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The Entrepreneurs' Organization Magazine



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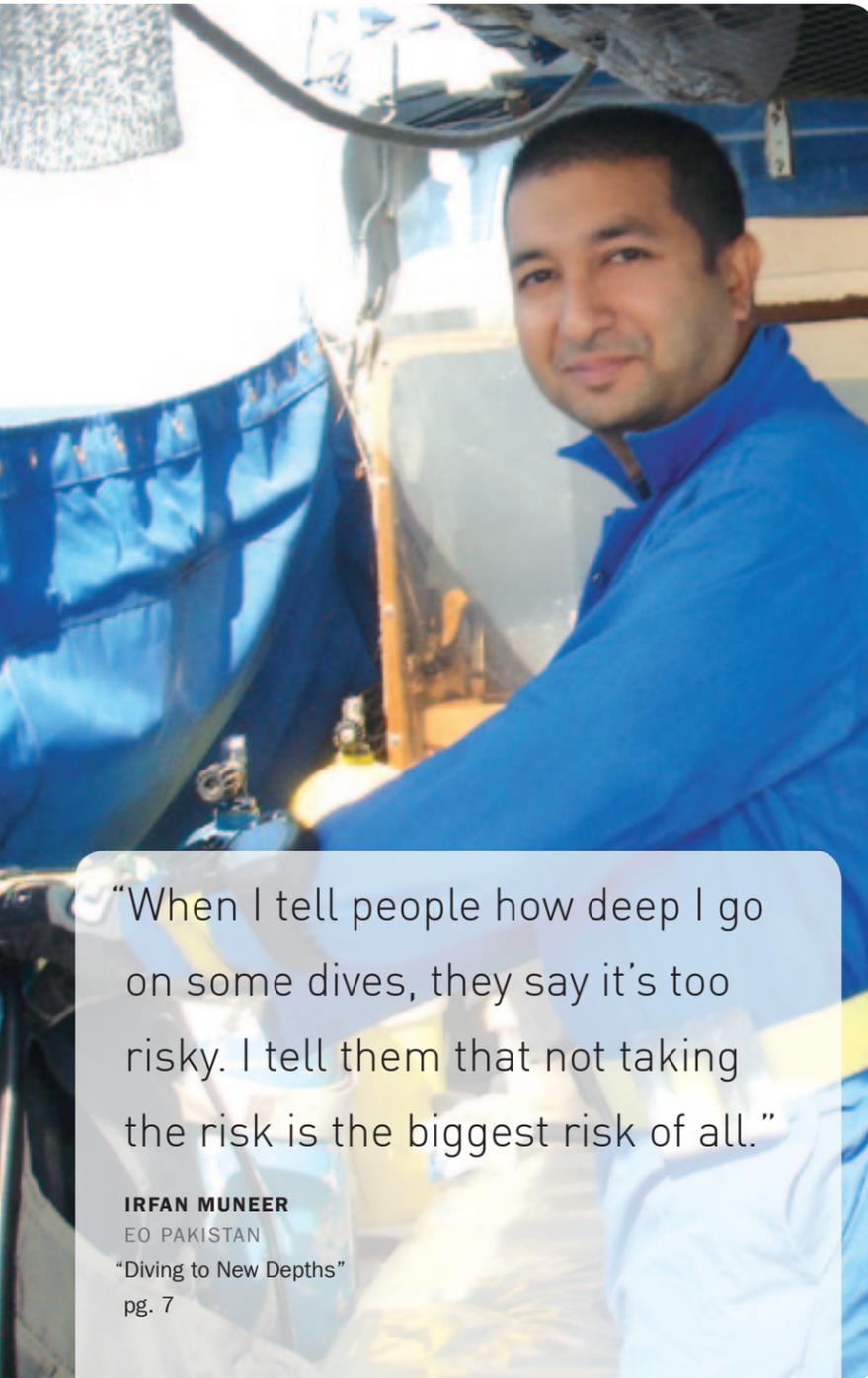
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# THE EXTREME ENTREPRENEUR

PRITAM DOSHI — EO BOMBAY



**Entrepreneurs'  
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"When I tell people how deep I go on some dives, they say it's too risky. I tell them that not taking the risk is the biggest risk of all."

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fueling the  
entrepreneurial engine

# PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES OF BUSINESS, LIFE



Running a business can be a bruising ordeal. Not everyone can go toe to toe with extreme obstacles, endure blows and come out victorious. It takes a truly unique person to push beyond the weight of improbability and successfully start, grow and groom a business. It also takes a special trait, something that propels leaders from ordinary to extraordinary. Some call this trait the “X factor,” a term referring to that special *something* someone possesses that helps him or her transcend from run of the mill to revolutionary.

the ground up and that we survived an onslaught of challenges in the process is a testament to our extreme nature. It’s what makes us unique as individuals and unites us as a community.

Every time I’m around my fellow EO members, I experience this “X factor.” At the 2009 EO Barcelona University, where more than 300 members gathered for four days of stellar learning and intense networking, I met hundreds of members who found success by taking hair-raising risks, abandoning convention and tightrope-walking that fine line between conventional and unconventional. Throughout the event, I was reminded of the awesome power of the human spirit, and I left thinking that *this* is what makes EO so special; this community of extreme entrepreneurs whose goals are to not only improve the global business landscape, but also to dramatically change it and themselves in the process. And that’s really what this journey is all about—to grow in our own special way and prove that anything can be accomplished.

I hope you continue to push yourself toward greatness, and know that when you face extreme odds, you have a community of members to lend a few helping hands.

Using this definition, the “X factor” is an extreme approach to business and life that tests capabilities and challenges convictions. The members in this issue all share this trait; they’ve found perspective by pushing the boundaries in their own special ways. They have achieved victory in the face of personal and professional contests, and they became better entrepreneurs for it. Though we profile only a handful of these members, they’re representative of the EO membership as a whole.

Many EO members have some measure of the “X factor” in them; we see it in the ideas they generate, the different plains on which they compete, the radical business methods and once-in-a-lifetime experiences they are perpetually engaging. You don’t have to conquer the world’s highest mountains to be considered extreme; sometimes it’s the daily management mountains that kick our “X factor” abilities into gear. The fact that we created a business from

Respectfully,

**MATTHEW K. STEWART**  
EO GLOBAL CHAIRMAN

# THE COOL ENTREPRENEUR



When I first heard about the theme of this issue, I immediately thought of one of EO’s core values: Cool. Of our five values, this one most aptly captures the spirit and personality of the EO member. It applies to the innate ability you have to remain calm when facing business barriers, as well as the innovative ways you embark on your entrepreneurial adventure. Your transition from analytical thinker to impassioned doer represents everything this dictum stands for, and it’s that unique journey that brought you to EO.

Your individuality and drive help define this organization. Built for members, by members, EO supports more than 7,300 unique and pioneering personalities, all of whom work to leave an indelible mark on the face of business, and in the process, do some very cool things. Individually, you create and alter companies with calculated risks and daring ventures. Collectively, you’re capable of changing industries through trend-setting and strategy. Being an entrepreneur is a powerful role with far-reaching responsibilities, and it’s one at which you excel.

As entrepreneurs, you serve as necessary agents of change; on many levels your original ideas and solutions often defy common sense and threaten convention. That’s a good thing because where would we be if everyone simply followed? If everyone traveled the

safest path in life and work? Normalcy can lead to predictability, which in turn can bring about stagnation. The world needs leaders who are willing to divert from the ordinary, take risks and produce the extraordinary. A number of these leaders—your peers and fellow EO members—are highlighted in this edition of *Octane*.

