

# **Success**

30 Interviews with Entrepreneurs & Executives

Jason Navallo

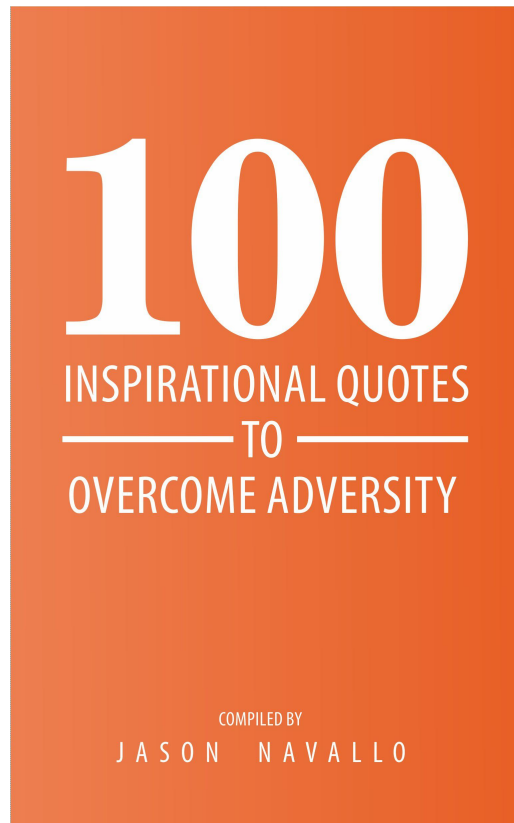


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# Introduction

“Success” is a subjective term. For some, success means having a big house, fancy cars, and a large bank account. For others, success means freedom: the freedom to do what you want, when you want. Everyone has their own definition of the word, which stems from our tastes, feelings, and life experiences.

A couple of years ago, I conducted an experiment. I wanted to know what some of the world’s most successful people, in my eyes, thought of the word “success.” I wanted to know what success means to them and the principles they live by. So I hustled, reaching out to hundreds of people, facing many rejections, to conduct insightful interviews.

In this book, you will read 30 interviews I’ve conducted with successful entrepreneurs and executives nationwide. For each interview, I asked everyone the same eight questions. These questions were meant to grasp their take on the word and uncover their life principles. These interviews changed my definition of the word "success," as well as my entire focus on what my life’s work should be about. I was truly inspired by what I gathered, and I hope you’ll be inspired, too.

## Colin Day



Colin Day founded iCIMS in 1999 and is the company's president and CEO. Prior to founding iCIMS, Colin worked in sales and new business development at Comrise Technology, an IT staffing firm. After successfully opening a new branch office in Washington, D.C., Colin recognized an opportunity to carve a technical platform out of the company, and iCIMS was born.

In addition to his responsibilities at iCIMS, Colin works to develop Software as a Service (SaaS) industry awareness and to educate human resources professionals on how to evaluate recruiting technology. He has contributed to various publications, including *Human Resource Executive*, *Employment Marketplace*, and *Human Capital*. He has also spoken at various engagements, including ReedLogic's HR Software Leadership Conference.

Colin has received numerous recognitions and awards. He has twice received *Human Capital* magazine's "HR Future Leaders Award," and has twice been rated one of the top five forward-thinking innovators in *Fast Company* magazine's "Fast 50 Readers' Challenge." In 2007, Colin was named Ernst & Young's "Entrepreneur of the Year" in the information technology software category. In 2008, Colin was recognized as one of the state's most dynamic business leaders in NJBIZ's "Forty Under 40" award program. In 2009, he was a finalist in the "Green Executive of the Year" category of the NJBIZ Green Leadership Awards, and in 2011, he was named a finalist in the "Executive of the Year" category of the NJBIZ Business of the Year Awards.

### **1. How do you define success?**

Stay true to yourself. It's one thing to get to where you want to be, quite another not to take shortcuts/lose your soul/bend your morals along the way. Our world is too focused on short-term growth. It's what the analysts/markets applaud right now. It doesn't necessarily build something enduring for the customer, and isn't that why we all got into business? You've got to wake up and be proud of what you've built, and the barometer for success should be beyond money and growth.

### **2. What is the key to success?**

Surround yourself with people who are smarter, more experienced, and more capable than you are, and then figure out how to get them all aligned around a common mission, vision, value system, and culture.

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

Not at all. I knew I always wanted to work for myself, but I didn't always know I'd be successful. I still wonder if I am, and I constantly try to redefine success each year.

### **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

I've always had an extreme fear of failure. When I was young, I used to avoid certain things if I didn't know how to do them or have the confidence that I can do them better than others. I've brought that fear to the business world, and I am trying to make sure it's a healthy fear.

