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The Entrepreneurs' Organization Magazine  
June 2015



*Committed to*  
**CORE**  
**VALUES**



"They say the more you give, the more you receive— this has certainly been the case with my experience."

### Finding Balance in Bali

Janine Hall, EO At Large – APAC

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Graphic Designer	<b>Dorothy Lin</b>
Videographer	<b>Jonathan King</b>
Writers	<b>Say Liang Lim</b> <b>Karen Hamill</b>

#### Global Support Services Office

Washington, D.C., USA

Entrepreneurs' Organization  
500 Montgomery Street  
Suite 700  
Alexandria, VA  
22314-1437 USA  
**info@eonetnetwork.org**  
**www.eonetnetwork.org**  
T +1.703.519.6700  
F +1.703.519.1864

#### Regional Support Presence

Belgium	New Delhi
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## Celebrating Our #EONATION



*Blair, speaking at the 2015 Global Leadership Conference.*

It's been an incredible year for EO and our membership. It seems like just yesterday I was introducing #EONATION, a theme that would come to define who we are as an organization and the spirit behind our efforts. Since its launch, #EONATION has become something much bigger than a theme or statement of community. It has become a powerful reflection of our actions as EO members; actions that serve as bridges between cultures, regions and ideologies. Above all, #EONATION has come to represent not only the breadth of our membership, but the diversity we celebrate within it.

Since July, we have furthered our influence as a global community of leading entrepreneurs. Our many accomplishments are proof of that: We welcomed six new chapters; hit the 11,000 mark in membership; introduced new programs like the EO/London Business School Growth Forum; launched EO Connect; held highly touted Global events; and focused on strengthening the family element of entrepreneurship through EO Spousal Forums and the EO Youth Exchange, among other successes. It's certainly been an amazing ride for EO, and one that will continue in FY2015/2016 under new leadership.

Eager to build on our success is Gilberto Crombe, a longtime EO Monterrey member and EO leader. I've worked alongside Gilberto for several years, and he brings with him an unwavering measure of passion and focus. I'm confident he will help EO achieve excellence by inspiring collaboration and leading from the heart. I'm proud to be a member of #EONATION, and I'm honored to have learned, grown and led alongside you as Global Chairman. Thank you, sincerely, for everything.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Blair".

Blair Assaly, EO Edmonton  
EO Global Chairman, FY2014/2015  
bassaly@eonetwork.org

**#EONATION**

## Growing EO Together



*Gilberto Crombe (EO Monterrey), a member leader since 1999.*

I am honored for the chance to serve as your new Global Chairman, and to follow in Blair's footsteps as we continue to strengthen our #EONATION. I've been a member in Monterrey, Mexico, since 1999, and a member leader for more than a decade. Throughout my journey, I've found a common denominator for achieving greatness—*teamwork*.

This approach includes such principles as inclusion, clarity and accountability. As we prepare for a new year, I invite you to participate in the evolution of our great organization. With our current size and footprint, we are close to realizing our vision of becoming the world's most influential community of entrepreneurs. But we need your help. Together, we must engage our communities with a clear message: That at 11,000 members strong, we are committed to changing lives through entrepreneurship. We will no longer be a best-kept secret!

We have a lot of work ahead of us, and we have a lot to learn from each other—from our EO peers and professional staff, to our EO GSEA and EO Accelerator participants, and those NGOs that nurture entrepreneurship globally. Now is the time to evolve as an organization. We have a new CEO with innovative ideas; we have Global leaders from each EO region; and we have a new strategy cycle emphasizing inclusion, strategy, alignment, accountability and continuity. We must rely on one another to move forward. Regardless of our different backgrounds and viewpoints, we must come together to collaborate, trust and be accountable.

We are not looking for perfection—we are looking for progress. I encourage you to participate, get informed, bring your ideas and speak up to the leadership of EO. And please know that I will always be available for you. As the African proverb goes: "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." Let's go all in and lead together this year. ¡Gracias!

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gilberto".

Gilberto Crombe, EO Monterrey  
EO Global Chairman, FY2015/2016  
gcrombe@eonetwork.org

**EO Together**



## A Year of Strategy and Strength

In just 12 months, we have become stronger and grown closer than ever before as an organization, all while positioning our global community as a go-to resource for entrepreneurial thought leadership. Our efforts this year, fueled by unity at all levels, are a reflection of our commitment toward the EO Global Strategic Plan and the imperatives that drive it. Evidence can be found in the recent All Member Survey, an annual organizational “pulse check” that informs us of our strengths and weaknesses as a growing, global community. This year, we met and set benchmarks for EO excellence:

- » We received the highest number of responses in EO’s history: 6,082
- » Our overall value rating as an organization remains high: 8.3 (out of 10)
- » The amount of members who plan on renewing for at least one year is significant: 97.7%
- » The quality of our chapter members increased since last year: 8.7 (8.6)
- » Forum satisfaction continues to rank as our highest-rated member benefit: 8.8

Certainly, these are impressive data points (email [news@eonetnetwork.org](mailto:news@eonetnetwork.org) for a full report), but one rating that stands out as truly exceptional is our Net Promoter Score, which settles in at 61.9%. A management tool that gauges the loyalty of customers, our Net Promoter Score is indicative of our success in serving our diverse

membership. To put our score in perspective, we beat out Zappos (60%), Westin (59%) and Discover (52%) this year, a feat that, coupled with our member value rating, speaks to the growing impact of our organization.

It has certainly been a remarkable year for EO, and we’re looking forward to building on this success in FY2015/2016 under new leadership. Recently, we leveraged feedback from the All Member Survey to develop a “Top 5” that will help drive operations in the new year. As we pursue these efforts, we will further unite to develop a more collaborative community fueled by teamwork, trust and respect. We welcome your feedback along the way. Should you wish to share your thoughts, or do so anonymously, scan the QR code below and you’ll be taken to an EO survey form. Your EO experience is important to us, and we will make sure your comments, questions and concerns are met with the strictest confidence and immediate attention. Together, we will keep the momentum going.

On behalf of the EO staff, thank you for your support as we close out another year and welcome an exciting new one. We’ve come a long way, and in FY2015/2016, we’ll go even further.

Regards,

Jason Tate  
Senior Vice President of Operations  
[jtate@eonetnetwork.org](mailto:jtate@eonetnetwork.org)

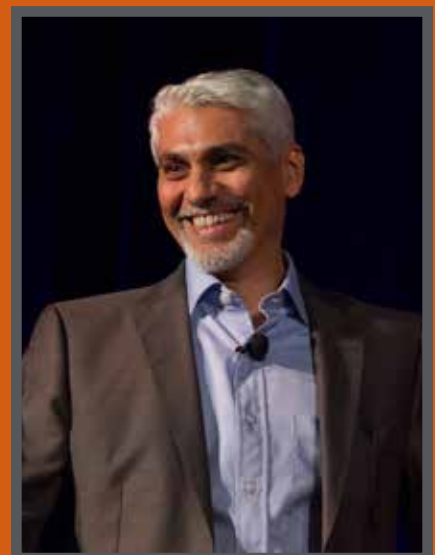


## Announcing EO’s New CEO

Since the retirement of Executive Director, Bob Strade, in December, a Global Board-led task force has worked diligently to determine a successor. After a thorough research and interview process, we are pleased to introduce **Vijay K. Tirathrai** as EO’s new CEO.

Vijay brings to EO more than 30 years of experience in the business sector and non-profit leadership. A longtime EO Malaysia member, Vijay served as Global Chairman in 2003, where he oversaw the merger of YEO and WEO, doubled EO’s membership and set in motion our exponential growth.

Vijay will start in his role as CEO on 1 July, and will be based out of EO headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia, USA. Welcome Vijay to EO at [vijay@eonetnetwork.org](mailto:vijay@eonetnetwork.org)!



## Welcome, Vijay!



# HOW CHASING NEARLY

## Corrine Sandler

Founder of Fresh Intelligence and Validatell.com

**W**hen I started my first business seven years ago, I knew I had a concept that I had to act on quickly. The only thing holding me back? I didn't know how to finance a startup. I had no idea how to borrow money or where to look for investors, so my only option was bootstrapping.

I approached a friend who ran a marketing company, and he offered me office space and a little cash. It wasn't much, but it was a start. I often say that I built my company with the bricks others have thrown at me. Three months later, I paid back my minimal cash loan. Now, seven years later, my company, Fresh Intelligence, is a thriving global enterprise with offices in two major cities. I am the sole principal with a kick-ass senior executive team and employees that I've been told would walk on hot coals for me.

As a serial entrepreneur, one company is never enough, so I started my next venture almost six months ago—but this time I chose a different approach to finance it. It's a technology company, and I needed to scale it quickly to grab first-mover advantage without first-mover risk. I had built the technology. I had set up the entity. Now I just needed to go hunting for the capital to make it happen.

Thus began my bad romance: courting cash; building a pitch deck, refining the pitch deck, building a new pitch deck; honing my mission and vision; crafting new pro formas and financials; changing my acquisition strategy; moving my target; building a new pitch deck; and chasing the cash cows all over the country. I spent six months meeting with venture capitalists (VC) in North America, and in the process, completely lost touch with why I had wanted to start the business in the first place.

It started to feel like a lopsided tennis game, with me doggedly lobbing back the volleys they sent flying over the net. It was a crash course in a business I knew nothing about, and I literally learned on the run. The VCs' demands shifted constantly, and I gladly obliged. They told me I needed a chief technology officer immediately, even though I had an MVP (minimum viable product) ready to go. But my job now was to appease them, so I shifted gears and began interviewing for a big-ticket employee.





# VENTURE CAPITALISTS COST ME MY *SANITY*

And finally the penny dropped: I got a call from a VC that focused on seed-stage funding. They were close to getting me a term sheet—we just needed to meet for a final discussion. They could squeeze me in for an hour at a Starbucks across the street from their 3 p.m. meeting ... could I be there? Oh, yes. Yes, I could. Two hours out from the scheduled meeting, I got an email. We had a new time and a new location. My hour was now down to 45 minutes.

As I read the email, I paused for a moment to reflect. In my first company—the initial bootstrapped baby—I had always had the autonomy to make my own decisions and drive my own vision and mission. Suddenly, I was reduced to being a glorified gofer ... and where would that end? In that moment, I thought of something a friend had said: “Corrine, they’re all your friends until they give you money, and then it’s the bottom line that counts. Period.”

I looked at the calendar. Had it really been six months since I launched my technology platform? What had become of my vision? My mission? I hadn’t laid a single brick. I had been waiting for others to do it for me, and I’d nearly lost my way. I agreed to the VC’s change of location. I went there to thank them for their time, and inform them that I had decided to focus on my company—emphasis on “my”—and not their funds. The experience I had gained was invaluable, but the time I had spent could have cost me my first-mover advantage ... and my autonomy.