In this issue, we recognize members who found success and satisfaction through unorthodox measures. Entrepreneurs who, in their own unique way, personify what it means to be “cool.” You’ll read about a member who encountered treacherous terrain on an expedition to the North Pole, a motorcycle racer who reaches speeds of 160 miles per hour and an extreme adventurer who finds respite in global sabbaticals. All of these members are living, working testaments to the fact that great risks produce great rewards.

So sail on, entrepreneurs, out beyond where the sky meets the sea. To paraphrase the writer Edith Wharton, you’ll be truly alive and unafraid of change, insatiable in intellectual curiosity, interested in big things and happy in small ways. (And always cool.)

Regards,

**BOB STRADE**  
EO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## EO UPDATES

### 2009 EO BARCELONA UNIVERSITY

More than 300 members interested in learning how to redesign their lives attended the highly rated 2009 EO Barcelona University, held in Barcelona, Spain, from 30 September-4 October. Members participated in breakout sessions with some of the world’s best business minds, dined on exquisite local cuisine and experienced the colorful culture of the region. Highlights include an inspiring lecture by keynote speaker Nando Parrado, a festive dinner at La Padra and a private concert at Santa Maria del Mar. A big thank you goes out to the EO Barcelona Committee and chapter!

### E024 A GLOBAL SUCCESS

On 19 November, EO held E024, a global learning program created to inspire and support the next generation of entrepreneurs. More than 60 chapters representing 17 time zones participated in the popular program, which represented 24 hours of global entrepreneurial learning and knowledge sharing. The goal of the program was to offer communities real-time learning to help drive economic growth in 21 countries. To bring added exposure to the event, EO streamed live footage from eight chapters on the E024 Web site, luring in 1,170 visitors and serving 31,288 viewer minutes of video.

### EOINJECTED LAUNCHED

In October, EO officially kicked off the pilot of EOinjected, a peer-focused addition to the EO experience that incorporates business and personal development tools into quarterly, day-long, Forum-like meetings, coupled with yearly events for EOinjected members only. EOinjected delivers more relevant peer input than members might get from their Forums, and it also provides measurable and enhanced business take-home value. To learn more, contact Renee Manning, Vice President of Learning and Forum, at [rmanning@eonetwork.org](mailto:rmanning@eonetwork.org).

### EO LAUNCHES NEW INDIAN CHAPTER

On 13 September, EO officially launched a new chapter in Indore, the heart of central India. The largest city and commercial capital of Madhya Pradesh, Indore is known as “Mini Bombay” and is home to roughly 2,000 factories. EO Indore marks the ninth chapter in India, including Nepal. Though the chapter is only three months old, it already has several Forum-trained members! That’s a testament to the importance of chapter growth and the demand for EO education.

## EXPERIENCE A WAVE OF EO LEARNING

Surf, sail and strategize at the 2010 EO California University, a highly anticipated event offering a new “twist” on EO learning, to be held 7-11 April. Attendees will:

- » Learn how to raise the business bar from the world’s top entertainment and tourism entrepreneurs
- » Gain unprecedented access to renowned businesses like Disneyland and Oakley
- » Experience a gold rush of exciting off-sites, including coastal skydiving, dolphin watching and surfing camps

Register now for this once-in-a-lifetime University! To learn more, visit <http://events.eonetwork.org/orangecounty>.



# LEADERSHIP IN EXTREME CONDITIONS

**PRITAM DOSHI**  
EO BOMBAY

Did you know that in -38°C (-36.4°F) weather, the human body burns 5,000 calories a day just to stay warm? That's the weight-loss program of a lifetime! It's also one of the many things you endure when you climb your way to the North Pole.

Earlier this year, I joined an expedition to the Pole in celebration of the first trek held 100 years ago. I snowmobiled on thin ice, narrowly avoiding glaciers, polar bears and reindeer; spent the night in a 100-year-old wooden ship that was stuck in a frozen fjord; dropped from a Russian helicopter; and "ran around the world" by circling the Pole. It was a treacherous journey, but one I'll never forget.

Like this adventure, running a company has its extreme challenges. Here are three business lessons I took away from this experience:

## 1. The Right Equipment is Critical

The team members who had equipped themselves with the right gear and learned how to use it effectively were comfortable throughout the expedition, while those who were ill-prepared were in pain. Carrying the right amount of gear and clothing is critical; too much or too little can be life-threatening in such cold weather.

This trip taught me that when you are well-equipped, you can endure pretty much anything. On the mountain, we had to always think ahead and consider what was around the bend. I do the same thing in my business. I use scenario analysis to understand what I need to do to prepare for and excel in certain scenarios. Doing so helps me consider what my business needs in terms of talent, tools and capital to perform successfully under stress.

## 2. Constant Pressure Helps Achieve Goals

I experienced this journey with people I had never met. Though we were different, we all had one goal in mind: To reach the North Pole together. We encountered compatibility issues among team members, problems with gear and mixed temperaments. However,

because of the extreme conditions and pressures we faced, we had to let go of our egos, defeat our mental blocks and do whatever it took to reach our goal. If a team member needed help with frost-bitten toes, the entire group would stay back and make sure she was warm before moving on. Without the extreme pressure, the team would have divided into smaller groups, seeking out those with whom we felt the most comfortable instead of staying united. This taught me that pressure helps align individual objectives with team goals.

## 3. Extreme Conditions Help Identify Natural Leaders

Although we had guides to help us, a few team members emerged as capable leaders. No one was told at the beginning of the expedition that he or she would have to lead; however, as we encountered tough situations, certain members took charge by pitching tents in the fierce cold, keeping us oriented toward the elusive Pole or even sacrificing their own gear to keep someone else from getting frost-bitten. These members, like any good entrepreneur, instinctively understood that they needed to guide, help and lead the rest of the pack. This experience taught me that natural leaders rise to the occasion when they're needed most, especially in extreme situations.

In the early part of my life, I was never an outdoor adventure-seeking enthusiast. However, I always dreamt of doing something radically adventurous. This expedition was my chance. Having journeyed to the North Pole and back, I now know that I can endure anything business throws my way, and more importantly, that I will learn from it and become a better leader. ☺



Pritam Doshi (also pictured above) is the executive director and CEO of PAE LTD, one of the largest distributors of lead storage batteries in India. With a strategically located network of branches nationwide, PAE serves more than 10,000 customers annually. Contact Pritam at [pritam@paeltld.com](mailto:pritam@paeltld.com).

# ROLLING WITH THE PUNCHES

**BEN RIDLER**  
EO NEW ZEALAND

Running a business can bruise your soul and damage your ego. Anyone who has ever started a business can attest to that. Three years ago, I tried something a little more punishing. My journey into the boxing ring began when a new sensation called "corporate boxing" came into town. My motivation was to get fit, lose weight and learn a new discipline. It turns out you can learn a lot about business from boxing.

## UNDERSTAND YOUR STRENGTHS

The ideal boxer is tall, thin, light-weight, super-fit, well-coordinated and equipped with fast-twitch muscles. Unfortunately, I'm short, heavy and slow, so I had to focus on other things that I could influence. I decided I would not be out-trained. Understanding how you're going to make the most of your strengths and your opponent's weaknesses can turn a no-win situation into a winning one.

I've applied this same lesson to my business. In order to get a competitive edge in the online industry, we sought a narrower market, played to our strengths and didn't try to take on the big boys at their own game. Within a few short years, we've become the market leader and have avoided going toe to toe with larger competitors.

## LEARN TO PACE YOURSELF

In boxing, no matter how fit you become, you can't throw wild punches the entire fight. You have to know when to conserve your energy and when to explode. This was a great lesson for me. At work, I used to rush into everything, and I always wanted it done yesterday. Learning to pace myself has made our business growth sustainable. Also, I've stopped burning out business partners and key staff, and I've made my career as an entrepreneur far more enjoyable.

