

Beef 'O' Brady's franchise owner creates success through community involvement

Don Bosko - Beef 'O' Brady's
Location: Lakeland, FL



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Franchise: Beef 'O' Brady's

Why did you choose franchising? And Beef 'O' Brady's franchise?

I was always a leader and achiever at school, work and church. In December of 1990, the company I worked for after 18 years sold the division I was managing. I decided I didn't want to work for a company again – I wanted to be my own boss.

I had always been a customer of Beef 'O' Brady's and I loved the family atmosphere. I wanted to be a part of a company that had already been proven successful. Franchises have a proven method of profitability, menu, atmosphere, marketing and more that have been tested to thrive and be profitable for the franchise owner. I chose Beef 'O' Brady's for all of these reasons.

Mr. Melody was the original owner of Beef 'O' Brady's in Brandon, FL and was very sceptical of me at first. I finally convinced him to allow me to work at his Beef 'O' Brady's location free of charge for a year so I could learn the ins and outs of the business. I was able to gain Mr. Melody's trust and I was eventually promoted to weekend manager and then I was able to open my first location in Polk County after proving I was dedicated and serious about opening my own Beef 'O' Brady's restaurant.

What did you do before buying your Beef 'O' Brady's franchise?

I worked at Owens Corning Fiberglass for 18 years. I started as a Customer Service Representative and eventually was promoted to Assistant Administrative Manager, General Manager, Sales Representative, Sales Manager and was offered the Atlanta Region Director position just as Owens Corning Fiberglass sold the division I worked for.

In December 1990, after 18 years of working 6 a.m. – 7 p.m. and weekends; I was out of work. I had worked so hard to advance in the company and I felt as if I had no control over my future. I decided that I would become my own boss by getting into franchising.

How did you raise the finance?

I put money into savings during my 18 years at Owens Fiberglass; I bought stock and saved over \$120,000 in the company stock. We cashed the stock, borrowed against my home and dug into savings to purchase our first Beef 'O' Brady's. The banks would not loan money to a man with

no experience in the restaurant business and no proven record of success. Also, it didn't help that 82% of restaurants fail within their first 2-3 years in business.

What training and support did you receive initially and on an ongoing basis from Beef 'O' Brady's?

I worked at the Brandon Beef 'O' Brady's for no wage, seven days a week, learning the ins and outs of the business, understand the menu, purchasing, quality control, finance, records and customer relations. I was so excited about the possibility of owning my own Beef 'O' Brady's one day that I truly looked forward to each new day. Work was enjoyable and it comforting to know that I could control my own success as a business owner.

What is an average day like for you? (information on your role as a franchisee – tasks you undertake etc)

I would arrive to work by 6 a.m., create a master plan for cleaning, cash controls, inventory, counts, scheduling, ordering products, motivating staff and greeting customers (getting to know them on a first name basis). I spent time visiting other businesses with food samples, joining clubs, charity groups, church fundraising events, networking at schools, attending chamber events and keeping all the restaurants energetic and positive. I led my employees by example – there was no task in the restaurant I wouldn't do by myself.

Now, I oversee the four Beef 'O' Brady's restaurants in Florida.

What challenges have you faced?

Developing a way to control cash, prevent theft and motivate and promote great employees have been challenging. It was also difficult to get the Lakeland community to understand the concept of a Family Sports Pub. We lost our entire business in 2004 due to Hurricane Jeanne in 2004 and we were able to re-build the restaurant with the help and support of the Lakeland community.

Has becoming a franchisee changed your life, if so how?

Yes, our business has allowed me to make new friends and become a leader within the community. Owning the restaurant and watching the business grow has given me great pride. My three sons now manage Beef 'O' Brady's stores and my daughter has taken her experience of working in the kitchen at 13 years old into a passion for culinary arts – she is now a gourmet chef of private yachts.

I have also been recognized as "Retailer of the Year" for the state of Florida and I have won education and community awards as well as awards in franchising. This has been a truly rewarding experience for myself and my family. This experience has allowed me to give back to the Lakeland community through many different fundraising and community events.

What advice would you give to someone thinking of buying their first franchise?

Visit many different franchise concepts. Understand the ownership, marketing, staff, cost, training and ability to be successful. Once you have decided on a franchise concept, visit the owners, work in the business and create a plan to make you a successful business owner. Develop a ten year outlook.

Ask yourself: are you motivated to accept the ups and downs? Can you create success with an innovative plan? Does your family support the idea? Have you picked a franchise that supports your goals and aligns with your personality?

I would advise prospective franchisees to look at the total package and know the ins and outs of each part of a business before purchasing a concept.

What are your plans for the future? Would you do it again?

My plans for the future are to remodel and update all the restaurants I own. In addition, I want to build two more Beef 'O' Brady's locations in Polk County and become even more involved in giving to charities and community groups that are in need. I would like to build a stronger environment for employees so they understand the 'WOW' experience.

I would do it again. We have closed two Beef 'O' Brady's locations in our 20 years in business, but it has taught to be more selective in choose restaurant locations and become a better business owner. Beef's has become a way of life for my family and have we have been very blessed with a career and a company that allows us to give back to the community.

Request information on franchise ownership of [Beef 'O' Brady's franchise](#)