Looking back, this experience taught me to never lose sight of my mission or vision when weighing my growth options. And not to let dollar signs steal my dreams, distort my business plan or dilute my vision. Would I do it again? Never say never—but not on anyone’s terms but my own. Let the VCs come knocking. Until then, I’ll carry my own bricks and build my own home.

*Corrine Sandler (pictured) is an EO Toronto member; the founder and chief strategic officer of Fresh Intelligence, a custom research firm; and CEO of ValidateIT Technologies, Inc., a technology insight platform. She is also an Advantage best-selling author of Wake Up or Die. Contact Corrine at [csandler@freshintelligence.com](mailto:csandler@freshintelligence.com).*

## LESSONS LEARNED from My VC Love Affair

- If they ask you to change your business plan to get dollars, walk away.
- If they focus on year-one revenue and not the concept, run away.
- If they think they have the power because you need them, hide away. They must want you more.
- If you find yourself celebrating a term sheet arrival more than a sale, you’ve lost your way.
- If your original vision is disappearing in the rearview, and you don’t like the looks of the landscape ahead, grab the wheel. It’s your way or the highway.

# REBOUNDED FROM ROCK BOTTOM



## Chip Dodd

President and CEO of Support Services of Virginia, Inc.

Chip (right), with his friend, Bessie, who lives with her two brothers in one of the homes mentioned in this article.

## “Let’s call it!”

“What?” I said. With a dead-serious look on his face, my company’s CFO repeated himself: “Let’s call it. Close it all down and let the bank come and get it.”

At that point, I knew I had really screwed up. It was January 2008. Two years prior, when local housing prices were skyrocketing, I was faced with an opportunity. The real estate market was capable of increasing by more than 20% in a single month, and I knew that if we didn’t figure out a way to buy the homes we needed to operate our company, we would be forced out of the city.

My company, Support Services of Virginia, Inc., was founded on a vision to help persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities live the best lives possible in integrated community settings. It was critical that we had affordable and accessible houses to provide our services. The problem was that the rent we were paying was already too expensive for our customers, so we were forced to use company income to subsidize their rent. I was desperate to figure out a solution.

I found a program that helps companies like mine finance houses to be used for our purpose. In less than six months, I bought four houses on a 30-year, fixed-rate loan, with little money down and no credit check. I was 34, and felt like Donald Trump. I didn’t know it at the time, but I had made one of the most common entrepreneurial mistakes: I focused all of my time on negotiating the deal, and ignored the cost it was going to take to see it through. Many business owners thrive off the rush they get from “the deal.” You can’t sleep. You can’t stop talking about it. The celebration begins the minute the documents are signed. In that celebratory moment, you have no idea you’ve just steered the ship directly into an iceberg. I was in for a rude awakening.

Fast forward six months later. After a mountain of bills from the hardware store, thousands of extra labor hours, overlapping rent/mortgages and a truckload of other unanticipated expenses, we had finally hit rock bottom. The CFO called me into his office and explained that we weren’t going to make Friday’s payroll. We had

borrowed all that the bank would lend, our credit cards were full and our time had finally come. That’s how I found myself at a local diner, having a meeting with the other two owners of the company (one of whom was our CFO), deciding what we were going to do. The proposal was on the table.

“Let’s call it.”

“No! We are smarter than that,” I said. “There has to be a solution!”

Approximately 185 employees and hundreds of individuals with disabilities were counting on us. Giving up was not an option. After some intense deliberation, we decided to go “all in” and right the ship ... or go down trying. We bet everything: retirement accounts, lines of credit, home equity and a likely bankruptcy— all of it. We had to give it one last shot.

We got to work by analyzing the entire company, made some tough decisions and created a detailed action plan. I called in favors from my outside support team for help. A personal referral landed me a meeting with a representative from a local bank who was willing to review our situation. He took a chance on us because he believed our strategy would work. Against their better judgment, and on the precipice of the Great Recession, his bank threw us a lifeline we needed to get back on track. A year later, we had turned the company around and were growing at a significant pace.

So, what did I learn from this nightmare? A few things: Always avoid the thrill of the deal and thoroughly analyze the entire situation from a two-year perspective; develop a strong team of “outside eyes” that you trust to give honest feedback and guidance whenever a critical decision needs to be made; avoid surprises by building systems to monitor and chart key metrics that are leading indicators of success; just because you can borrow money, it doesn’t mean you should; and finally, I learned that I NEVER want to be in that situation again!

*Philip “Chip” Dodd is an EO Southeast Virginia member and the president and CEO of Support Services of Virginia, Inc., which provides person-centered support to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout Virginia. Contact Chip at [chip@ssvainc.org](mailto:chip@ssvainc.org).*



# A Decade of LESSONS LEARNED

## Matt Shoup

Owner of M & E Painting, LLC

I recently closed another year of business for M & E Painting, and it was a special time for me for two reasons: We celebrated our 10<sup>th</sup> year in business, and I had made the decision to step out of the day-to-day operations and focus on speaking, coaching and writing a book through MattShoup.com, my new venture. As I moved forward, I found myself having to explain to peers why I was no longer involved in my first company. Along the way, I uncovered experiences and important lessons learned that proved invaluable in the past decade.

**1. Let Leaders Lead:** The biggest lesson I've learned is that I did a poor job letting my leaders lead. I gave them a job to do, and then didn't fully let them do it. I remember one of my sales reps telling me to let him close a sale or he will never become better than I was. I realized in that moment that I let my fear and insecurities kick in, which led me to do people's jobs for them. I was afraid to let them fail and then teach them, so I never let them learn. Once I let go, I was free to let them lead.

**2. Stop Talking So Much:** Marketing and PR have always been my natural strong suits. For years, I spent a ton of money marketing my company. I tracked the ROI on everything I did. We turned up what worked and turned down what didn't. After about a million dollars of traditional advertising, I found that I should have stopped talking about myself. One piece of well-landed PR, along with a business award, afforded me much more credibility, exposure and connections than any paid marketing. Plus, it got others talking about my company, which was much more reliable than me talking about myself.

**3. Take Massive Action:** When I founded my business, I knew that everything was going to be dependent on me. I took massive action, working countless hours pushing a huge boulder up a considerable mountain. I found that as difficult as it was, I kept on keeping on. When that boulder crested the top of the mountain, an unstoppable momentum ensued. There were times I wanted to quit and the boulder pushed back, but I kept moving forward.

**4. Share Your "Painted Baby" Story:** One of my favorite stories to share with potential customers and team members was when our company massively screwed up. I have found that the A+ and 5-star reviews, while nice, will only get you so far. Humans respond to train-wreck stories. These are the times in my business where I was able to show what I was truly made of. It pulls people in and shows them your authenticity.

**5. Plant Your Flag:** My business became successful rather quickly, but it took much longer for it to be impactful. When I was growing M & E Painting in my early 20s, I didn't have a clear understanding of what I stood for. I call this your "flag." Everybody has a flag, and many have no idea what it is. When I became clear on who I am, it made sense that my business would be a natural extension of my values. When I planted my flag, people saw what they were fighting for every day. What's more, my flag attracted those with similar flags (team members, vendors and customers), and repelled those who were not on the same page.

**6. Take Frequent Mini-Vacations:** Vacations have been a great way for me to unwind, relax and recharge. Upon returning from vacations, I would realize what kind of bottlenecks and holes I had in my business. Being away for weeks at a time tested the company's ability to run without me. When I returned, I knew what I needed to teach in order to take a longer—or maybe a permanent—vacation down the road. This was a crucial step in my exiting the daily operations of the business.

Matt Shoup (pictured) is an EO Colorado member and owner of M & E Painting, LLC, a painting business he created with only US\$100 to his name, a passion for entrepreneurship and a desire to support his family. Contact Matt at [matt@mandepainting.com](mailto:matt@mandepainting.com).



# REFLECTIONS FROM A FORUM RETREAT

**Zaheer Goodman-Bhyat**  
*Founder of Light and Dark Films*

I'm a member of Forum 2 in Cape Town, and last year we held a retreat that proved to be the highlight of our year. What made this retreat so extraordinary is that when we made contact with external facilitators to aid our journey, it was clear that our individual personalities were going to dictate our early exchanges, and that there was no consensus behavior. We needed direction for growth.

Our Forum has enjoyed numerous retreats over the years, but in 2014 we wanted to go deeper—to push the boundaries of what had been done before. We felt we could be better coaches, and were keen to explore deeper levels of functioning. However, something was holding us back from more meaningful engagements. We recruited two external facilitators—Marc Rogatschnig and Gavin Shaskolsky—to lead us into uncharted territory. The challenge was exciting, daunting and energizing for us all.

At our first meeting, Marc and Gavin were confronted by the rank and power of the group. They were being invited into a sacred and safe space, while at the same time being tasked to ignite real impact and push the limits of everyone's comfort zones. They were also complete strangers to us. Forum members were understandably cautious to dive in and expose their frailties. Signs of a deep-seeded fear of failure began to emerge in the form of a bristling, competitive energy. It was projected onto the facilitators and revealed an underlying, and potentially limiting, aspect of the group's identity.

The retreat itself began with an invitation: We were asked to bring five objects that reflected aspects of ourselves as an interpretation of EO's five core values. The early exchanges were lighthearted, but the competitive undertone soon thrust into sharp focus. We independent and self-directed achievers will not easily let others lead, support, challenge and facilitate our journey. Subtle shifts in the group dynamic emerged as each person shared the meaning of their objects. Each share made it safer for the next person to dive deeper. That strengthened the process, and inspired more ownership and partnership in our collective journey. The real conversations had been ignited, and progress was evident.

After we had grasped the high-level intent and skills of an effective coach, we were tasked to experience a different kind of coaching firsthand. It was easy to spot the changes. The powerful questions, deep safety and attentive coaching were evidence



*Zaheer Goodman-Bhyat (pictured, second from left) is an EO Cape Town member and the founder of Light and Dark Films, an award-winning film company specializing in prestige feature films for the international market. Contact Zaheer at [zaheer@lightanddarkfilms.com](mailto:zaheer@lightanddarkfilms.com).*

of change in action. In the first day's debrief, most people commented that they had never before experienced such powerful, real and impactful conversations. We were all struck by the authenticity and emerging vulnerability in the room. People were beginning to transform.

The second-day greetings were profoundly different than the first. An eager, open and easeful group was ready to immerse into a deeper level of engagement. With each person's "check in," it emerged that something subtle, yet profound, was taking shape in the group. There was a firm field of safety and growing trust. We were willing and playful, vulnerable and open to the unknown and the unseen. The conversation moved gracefully as we spent our time reflecting on aspects of our lives and our impact in the world. That created an environment of vitality, presence and life.