## PUT EMOTIONS ASIDE

Boxing teaches you to control your most basic emotions: fight or flight. When you're in the ring, you must stay calm, keep your hands up, stick with your plan and ultimately not let your emotions make your decisions for you. In business being able to find that calm place, apart from your emotions, allows you to make smart and thoughtful decisions.

At the start of the recession, our revenue dropped 26 percent after nearly four years of growth. Although I had a plan, we were engulfed in emotions. Once we took them out of our decision-making, we were able to review our plan and focus relentlessly on execution. Nine months later, we were achieving record growth.

## EXECUTE UNDER PRESSURE

Boxing is about executing your plan under pressure. It's easy to throw combinations on the punching bag and look good, but when someone tries to take your head off, most of your preparation goes out the window. In business, plans are important, but execution is everything.

I learned that the hard way when I had to turn my business around during the economic downturn. The key to our success was sticking to a plan amidst the chaos. Our banking partners were in turmoil, clients were panicking and the market was unstable. By staying on track and letting everyone know we were sticking to our plan, we became a place of stability in crazy times.

## LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE IN YOUR CORNER

Listening to the people in your corner is another crucial skill and one of the greatest lessons I've learned. The people who surround you can always show you opportunities that you would ordinarily miss. My company exists because I learned that everyone is able to achieve more with someone in their corner, watching things from a different perspective when you're busy ducking the punches that come with running a business.

I'm still boxing to this day, and it continues to provide me with new ways to work out challenges. More importantly, it's taught me that life, like work, is all about being able to take a punch, shake it off and step back into that ring. ☺

Ben Ridler (pictured) is chief results officer at Results.com, an award-winning company known as the "business execution experts." Results.com helps transform business potential into extraordinary results by changing the way business leaders see their business and the opportunities and challenges it presents. E-mail Ben at [ben@results.com](mailto:ben@results.com).

# WHEN THE RUBBER HITS THE ROAD

JOHN JANKOWSKI  
EO AUSTIN

Growing up, I was never what you would call a “team sports” guy. While my friends were busy playing baseball, I gravitated toward a single-person sport that has since changed the way I live and work: motorcycle road racing.

I started racing motorcycles long before I became an entrepreneur. In fact, it was my desire to race that inspired me to be my own boss. Racing taught me that I could be the creator and master of my own destiny. When my father sold his business and I lost my job, I decided to start my own engineering firm. I knew I could make my own success by applying what I learned from the racetrack to the workforce.

## PREPARE TO STAY COMPETITIVE

Racing, like running a business, requires intense preparation. I once kept track of the time I spent working on a motorcycle to remain competitive with the other riders on the starting grid. I uncovered a simple equation: six hours working on the bike for every one hour I spent riding. Tuning my bike, riding practice laps and maintaining a high level of fitness are all necessary to perform at a championship level. Likewise, in business, to perform at a competitive level requires discipline, strategy and preparation that no one ever sees.

As a consultant to architects and their clients, I’m never surprised by how savvy they can be. Walking into a meeting and risking being asked to discuss the latest technology—that I’ve never heard of—is no less dangerous than throwing my leg over a bike that’s not been properly set up, checked and rechecked. I’ve learned to do my homework beforehand to ensure I’m on point with my clients. In business, preparation is not a luxury, it’s mandatory.

## DON'T LET FEAR TAKE OVER

After decades on the track, I am keenly aware of the risks inherent to motorcycle racing. I approach risk in business the same way: I know the potential problems, look for ways to optimize the outcome and take steps to produce the best and safest results. At the same time, it’s important that I evaluate multiple scenarios without letting fear take over.



Recently, I had a veteran employee who was dramatically underachieving. This was causing significant stress to the team, all of whom were picking up the slack. I tried to help this employee improve, but things weren’t getting better. I feared the possibility of letting an experienced team member go, but I had to make a decision. I fired him. Afterward, the attitude and productivity of the team improved. I’ve since learned that my fear of losing an employee, or the repercussions of termination, undermines the efforts and discipline required to build a strong team.

## MAINTAIN YOUR FOCUS

Ultimately, being a motorcycle racer or an entrepreneur does not totally define me. I used to think that being the best at something would make me a different or better person. Years ago, I set a goal to win a regional championship. I wound up winning four and earned pole position based on accumulated points in eight national final races. Once that was behind me, though, I didn’t feel like anything had really been accomplished.

What I learned is that the highs in racing are incredible, but they are also fleeting. The same experience applies to business. As an entrepreneur, I have to maintain my focus without giving in to the quick ups and downs. It’s great to revel in success, but once the high wears off, it’s time to focus on the next big project. Only then can I truly reap the rewards that come when hard work and preparation meet risk. ☺



John Jankowski (also pictured in action) is president of JanCom Technologies, Inc., a business that bridges a critical gap by planning and designing the network technology infrastructure, components and audio-visual systems for leading organizations. E-mail John at [johnj@jancom.com](mailto:johnj@jancom.com).



# Diving to New Depths

IRFAN MUNEEB  
EO PAKISTAN

There’s no getting around danger. It’s an inherent part of business, and also part of scuba diving, my respite from the budgets and board calls. Diving into exotic waters, exploring new territory and testing my limits a hundred feet beneath the ocean’s surface have taught me a lot about life and work. For the past 12 years I’ve been running a leather manufacturing business, and I’ve found that scuba diving has given me the skills I need to run it successfully.

## Ignore Your Instincts

During our dives, we constantly come across situations where we must trust the equipment, rather than our instinct or drive. That’s tough to do as an entrepreneur, considering instincts are what made me successful in the first place. But in diving, you reach a point where you can’t push yourself for the sake of your ego. For instance, if your equipment indicates that you are low on air, you must return to the surface and abandon your dive. Otherwise, you’re putting yourself in danger.

In business, sometimes I get carried away by my instincts, and I overlook things. In 2000, we started working on a unique project developing a stretchable leather. Because this was a new concept in Asia and the leather world, I took the lead on developing the technology. The project became so important to my ego that I didn’t want to see it fail. I began to get carried away and ignored the reports and bottom line. When we finally looked at the numbers, we decided it was not worth doing and stopped immediately. Looking back, I feel lucky to have avoided such a costly project.

## Adopt the Buddy System

I love the concept of the buddy system in scuba diving. It’s mandatory that every time we dive, we must take a buddy along with us. We not only dive together, but we also have complete knowledge of one another’s equipment. Even though we’re diving on our own, we have a backup in case of emergencies. I follow the same rule in my business. No matter which level of management they’re in, members of our team must have a buddy. They perform their own tasks, but they also have complete knowledge of their companion’s work, strengths and weaknesses.

## Minimize the Risk

When I tell people how deep I go on some dives, they say it’s too risky. I tell them that not taking the risk is the biggest risk of all. Scuba diving has taught me that taking an intentional risk is the best form of risk minimization. When we’re exploring a new dive site, we must equip ourselves with the proper tools to pre-calculate the risk. We use these tools to know the depth, types of species, wind and water currents we might encounter. This way, we minimize the amount of risk we face.

In business, financial risk is one of the key factors we watch. Before we start developing a new product, for example, we always put a financial value to the failure and success of the product. This helps us stay prepared for the risks involved and potential failures.

## Add Variations to Your Plans

Exploring new variations is an important aspect of staying successful. Sometimes, looking for a slight variation of the same dive site can open up a new world of information and adventure. I approach my business in the same way. I am always ready to look into process and structure variations.

In 2008, when energy and fuel costs skyrocketed, we decided to look into our procedures. We found that by reducing a percentage of water consumption and adjusting time in the process, we could get additional chemical uptake, thus reducing our costs by five percent. Because we looked at variations in our working plan, we were able to save a few million dollars.

