

# Why You Should Choose A Sales Career With Blue Ribbon Foods A Letter From The Owner's Son

Dear Friend,

My name is Ryan Kantor. I'm a college student at Clemson University and my father, Keith Kantor, is CEO and one of the owners of Blue Ribbon Foods. I'd like to share with you some important reasons why you should consider a selling career with the company.

The answer in short is, it's a great company. The difficult part is explaining what makes it so great. It really boils down to one of the main philosophies my dad and his business partner, Trey Pounders (President), believe in: A great company requires great people. To have great people you have to seek them out, give them the tools they need to succeed, encourage their initiative, support them, and help them become an integral part of a great team.

To do this, my dad says you cannot just state a philosophy. You must live by it. I grew up in that environment, and for most of it I was too young to understand what he meant. But now I can see how his belief in people and an entrepreneurial spirit have come to fruition in Blue Ribbon Foods. It is this belief that makes the company so special.

Here's what I mean. When you join the company, you don't work *for* Blue Ribbon Foods. You become part of the team. One of my dad's favorite quotes is, "the easiest way to make money is to help others make money." This is one of the most important philosophies embedded in the culture of the company. Trey Pounders and my dad do whatever they can to put their team members in a position to succeed and reach their goals. I will explain how they do this in a minute but first I'd like to share with you why our customers are so passionate about us.

## What We Do

We provide our customers with higher quality, healthier, better tasting food. The food contains no hormones, no dyes, no chemical preservatives, no antibiotics, or any other unwanted chemicals. It's better than anything out there. In addition, we feature a selection of health and wellness products – our best sellers are our water and air filtration systems. We also sell high-end, commercial grade freezers and grills, as well as other appliances, waterless cookware, and cutlery. Our fleet of refrigerated trucks delivers the food to our customers' homes. Our uniformed drivers pack the food in our customer's freezers for them.

Because we offer and deliver substantially better, healthier food, directly to our customer's homes, for about the same as what they spend anyways, we have a remarkable 75%+ company-wide closing ratio. With our top notch service department, 90% of the families who shop with us remain long-term customers. Customer satisfaction is such that more than 70% of our new customers hear about us, and are referred by, other satisfied customers.

A lot of companies talk about customer service, but we REALLY emphasize it. We have not one, but two customer service managers (Adam Zeisel and Stephanie Shaw). Each order is called and confirmed. When we do receive a (thankfully rare) complaint, Adam and Stephanie don't just respond. They're proactive. Why such an emphasis on customer service? We have some customers who have re-ordered from us for more than 20 years. My dad says this is the difference between having a stable, financially secure company and one that is here today and gone tomorrow.

Last summer I went through the company's sales training course. The most valuable thing I took from the class was that the products and services we provide are truly good for families. With all the negative things that have been in the news lately about e-coli and salmonella in food, it is becoming clear that better quality food is a smart choice.

## **The Five Ways We Help You Succeed**

- 1.** Our salespeople are supported with an innovative marketing and CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system comprising of print, digital, voice, and video communication to our clients and prospects. We communicate with our customers at least four times a month. By doing this, we continuously foster a sense of community and relationship which, of course, leads to additional referrals. So much so that, as I mentioned, more than 70% of our business comes from referrals.
- 2.** Recently, we pioneered a highly effective lead generation system where you're able to control your flow of leads. Want more sales? Use the system more. Want more time for the family? Use the system less. This is one of our most effective ways of generating "warm" sales (much better than a "cold" sale, don't you agree?).
- 3.** You'll benefit from the strong presence we have at consumer and trade shows. Imagine a state of the art trade show booth with live chef appearances, cooking demos, and food giveaways. All of this is designed to generate additional leads for our salespeople. Typically, a show will net about 250-300 leads and we participate in a minimum of 40 shows a year.
- 4.** Our products are so well regarded that not only do our customers provide us with referrals, but so do doctors, chiropractors, and nutritionists. We just hired our own dietician to help our customers who need specialized meal planning.
- 5.** Finally, you'll receive great training. Some companies believe in throwing their salespeople out in the market with little or no education. Not us. Whether you've never sold before (I hadn't) or you've been in sales all your life, you'll greatly benefit from this comprehensive program. Are you a "foodie" and into food, or is mac 'n cheese your idea of a gourmet meal? It doesn't matter. You'll leave our training program with a complete understanding of our products, our company, and our sales process. And what a sales process. As I said, I've gone through the company's three-week training program and it really works. I guess the 75% sales closing rate speaks for itself.

## **What Else Can You Expect From the Company?**

My dad believes in treating the people on the team well (he actually just had me read another book about it –*The One Minute Entrepreneur*). One of the ways he does this is with a compensation structure that has realistic six figure potential. Our top salesperson, René Elalouf, who has been with the company for about five years, routinely earns in the middle six figures. Probably a fairer representation for you would be one of our newest salespeople, Cayci Johnson. Cayci has only been with us for three months, but in her first month she made eight sales (earning about \$7,000). That's a pretty realistic starting figure. Even with her selling career taking off, Cayci is able take time out for her weekly radio show (she's a pretty interesting gal) and take Fridays for herself.

