

# The danger of being too focused

 By [Rolf Akermann](#)

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Constantly we are reminded to be, or stay, focused. But is this always right?...

A number of years ago, a friend and I went crayfish diving on the West Coast. Swimming along, I was focused on spotting the telltale feelers of a crayfish hiding in a gap in the rocks. Only when I hit my head against a "rock" did I notice the abundance of "Perlemoen"! I prefer this to crayfish, but because I was focused on finding crayfish, I almost missed this opportunity. It taught me a lesson. My focus should not have been only on crayfish, but rather of finding delectable food in the ocean.

## Small food producers are often too focused

Speak to any small/start-up company in the food sector and they will tell you how close they are on getting a listing at one of the big chains, such as Pick n Pay, Checkers, Woolies, Spar etc. This is their FOCUS. The process of getting listings from the big retailers is costly and time consuming with listing fees, adherence to quality standards and investment in production capacity putting huge strain on cash-flow.

Often they are focussing on the wrong distribution channel for their product. The product could be far more suited to delis or chains such as Wellness Warehouse. They would be able to manage the growth of the brand with much less risk. Steady growth in other channels than the big supermarkets, can lead to listings at no cost and no risk in the long term.

## Be focused on the right thing(s)

Staying with the example of food producers, their objective was to get their brand noticed (awareness) by their target market. Thorough research of possible routes to market should be done, instead of trying to get a listing at a big chain. The desire for quick growth, over-shadows reason and logic.

Once the correct distribution plan has been developed to reach the target market, then it is time to FOCUS. Find the right distributor (or set up your own), employ the right sales / supporting staff and gear your production to satisfy your clients. I came across this [article](#) that shows the impact small food producers have had on BIG brands. Not via the likes of Tesco's but via lesser groups. It will take time, but could be the difference between success and failure.

## The formula

I have only used the food producers as an example. This principle can be applied across all business sectors, departments and disciplines. The formula in my opinion is as follows: 1. Define the objective. 2. Do research to find out how this can best be achieved. 3. Focus on getting it done, through planning and implementing the right strategies.

## ABOUT ROLF AKERMANN

Passionate Marketing / Brand Strategist with substantial industry experience - Thrives on building and growing successful brands...

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