



When One Door Closed, A Window Opened

By Nadra Angerman



Rob and Kathy Adamson, owners of Evergreen Textiles and Salvin Manufacturing

When one door closes, another one opens. For Rob and Kathy Adamson, this old saying couldn't come closer to the truth.

Today they own Evergreen Textiles and Salvin Manufacturing on 1st Avenue South in Georgetown. Their businesses feature a textile showroom frequented by leading interior designers, a 27,000 sq. ft. manufacturing facility and a place of work for 25 dedicated professionals. It all grew out of the fact that in 1992, Rob suddenly found himself out of a job.

By age 45, Rob had worked his way up through a succession of management and finance jobs, each one better than the last, until he wound up out of work when the family-owned businesses that employed him decided to make a family-related change in its management structure. At that point, Rob had a wife, four kids, a home and all the responsibilities that go with them – and no job or employment prospects.

"I suddenly found myself looking for a job that needed to pay me \$50,000 or more," he said, "and I found myself competing with people who were half my age with twice as

much education. The only way I could go forward was to essentially buy myself a job by starting my own business."

Fortunately, Rob and Kathy had been able to save a little money for emergencies. They used it to purchase Salvin Manufacturing, a custom drapery fabrication business founded in 1955. The company had five employees, a loyal customer base, and a new owner who didn't know much of anything about drapes. "I didn't know drapery from doorways," said Rob.

But his strong financial background helped him analyze what he had to work with. More importantly, he knew how to build a team – a skill he acquired when he worked as a general operations manager for Safeco Insurance. Rob spent the first six months at Salvin learning the drapery business from his employees.

The company thrived and in 1998, Rob and Kathy purchased Evergreen Textiles, the largest fabric distributorship in the Pacific Northwest. In addition, Evergreen Textiles represented Kirsch, a company that invented the first flat curtain rod and a leading supplier of designer window décor and drapery hardware collections.

In the year 2000, Rob and Kathy added Ship and Shore Bedding to their line, a small retail fabricator for boat interiors.

Today, their companies represent textile, trimming and decorative hardware from Conso, Kirsch, Trimland, KS System and Rollease, to name just a few. Evergreen Textiles and Salvin Manufacturing have earned recognition as a one-stop source for trend-setting interior designers.

All because Rob was able to rebound from what seemed like a career setback. A door shut. A window opened. A successful business person persevered. ■