All in all, scuba diving is as exciting as it is educational. Whether I’m underwater or at work, I’ve learned that by occasionally ignoring my instincts, leveraging my peers, making calculated risks and adopting new methods, I can reach deeper depths of learning and explore new areas of growth. ☺



Irfan Muneer (also pictured above) is the director of Din Leather, LTD, a leading leather manufacturer that annually exports goods worth more than US\$25 million. Din leather is used in Pakistan’s shoes and fashionable handbags. You can e-mail Irfan at [irfanmuneer@dingroup.com](mailto:irfanmuneer@dingroup.com).

# OPERATION: COMMUNICATION

I DANGLED  
MY FEET OFF  
OF A 1,000-  
FOOT CLIFF,  
SQUINTED  
THROUGH A  
TELESCOPE  
AND TRIED TO  
MAKE OUT THE  
FIGURES TWO  
KILOMETERS  
AWAY.

**DARREN HICKS**  
EO SAN FRANCISCO

It was our fifth day of the mission. I was tired, hungry and I had only half a canteen of water left. The silence was eerie, boredom set in and deep thought was the only way to take my mind off of the discomfort. I remember thinking, "I need to do something else. I need to get into business, make a bunch of money and live the easy life! I am a Navy SEAL for goodness sake; I can do anything! It will be easy." That was six years ago, and as I sit at my desk writing this article—18 months into the worst recession since the Great Depression—I can't believe how wrong I was.

In 2005, I decided not to re-enlist in the Navy and try my hand at the family business. The transition from nine years of the SEAL lifestyle seemed simple enough. I knew I would miss the action: Freefall parachuting from 26,000 feet, fast-roping onto rooftops, hanging out of helicopters that sliced through canyons. Yet I didn't know I'd miss one specific aspect of the SEAL culture: How we communicated.

There are many leadership qualities that I took from the SEAL teams, but there is one thing that stands out more than the others. I did not see it as noteworthy when I made the transition, but in the past four years it has become the basic tenant of how I run my business. It is the issue of using candor when communicating. In the Navy, your life depends on communicating effectively with specifics. A person's ability to deduce the correct information, discuss options honestly and execute a decision could mean the difference between life and death. You must speak with candor—there is no other way.

I was shocked to find that in the business environment, candor has been supplanted with political correctness, fuzzy language, false niceties and a general lack of frankness. I witnessed conversations full of flowery language, mantras and one-liners ending with no directional clarity or resolution. It was as if just having the conversation was enough to put a concern or idea to rest. It wasn't until early last year, though, that this lack of candor finally smacked me in the face.

I was having some communication challenges with one of my managers, who happened to be an outstanding employee. She seemed overly defensive, and it was clear that I could not get my message across without her feeling immediately negative about our conversation. We had established a great working relationship, but at that time something was just not right. I encouraged her to speak her mind. She said I was not respecting the amount of experience she had in the industry, and she felt I was trying to dictate how she conducted business. In short, she believed I didn't trust her instincts and experience. She was right. She didn't feel comfortable telling me this before because in her past job experience she was told never to tell her boss what she really thought!

After this meeting, I thought about all of the conversations that preceded this one and realized that we were talking past each other the entire time. Those meetings were a waste of time, and as any business owner can attest, wasting time is wasting money. I realized that my vision of a high-performing company simply could not happen unless we spoke from the heart, expressed honest opinions and told the truth. I had nearly ruined a relationship with one of my best employees because I didn't establish a culture of communicating with candor. So, I set out to change that.

Here are the three ways I opened the lines of communication at work:

## 1. WE SAY WHAT'S ON OUR MIND

Candor became one of our core values. We have since created an environment where honest, clear communication is encouraged. There are still just as many disagreements, but being able to speak candidly has changed the way people feel about the disagreements and minimized the time it takes to reach solutions.

## 2. WE LOOK FOR IT WHEN HIRING

We discuss candor during the hiring process, and we set a huge expectation that if people come to work here, they will have to use candor and accept it from others. We found that it's rare for people to accept this. But when we do find these people, they love working in an environment where candor and open communication are encouraged.

## 3. WE ACCEPT CANDOR FROM OTHERS

We had to accept that each of us will use candor in our communications. We work hard to avoid taking it personally when someone is telling the truth and being frank. This is not easy. When someone is updating you on a situation, it is sometimes difficult to avoid making excuses or assigning blame and instead take in the true details to plan the next step. And yet, by understanding each other, emotions are kept in check and work gets done.

When we use candor in the workplace, communication is quick, all of the details are exposed and solutions are found. An open and frank environment avoids red tape and produces results at a more efficient rate. In my company, we live by the saying, "There is no such thing as bad news; there is only the truth." And when it comes to business, truth is what separates an ordinary company from an extraordinary one. ☺



Darren Hicks is the CEO of Hicks Consulting Group, Inc., a business that has provided information technology solutions to more than 500 public corporations, privately held companies and government institutions for more than 30 years. E-mail Darren at [dmhicks@hicksconsult.com](mailto:dmhicks@hicksconsult.com).

**GREG REX**  
EO SAN DIEGO

As a surfing entrepreneur, my passions include traveling the world, chasing storms and searching for the biggest waves possible. Not only do I get to experience the beauty of the ocean, but I'm constantly challenging myself while living on the edge. Believe it or not, the ocean can teach you a lot about life and business.

### Once You Commit, Fully Commit

On one occasion in Hawaii, USA, I was surfing with some friends when I noticed a huge group of waves building on the outside reef. As I turned to catch a wave, I felt the forces of nature against me—wind, water, currents, all ready to crush me. Just then, I heard a “woohoo!” from a friend, giving me the confidence I needed to fully commit to the wave. I pulled into a glassy barrel, raced down a picturesque green wall and shot out the back flying 15 feet in the air. Seconds later, I paddled out for another one.

One of my first attempts as an entrepreneur was an equity partnership to help expand a Canadian company into US markets. The company was only doing US\$650,000 in annual sales, but I saw big potential, untapped markets and a chance to build my own company. It was a great opportunity, but it meant leaving the ocean, my family and a great position with my mentor. Nonetheless, I committed myself to the challenge. Within two years, sales had grown to more than US\$6.5 million. This experience taught me that sometimes you just have to commit to an idea, even if it seems scary.

### Learn to Hold Your Breath

When you paddle out into monstrous waves, it's not a matter of if you're going to take a few on the head, but how many. The ocean, like the business world, is so volatile that you never know what you're going to get until you're out there. For 20 years I've been practicing holding my breath under water so that when I do get held down, I can relax and wait it out. This philosophy is also applicable to business, especially considering the current economy.

A few years ago, I helped start a dot-com that grew from zero to US\$40 million in 18 months. At one point, we had one of the top NASDAQ IPOs ever. Unfortunately, I had all my eggs in one basket when the stock market crashed. I wasn't ready, and it took a long time to recover. Now, I'm smarter and have learned that a wipeout doesn't have to be catastrophic. I mitigate risks to levels I'm comfortable with, take control of what I can, minimize losses, learn from mistakes and focus on a rapid recovery. In other words I catch my breath, paddle back out and wait for another wave.

### Keep Looking “Outside”

When you're surfing, you have to pay attention not only to the waves in the lineup, but also to the rogue waves coming in on the horizon, what surfers call the “outside.” Big waves, like changing market conditions, move so fast that if you wait until they're on top of you, you'll get hammered. Having vision enables you to position yourself in front of trends and avoid getting caught on the inside.

