

Greet a garbo

HOT SHOT

Richard Dutton, 31 Personal rubbish removal franchisee

Are you or are you not a garbage man?

It's a little bit more than that. For one, it's my own business, my own franchise. Second, the word "garbage" is a little bit narrow. I'd say "demolition and waste removal" is probably the best way of describing it.

Describe what you do.

We get calls from customers who want to empty out their garage or throw out old pieces of furniture. We get hoarders and people who have collected stuff over the years who just want to do a clean-out, as well as people who have just renovated. Offices and builders who have cut-offs and extra rubbish are also our customers. It's hands-on rubbish removal. Rather than have a skip, we drive up in a truck, throw the rubbish in and drive away.

What's the most unusual thing you've ever had to dispose of?

There have been a few. I'd probably say the cheese. It was a job near Homebush where new management had taken over a factory store space and wanted to clear out the previous tenant's rubbish. We basically took away six truckloads of cheese, the majority of which was off. They were massive chunks of cheese, not just the good old 270 grams of cheddar that you get at the supermarket. They were five or six kilograms each. The boys and the bin and the inside of the truck were smelling for days after that.

How did you get into the industry?

One of the three brothers who own the company is my brother-in-law. To me, it was a family business. I had just finished working in TV production and, before that, events management and I didn't feel secure in either of those jobs. I thought buying a franchise would help with the security factor.

So it wasn't an ambition growing up?

No. I've always been kind of entrepreneurial. I like to work for myself. I prefer to have my own rules.

How much can a good waste removalist earn?

\$2500 to \$3000 a week.

What's the best thing about your job?

Working for myself and the flexibility to pick and choose my days of work.

And the worst thing?

Certain disgusting garbage that you collect, but that's quite rare.

Do you think you can judge a person's lifestyle by what they throw out?

Definitely. I'm not restricted to one area of Sydney. I travel way out west and to Baulkham Hills and down south, Cronulla way. I mainly do the east. You can see the variety of different people and the way that they live. You can get a bit of an idea of their style and their background.



Are you a clean freak at home?

I'd say 80 per cent yes, 20 per cent no. I go through stages when I clean like crazy. Overall, I like to be clean because I come home dirty. I jump in the shower and usually clean up my house as soon as I get home.

Does your industry get a bad rap? Most kids don't grow up wanting to be a garbo.

It does, but you can turn any industry into somewhere that you want to be. I don't think many people aspire to work for someone else as a waste removal person, but if you're working

for yourself in an entrepreneurial sense then it can definitely [be a great career].

What advice would you give people thinking about going into business for themselves?

Just go for it. It is a little bit of a gamble, buying into a business and starting something up yourself, but I think you've just got to give it a go. You can always give it away [if it doesn't work out].

Elicia Murray

Richard Dutton owns a franchise for 1300RUBBISH, www.1300rubbish.com.au.