The facilitators continued to deepen the conversations around authentic leadership and connection, and offered opportunities to each individual to dismantle the barriers and beliefs that were holding them back from finding reserves in their potential. There was an emerging embodiment of presence and calmness, and a clear link to our leadership in work and life. We were forging deeper relationships not only with each other, but with ourselves, too.

Looking back, this retreat proved to be one of the most transformative experiences in our Forum's history. Personally, the most profound learning I received was that listening is more important than speaking, and knowing when *not* to speak may be the noblest of skills. A couple of months after the retreat, we met with the facilitators for a final debrief. It was a spirited reminder of a transformative process. In the words of Marc and Gavin:

"This is why we do this work. To bring out the best in people and transform the world through leaders who influence and impact others. It is about the privileged experience of connecting and boldly going deeper together, because in the end, relationships are the heartbeat of life and leadership."





# THE ABSENT ENTREPRENEUR

Debbie Goodman-Bhyat  
CEO of Jack Hammer Executive Headhunters

Debbie Goodman-Bhyat (pictured) is an EO Cape Town member and the CEO of Jack Hammer Executive Headhunters, a premier executive search firm in South Africa. Contact Debbie at [debbie@jhammer.co.za](mailto:debbie@jhammer.co.za).

In early 2013, at the age of 42, I embarked on a proper mid-life crisis that took the form of wanting to dance again—professionally, on a stage somewhere and with a dance company. In my former career, I was a contemporary dancer, choreographer and director of an independent dance company. I retired at the grand-old age of 28 due to an injury and being flat broke. I took the business route and embarked on a new career as an executive headhunter.

For more than 15 years, I lived quite happily without the urge to dance or perform ... and then overnight, the itch demanded to be scratched. An almost 18-month training and rehearsal process ensued. For the first time in a decade and a half, I was not 100% focused on my business, nor 100% available for my team, clients and the hundred other moving parts—and it terrified me! I found myself worrying: What if my team's delivery and productivity dropped? What if my clients were unhappy and left? What if my reduced attention resulted in dropped balls and my business suffered irreparable damage?

The fear of failure was staring me in the face each time I made the nine-hour drive to my dance rehearsals. And yet, the re-inspired passion and goal of performing on a stage again were powerful enough to keep me dancing, in spite of the internal, critical voice of judgment. Before I knew it, performance day had arrived. I danced at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown, South Africa's biggest and most prestigious arts festival. It was magical to be back on stage, doing the thing that had been my all-consuming passion from the time I was a child. And then, five shows later, it was all over. I was back at work, all in one piece ... and so was my business.

In fact, business was better than ever! Once I had a moment to catch my breath, I started to reflect on the many developments and transitions that my company had gone through over the previous year as a direct consequence of my passion project. And the realization was that my absence had been the best thing for my business and team. Here are some related key learnings:

**1. Clients just want excellent delivery and great service:**

As long as clients are getting these things, they don't care much about whether you're at the office or playing golf (or performing at a dance festival, for that matter).

**2. Let your team do what they do best:** Instead of the team being accountable to me for delivery on their projects, they set up internal, service-level agreements and became accountable to their colleagues. Each person knew what was expected of them, so if someone was not delivering, it was visible. My personal input—sanctions or incentives—became unnecessary.

**3. Don't just delegate—give a proper mandate:** Delegation was not enough if I wanted to avoid being piled with final decisions on all of the same tasks that I had handed over in the first place. I looked at the many things that no longer needed my personal "yes," and gave a mandate to my team to do more than just execute—I empowered them to make decisions.

**4. I still love my business:** Perhaps the greatest insight I received from taking the time to do something that I had been passionate about early in life, was the perspective that the thing I do now (executive searches) challenges, inspires and fulfills me.

**5. My company can survive without me:** For the first time, I was able to test the resilience of my business and team—and the results were spectacular. Not only did everyone survive, but my key stakeholders thrived.

All in all, I think I'm (mostly) done with dance, but I now have the confidence and know-how to step away from my business from time to time to pursue whichever passionate endeavors arise. The bucket list beckons!

# Surviving a Business Partnership Separation

**Chris Peer**

*Partner and CEO of  
SyncShow Interactive*

It was August 2011, and I was miserable. My nine-year-old business was stagnant and our culture was going downhill. I was frustrated, somewhat depressed and becoming a total jerk to work for. How did it come to this?

After founding the company in 2002, Idea Engine (now SyncShow Interactive) saw great success. We were growing at double-digit percentages year after year. Four years later, I brought on a business partner, Dan, to help round out our offering and improve our capabilities. Dan and I were old friends, and in the years following our business partnership, our friendship grew stronger. We were hard workers with the same lofty goals. We reveled in the excitement of growing our business, and had dreams of wealth and success. You could say we were cocky or naive ... but we believed.

In late 2010, things began to change. Work became, well, work. Our team was awesome, but our focus was split. Dan and I had unintentionally built our business into two different companies—one that focused on software and one that focused on marketing consulting. We had two teams trying to operate as one, and when issues arose, the finger-pointing began. Employees

were frustrated, and I dreaded coming to work each day. My life was suddenly all about putting out fires, and my relationship with Dan became stressed. Although we were producing a great work product and our clients were happy, I was becoming a miserable person to be around.

A year later, things got worse. Dan and I kept trying different ideas, models, incentive plans ... anything to spark our growth. Every shiny new idea was adopted, and our focus lapsed. Our financials were going downhill, and without significant new sales, I predicted that we would be out of business in six months. Around this time, I scheduled an off-site strategy retreat with Dan. The plan was to dive into our personal goals and career desires. When finished, we would let the chips fall where they may and make the appropriate

adjustments to our business. We decided that no matter the direction our retreat took us, no matter how difficult or scary, we would make the necessary changes.

The retreat went well. We holed up in a log cabin for three days and documented our personal goals, company challenges and the changes we would need to make to accomplish growth. Afterward, I felt reenergized and ready to tackle our new corporate mission. But after a couple of weeks, I realized that Dan and I were not on the same page. We had gravely different ideas and passions regarding how to achieve our goals.

A few months later, Dan and I dissolved our business partnership. Fortunately, we drafted a separation agreement prior to becoming partners. This agreement formed the outline for next steps, and it saved our friendship. I ended up buying out his shares, and still own the company today. Business is up by more than 60%, and I'm enjoying work again. As for Dan, he started a new company and has seen great success. We're even working together as partner companies. It feels good to be past the hardships and to have both found success. As partnership-separation stories go, this was a win-win.

Looking back, this separation forced me to address several critical issues in the business, including our unique selling proposition, corporate culture, work/life balance and my management style. As a company, we decided to focus on what matters most—happiness. We got rid of some difficult clients and stopped working for just anyone with a checkbook. We also made a major transition to service only qualified customers in the manufacturing industry. Our messaging is clearer and our employees are more focused. I am much happier now, and while growth challenges are ever-present, things just seem easier. In the end, I learned that working harder does not always mean company growth. When it comes down to it, addressing the simple things can make a world of difference in ways unexpected.

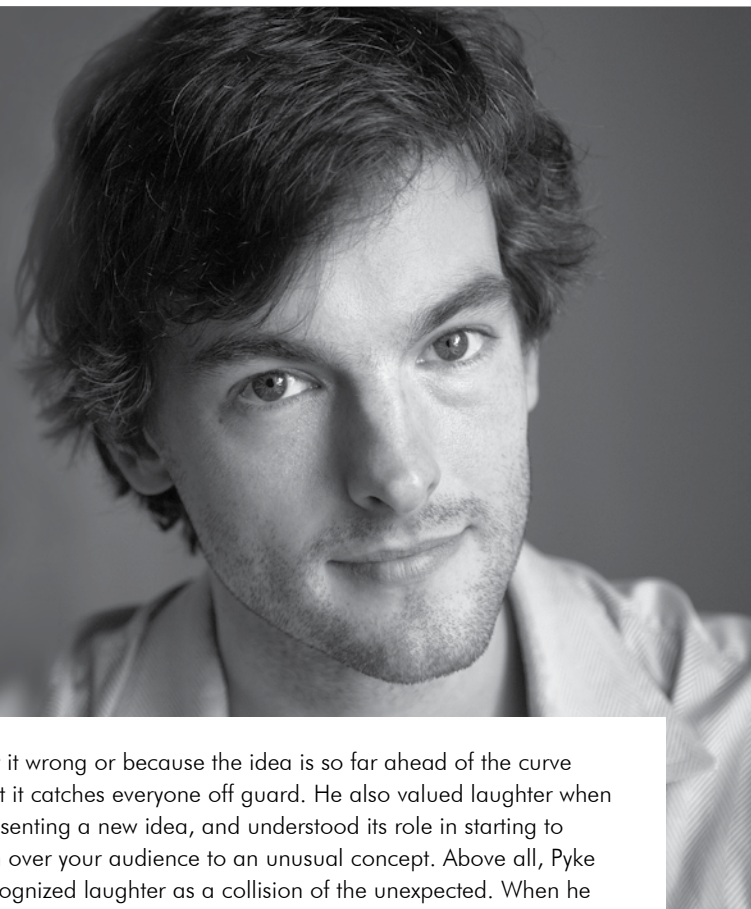
**“My life was suddenly all about putting out fires, and my relationship with Dan became stressed.”**

*Chris Peer is an EO Cleveland member, as well as partner and CEO of SyncShow Interactive, a customized sales and marketing solutions firm. Contact Chris at [chrisp@syncshow.com](mailto:chrisp@syncshow.com).*



# The Role of RADICAL INNOVATION

Are you a radical innovator? Should an entrepreneur aspire to be one? Absolutely, says **Henry Hemming**, an EO speaker and author of *The Ingenious Mr. Pyke*. In his book, Henry tells the story of Geoffrey Pyke, a journalist who changed the landscape of British pre-school education, earned a fortune on the stock market, wrote a bestseller, and in 1942, convinced Winston Churchill to build an aircraft carrier out of reinforced ice. In this interview, Henry espouses the benefits of radical innovation and the role it played in the miraculous life of this misunderstood genius.



By many accounts, Pyke was considered a genius. Did he embrace that title?

**HH:** “Pyke would always reject the label. He would say that he was not a genius; he simply had an intellectual technique he spent his entire life perfecting. He believed that anyone could learn this technique; that we can all learn how to think like geniuses if we follow certain principles and are prepared to take particular risks. He began to describe this in a book, but sadly he died before finishing it. What I’ve tried to do in my biography, as well as talks and workshops, is illustrate this technique using stories from Pyke’s life. Perhaps this will help create one or two new entrepreneurial geniuses; certainly that’s what he would have hoped!”

Pyke had a knack for spotting a lack of innovation. What were some tell-tale signs?