When I started WeightLossDoctor.net seven years ago, my vision was to help transform the healthcare system. I saw a wave building, and it was called “wellness.” Consumers were looking for alternatives to surgery and drugs, especially for weight- and lifestyle-

related diseases. I decided to specialize as an expert providing business training to an underserved market. Many said the idea would never work. Instead of listening to them, I looked outside and kept working on my message, sales channels and relationships. We still have a long way to go, but now we have more than 1,500 health professionals improving the lives of 30,000 clients every day. Riding that wave of opportunity has put us on track for US\$13 million in gross sales this year alone.

The knowledge, mindset and skills it takes to survive big-wave surfing are similar to that of running a business. You anticipate ups and downs, remain calm under pressure, don't fight the currents and keep an eye out for opportunities. It's just like catching that perfect wave—you get in position, paddle like crazy, make the drop and then enjoy the ride. ☺



# Riding the Business Wave

Greg Rex (pictured) is the founder and CEO of WeightLossDoctor.net, a training and coaching company that specializes in helping health professionals offer a turnkey weight management program to their patients suffering from obesity, diabetes, metabolic syndrome and other weight-related diseases. You can reach Greg via e-mail at [greg@weightlossdoctor.net](mailto:greg@weightlossdoctor.net).

**APRIL COX**  
EO EAST TENNESSEE

**I am more than my work.** If there's any lesson I've learned in the past year, it's that work doesn't define who I am. This is a story about how I learned to find my true self, take off the “entrepreneur mask” and face my dreams.

From a business standpoint, I run a full-service custom software development company. From a personal standpoint, I'm a music star in the making. When you're constantly working, it's easy to lose sight of the person behind the entrepreneurial title. I came to that crossroads last year, and I decided to make a change.

To recapture my true sense of self, I decided to create a “vision board” for my life. I purchased a foam board, gathered some magazines and began cutting out images with which I identified. I dug deep inside, found my inner-most desires and searched for photos that illustrated them. I didn't think about five or 10 years from now, I thought about my entire life. Once I had enough images, I arranged them on the board, filling it with photos that inspire me to follow my dreams. When I was finished, I hung it in my office for all to see; it became a visual representation of *me*.

After completing the project, I took a step back and noticed that a huge part of my board was dedicated to music. Seeing my dreams from a visual standpoint and listening to my mental attempts to disqualify areas of the board helped me realize how effective I had been at holding myself back. For the longest time, I consistently chose to be someone I wasn't just to maintain the order of things. The realization shocked me. I'm a successful entrepreneur who works with reckless abandon to accomplish things others can't—how could I be preventing myself from really growing? But that's exactly what I was doing.

Who I really am had been neglected because I was too busy identifying “me” as my work, and I wouldn't let myself be vulnerable to my own dreams. I realized that limiting thoughts about my personal ambitions had similar affects on my work. I was deceived into thinking I was living authentically. Experiencing the spikes of doing great things in business, followed by the lulls of feeling like they were forced, was a clear sign that I wasn't. As entrepreneurs, I believe we can make millions of dollars but still lack authentic success. Creating the vision board helped me get over being embarrassed about my aspirations, and it showed me that to follow my dreams, I had to let the real me shine.

I have been passionate about singing all my life, but I never pursued it on a professional level. What was I waiting for? I began by finding a voice coach who could help me build my voice and determine what type of music star I want to be. I also started accepting opportunities to sing for events and began working with a local recording studio. Lastly, I tapped into all my business associates who were connected to the music industry and shared my dream. Today, I'm continuing to strengthen my singing voice, I just finished recording my first demo CD and I'm writing my own music in preparation for my first solo EP, to be recorded in early 2010. My dream of being a singer is coming true!

As I look back over the past year and a half, the vision board was the beginning of my realization that I was the only thing stopping me. When I created my board, I reminded myself who I was, what my dreams were and what I had to offer the world. In the end, I've learned that it's important to illustrate your dreams, share them with others and recognize when you're sabotaging yourself. I've also learned that in the course of sharing my vulnerability through visuals, the limitations and fears faded, which helped me build the perfect startup company: *me*. Its brand is the greatest version of who I am, and people want to be a part of it, whether I'm peddling software at work or rocking a concert stage. ☺

April Cox (pictured) is the president of Efficiency, a custom software development company based in Knoxville, Tennessee, USA. You can e-mail April at [april@efficiency.us](mailto:april@efficiency.us).

FACING THE MUSIC



## CONFESSIONS OF AN EXTREME SPORTS ADDICT

**SALVADOR PAIZ**  
EO GUATEMALA

My addiction to extreme sports started at an early age. It began with water polo in high school, followed by a long stint of scuba diving. Eventually, skydiving was thrown into the mix. By the time I graduated from college, I had completed the first 100 of more than 350 jumps. Later, when I moved to Guatemala, I picked up kite surfing, a sport I've been hooked on ever since.

To some it might look like I'm using extreme sports as a way to escape the high-stress, buttoned-up life that I lead as vice chairman of Wal-Mart, Central America. That's only part of the story. Sure, there's an element of release that helps counter the pressure of my workload, but there's also an element that helps me manage my work and become better at it. Sound unrealistic? Consider this: Every time I prepare for a session of kite surfing, I hone the same four skills I use every day in business.

### 1. DON'T GIVE IN TO FAILURE

The first few months on the kite board were some of the most frustrating I've experienced. Half of the time the board sank, and with it, my spirits. However, frustration soon gave way to small gains. I started keeping afloat for 30 seconds or longer, feeling my confidence build with each raise of the sail. Six months later I was jumping 15 feet in the air! The first time I felt myself soaring above the waves, I realized the meaning and purpose of every futile attempt that had gotten me there. Nobody is born knowing how to do this stuff; it takes repeated practice. This fact helped me navigate the learning curve during the first few months of the various roles I've held throughout my career.

### 2. GIVE YOURSELF THE FREEDOM

Kite surfing has taught me the importance of freedom when it comes to performing within a framework of success. If I want to take advantage of a rogue wave and execute a spectacular jump, for example, I need to anticipate that jump and provide myself the freedom to improvise and execute at the appropriate time. It's the same in business. I remind myself that real success depends on quality execution, which is dependent upon the amount of freedom I give myself and my teams to maneuver.

Salvador Paiz (pictured) is the vice chairman of Wal-Mart, Central America, sits on the board of several ventures and also serves as president for two non-profits: FunSEPA and Entrepreneurs for Education. You can e-mail Salvador at [salvador@funsepa.org](mailto:salvador@funsepa.org).

### 3. PUSH THROUGH YOUR COMFORT ZONE

Comfort zones are dangerous inhibitors of innovation in both work and play. In work, comfort zones lead to a pacifying lull where we stop questioning the status quo and forget to keep pushing the envelope. It would be far easier to master a few basic skills or to always take the safest route, but to be really innovative and enjoy the rush of the extreme, you have to be willing to go beyond your limits and then go even farther. If you don't go there, the competition certainly will!

### 4. VISUALIZE THE BIG PICTURE

Before I hit the waves, it's essential that I visualize my success. Legendary baseball pitchers will tell you that they have to see the pitch before they throw it. I use this technique to imagine myself above water, in the air and landing. Visualizing success is something I might have never tried in my work life. I was too busy trying to do my day-to-day work to take time and visualize the big picture. But since I've started incorporating this technique, I've discovered that I can not only see my goals with greater clarity, but I can visualize the way to achieving them. Visualizing is a compass without which I dare not navigate.

These four skills help me get ahead in life and business. I believe that my willingness to hone them will lead me to even further improvements in both work and play. However, in order to get to where I need to go, I have to remember the most important thing in both extreme sports and extreme business: You can only get so far by strategizing and visualizing, because in the end you have to be willing to jump. ☺



# GIVING MYSELF A TIMEOUT

**BEN WAY**  
EO SOUTH FLORIDA

Taking time away from business is never easy. But for me, sabbaticals are an integral part of my success as an entrepreneur; one of the "X factors" that keeps me thriving. And, like many things entrepreneurial, I came across this realization by accident.

