

20 OUT OF 20

How listening to a franchise network helped Sky High Window Cleaning improve every comparable franchisee engagement measure in six months

A Franchise Growth Case Study

Steve Barrett | Black Flag Coaching



SIX MONTHS. ONE NETWORK. SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS.

4.28

**Overall average across comparable
measures**

Up from 3.32 / 5

20/20

Comparable measures improved

87%

Franchisee survey participation

Up from 53%

100%

**Positive about being proud to be part
of Sky High**

100% Positive that the franchisor and franchisees are working towards the same goals

"We had to want the truth more than we wanted a good score."

LISTEN BEFORE YOU ACT

When I started working with Sky High Window Cleaning, I could have arrived with a list of things I thought the franchise needed to change.

Instead, one of the first things I suggested to founder Paul Needham was that we ask the franchisees.

We introduced an anonymous franchisee engagement survey to establish a genuine baseline. We wanted to understand what was working, where the friction existed and what franchisees wanted more of.

The objective wasn't to generate a positive set of statistics. It was to give the people already inside the network an opportunity to tell us honestly how they were experiencing it.

The results gave us plenty to be positive about, but they also highlighted some clear opportunities.

That gave us somewhere to start.

"The survey didn't improve anything. What happened after we listened did."

TURNING FEEDBACK INTO ACTION

The first survey wasn't the end of the exercise. It was the beginning of the work.

Over the following six months, Paul and I used the feedback, alongside our wider work with the network, to help shape a number of changes.

BETTER COMMUNICATION

Communication became more regular, purposeful and two-way.

MONTHLY FRANCHISEE CALLS

A consistent rhythm was introduced for sharing information, discussing the business and keeping the network connected.

PEER-TO-PEER CONNECTION

A network WhatsApp group made it easier for franchisees to share experiences, ask questions and help each other.

MORE MEANINGFUL BUSINESS CONVERSATIONS

There was greater focus on helping franchisees build stronger businesses, rather than allowing support to become purely operational.

BETTER TOOLS, SYSTEMS AND SUPPORT

Sky High continued investing in the infrastructure and support available to franchisees as the network developed.

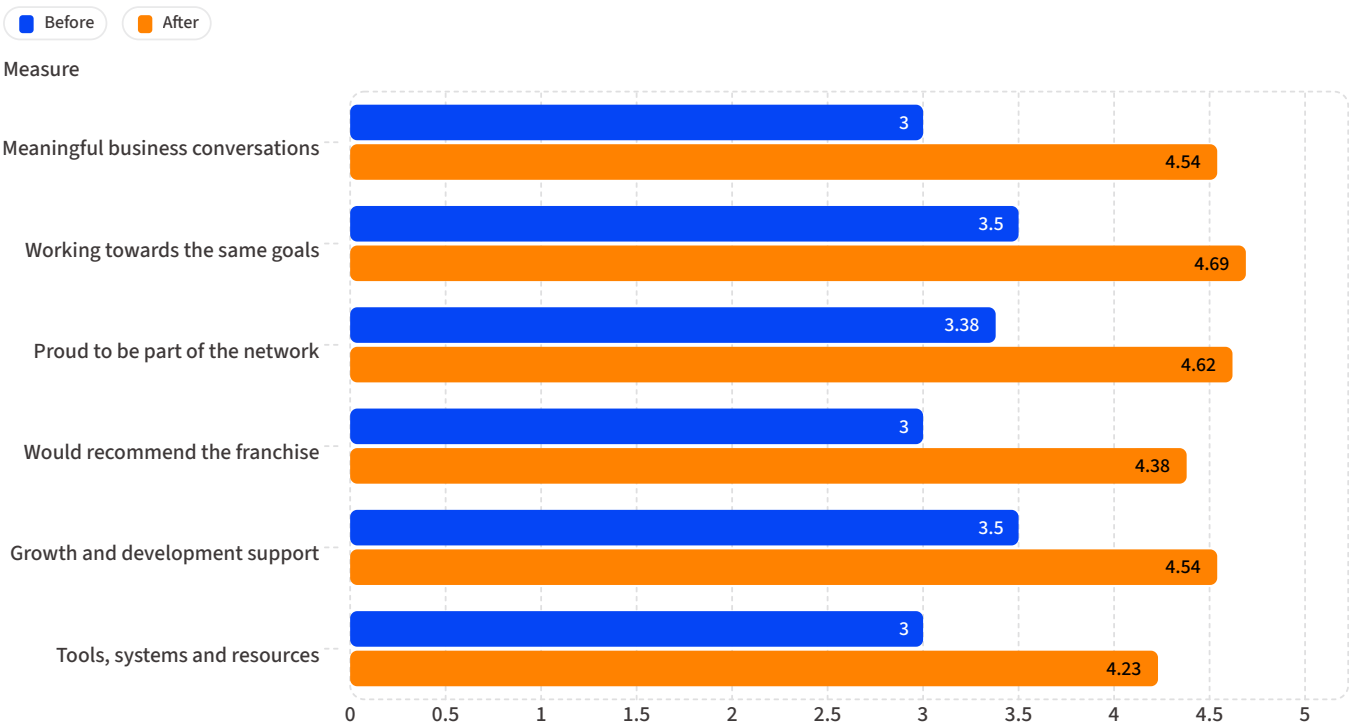
None of these changes happened in isolation.