**HH:** “When Pyke was sent to the United States during WWII to develop his radical new idea for an elite guerrilla force—a military unit now seen as the precursor of today’s U.S. Special Forces—he saw in the U.S. Army administration signs of a lack of innovation. It wasn’t just that his new colleagues were doing things in a certain way ‘because that’s how they’d always been done.’ What worried Pyke was the angry response to the possibility of changing those behaviors. A sure sign that innovation is being stifled is when it becomes taboo to challenge dearly held organizational habits. By contrast, Pyke saw intellectual cross-fertilization as one of the great spurs to innovation. When departments within the same organization are unable to easily collaborate and share ideas with each other, innovation tends to suffer.”

What characterized Pyke’s approach to radical innovation?

**HH:** “I’d say it’s characterized by a different understanding of laughter. As a radical innovator, Pyke argued, you must be ready to have people laugh at you or your idea, either because you’ve

got it wrong or because the idea is so far ahead of the curve that it catches everyone off guard. He also valued laughter when presenting a new idea, and understood its role in starting to win over your audience to an unusual concept. Above all, Pyke recognized laughter as a collision of the unexpected. When he heard someone laugh, he would ask himself why it had happened and whether that joke contained the seed of a new—or an old—idea that could be refashioned to new effect. Often, it could.”

How can people adopt Pyke’s methods of innovation?

**HH:** “You can start by thinking of the assumptions we have regarding a subject around which you want to innovate. Next, find the weakest assumptions and challenge them by writing down a series of questions. As Pyke once put it, ‘The correct formulation of a problem is more than halfway to its solution. If anybody says he has nothing to say, it only means that the problem has been put to him inappropriately.’ Once you’ve perfected the wording of these questions, it’s time to start looking for solutions. Start with experimentation—experiment widely, cheaply and rapidly, always keeping an eye out for the unusual results, outliers and anomalies that strike you as odd.

“Once this is done, you arrive at the key stage in Pyke’s approach, which he called the ‘Auto-Socratic Method.’ This is Pyke’s secret sauce. It’s a Pykean brainstorm that gives you the outline of a new idea. The next step is to play devil’s advocate. Look for holes in your idea, preempt criticisms and smooth off some of its rough edges. Finally, it’s time to identify a champion who can take on your idea and win over others before you pitch it to them. The last stage of Pyke’s approach was to pass on this understanding of innovation to others.”

*Henry Hemming (pictured) is a celebrated author and speaker who recently gave talks on radical innovation to both EO Saudi Arabia – Riyadh and EO Qatar. Contact Henry at [henryhemming@gmail.com](mailto:henryhemming@gmail.com).*

# My Business isn't Great (and That's okay)

**Bob Bernstein**

*Managing member of Bongo Productions*

I decided a long time ago that “good enough” is way better than “great.” In short, I’m okay that my business doesn’t meet the definition of being a great business. It doesn’t maximize profits, has inefficiencies all over the place and is slow to implement needed changes. The trade-off is that I get to drive my kids to school most mornings, take eight-week summer vacations and meet my wife for a weekly lunch or occasional matinee.

Don’t get me wrong: I’m proud of my business. What started out as a small coffeehouse 22 years ago has grown into a restaurant group with six different concepts, two wholesale operations and millions of dollars in real estate holdings. We employ 180 people, and have had constant growth in same-store sales, operating profits and distributions to investors. Sure, we could be bigger and more profitable—but at what expense?

As an entrepreneur, I hear stories of how peers ignore their families and themselves as they work around the clock to run their

my family even further ahead of my business. Owning a profitable, mature business put me in a decent financial position, and being an older dad gave me the motivation to spend as much time with my son as possible. While I was away, the business suffered. Decisions didn’t get made, chances for growth passed by and some good employees left for what they believed were better opportunities. But in the long run, the decision to put my business second made me a better leader.

Over time, I learned to let go, delegate and empower my staff. I again threw the keys at a trusted employee and asked her to run the place. I kept giving her things to do, and she kept finding new things to accomplish. Before, nothing would have happened until I thought of it, implemented it and insisted others continue to do it. Now, this employee is analyzing profit and loss statements, coaching store managers and making changes without me. In fact, she’s helped open two more operations and has managed five major construction projects.

My company doesn’t meet famed business writer Jim Collins’ definition of “great” companies. We don’t blow away other restaurants’ return on investments, and we haven’t created places that are so unique that they would leave a hole in the marketplace that no one else could fill. However, I think my company is something even better than great. Somehow without a real plan, we’ve created an incredible company, one that affords me this lifestyle.

I came up with this distinction between “great” and “incredible” a few years ago. I turned 50 at about the same time my business turned 20. The twin milestones made me question things, including how I was running my company. After all, I had no formal business training or management experience when I quit my job as a reporter to open a coffeehouse. Over the years, I’ve made a lot of smart decisions and some classic blunders. More importantly, I learned that as proud of my business as I was, it didn’t meet the textbook definition of being great. And that was OK.

The best reassurance that I made the right decision to put my family first came from my 9-year-old son. We were out to dinner, and I asked him what he wanted to do when he got older. Without hesitation, he said, “Something like you.” “You want to own your own business?” I asked.

“No. Be a daddy.” That moment reminded me of a quote in *Big Fish*, a book I love: “A man can be considered a success if his son loves him.” While my business may never be “great,” I know my decision to settle for “good enough” helped me create a business that, incredibly, gives me the lifestyle I want.

*Bob Bernstein (pictured with his family) is an EO Nashville member and a managing member of Bongo Productions, Nashville’s oldest and most honored coffeehouse. Contact Bob at [bob@bongojava.com](mailto:bob@bongojava.com).*



*Photo credit: Missy Wood*

businesses. I did the 18-hour-days, seven-days-a-week thing for about three months, during which I lost 22 pounds and almost a long-term relationship. I quickly realized I needed to make a change. Without planning—and perhaps out of desperation—I asked a key employee, “What are you doing at 6 a.m.?” He looked puzzled. “You’re opening up. I’m not coming in tomorrow.” I ended up returning around lunch time, but the precedent was set.

Jump ahead 12 years. I got married at 44, and we had a son 13 months later. When he was born, I made the decision to put



# Keeping Your Health in Check

Running a healthy business can be challenging. Add your personal health into the mix, and being an entrepreneur is a full-time job! For **David Azanza**, a new EO Philippines member and president of FeelGood, Inc., health is integral to every aspect of his entrepreneurial journey. In this interview, David touches on the importance of staying healthy, the value of cleanses and the benefits of having a big network.

*What steps do you take to ensure you're balancing the health of your business with your personal health?*

**DA:** "In the same way that I don't see 'health' as a term that is only related to the body, I don't see business health as just a string of numbers at the end of the month. To help me balance both, I don't check email past 7 p.m. If it's something urgent, then whoever needs to get in touch with me can call or send a text. I also allot myself 'proper' working hours for most days. Any time between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. is work, and outside of that I protect my personal time. Personal time is when I take care of exercising, spending time with the family, seeing friends, etc. It helps that my business is health-oriented, since my visits to our stores means that I can feed myself well and do some quality control."

*Entrepreneurs often pride themselves on having hard-charging lifestyles. How integral is health to the entrepreneurial journey?*

**DA:** "Properly running a business is difficult if you're not feeling well. Keeping in shape and staying healthy are not just integral to the entrepreneurial journey, but to life in general. Our business is oriented toward helping people achieve a balance on the food side of the wellness equation. We don't argue against partying hard, drinking or other things that make life more fun. Instead, we position ourselves as the counterweight to that. Go and have fun, just remember to treat your body and mind well on the flip side so that

you can, as much as possible, keep within a happy and moderate level."

*How do you determine what type of cleanse someone needs and how often they should use it?*

**DA:** "From the start, our juice cleanse business has been designed and marketed around the concept of convenience and comfort. If you're only comfortable doing a cleanse for one day, then great. That's already better than nothing. Comfort in this case applies to your mental state, as well as the feedback from your body. If you start with a one-day cleanse and want to extend it to multiple days, then we're good with that, too. In general, we don't recommend doing more than a three-day cleanse without medical support, or at least the additional support of hydro-colon therapy. Also, we don't recommend juice cleanses for people that have pre-existing medical conditions (e.g., diabetes, high blood pressure) without them first getting their doctor's approval. There are many types of cleanses out there; you just have to do the research to make the most educated decision."

*What are some challenges that stem from working in the health industry?*

**DA:** "We started out with cleanses and branched out into salad-oriented restaurants, so our brand is very much associated with health and wellness. We have to be careful about how we extend our brand and curate our offerings at our restaurants. Restaurants



are fairly capital intensive on the startup side, so capitalization and cash flow issues are always at the forefront of our expansion. Since joining EO, one of the most interesting things I've learned is that I am not alone in my experiences. The entrepreneurial journey seems to be remarkably similar regardless of industry. It all boils down to the same basic issues: staffing, management, cash flow, capitalization, marketing, etc."

*What tips can you share when it comes to staying healthy while running a business?*

**DA:** "Aside from the obvious platitudes of finding time to exercise and being with your family, this is a case of different things floating different boats. The most important thing for me, personally, is to carve out time where I can just zone out the business and focus on other things. I like to start my day with a routine of activities that are fairly mundane but important (basic food quality control, checking the numbers from the previous day, reviewing financials, etc.), so that I can focus the rest of the day on more value-added work. I also find it important to have a sounding board/support network. This alone has provided me with insights and ideas that I've been able to use to help grow the business."

*To learn more about David's journey, contact him at [david@juju.com.ph](mailto:david@juju.com.ph).*







# Committed to CORE VALUES

Every journey requires a roadmap of sorts. For business owners, that compass often comes in the form of core values. For **Kalika Yap**, an EO Los Angeles member, serial entrepreneur and mother of two, core values provide an important framework in her business and family. In this special interview, Kalika offers insights into her “accidental” entrepreneurial journey, balancing multiple businesses and the role core values play in her businesses, family and future.

Your entrepreneurial journey is unique in that you made the jump from journalism school to entrepreneurship largely by accident. How did you discover your entrepreneurial spirit?

**KY:** “As a child, I immersed myself in old books, biographies and poetry, so I thought a career in journalism would be a natural fit. When it was time for college, I swapped Hawaii’s Kai trade winds and a mixed-matched swimsuit for a New York University backpack, woolly socks and layers. At the time, I was bright-eyed with a native tan and bikini lines. My friend, Lei Ann, knew I had arrived at the airport when she saw a security guard decked in tuberose leis. Four years later, armed with a bachelor’s degree in journalism, I landed a job with Bloomberg News ... but something didn’t feel right. I spent most of my time at work behind a computer documenting interesting lives rather than living one. I went on to work for CNBC, but the feeling that there was something bigger out there for me hung around. I felt like I had another calling.