After the dot-com crash, I had been reduced from a pioneer in my industry to a rather humble, lost, poor teenager. I had a long, hard think about what I truly wanted. Having spent most of my young life engaged in some kind of business, I realized I had left out a significant part of my childhood. I decided I was still young enough to have fun and explore the world.

Because I can't do anything "small," I pursued and was chosen to be on one of the first reality TV shows in the United Kingdom. The show sent us across the globe for 11 weeks, visiting 11 different countries and encountering 11 unique challenges. We served as our own camera crew, which made the trip even more entertaining, and we experienced everything the world had to offer, including living with a Reggae artist in Jamaica and trying beef burger ice cream in Venezuela. (And yes, the dessert was as disgusting as it sounds.)

Though I got to travel the world, what this sabbatical really taught me was that disengaging your mind for a few months has significant benefits. Like all entrepreneurs my mind never stops; it is always taking in information, processing it and making decisions. The human mind was never designed for this kind of workload. Tens of thousands of years ago, the only decisions our ancestors had to make were based on meeting the basic needs of survival and comfort. Today, we have to make those decisions, as well as hundreds more. Years and years of decision-making takes its toll in the form of stress.

I can do about three to five years of hard work before I approach a state of burnout or stagnation, so I try to plan a sabbatical every three years. By no means is this easy. The first thing I have to do before going on sabbatical is to decide who is going to be my key decision and communications gatekeeper. This must be a person I trust completely, who can make small decisions on my behalf and knows when to contact me. After that, it's really a matter of putting in place people and processes that allow me the freedom to travel without worrying.

I have now had four sabbaticals in my life, and each time I came back with renewed energy and a head full of new ideas. The real benefit of going on sabbatical is being able to separate the wood from the trees, as well as appreciate the time it takes to develop ideas. Within four weeks of returning from my last sabbatical, I started three businesses. I would not have had the energy or thinking time to develop them had I not taken a break from it all. There is no point in working all your life if you can't enjoy it at the same time.

Personally, the way I enjoy life may sound like hell on earth for some people. I love collecting strange hobbies and extreme sports; everything from fire breathing in Thailand to the flying trapeze in Australia. But I also think taking these risks and trying new things helps my business. I feel that by doing extreme things, it allows me to push my risk profile even further in business. In turn, I potentially increase my chances of a high-risk, high-reward event. Then again, it also increases my chances of losing everything. But hey, that's the very definition of risk, and at least I can take a break from it all every so often. ☺

With more than 15 years of business experience and nearly 20 years in the technology industry, Ben Way (pictured) is considered a leading voice on technology and innovation. He currently serves as president of The Rainmakers, LTD, one of the world's leading innovation and incubation companies. Contact Ben at [ben@makingrain.com](mailto:ben@makingrain.com).



# The Write Stuff

MICHELLE DRESBOLD

EO SPEAKER

It may not seem extreme, but believe it or not, a lot can be learned about how you live and work from the way you dot your “i” or cross your “t.” Did you know that changing your handwriting can increase your self-esteem, create more opportunities and help you achieve even greater success in work and life?

Handwriting therapy works on the principle that behavioral changes can effect psychological changes. Numerous studies have shown that the physical act of laughing actually helps strengthen the immune system. Similarly, your writing drags downhill when you feel sad; forcing your hand to write uphill will make you feel more upbeat.

In my years of experience analyzing the correlation between handwriting and human nature, I’ve uncovered a few tricks that create lasting impressions. Here are five writing suggestions that can help you be more successful in your professional and personal life:

- 1. Get to the top by writing uphill.** When you write, use unlined paper and make a conscious effort to write slightly uphill. More than 90 percent of the top players in almost every career have handwriting that slopes upward.
- 2. Follow your dreams by following through on your t-bars.** Cross your “t” high, strong and firm. A “t” that is consistently crossed high with a firm stroke shows a writer who sets high goals and has the determination to go after them.
- 3. Clean up your “o”s and “a”s to communicate better.** Make your “o” and “a” letters very clear. These are the communication letters. Get rid of all the extra gunk, blobs, squiggles and curly-cues inside your “o”s and “a”s and you’ll find that your communication skills will be more effective.
- 4. Align yourself for success.** You’ll feel more confident in public if you underscore your signature with one simple underline.
- 5. Develop an even disposition by controlling your pugilistic “p”s.** Writers who are overly argumentative often make their lowercase “p” with an initial stroke that spikes far above the rounded part of the letter. Learn to control your spikes and you just might start hearing new things, like the words your associate was trying to get out before you interrupted him.

Handwriting therapy has helped me make some effective changes in my own life. For example, when I first started studying handwriting analysis, my teacher took one look at my writing and said: “Michelle, you’ve sure got a ‘pugilistic p.’ I bet you love to argue!” “What! Me? No way!” I insisted. And yet, as I observed my interactions with others, it was true.



Michelle Dresbold is a nationally known handwriting expert, personality profiler, keynote speaker and guest lecturer, who last spoke at an EO Pittsburgh event. She is also the author of *Sex, Lies, and Handwriting*. To learn more, visit [www.michelledresbold.com](http://www.michelledresbold.com) or e-mail Michelle at [mdresbold@comcast.net](mailto:mdresbold@comcast.net).

So, I decided to change my handwriting. Every time I wrote, I consciously made my “p” without a high initial stroke. Changing the way I made my letters wasn’t enough, though. As I was writing each “p,” I repeated to myself, “I listen when others talk, don’t interrupt and calmly resolve issues.” And it worked! As my writing changed, a gentler, non-confrontational Michelle emerged. Now when I disagree with people, I’m not nearly as disagreeable.

Knowing how to change my handwriting has been a powerful tool in my professional life, too. After I graduated from college, I floundered for years. I knew that I needed to change something, but what and how? I started by changing one seemingly minor thing that I could see and control: the letter “t” in my handwriting.

The horizontal cross bars on my “t”s were wimpy. They stopped short, going only halfway through the “t” and barely crossing through the stem. Like my cross bars, I wasn’t following through on the things that were important to me in life. I decided to work on it. As I wrote my “t”s strong, firm and complete, I would repeat, “I know what I want, and I go for it.” Since then, many of my dreams have become a reality. I became a regular handwriting consultant for the police, I’ve published a book and I’ve spoken about handwriting on television and at conferences around the world.

If you think that adjusting your handwriting won’t make much of a difference, think again. Handwriting is a pathway to the brain, so if you can change your handwriting, you can change the way you think. And if you can change the way you think, you can change your life!

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IMAGE PROVIDED BY IMAGESOURCE

# PERFORMING AT AN ALL-STAR LEVEL

MARK EATON  
EO SPEAKER

As entrepreneurs, how many of you run around in your business, trying to play every position all the time? As a former professional basketball player, I know how difficult it is to try and keep up with the competition, my own goals and the overall pace of the game. What helped me become an all-star player was my ability to define my role, narrow my focus and leverage my greatest skill.

After my first season of playing basketball in college, I had some serious doubts about my future in the sport. I spent the whole season sitting on the bench. I felt like I was an absolute failure. I started to ask myself, “Am I good enough to be out here?” I remembered what my basketball career in high school had been like. Even though I was over seven feet tall, I spent most of my time on the sidelines. The smaller players were much faster than me, and I could not keep up. I quit playing the game for a reason, and now I doubted my decision to return.

The following summer, I played basketball at my college gym every evening. All of the greatest players congregated in what we called the “Old Men’s Gym” to test their skills in pick-up games. One afternoon I was trying to catch a fast guard named “Rocket” Rod Foster. He was so quick that he would be at the basket before I made it to half court! I just stood there, huffing and puffing, thinking to myself, “I can’t do it. I can’t play at this level.”

