



Interviewee:	Danielle Allen – “The Other Bird” & Commercial Leader
Company:	Two Birds Brewing (Two Birds are Danielle Allen and Jayne Lewis)
Date:	September, 2017
Website:	twobirdsbrewing.com.au

“We can’t afford for our people to come to work and have a Bad day!”

Context: In the Jan-Feb 2010 edition of the Harvard Business Review, authors T.M. Amabile & S.J. Kramer provided ground breaking research findings into what produces a “good day” in the workplace. Within some 12,000 individual diary entries, “progress” or the sense of ‘moving the dial’, was the vital ingredient discovered in over 76% of participants “best days” at work.

Margin Partners Advisory is interviewing Australian Leaders to benchmark the regularity of “good workday’s” and to provide insights into how their frequency can be increased. More interviews and case studies are available at valueleakage.com.au

1 Describe a good work day for yourself:

It starts with a completely unsolicited email from a customer that says, “Well done Two Birds – I love your Beer!”. Following this would be some sizable orders for our Brews that exceed our monthly Sales target. Thereafter, I’d be able to get my hit list of tasks done by midday to free myself up to do what I do best in the afternoon.

My “best” involves positively connecting with our Staff and Customers. I thrive on sharing our Two Birds vision and enjoying the moment when you know you’ve got someone over the line. Talking with new Customers can be thrilling. I look for new seeds of growth in every meeting and I’m very prone to getting a big sense of achievement out of getting a deal done.

2 How many good days do you average a month?

Four out of five days are good. Let’s face it, it’s fun making beer. That said there are challenges and the biggest of those are internal. We have grown from being literally just “Two Birds” (Jayne and myself) into an organisation that employs over 20 people. The bigger you get the more you should stop and think about the broader welfare of the company and the people within it. People depend on the business being successful. They want to come to work and feel valued. It forces me to stop. I have to routinely put down my “to do list” and consider their input, feedback and level of engagement. A lot can take place within our nest!



A good Workday for Danielle Allen at Two Birds Brewing

3 Describe a good workday for your companies P&L?

Achieving our sales goals. We are a volume driven business. We can't influence our cost base, nor the weather, but we can get to work and build sales. A good day sees plenty of Beer being invoiced. It's that simple and it's that sensitive.

4 Do the two days align?

Totally. At the end of the day everything comes back to distribution and Sales. We are small, agile and my husband just happens to be the Sales Manager. We can keep such a tight rein on variable costs and discretionary spending but ultimately, we need to keep selling more Beer. For Jayne, it's totally different. Her role is about production quality and operational efficiency. Good days for her are about the integrity of the beer we sell. We have different motivations but that is what makes us unique and successful.

5 Where is Margin Erosion most likely to occur in your sector?

I'd have to say internally. Leakage for us is most likely in the production space because things can come undone quickly. When you're effectively hand producing FMCG products, mismanagement of line items such as Packaging and Inventory, can all too easily tie up working capital. Equally, producing a batch of Beer that is not within specification can literally wash away profit. We can't afford for people to come to work and have a bad day. A press of the wrong button or a measure of incorrect ingredients quickly erodes value.

Within the external Craft Beer sector, I would say that the biggest risk is in not having a robust Business Plan. There are so many distractions in our crowded Category that can too easily push Brewers and our Sales team off track. Packaged beer or Kegs? Tasting rooms or Restaurants? Large Retail or smaller Independents? A written Plan with a clear Mission and Vision gives you the road map to constantly refer back to. Trust me, you need it.

6 Key Takeout:

Danielle exudes a maternalistic instinct for the Two Birds brand. She shared that she would "never be able to shake the sense of it being an extension of Jayne and herself because we live and breathe it every single day".

However, building on the "family metaphor" it's clear that as her "baby" has grown, so too has the wider Two Birds family. It's no longer just her and Jayne. She has less time to spend in the area's she favours and more demands to manage staff and overall Business health. Impressively the Two Birds have been proactive in engaging the hired help required to make things work. From appointing external Brand agencies; to establishing a formalised Board and Reporting structure, the Two Birds are stepping outside their comfort zones to create a platform for long term growth. It's a compelling example to other's who suddenly find their small business "growing up so fast".