“Fast forward a few years: My longtime college boyfriend got a job in Santa Monica. After a year of trying the long-distance thing,

I moved out to California to be with him. Three weeks later, he dumped me for the receptionist. With no place to live, no friends and no job, my ex-boyfriend told me to look for employment at Cyberjava, the first Internet cafe in Southern California. This was in 1996, and it was in that cafe that I was first introduced to the World Wide Web. I was hooked! I made cappuccinos during the day—I was paid US\$6 an hour under the table—and taught Internet workshops sponsored by Yahoo! (before they became Yahoo!) in the evenings. Two years later, I started Citrus Studios, my first company. The wisdom gained from Citrus helped me create Luxe Link, a patented purse holder. Each company that followed piggybacked off the wisdom of the previous one. I jokingly call myself an ‘accidental entrepreneur’ because I went from journalism to JavaScript, baking zucchini bread for coffee customers to building websites for big companies. It’s funny how life works out.”

You now run five businesses, with a new Citrus Studios branch opening up in your home state of Hawaii. What's the secret to your success as a serial entrepreneur?

**KY:** "I don't know that there are true secrets to success when it comes to serial entrepreneurship, but I can share what I've learned to keep growing. First, understand technology. We live in a technologically advanced and constantly changing world. If you're not in the know, you are quickly in danger of becoming obsolete and outdated. This isn't about being 'cool,' it's about being current and relevant. Dedicate time to learn how to use technology, and then use it to your advantage. Second, embrace your mistakes—they are your greatest teachers. A smart person learns from his or her mistakes, and a wise person learns from other people's mistakes. Third, feed yourself with brain food. I read several books at a time, which fuels me intellectually, professionally and emotionally. Finally, remind yourself of your priorities. I have a Sticky Note on my computer, which says: 'What are three things I need to do to double or triple my revenue?' There isn't a single person reading this interview that doesn't feel the pressures of time. You have to optimize your productivity and defend your time."

You wear many hats—you're a mom, wife, entrepreneur and inventor. How are you able to balance these important roles?

**KY:** "It's not easy, but I've learned that when you combine your vision and core values with time management, you get the life you want. I started by defining a vision and mission for my life, which is to leave a legacy of wisdom, inspiration and enduring wealth for my family, friends and community for generations to come. Once I had my vision firmly in place, I defined my core values. Core values will help you make decisions when it comes to what you do day to day, and will serve to answer your 'why' as you navigate the ups and downs of business and life. I then tied my vision and core values with time management, which keeps everything balanced."

"Having a reliable team also helps. I have two assistants at work who keep my schedule in check. I make it a point to put my family appointments as priorities on my calendar before anything else. My team knows that family comes first. And when they follow the core values that I set, I can delegate and trust more, which frees me up to stay focused on the larger vision of my companies. As an aside, I love Google Calendar. It's easily sharable, and no one can put me in the position to defend my time when they know one of my core values is commitment to my family, which is chiseled into my schedule."

Your core values play an integral role in your entrepreneurial journey. What are your core values in business, and how have they contributed to your success?

**KY:** "My primary core values in business include being true to your word, communicate kindly, have heart, be passionate and innovative, take responsibility and listen. I believe I've always



(clockwise) Rodney, Kailani, Malia and Kalika at a recent function.

operated from an intuitive set of values, but early on they were intangible to my employees and clients. Without a set of core values to abide by, my business decisions were inconsistent. I simply didn't have a roadmap to guide me. My team didn't have that map, either, and we were all rowing in different directions. However, when I defined my core values about seven years into my first business, it transformed everything. I shared them with my employees (I hire and fire based on my core values), my vendors and my partners, and began to see the far-reaching effects of operating by a set of fundamental principles. In my businesses now, working off of core values sets the tone for my employees and lets clients know what they can expect when working with me. I have also found it frees me up to make decisions faster, helps me to stop micromanaging, and allows me to focus on the core work and start other businesses."

What role do your core values play at home, and why is it important that you instill them in your family?

**KY:** "When it comes to the core values I've instilled in my family, they're similar to those I've built into my businesses. For my family, they include show love, show joy, communicate kindly, and make wise and conscious decisions. Our family core values are always in the back of everyone's mind. It's a wonderful guide for my two children, Malia (8) and Kailani (6). My husband, Rodney, and I find our daughters catching themselves just at the point when they're about to break one. They're always pulled back and pointed toward the value that we expect from one another."

"Ultimately, living by core values means that I make sure I carve out time in my schedule for my kids and husband first. It also means that when I communicate with my family, team or clients, I do so in a way that is honest and kind. I have slightly different core



values for each of my businesses and my family, but 'communicate kindly' is one that applies to all. Words and tone are very powerful instruments in our life's tool belt. Situations will arise in which your core values will be tested, and you'll want a reminder of where you stand and what you're made of. I have walked away from vendors or clients that were belligerent toward me or my staff. They broke the 'communicate kindly' core value."

### How has operating from a set of core values benefited you in business and life?

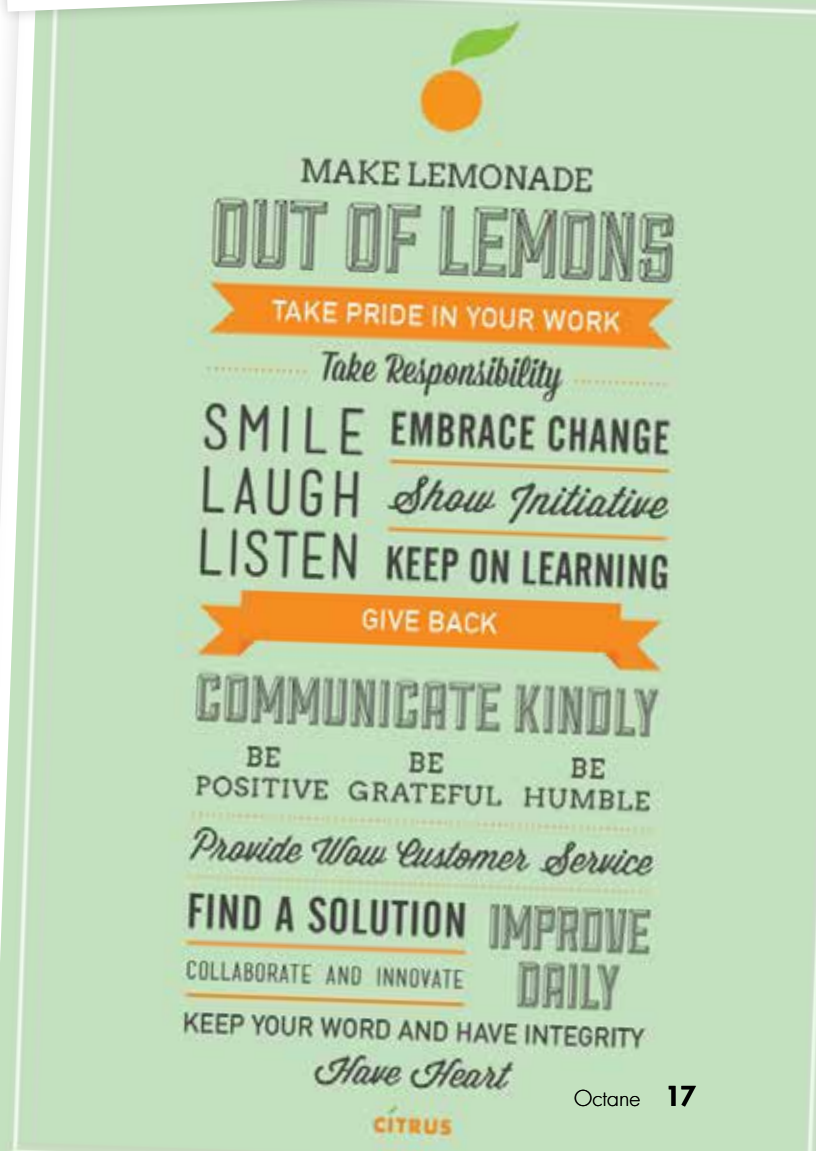
**KY:** "Knowing what I value makes it easier to make decisions that are in line with who I want to be and what matters to me in life. It also allows me to be decisive so that every fork in the road isn't a major crossroads. Core values have helped me, my family and my team all work toward a common goal. And it helps others know what I expect from them without my having to remind them daily. I've found that writing your core values down when you are not conflicted, and your mind and heart are clear, is essential. It will also help you defend them when they're being tested. Ultimately, your core values will guide you in your day-to-day decisions when conducting yourself, supporting your family, running your business and hiring or firing employees. If you can't identify your core values, you can't be your authentic self, and you'll spend a lot of time defending things you don't really believe in."

### You have a favorite quote that inspires you to achieve greatness. What is it, and why does it resonate with you so much?

**KY:** "It's a quote by poet Albert Camus, and it goes: 'In the depth of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer.' Entrepreneurship is hard, yet everyone has the resilience, despite the hardship, to leave a mark. Personally, my invincible summer is my inner strength; that determination to make the best out of any situation and 'turn lemons into lemonade,' which served as inspiration when it came time to naming Citrus Studios. I believe everyone is capable of greatness; they just need the right fuel. I found mine in my core values, which continues to open the door to so many wonderful things in business and life. I still have a lot to learn as an entrepreneur, and this journey isn't an easy one, but I am always seeking constant progress and improvement. I believe through hard work and heart, anything is possible."

"Speaking of possibilities, I recently rediscovered a journal I had when I was younger, and the passages spoke to what I hoped my future would be like. I envisioned running multiple businesses and traveling around the world. I imagined myself with a wonderful husband and family. I'm happy to say that I got all of that! It wasn't easy, but the journey was rewarding. I'd like to think that my core values helped get me there, and that maybe this entrepreneurial journey of mine wasn't such an accident after all. If I were to write in that journal today about what my future holds, I would like to give back in a bigger way. I would like my philanthropic contributions—whether monetary or otherwise—to have a larger impact on the world, with a focus on technology, women and education. Who knows if that will happen, but I'll keep appreciating every moment along the way."

Learn more about Kalika's entrepreneurial journey, and how she's using her core values to fuel her family and businesses. Scan the QR code for a special video, or visit [blog.eonetwork.org/kalika](http://blog.eonetwork.org/kalika).







**John Cinquina**

*Managing Director of Red Meets Blue Design*

**G**rowing a business is a journey, and my experience has been that there are a handful of milestone moments that can change the course of the business in significant ways. They don't happen regularly. In fact, they are rare, but you remember them because they always bring about change.

I encountered a big milestone moment for our business a few years ago. I had been reading *Good to Great* by Jim Collins, and had seen Simon Sinek's "Start with the Why" video on TED. Both had left me feeling somewhat disoriented. I knew what we did (we were a design and web agency), but I wasn't sure we had a purpose. What's more, it felt uncomfortable when someone asked me where I saw the business going. Beyond just "we want to grow," I didn't feel a deeper calling that drove us.