Together, they were part of building a stronger franchisee experience.

THEN WE MEASURED AGAIN

Six months later, we went back to the franchisees and asked the same questions again.

The results showed significant movement across the network.



The overall average across all 20 comparable measures increased from **3.32 → 4.28 / 5**

An improvement of approximately 29% in six months.

20 OUT OF 20

20 questions measured twice.

20 improved.

Not one went backwards.

Every comparable measure of the franchisee experience moved in the right direction.

Communication.

Support.

Recognition.

Confidence.

Alignment.

Pride.

Recommendation.

Tools and resources.

Business conversations.

Growth and development.

20 OUT OF 20.

"The objective wasn't to make the dashboard greener. It was to build a better franchise. The greener dashboard should be the consequence."

FROM A NETWORK TOWARDS A COMMUNITY

The numbers told us a lot.

The franchisee comments told us something else.

Earlier feedback had highlighted that franchisees weren't working together as much as they could.

Six months later, franchisees were asking for more opportunities to meet, share best practice, learn from each other's successes and failures, collaborate on larger contracts and spend time alongside one another.

"The support this year has been brilliant. Especially since we started the WhatsApp group and monthly calls."

"Fantastic progress since last survey. Can see we all have same goals because of the communication!"

That represents an important shift.

A collection of franchisees operating under the same brand isn't necessarily a network.

The real value begins to grow when knowledge, experience and support start flowing between franchisees as well as from the franchisor.

That is the network Sky High is continuing to build.

ENGAGEMENT ISN'T AN HR METRIC. IT'S A GROWTH METRIC.

Why does any of this matter commercially?

RECRUITMENT

The people already inside a franchise can become some of its most powerful advocates.

In six months, Sky High's recommendation score increased from 3.00 to 4.38, with 85% of respondents giving a positive response.

PERFORMANCE

Meaningful business and performance conversations increased from 3.00 to 4.54, while growth and development support reached 4.54.

SCALE

A connected network can share knowledge, solve problems and develop capability across the franchise rather than relying on the franchisor to provide every answer.

ALIGNMENT

The score for the franchisor and franchisees working towards the same goals reached 4.69, with 100% of respondents giving a positive response.

Growth becomes considerably harder when the network isn't coming with you.

"Growth without alignment simply creates more problems at scale."

LISTEN → ACT → MEASURE → IMPROVE

The approach isn't complicated.

1

LISTEN

Give franchisees a genuine opportunity to tell you what they think.

2

ACT

Turn the insight into clear priorities and do something about them.

3

MEASURE

Go back and find out whether the changes actually made a difference.

4

IMPROVE

Use the new evidence to determine what happens next.

Then repeat.

A franchisee engagement survey shouldn't be an occasional exercise designed to produce a score.