As I stood there, I suddenly felt a large hand on my shoulder. I turned around and there was Wilt Chamberlain, arguably the greatest basketball player of all time. Wilt had retired from the game a few years before, but every afternoon he would come to the gym to watch the younger players work out. He had been watching me, and he saw my potential.

Wilt spun me around, looked me in the eyes and said, “Young fella, you’re never gonna catch that man. More importantly, it’s not your job to catch him.” He took me by the arm and led me back onto the basketball court. He positioned me right in front of the basket and said, “Your job is to guard this basket. Your job is to stand right here and keep other players from scoring. I’ve watched you play, and I see the skills you have at defense. That is what you need to concentrate on.”

That day, everything changed for me. I began to understand what I needed to do on the court. Wilt showed me my role and how I could be invaluable to my team. I wasn’t fast, and I wasn’t that great at scoring, but I did have a talent for preventing others from scoring. I could be a force on defense, and I could help my teammates win games.

From that day on, I stopped trying to do everything on the court and instead focused on being the best defender I could be. I focused on the one thing I could be great at, and I went on to become one of the best defensive players in the National Basketball Association (NBA). Four years later, I broke the record for the most blocked shots in a single season, was named Defensive Player of the Year twice, and in 1989 I became an NBA All-Star.

As a business and motivational speaker, I’ve shared this story with thousands of people around the world. Honoring your role and that of others is one of the four commitments I teach; commitments that help individuals and teams go from doing their best to being the best. High achievers have a desire to excel at everything, but they run the danger of not playing to their strengths, which prevents them from keeping up.

If you want to lead your team to greater heights in performance, narrow your focus and intensify it. Do what you do best and let go of the rest. When you focus on your strengths, you allow your team to focus on theirs. And if everyone on your team focuses on what they do best, you will have a championship-caliber team capable of all-star performances. ö



Mark Eaton (also pictured above) is a business and motivational speaker who shares with organizations the four commitments that bring about teamwork, breakthrough success and sustained cultural change. Mark’s astounding journey from auto-mechanic to record-breaking NBA All-Star, combined with his practical strategies, help organizations play and win in the biggest games. Mark last spoke at the 2009 EO Arizona University. For more information, visit [www.7ft4.com](http://www.7ft4.com) or e-mail Mark at [mark@7ft4.com](mailto:mark@7ft4.com).

# JUMPING INTO THE RIGHT RISKS

BILL PERFORMING ONE OF HIS SIGNATURE DIVES.

**BILL TREASURER**  
EO SPEAKER

Risk is relative. I learned that lesson on top of New York's Empire State Building when I was seven years old. While my dad and brother peered over the guardrail to gawk at the busy metropolis below, I stood with my back plastered against the concrete wall, frozen and ashamed. It was the first time I realized that not everyone has the same fears. I also realized that I hate being controlled by fear. "Why is it so easy for them, but so hard for me?" I wondered.

Fear is an invitation to courage. I answered this invitation by becoming a springboard diver. Over a long period of time, I was able to dominate my fear of heights instead of letting it dominate me. For seven years I traveled the world as a member of the US High Diving Team, performing more than 1,500 death-defying dives from heights that scaled to over 100 feet.

What I learned in dealing with my fear of heights is that risk is something you simultaneously want and don't want. Risk tempts you with its rewards, yet repels you with its uncertainties. We know instinctively that the best way to resolve our internal dilemmas is to confront our fears, even if it means doing outlandish things.

Take high diving, for instance. It's been called a testament to man's indulgent pursuit of the insignificant. What, after all, did my own high-flying feats prove? That I could withstand a few seconds of plummeting hell? So what? For me, taking a high dive was more than an act of bravado or a flight of fancy. It was an act of liberation; from self-imposed limitations, outdated mental scripts, and most of all, fear.

Like it or not, taking risks is an inevitable and inescapable part of life and business. Whether you're making a high-stakes investment, launching a new product line, bringing on a business partner or taking some other leap of consequence, sooner or later all entrepreneurs are called upon to take professional high dives.

## TWO FACES OF RISK

Contrary to popular opinion, people cannot be neatly divided into two sweeping categories of risk takers and risk avoiders. In truth, all of us are risk takers and risk avoiders. We simply take or avoid risks in different domains and for different reasons. My late grandmother, for example, could speak her mind to people in authority with little regard as to whether or not they'd be pleased to hear what she had to say. But my tell-it-like-it-is grandmother was a wimp when it came to physical risks. For example, she never mustered up the courage to learn how to drive a car.

Since all of us are both risk takers and risk avoiders, when facing a situation of consequence, the key question becomes, "Is this the right risk for me?" So how do you know if a risk is right or wrong for you? And, if it is right, how do you find the wisdom and courage to go for it when it's so much easier not to? I suggest using the five "Ps" as a way to gauge whether a risk is "right." When you come to rely on all five criteria as the basis for decision-making, you qualify as a "Right Risk Taker."

## THE FIVE Ps OF RISKING RIGHT

A "right risk" isn't a function of safety, security or raw odds. It's a function of compatibility: A risk that's right for you may be a folly for someone else. If you can check off each of the criteria below, the probability is very high that the risk is right for you. That doesn't guarantee a successful outcome, but it does increase the likelihood that you won't regret having pursued the risk, whether or not the risk turns out as planned.

**PASSION** Right risks are risks we care about intensely. Such risks often involve ordeals and suffering. The word "passion" comes from the Latin verb "pati," literally translated as "to suffer." By arousing the strongest, most untamed parts of our nature and stirring up the wild mustangs in our soul, our passion gives us the raw energy and wherewithal to suffer through the anguishing moments that accompany a right risk.

**PURPOSE** A right risk is taken out of a deep sense of purpose. Purpose serves to harness our passions, giving them direction and focus. Right risks stand for something beyond sensory or ego gratification. Instead of obsessing strictly about gain and loss, the Right Risk Taker asks, "How will this risk make me a more complete person?" or "How will this risk advance my goals?"

**PRINCIPLE** Right risks are governed by a set of values that are both essential and virtuous. Risks are, fundamentally, decisions. When facing a decision of consequence, principles form a set of criteria against which the risk can be judged. The principles that Right Risk Takers often use as the basis of their decision-making include justice, independence, freedom, mercy, compassion and responsibility.

**PREROGATIVE** Right risks involve the exercise of free choice. Right Risk Takers view the power to choose as a privilege and then honor it as such. By consistently making choices at a conscious level, they are better able to make superior judgment calls at an instinctual level and in fast-moving situations.

**PROFIT** A right risk should have a substantial upside. Though well aware of the risk's upside potential, the Right Risk Taker considers profit only after considering the other four evaluation criteria. Doing so keeps the Right Risk Taker from becoming too hypnotized by the lure of gain. Profit is in the outcome—it comes after everything else is done right.

Unlike run-of-the-mill risk takers, Right Risk Takers know that risk-taking has to be about much more than just compensation; it has to be about destination. Instead of asking, "What will this risk get me?," the Right Risk Taker asks, "Where will this risk take me?" By using the five Ps, the Right Risk Taker moves from where they are, to where they want to be. And that's what progress is all about.



Bill Treasurer is founder and chief encouragement officer of Giant Leap Consulting, a courage-building company that helps people and organizations live more courageously. Bill's first book, *Right Risk*, draws on his experiences as a daredevil athlete. Bill's newest book, *Courage Goes to Work*, is about how to inspire more courageous behavior in workplace settings. Bill recently spoke at the 2009 EO Barcelona University. You can reach him at [btreasurer@giantleapconsulting.com](mailto:btreasurer@giantleapconsulting.com).