We started our business as a creative agency, and had become good at making things look great. But that's all it was. I worried that the business wasn't sustainable or unique enough, and when a prospective client in a sales meeting asked, "What makes you different?", I struggled to answer the question with real conviction. "Why do we exist?" is a question I've avoided in the past, but for the first time, I decided to stare it in the face and answer it. I began by visiting and speaking with clients. I also ran a number of internal culture workshops with our team, and I took time out to reflect. The questions I hoped to answer included:

- » Who are we and why do we exist?
- » What real value can we provide to our clients?
- » What do we want to be the best in the world at?
- » What is our purpose? Why are we here?
- » How will we make the world a better place?

# UNCOVERING MY COMPANY'S PURPOSE

It took me six months of staring these questions in the face every week until I had finally arrived at a statement that changed our business from that moment on: "Build great brands." It was a wake-up call. It dawned on me for the first time. This was our calling—to build great brands. We say "build" because great brands don't just happen. We say "great" because "good enough" isn't good enough. We say "brands" because a brand is far more than just a logo or brochure. It's the entirety of the way a company communicates to the market, and when done well, it propels organizations toward their goals.

As Jim Collins articulates in his book, I had finally found something that we could be passionate about, could be the best at and that could drive our economic engine. From this milestone moment onward, things became clearer for us. Making things look good (designing) was still important, but we decided that great brands must be meaningful. The design and content must resonate with the story, values and purpose of an organization. The brand must connect with audiences, and there had to be alignment across every touchpoint. We uncovered that great brands were human, authentic and values-focused, so we built a process on how to achieve this from the ground up. It started with strategy instead of design, and it was game-changing for our business because our work got better. More importantly, we felt proud of what we were becoming as a team.

I now feel excited about our business, and not just what we do but why we exist. It gave me confidence to create a vision that aligns with who we are and what we stand for. There was, however, a follow-up effect I didn't anticipate. This discovery experience helped our team understand and articulate who we are, and in turn, that afforded them the focus and confidence to contribute to the conversation on improving our company. Their initiative for improving our process and product in ways that aligned with our purpose has, to date, led to invaluable and innovative improvements to our business. I trace this back to the moment we discovered our purpose, and for that, I am thankful.

*John Cinquina (pictured) is an EO Perth member and the managing director of Red Meets Blue Design, an international, award-winning branding firm. Contact John at [john@redmeetsblue.com.au](mailto:john@redmeetsblue.com.au).*



# PROTECTING YOUR GOOD NAME

JJ Rosen

Founder of Atiba, LLC

Reputation in the business world is both a valuable and fragile thing. The value of a great reputation is measurable in sales, profits, accolades and growth. Businesses and brands with great reputations almost always achieve long-term success. The challenge, especially in a world where anyone for any reason can communicate to millions of people with ease, is that a great reputation can be destroyed much faster than it can be built.

The evolution of social media, search engines, online reviews and constant connectivity all but guarantee that every business will eventually be faced with an online attack on their reputation. One angry client, one disgruntled employee or one piece of negative press, and your business could be in deep trouble. Google and Facebook can become your worst enemies when your name or brand is being trashed online for the world to see. Enter the relatively obscure field of "reputation management."

Reputation management is an important, but often ignored, marketing task that has become essential for every business. The primary objective is to keep any negative content related to your brand and business from being seen. This is, of course, easier said than done. The intersection of search engines, social media and mobile devices can allow a negative comment or bad online review to go viral easily and quickly. Successfully managing a business's reputation online requires a combination of technical, PR and marketing skills that need to be applied consistently in order to work.

Ideally, a business reputation-management strategy is proactive rather than reactive, and starts before negative content appears.

Preemptively filling the web with positive or neutral content that you control is much more effective than working in crisis mode. There are multiple ways to protect your reputation online, and one size does not fit all. The approach can vary as well, depending on whether

**"Glass, china and reputation are easily cracked, and never mended well."**

**— Benjamin Franklin**

there is already negative content about your business on the web or if you're putting a plan in place to mitigate any future online reputation issues.

Reputation management is a tough do-it-yourself task, but having a base of knowledge is important for all business owners to help navigate through the various approaches and different firms that can help. Here are some key things to know before you embark on a reputation-management plan:

- » **Constant monitoring is needed.** This is the easy part. Be sure you're the first to know about any mentions of your name or brand. To proactively track your online presence, use free tools like Google Alerts, SocialMention.com and Technorati.com.
- » **The more content, the better.** It's hard to completely remove a bad review, tweet or news item from Google search results. The key is to turn any negative content into a needle that is buried in the haystack of good content about your business on the web. Filling the internet up with websites, blogs, videos and positive comments will help dilute what is bad.
- » **Providing customers and employees with a productive way to complain is good business.** Having a structured, easy and responsive way for an unhappy customer or employee to communicate with your business will help keep complaints private. Reputation attacks often occur publicly on the web simply because it is an easy (and sometimes the only) forum in which to vent. Giving a complainer an even easier way to complain (that you control) will help keep small issues from becoming PR nightmares.

- » **Reputation management is an ongoing endeavor.** If any reputation-management agencies make you any promises, get up and walk away. With Google constantly changing algorithms, new review sites coming up, new social networks sprouting and increased mobile access, there is no magic bullet. Reputation management takes hard and persistent work.

Reputation can make or break a business. In an online world with very public forums for airing grievances, monitoring and managing your business's reputation is mission critical.



JJ Rosen (pictured) is an EO Nashville member and the founder of Atiba, LLC, an IT consulting, programming, networking and web-development firm. Contact JJ at [jjrosen@atiba.com](mailto:jjrosen@atiba.com).

While conducting business overseas offers ample opportunities to learn and grow, there's something to be said about embracing your surroundings. For **Cristiano Miano**, a serial entrepreneur from Brazil, leveraging the local economy and creating a niche helped him achieve success and significance.

**Cristiano Miano**  
EO São Paulo  
President of Grupo Digi  
EO member since 2013



## 1 How did you get started in your industry?

**CM:** "I started a web-development company when I was 19 years old. I programmed websites for small companies, and now, after 15 years in business, we have three companies in the advertisement and communications industry."

## 2 Who inspired you to become an entrepreneur?

**CM:** "My family and friends. My mother played an important role with her guidance and support. My entire family is made up of entrepreneurs. My father, mother, grandparents and uncles own their own businesses."

## 3 How does your company stand out from competitors?

**CM:** "Our three companies within Grupo Digi all have unique value propositions that give them advantages in the market. One of our strategies and main objectives is to have each of our companies answer this simple question: 'What would our clients miss—and not be able to get from other companies in the market—if our company disappeared today?' That helps us stay ahead of the competition."

## 4 What are the benefits of being an entrepreneur in Brazil?

**CM:** "Brazil is a dynamic and flexible country. The market is big, we are a friendly nation and we don't have any international conflicts. All of that helps when it comes to building a business."

## 5 How has Brazil's economy impacted your business?

**CM:** "The local economic status has transformed my company to be financially mature and flexible. The Brazilian economy gives my business opportunities for growth, and at the same time helps me create a dynamic and financially capable company. However, it is important to be prepared for eventual changes of laws and rules, as well as the dollar rate and other movements within the international market."

## 6 If you could live anywhere else in the world, where would you live and why?

**CM:** "I would choose to live in the United States, specifically in the Silicon Valley area. Businesses in my industry, and in the

innovation economy, seem to flow much better there. People in the Silicon Valley area are also more prepared for innovations in business."

## 7 What should people know about EO São Paulo?

**CM:** "EO São Paulo is a relatively new chapter that launched less than two years ago. However, it is growing quickly, and I believe we will reach 100 members very soon. Our chapter was founded by a core group of nine board members who had very little knowledge of anything EO-related. Many of our members connected with each other through the Harvard Business School at EO's Operational Planning Meeting."

## 8 What is the best business advice you've ever received?

**CM:** "This advice was given to me by my first boss and mentor: 'We should not live by the stress of achieving something bigger. It is important to enjoy the journey and eat the strawberries we find along the way.' Upon first hearing this, I didn't understand. Today, I am able to appreciate this advice and give value to it. I have been an entrepreneur for more than 15 years, and I'm still looking to achieve more."

## 9 What does being a part of a community like EO mean to you?

**CM:** "Being an EOer makes me feel more connected to different areas in the world. I feel welcome in every country I visit, whether for business or pleasure. Being a part of EO also lets me feel like I'm making my mark in the world by working with communities, families, companies and the entrepreneurs themselves. I always have a thirst for learning, and am eager to pass on my insights to others."

## 10 What one thing would you like to cross off on your "bucket list"?

**CM:** "I would like to sail the world in my boat before I reach my 50s. If not a world tour, then I would like to sail for 90 days and visit different areas around the world."

*Want to be interviewed for "10 Questions" in the next issue of Octane? Contact us at [octane@eonetnetwork.org](mailto:octane@eonetnetwork.org)*



## What one piece of advice do you wish you could have given your younger entrepreneurial self?



*"You cannot be everyone's friend. You cannot make everyone like you. I've learned over the years that if you've accomplished anything in life or business, you're going to have your supporters and detractors."*

Violet Lim, EO Singapore  
CEO of LunchClick and  
Co-Founder of Lunch Actually

*"When in business, you need to make decisions based on protecting and growing the health of the business, not based on an individual, family member or friend. In the end, these decisions almost always produce the best outcomes for everyone."*

Jaye Donaldson, EO Connecticut  
President and CEO of  
The Donaldson Group



*"I would tell myself to focus on my primary line of business, and channel all of my energy and resources into growing it, rather than trying my hand at new startups."*

Gaurav Agarwala, EO Kolkata  
Managing Director of Neora Hydro, Ltd.

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# Leveraging the EO Network

**Tang Ching Leng**

*Managing Director of Sinwah Industries*

When incoming EO Malaysia Chapter President, Felicia Lim, was cracking her head over the ideal venue for our latest Strategy Summit, the location of Jakarta, Indonesia, wasn't even on the short list. In fact, Hanoi, Vietnam, was our final choice after weeks of painstaking planning. A luxurious hotel by the countryside was booked, and various outdoor activities that tickled the soul were lined up. We were locked and loaded for the time of our lives!

Alas, it was not to be. Our facilitator, Jody Dharmawan, with a schedule tighter than Mick Jagger's pants, could only attend if we shifted the venue to his home city of Jakarta. Our first thought was: "Jakarta?! That city with the infamous traffic snarl?!" So out went the relaxed countryside setting for our meetings, our meals by the paddy fields, our morning walks with buffalo ... we were devastated. And so were the buffalo. But if Jody wanted us to come to him, of course we would oblige.

We quickly got down to piecing together a new program. Our challenges were two-fold: First, how could we get our board members, many of whom have just taken their first step in EO leadership, to become comfortable with one another and allow their creative juices to flow in discussion? Second, in line with our board's tagline—"The Crazy Ones"—how could we create a memorable experience that, well, bordered on insanity? We had a lot to do.