Of course, benefits like medical, dental, car allowance, vacations, and 401k are available to you based on tenure and performance. You'll also receive a laptop computer.

## **What Will Be Expected From You?**

Fortunately, we are in a position where we do not have to choose just anybody to join our team. Our mantra is, we want "A" players only! So what is an "A" player?

- An "A" Player is self-motivated. Yes, we will guide you and support you, but we can't make you ambitious. To be considered an "A" player you must want to succeed for your own reasons.
- An "A" Player has an entrepreneurial mindset. You will fit into our company culture if you love the fact that you can control your own destiny. To be an "A" player, you'll appreciate the support team around you, but thrive on the autonomy you'll have. This is a no-cube culture. We're growing. Expanding. Promoting. Excited? Let's go.
- An "A" Player wants to be successful. Mediocrity is unacceptable. If you don't like losing - even finishing second hurts - then you'll be considered an "A" player. It's just an observation, but many people seem complacent today. Why settle when you don't have to?

## **You May Have Some Questions, So Let's Go Ahead And Answer Them Now**

### **How financially stable is the company?**

Good question. We are very sound financially. Our two owners are proven entrepreneurial executives and well-respected members of the Atlanta business community. Under their guidance, the company has grown over the last 27 years into the largest in-home food service company in the country.

Our headquarters is in Norcross, Georgia and our state of the art, federally inspected processing plant is in Tifton, Georgia. Sales offices are located in Atlanta, GA; Warner Robbins, GA; Macon, GA; Memphis, TN; Nashville, TN; Chattanooga, TN; Knoxville, TN; Greenville, SC; Winston Salem, NC; Greensboro, SC; Raleigh Durham, NC; Roanoke, VA; and Jacksonville, FL.

We are in a recession-proof niche with few competitors. Expansion and growth are continuing and more offices will open in the future. We are a debt free, privately owned company.

### **I don't feel comfortable with a commission-only position. What else can you tell me about it?**

We've tested other compensation models but our current model provides more income. Plus, our current salespeople all prefer it. Yes, it is a bit of an initial risk, but no more so than becoming a Realtor or mortgage loan officer. Alternative compensation models just can't get you into the six-figure range, at least not as quickly.

### **How hard is it to get a sale?**

Most of the people we visit end up buying from us - about seven or eight out of every ten. That's pretty amazing when you consider that most sales jobs have a closing percentage of around 15-30%. When you've got a superior product that is healthier for you, tastes better, is delivered to you and costs about the same, well, it's not the most difficult sale in the world. To assist you, we've also got some terrific sales managers like Joe Torres in Atlanta, and an outstanding Vice President of Sales in Kyle Gordon.

### **What are my hours going to be like?**

The hours you work will be mostly up to you. Aside from meeting with the sales manager (generally in the mornings), your schedule will be flexible. That's not to say you won't work hard. You will. You'll meet with prospects, generate new business, help-out at trade shows and attend sales meetings. But what six-figure jobs do you know of that don't require work (see "A" players above)?

But if you want to take a Wednesday off to hang out with your family, it's OK. If you want to schedule a sales call on a Saturday morning, it's fine. You really will set your schedule.

### **What's it like working for the company?**

No stiffs here. When you meet my dad you'll see what I mean. He's a pretty big goof ball with lots of corny jokes and stories. He's also a special forces officer in the Marine Corp. So you could say we're disciplined and work hard, because we all want to be successful, but we're also laidback, informal and fun. Good natured kidding. When my dad gets started with Stephanie (10 years with the company) or Maxine (19 years with the company), it's really funny. But we do work.

### **How long do people tend to stay with the company?**

Some have been with us for a long time. A few that come to mind: Adam Zeisel (14 years), Cheryl Rhea (8 years), Mike Partain (11 years), Kyle Gordon (14 years), Joe Torres (6 years). Of course, not everybody stays this long. We're a great fit for a lot of people but in all honesty, we're not right for everybody.

### **What are my growth opportunities?**

Truly unlimited. No hype. My dad started off as a salesman and now he owns half the company. Joe Torres started off as a salesperson in Nashville before becoming the Atlanta sales manager. Mike Maize jumped from salesperson to managing our North Carolina sales operations. New locations provide opportunities for new positions. We strongly believe in promoting from within.

## What's The Next Step?

If you're an "A" player and interested in learning more, I invite you to fill out an online application or email your resume to [service@BlueRibbonFoods.com](mailto:service@BlueRibbonFoods.com). Once we receive your information, we'll contact you for a brief phone interview.

Thanks for reading this. I hope it was helpful. Best of luck in your selling career and...

**Go Tigers!**

Ryan Kantor

PS Please take a look at the videos we've posted of [some of our team members](#). It will give you a good idea of the wonderful people we have on our team.