**GLEN ANSELL**  
EO SOUTH AFRICA

"I think it would be an understatement to say that risk is an important part of being an entrepreneur. It is the most vital ingredient to entrepreneurship. The one risk that sticks out most for me was the recent decision to move into a high-growth state, even as we were hit by the global recession. There were continuous 'doomsday' warnings stressing the importance of cutting back and downsizing, but we made the conscious decision to do the opposite. We wanted to increase our spending on public-facing marketing, while at the same time focus on cost efficiency, rather than cost cutting. It's a gamble, but that's business."



**DIANE DUFOUR**  
EO OTTAWA

"In Canada, there is a one-year maternity leave statute. That's fabulous for families, but a nightmare to manage for business owners! In 2006, out of 16 staff members, five were pregnant, which meant they were going to be out on leave... at the same time. I couldn't afford to lose a third of my staff! So, I re-engineered the company to grow by 40 percent, ensuring that the new people we hired (and heavily invested in training) were kept. What did this experience teach me? That risk is everywhere, even when it comes with good news. Still, I'd rather live on the edge doing what I'm passionate about, feeling truly alive, than rotting somewhere doing a 'job.' Self-employment is the only answer for a person like me."



**ANKUR BHATIA**  
EO NEW DELHI

"We believe that no business is successful without facing risks and taking on challenges to overcome them. Risks and challenges are an integral part of any business, and to make the business profitable, you have to dive into the unknown, the unseen, and experience it firsthand. Without taking risks, one stagnates. I've learned that taking risks guarantees growth."



**MIRIAM HERZ**  
EO COLOMBIA

"Every day I am facing risk in business. I can work an entire year developing a plan, and it can fall down in a single day! To overcome the loss you just have to keep on working because every day brings new challenges and you will never stop learning. I've found that if you want to succeed in life, you must take risks. Being the best always comes with the will to assume the possible risks; this is the same in all aspects of life."



**MARTIN GRUNBURG**  
EO SAN DIEGO

"As with any great personal adventure, I've found that the best lessons seem to be revealed not as a direct result of the achievement, but as a by-product of the journey. For example, the Catalina Classic, a 32-mile, open-ocean paddleboard race I first completed in 2003, offered many great lessons I continue to apply to work and life. In fact, it was the preparation for that event that spawned my development of The Habit Factor®, a process I created to identify and track key, supporting behaviors that I could then make into a habit to help me reach my goals. Preparing for and participating in this race taught me that you don't get what you want, you get what you measure (track). It seems the best results come from tracking a few essential behaviors, which can help you create the most important and supportive habits, enabling the achievement of ANY goal."

# GLOBAL LEARNING CALENDAR

## JAN



**2010 EO SAUDI ARABIA COLLEGE**  
18-22 January 2010  
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

## FEB



**EO/BABSON EXECUTIVE GROWTH SEMINAR REGISTER NOW!**  
Session I — 21-24 February 2010  
Session II — 24-27 February 2010  
Sessions I and II — 21-27 February 2010  
Babson Park, Massachusetts, USA

## MAR



**2010 EO LATIN AMERICAN/CARIBBEAN CONFERENCE REGISTER NOW!**  
3-6 March 2010  
San Jose, Costa Rica

## APR



**2010 EO CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY REGISTER NOW!**  
7-11 April 2010  
Dana Point, California, USA

## JUN



**2010 EO EXPEDITION: ECUADOR & THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS REGISTER NOW!**  
4-13 June 2010  
Galapagos Islands, Ecuador

## NOV



**2010 EO CAPE TOWN UNIVERSITY**  
10-14 November 2010  
Cape Town, South Africa



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# LESSONS FROM THE EDGE

# QUOTED & NOTED

## Oman Members Recognized for Regional Growth

In a recent issue of the *Oman Economic Review*, a leading business magazine in Oman, five EO members were recognized for their involvement and longevity in the local business scene. Featured in the story were Nikhil Sampat, Hritik A Khimji, Qais M Al Khonji, Hayyan Ali Al Lawati and Tariq Al Barwani.

## Idaho Member Earns Small Business of the Year Honors



EO Idaho member Sherman Leibow's company, Great Western Barbecue Supply, LLC, was recently named 2009 Small Business of the

Year by the Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce. Criteria for the annual award includes company growth in revenue and employees, staying power, community involvement, response to adversity and innovativeness of products or services.

## New York Member Blogs for *The New York Times*



EO New York member Jennifer Walzer was asked to author a blog for *The New York Times*, where she writes about the day-to-day life of an entrepreneur.

The blog, titled, "You're the Boss: The Art of Running a Business," touches on the small and large challenges of business ownership. View the blog at <http://boss.blogs.nytimes.com>.

Share your news with your EO peers by sending a detailed e-mail to [octane@eonetnetwork.org](mailto:octane@eonetnetwork.org).

Please include a 300 dpi headshot with your submission.

To see more members in the news, visit [www.eonetnetwork.org/press/mitn/](http://www.eonetnetwork.org/press/mitn/).

## Winnipeg Company Blossoms in Publication



EO Winnipeg member Heidi Reimer-Epp's business, Botanical PaperWorks, was profiled in the September 2009 issue of

*Fast Company*. In a section titled, "Transformers," the company's product, Garden Greetings plantable paper, was spotlighted for its unique ability to sprout into flowers or herbs.

## South Africa Member Teaches Business to Youth



EO South Africa member Ronen Aires, director of The Student Village, recently attended the Gordon Institute of Business Science's "Spirit of

Youth 2009" entrepreneurship event, where he addressed a gathering of 120 student leaders from 40 township, urban, independent and farm schools. The day-long program was comprised of talks and a facilitated entrepreneur simulation workshop to give the children solid entrepreneurial grounding.

## Fun, Fearless Female of the Year



EO Sydney member Emma Isaacs was recently recognized as a finalist in *Cosmopolitan* magazine's "Fun, Fearless Female of the Year" award in

the "Entrepreneur" category. The award ceremony is an annual celebration sponsored by Bioré. Emma is the managing director of Business Chicks, Last Thursday Club and Studio Bodyfit.

## EO Chairman Emeritus Releases New Book



EO Chairman Emeritus Peter H. Thomas recently published his sixth book about better business. His latest tome, *Be Great: The Five Foundations*

of an Extraordinary Life in Business – and Beyond, focuses on the values and decisions that help people lead more successful personal and professional lives.

## Marshall B. Klein Entrepreneur of the Year Announced



EO New Orleans recently awarded their prestigious Marshall B. Klein Entrepreneur of the Year award to Patricia Talbot, president and owner

of Baton Rouge Duplicating Products, Inc. The Marshall B. Klein Entrepreneur of the Year award is given annually to an EO New Orleans member that exhibits clarity of purpose and balance of work, family and community.

## UAE Member Honored with Prestigious Award



EO UAE member Nilesh Ved, chairman and founder of Apparel Group, was recently honored with the Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum

Award for Business Excellence in the "Re-Exports" category. The award recognizes successful companies that have contributed to the economic development of the UAE.

## THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

EO's partners make it possible for us to provide you with outstanding learning events, new benefits and other opportunities that make your membership experience valuable. Through these important relationships, we can continue to create programs that support growing and successful entrepreneurs as we pursue our vision to build the world's most influential community of entrepreneurs.



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## ONE Latin American/Caribbean Conference Costa Rica

### FAST FACTS:

**Date:** 3-6 March 2010

**Location:** San Jose, Costa Rica

**Accommodations:** Real InterContinental Hotel and Tower

**Fees:** Member/Full Guest - US\$1,100  
Limited Guest - US\$750

To register or for more information, visit <http://events.eonetnetwork.org> or e-mail [events@eonetnetwork.org](mailto:events@eonetnetwork.org).

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- David Hauser, EO Boston/Event speaker

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