The first three days of replanning yielded no results. Potential hotel choices were either full or too expensive. Dinner venues had to be carefully considered both for their proximity to where we were staying and, crucially, its food quality (we Malaysians are known to revolt when served substandard meals). And if we couldn't confirm our hotel, we couldn't pre-book the restaurants. We were going in circles until Michelle Voon, EO's Chapter Manager of Northeast and Southeast Asia, in a moment of pure genius, blurted, "Let's contact EO Indonesia!"

Even though we have heard so much about the power and wonders of the EO network, we were still amazed by the scope of assistance that EO Indonesia rendered to our chapter. From the moment we connected with EO Indonesia's Chapter President, Cindy Gozali, over the phone, the magic of EO's peer-to-peer support system kicked in instantly. A WhatsApp? channel was set up, and things began to fall into place even before you could say, "EO Indonesia rocks!"

Through EO Indonesia's contacts and local knowledge, we secured rooms at a heritage hotel (formerly a Dutch telecommunications outpost) and were given excellent dinner recommendations. What's more, Yudha Kartohadiprodjo, owner of the largest magazine publishing house in Jakarta, graciously offered to host us in his office. He even arranged for Warren Liu, a TED speaker from Hong Kong, to engage us. To lessen the pain of being stuck in traffic, EO Indonesia suggested we rent a party bus, outfitted with a huge LED television, premium sound system and laser lights. Best of all, Yudha arranged a video crew to capture our crazy moments!

From the moment The Crazy Ones arrived at the Jakarta airport, we had an amazing time, thanks to the generous help of Cindy and her team. All in all, our Strategy Summit was a success. We worked hard, aligned our goals and left with a great plan for the year. Most of all, we had fun, got to know each other a little deeper and walked away with the knowledge that the EO network is one of the greatest benefits this organization has to offer. Thank you, EO Indonesia, for your support. You reminded us how impactful our #EONATION truly is!

*Tang Ching Leng is an EO Malaysia member, managing director of Sinwah Industries and his chapter's incoming Communications Chair. Contact Tang at [cltang@sinwah.com](mailto:cltang@sinwah.com).*



# FINDING BALANCE IN BALI

## Janine Hall

Founder of Escape Haven

I remember attending a few Universities over the years, where we were encouraged to find and follow our “why.” For the longest time, I didn’t think much about why I did what I did. What led me to quit the corporate rat race five years ago and move to Bali to follow my dream? I knew no one, had little resources and channeled all of my energy into a health and wellness business. My goal was to help women recharge their physical, mental and emotional batteries in paradise. As I built my global business from the ground up, I pondered my true purpose.

As far back as I can remember, I’ve had an inner yearning to make a greater impact on the lives of those around me. And while I found success as an entrepreneur, I sensed that I had more to offer. Launching my charity, Creating Futures Foundation, was a natural step for me. I started life as an orphan in New Zealand, and felt grateful for the opportunities afforded to me through education and travel. I’ve always felt an affinity with other orphaned children. Upon moving to Bali and visiting a number of orphanages, I was struck by how limited the access was to essential resources like education. Before I knew it, I had found my passion and purpose in life.

I felt compelled to give orphaned children the chance at a successful future. I learned that a staggering 80% of the orphans have parents that are simply too poor to care for them, so they are given away. I committed myself to raising awareness and funds to change their lives for the better, and reunite them with their families when possible.

They say the more you give, the more you receive—this has certainly been the case with my experience. Giving back to Bali in a meaningful and measurable way has definitely given me a renewed sense of purpose, balance and fulfillment in all areas of my life. It also reconfirmed my “why,” which is all about positively impacting others.

Seeing the next generation of children in Bali graduate with fluent English skills and high self-confidence levels is a great measure of success. While giving back is certainly rewarding, my passion for this cause also helps fuel my drive in other areas of my life. In fact, I am able to bring to my business and personal relationships the fire and enthusiasm I feel as a result of my charity work. The relationships I’ve formed with other volunteers have also been a true influence over my life and the way I conduct business. They serve as a great reminder regarding the nature of the human heart, and how inherently we want a better world and to be happy.

What’s more, my work with the foundation attracts likeminded people to my business, which further strengthens my client base. And while setting up a charity in a third-world country has been a steep learning curve for me, I learned that with commitment and the right people on board, positive change can happen quickly. We were able to couple a good cause and pure intention with selfless volunteers, and have seen a positive result in a short period of time. I take this lesson into my business. I don’t accept excuses, and I know that what we want to achieve is possible with perseverance and self-belief, married with an understanding of my why.

I’m a big believer in karma—what you put out in the universe you will receive back. It’s empowering to see the synergy of what can happen when you have the right idea coupled with the right people. It has given me momentum in my business and life, and helped carry me through some of the darker times when I’ve hit a few rough patches. Looking back, this journey to find my purpose has been beneficial in business and beyond, and I’m thankful for the experience.



Janine Hall (pictured center) is the founder of Escape Haven wellness resorts, located in Bali, Byron Bay, Noosa, Sri Lanka and Morocco. Through her charity, Janine is decreasing the need for orphanages in Bali. Contact Janine at [janine@escapehaven.com](mailto:janine@escapehaven.com).

# DOUBLE DOWN OR DIE

Doug Pick

President and CEO of Dap World, Inc.

**F**or two decades, my company rode a wave of success as a national leader in retail ear plugs. We were rewarded by leading chains for being an innovator. After the 2008 financial collapse, we went temporarily unscathed. It wasn't until April 2010, however, when the first dagger struck and I was faced with a daunting choice—"double down" or die.

This ominous decision was prompted by a reoccurring theme echoed by key accounts: store brands were now the focus and established brands were in danger of extinction. Historically, store brand winners were manufacturers, since source suppliers can afford to offer the lowest costs. We were a glorified distributor that made nothing. To compound matters, the barriers to entry when it came to ear plug manufacturing were sky high.

Seeing the writing on the wall, I decided to double down and go after extreme growth. Now, after three years of writing checks, I've emerged from the process having created a vertically integrated family of ear plug companies. My journey has been rewarding on countless fronts, and also very challenging. I've been pushed, prodded and stretched in ways I didn't think possible. Here are four lessons I learned along the way:

**1. Eliminating "failure" from my vocabulary.** Aside from the extraordinary investments required, manufacturing high-quality ear plugs is insanely difficult. As the sole financier with no scientific background, there were many disappointing and dark moments when I had to force myself to recall Thomas Edison's 10,000 attempts before he succeeded at developing the light bulb. Now that we're producing millions of ear plugs, I can reflect on how mission critical it was to view each unsuccessful try as a private education in learning how *not* to manufacture ear plugs. Furthermore, as a leader, I learned the importance of maintaining the position as the beacon of positivity and patience in order to overcome adversities.

**2. Instilling urgency.** Every day, I'm in a battle against time because resources are tight and manufacturing is slow and costly. As a distributor, turn-around times were predictable. Now that we're the source, I've learned that my team and I can never take our foot off the pedal. A perfect example occurred when we needed a replacement part that was shipped snail mail and took more than a week to arrive. Considering our machines produce US\$20,000 to US\$30,000 in sellable inventory daily, had we requested overnight delivery, we could've profited tens of thousands more than the cost of the freight.

**3. Buying the best ... always.** My wise uncle once said, "The poor man cannot afford cheap shoes." As one who had had great success buying pre-owned, I believed I could apply this

philosophy to the new company. I was dead wrong! Case in point was our first pre-owned air compressor that we bought for US\$4,000. The compressor worked fine for months doing short, pre-production sample runs, yet when pushed in real production, it failed miserably, costing us our credibility, weeks of lost production, labor and raw materials. Ultimately, I bit the bullet and purchased the "best shoes" in a new US\$30,000 compressor. Problem solved.

**4. Discovering your team's dreams.** In November 2011, I attended an EO New York event, which featured Matt Kelly, author of *The Dream Manager*. The golden nugget I extracted was to dive deep with staff to not only uncover their life's dreams, but help them attain them. I decided to give Matt's idea a shot, so I conducted one-on-ones with each team member. Matt's idea helped me hit a rich vein of passion, and the results have been tremendous. My staff now displays a heightened level of focus, excitement and empowerment for their work because they know their employer cares about what's important to them. We reinforce individual goals and build team camaraderie by taping each team member's goals on company walls. Intimate bonds are established as everyone learns what excites their co-workers.

In the end, I've realized the cliché—"no risk, no reward"—is accurate. More importantly, I've experienced firsthand that when one "doubles down" on his dreams, others will rally, and a powerful force will propel the mission to its deserved success.

Doug Pick (pictured) is an EO Orange County member, as well as the president and CEO of DAP World, Inc., a leader in ear plug manufacturing and marketing. Contact Doug at [dap@dapworld.com](mailto:dap@dapworld.com).







# EO Program Spotlight: The Power of Executive Education

**Randy Nelson**

*President of Gold Dolphins, LLC*

**A**t the recent EO/London Business School Growth Forum, which I attended with more than 70 global EO members from 21 countries, Richard Jolly, an adjunct professor of organizational behavior and a member of the faculty, stated that “a lack of self-awareness is the fatal flaw for the leader.” Having experience with such a flaw in my years as an entrepreneur, I am in complete agreement.

I joined EO in 1998, and when I look back at my time as a founding member of EO Raleigh Durham, I realize there are a couple of key inflection points that were life- and career-changing for me. As a young entrepreneur, I was loaded with self-confidence. I believed there was not much I couldn't accomplish if I set my mind to it. Hanging around other successful entrepreneurs in EO only multiplied these feelings, but something critical was still missing from my entrepreneurial resume— self-awareness.

Stephen Covey defines self-awareness as: “The ability to reflect on one's own life, grow in self-knowledge to improve oneself and either overcome or compensate for weaknesses.” Translation in my career: Wake-up calls! The most abrupt wake-up call came after eight years of consistent growth in one of my businesses. I applied for, and was accepted into, the “EO Birthing of Giants” program at MIT, now known as the Entrepreneurial Masters Program. I was so excited to hang around other entrepreneurs and learn a few things, but what I didn't expect was to be bombarded with information that proved there were too many things “I didn't know I didn't know.”

Reflecting on this “whoops” moment, it clearly was the turning point that had me fully commit to grow in self-knowledge for the benefit of both myself and my company. Another major inflection point came when I lost complete control of my business in 2001, right when the economy nosedived. My business had to be downsized by more than 75% in a three-year period, taking with

it the careers of more than 200 loyal employees. It became very clear during this challenging period that I needed to improve my leadership skills (especially my financial skills) to overcome the challenges facing my company.