Used properly, it can become part of the operating rhythm of a growing franchise.

THE NEXT SIX MONTHS

20 out of 20 doesn't mean the work is finished.

In fact, one of the greatest benefits of measuring again was discovering what Sky High needs to focus on next.

The latest feedback has helped identify three priorities for the next stage.

HELP MORE FRANCHISEES MOVE FROM OPERATING TO GROWING

As businesses develop, franchisees increasingly face questions around employees, additional vans, cash flow, commercial work and finding the time to build rather than simply operate their businesses.

STRENGTHEN LEAD GENERATION AND LOCAL MARKETING

Continue developing centrally generated opportunities while giving franchisees more tools, knowledge and confidence to generate business within their own territories.

BUILD THE POWER OF THE NETWORK

Create more opportunities for franchisees to share knowledge, learn from one another and collaborate.

The challenges change as a franchise grows.

The support has to evolve with them.

THE RESULT AFTER SIX MONTHS

87%

Franchisee participation

4.28

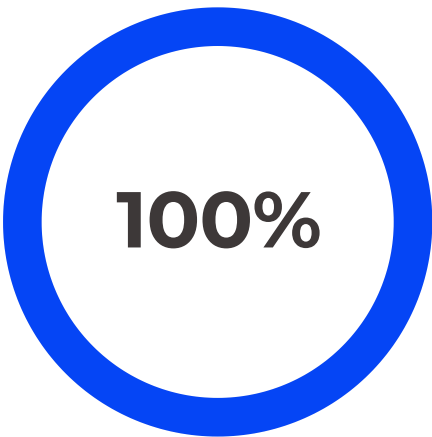
Overall comparable score
out of 5

29%

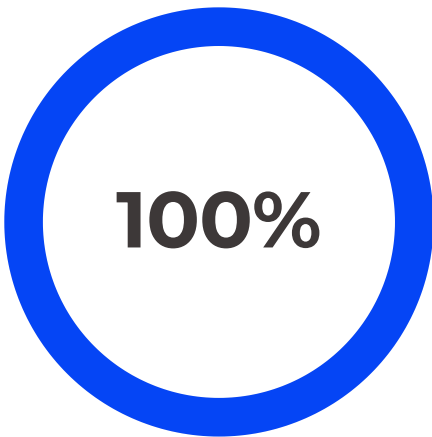
Improvement in the average score

20/20

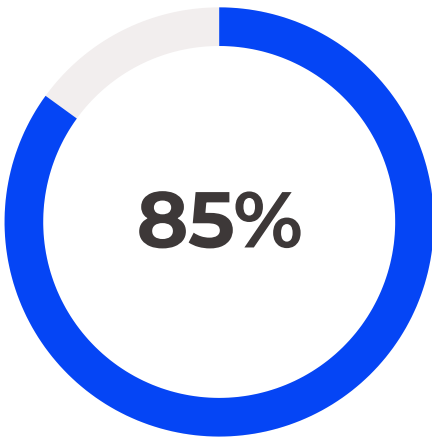
Comparable measures improved



Positive about being
proud to be part of Sky
High



Positive about working
towards the same goals



Positive about
recommending the
franchise

These numbers provide something more valuable than a testimonial about the work.

They provide evidence of change.

BUILDING A FRANCHISE IS ONE CHALLENGE. SCALING ONE IS ANOTHER.

As a franchise grows, the things that got it through the early stages don't always provide what it needs for the next one.

The founder can't remain the answer to every question. Communication needs more structure. Franchisee support needs to evolve. Strong performers need opportunities to grow. Underperformance needs to be addressed. Knowledge needs to move around the network.

I work alongside growing franchisors to strengthen the operation behind the network, improve franchisee performance and build the leadership, systems and rhythm needed for the next stage of growth.

Sometimes that means coaching the franchisor.

Sometimes it means working directly with franchisees.

Sometimes it means fixing something operational or helping build something that doesn't yet exist.

The work depends on what the franchise needs next.

If you're growing a franchise network and some of this feels familiar, let's have a conversation.

Steve Barrett

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