them to the franchise business called Kitchen Tune-Up and, as they say, “the rest is history.”

Admittedly both Jim and Arlene love what they do, but it wasn't always smooth sailing to get to where they are now. The Phillips have dealt with and overcome many issues including finding quality labor, long work hours, searching out creative alternatives when things didn't fit into their budget and recently a faltering economy, to name a few...

Jim states the KSBDC helped them with usual technical documents such as a business plan and cash flow, but over and above that, two things really stand out as helpful . . . moral support and connecting them through the tax seminars with the Kansas Department of Revenue. “The tax seminars KSBDC hosts are great,” states Jim. Jim's wife, Arlene, manages the money and marketing side of the business while Jim focuses on customer relations and making sure the remodel jobs go smoothly.

One of the biggest challenges the Phillips have faced is finding effective marketing strategies. “...everything works a little bit, but nothing works all the time. Some things are dismal failures and some things are hot for a while and then cold.”

Jim credits Arlene for tenaciously negotiating on rates – something small business owners must constantly learn to do if they're to be successful. “At the end of the day, it's hard work and long hours,” Jim says, “but there's a completely different level of satisfaction with the work you do as your own boss.” Jim states, “We've always had satisfied, happy customers! The key is to over deliver, make sure we go the extra step to exceed their expectations! It's all about customer satisfaction for us and that sets us apart!”

Secret to Success

“Be mindful of your cash situation – don't over estimate your income when starting up and don't under estimate your outgo. Hope for the best but be prepared for the worst. Give yourself a cash cushion and don't make assumptions.”