Looking back, I realize how important these two inflection points were on my entrepreneurial journey. More importantly, when my weaknesses were exposed, I made the right decision to focus on improving my self-awareness, instead of relying on my optimism and self-confidence to get me through. When I could overcome the weaknesses, I did, and EO was a significant asset to help make that happen. When it was clear I did not have the ability to overcome the weaknesses, then I had to compensate and bring on the right people to help. Earlier in my career, I wouldn't have been capable of making either decision.

We all allow ourselves to become vulnerable in our Forum groups, and that is one of the most valuable features and benefits of EO. But in my career, I had to take it a step further and become self-aware that I was a significantly better leader when I transitioned from the “I don't know what I don't know” leader to the “I know what I don't know” leader. And I had to surround myself with great people that could not only compensate for my weaknesses, but also make me aware of what it was that I didn't know. I have never lost my self-confidence or my optimism, though they have certainly been challenged in the past 25 years. To grow as a leader and as a person, increasing my self-awareness was one of the greatest gifts I ever gave myself and my organization.

*Randy Nelson is an EO Raleigh Durham member; president of Gold Dolphins, LLC, an executive-coaching firm; a former Navy submarine officer; and the author of The Second Decision: The Qualified Entrepreneur, an entrepreneurial and leadership self-awareness journey. He is also a speaker and executive coach to entrepreneurial CEOs. Contact Randy at [rmelson@gold-dolphins.com](mailto:rmelson@gold-dolphins.com).*

# GIVING BACK TO VETERAN BUSINESS OWNERS

**Mark Martin**

EO Houston

It's amazing what can happen when passionate EO members commit to making a difference. That's exactly what occurred during a Strategy Summit in 2013, when my chapter mates were having a "community outreach" break-out discussion. We talked about how we could give back to our city while supporting something we believed in. We wanted to create a lasting mark in the community. We got our chance this year.

We focused on supporting veterans, and established an alliance with Veterans in Business Association (VIBA), a group of MBA students who are military veterans at Rice University. Soon after, the "Veterans Business Battle" was born. The goal was to host a competition for veteran-owned companies and strategic workshops, followed by an awards dinner that honored a "Veteran Entrepreneur of the Year," someone who owns a business and gives back to the veteran community. The contest was open to all honorably discharged veterans across the U.S. who wanted to start or grow a business. There were four competition tracks: "Startup," "Growth," "Venture Capital" and "SBA Lender." The goal was to fund at least US\$1 million for veteran-owned businesses through investments and lending opportunities.



(left to right) Travis Haley from Main Street Capital; "Veteran Entrepreneur of the Year" winner Carlos Castro from Mobile C-Arm; and Jevaughn Sterling from Amegy Bank.

In all, 146 applications were submitted, and US\$720,000 in seed capital and SBA loans from qualified investors and investment firms went toward veteran-owned businesses (with ongoing negotiations pushing us toward our goal of US\$1 million). On 28 February, 15 of the "best and brightest" veterans pitched their businesses, with winners in four categories being recognized, and several others honored and funded. Ultimately, we selected three businesses to be considered for "Veteran Entrepreneur of the Year," of which one received the honor. Our business workshops were also a success, thanks to the support of the Rice VIBA students. All in all, our collaboration with the mayor of Houston, the city and local media channels helped us support leading veteran entrepreneurs, generate significant goodwill and achieve quantifiable dollar value in earned media.

Looking back, none of this would have been possible without a great team committed to getting things done. Every member had an equal and vested interest to make the event successful. As a chapter, we wanted to give back, promote entrepreneurship, support veterans and establish a "brand-able" annual event that we could be known for in Houston. I'm happy to say we did that and so much more!



## Fueling the Entrepreneurial Engine

**Richard Cooper**

EO Toronto

Ever since I had a poster of a white Lamborghini Countach on my wall as a kid, I've always been a huge car fan. It wasn't until I became an entrepreneur that I decided to combine my two biggest passions—entrepreneurship and cars. Thus, "Entrepreneurs in Cars" was born. The concept is simple: Put an entrepreneur in the passenger seat of his or her car and record a video interview allowing them to tell their story. Here's a sample from an EO Toronto peer:

**Ian Farr, CEO of Bimmian.com:** I met Ian at an EO dine-around. We hit it off immediately. A successful entrepreneur and car enthusiast, Ian was a natural fit for my first episode. When he asked me to meet him at his aircraft hanger to drive his 620-horsepower,

supercharged BMW M3, I was giddy. Ian created his multi-million-dollar BMW parts business off the back of painted reflectors. His biggest lesson learned? "Fulfill your own need, and if other people want what you are doing, sell it to them."

Since I started "Entrepreneurs in Cars" as a side project last year, I've come to learn that we all share similar challenges and successes, fears and failures. By networking with entrepreneurs in this fashion, I've learned to make my own entrepreneurial journey as high-octane as possible.

Learn more about "Entrepreneurs in Cars" by visiting [www.youtube.com/EntrepreneursInCars](http://www.youtube.com/EntrepreneursInCars), or contact Richard at [rcooper@totaldebtfreedom.ca](mailto:rcooper@totaldebtfreedom.ca).



# NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



## Justin Siegel

EO Austin

CEO and co-founder of JNJ Mobile, Inc.

Joined EO in February 2015

### What inspired you to take the entrepreneurial path?

JS: "I became an entrepreneur by coming to the realization that I didn't want to work for other people. Fortunately, my best friend shared the same opinion, and we came up with a great idea for a business we are passionate about."

### What is one of the toughest challenges you've faced in business?

JS: "There are so many challenges you face when building a business that it's hard to point out just one. However, one of the hardest challenges for me, and I believe for most entrepreneurs, boils down to managing your own psychology. As the founder and/or CEO, you are the power plant off which the whole company feeds. You go down for a minute and everything goes dark. It's tough to bring your 'A game' every day of the year."

### What is a common misconception about your industry?

JS: "People dramatically underestimate how difficult it is to build successful direct-to-consumer products for mobile phones. It is one part good idea, and 99 parts execution."

### Which entrepreneur would you follow in the footsteps of?

JS: "Warren Buffett is my inspiration. It's not because he's at the top of the *Forbes* list. It's about his philosophy, which applies to life and business. He has a strong framework for making decisions. He's also a brilliant communicator. And most importantly, he loves his life!"

### Where do you see yourself in five years?

JS: "Hopefully, doing more of what I get to do now. I enjoy building businesses, mentoring entrepreneurs and investing in companies where I think I can add value and success is likely. I'm also grateful for the work/life balance I've been able to achieve."

Welcome Justin to #EONATION—  
contact him at [moconinja@gmail.com](mailto:moconinja@gmail.com)!

## EVENT SPOTLIGHT



With millions of businesses in China migrating toward mobile Internet platforms, EO China East hosted an event that explored this new approach and its role in traditional business. The event was held in Shanghai, China, on 10 April, and brought together members from EO Beijing, EO China South, EO Dalian, EO Hong Kong and EO Shanghai, as well as a handful of prospective members. All in attendance networked with likeminded peers, engaged business experts and learned about the "mobile Internet mindset" from speakers Li Xiang and He Yong Ping. Adding to the event's value was a session hosted by Forum 1, which touched on the benefits of mobile technology.

Congratulations on a  
successful event, EO China East!



## Bahrain Member Earns High Honor

Suhail Algosaibi, founder of DreamBody Centre, recently received the eGovernment Excellence award in the “eEntrepreneur” category. Given to Suhail by Bahrain’s deputy prime minister, the award recognized DreamBody Centre’s efforts to target audiences through innovative and highly effective solutions.



## Toronto Member Talks EO in *The Financial Post*

Anthony Di Marco, president of Di Marco Group, Inc., was recently featured in *The Financial Post*. In his article, Anthony said joining EO has helped him emotionally and financially. “A lot of us can figure out ways to make money. But a lot of us can’t figure out how to get through life with the money,” he said. “Who do you talk to?”

## New Jersey Member on MSNBC

Denise Blasevick, CEO of The S3 Agency, recently made an appearance on MSNBC’s “Your Business,” where she mentioned the benefits associated with being an EO member. Denise currently serves as a Marketing and Communications Chair in EO.



## New York Member Supports Sustainable Development

Sergio Fernández de Córdova, founder and chairman of PVBLC Foundation, PVBLC LaTam and P3 Global Management, recently launched the UN SDG Fund and its private sector advisory, which identifies collaboration and investment opportunities in sustainable development. This launch was followed by a media summit PVBLC hosted at the United Nations.

## Philadelphia Member Expands Business

Chris Wichser’s company, TechPats, recently acquired Global Intellectual Strategies (GIS) of Ottawa, Canada, with a satellite office in Tokyo, Japan. The addition of GIS will expand TechPats’ service offerings, and position it as one of the premier patent-consulting firms in the world.



## Los Angeles Member Makes Franchise List

Roughly 10 weeks after opening FranchisePerils, a division of ExecutivePerils, CEO Peter Taffae’s company was listed in *Franchise Time*’s “20 to Watch: Franchise Trend-Setters in 2015” list. FranchisePerils brings unparalleled expertise to both franchisors and franchisees.



# GLOBAL LEARNING CALENDAR

2015



## 30 SEPTEMBER – 4 OCTOBER EO OSAKA GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

Osaka, Japan

Sold out! Join the wait list.



## 1-4 NOVEMBER | EO KEY EXECUTIVE PROGRAM

Dedham, Massachusetts, USA

Sold out! Join the wait list.



## 1-5 NOVEMBER | EO LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Washington, DC, USA

Applications available in August.



## 19 NOVEMBER | EO24

Virtual

24 hours of learning at your fingertips.

2016



## 9-13 MARCH | EO BANFF GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

Banff, Alberta, Canada

Registration opens 10 September 2015!



## 12-15 MAY | EO GLOBAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Bangkok, Thailand

\*By invitation only



## 1-5 JUNE | EO ENTREPRENEURIAL MASTERS PROGRAM, CLASS OF 2018, YEAR 1

Applications available mid-October 2015.

## Coming Soon!

### 2016 EO LONDON GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

London, England

### 2017 EO MEXICO GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

Mexico City, Mexico

For more event information, visit  
[events.eonetwork.org](http://events.eonetwork.org) or contact  
[events@eonetwork.org](mailto:events@eonetwork.org).

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- » EO Asia Bridge Campus – Haikou, China; 1-3 July 2015
- » EO Asia Bridge Forum – Haikou, China; 3-5 July 2015
- » EO Unlimited – Berlin, Germany; 1-4 July 2015
- » EO NERVE – Nashville, Tennessee, USA; 16-18 September 2015
- » EO Alchemy – Denver, Colorado, USA; 6-9 October 2015
- » EO Thrive – Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA; 28-30 October 2015
- » EO Ignite Auckland – Auckland, New Zealand; 18-20 November 2015

For more information, scan the QR code at right.



Entrepreneurs' Organization  
500 Montgomery Street, Suite 700  
Alexandria, VA 22314-1437  
USA



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