### **5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

Be yourself, and don't be afraid to go in opposite directions. When our competitors started dropping prices, we raised them. When they started building out a broad portfolio, we stayed focused and went deep. When they got "starstruck" by enterprise customers, we remained focused on the small and medium-sized business (SMB) marketplace. Blue ocean strategy allowed us to stand out and win at what we do best.

### **6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Sleeping. I have two kids.

### **7. What makes a great leader?**

I am still trying to figure this out. I think it's an ability to persuade people who are smarter and more capable than you to follow you, and then get the hell out of their way.

### **8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Don't try to chart it all out. Life is random. I graduated with a psychology degree and joined a recruiting firm out of college because it was close to where my girlfriend lived. They built software that we took and spun out. That led to my company, iCIMS, where we now support over 1,500 companies. I never thought following a girlfriend would be the catalyst. Be open to any catalyst, but know an opportunity when you see one.

# Craig Newmark



Stephanie Canciello, unali artists

Craig Newmark is a self-described nerd, pioneer of the web, speaker, philanthropist, and a strong advocate of the use of technology for the public good. He is the founder of [craigslist.org](http://craigslist.org), which he started in 1995 and is now one of the world's most-visited websites. He continues to work with [craigslist](http://craigslist.org) as a customer service representative (CSR).

Today, Craig's primary focus is [craigconnects.org](http://craigconnects.org), which he launched in 2011. The mission of [craigconnects](http://craigconnects.org), in the short-term, is to promote, expedite, and enhance the use of technology and social media for the benefit of philanthropy and public service. He uses the [craigconnects](http://craigconnects.org) platform to support the efforts of those "getting stuff done" in areas such as veterans and military families, open government, public diplomacy, back-to-basics journalism, fact-checking, consumer protection, election protection and voter registration, and technology for the public good. Craig's long-term mission for [craigconnects](http://craigconnects.org) is to ultimately extend the reach of technology worldwide, to "give a voice to the voiceless and real power to the powerless."

Craig currently serves on the board of directors of the Center for Public Integrity, Sunlight Foundation, Consumers Union/Consumer Reports, and Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America. He also serves as an advisor on the use of technology for more than a dozen other non-profit organizations and government agencies.

Craig was born in Morristown, New Jersey and now lives in San Francisco, California, which has been his home for more than 20 years. He enjoys birdwatching, squirrel-watching, and science fiction. He communicates regularly through his own blog on [craigconnects](http://craigconnects.org), *The Huffington Post*, Facebook, and Twitter. He also travels the country speaking about issues, appearing on behalf of the organizations he supports, and delivering his [craigconnects](http://craigconnects.org) message to audiences nationwide.

## 1. How do you define success?

It's a matter of what makes you happy. For me, it's a matter of social impact, by my own actions, and more importantly, by finding ways to get everyone the means to work together for greater social impact.

**2. What is the key to success?**

Treat people like you want to be treated.

**3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

I'm not successful, yet.

**4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

Over time, people of good will prevail.

**5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

If it wasn't for comedy, I'd have no personality at all.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

What is "spare time"?

**7. What makes a great leader?**

"Greatness" in leadership involves the ability to inspire and motivate large numbers of people. It includes charisma, which I don't even begin to understand.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Read *Dilbert*. Take responsibility for how people perceive you, which is to say, you own your own brand. That includes your use of social media.

## Dipanshu “D” Sharma



Dipanshu “D” Sharma founded xAd in 2009 with the goal of conquering the mobile-local search and advertising markets in the U.S. For over a decade, D has found new ways to leverage technology and to improve business models for entrepreneurs and innovative companies. He previously developed new technologies for Nokia, as well as co-founded RockeTalk, India’s fifth-largest mobile traffic site, and Kadonk, the top Microsoft Project Viewer. He was named TeleFusion’s “Technology Leader of the Year” and was nominated for Ernst & Young’s “Entrepreneur of the Year.” D sits on the board of directors at xAd and Kadonk, and is a member of Veracity Wireless’ advisory board.

### 1. How do you define success?

For us at xAd, it’s about a relevant local ad experience that drives consumers to retail stores, and being able to do it at a global scale. For me personally, it’s about products that make our lives better.

### 2. What is the key to success?

Focus: Entrepreneurs have a lot of ideas and often companies fail from a lack of execution, rather than having the right idea.

People: Hiring “A players” is key. My philosophy is to hire someone who can do your job and make your job redundant. My team is self-sufficient, allowing me to focus on building the future of xAd.

Timing: All products can be too early to market or too late. While it is very difficult to time, there is no point in waiting forever for timing to happen. One way to check is to look at the dependencies for the business to be successful. For example, mobile technology companies before the open AppStore infrastructure could not really have been successful, as they lacked significant distribution. Online companies needed Internet adoption. The question you have to ask is, “Is the underlying infrastructure



ready to scale?” Predicting the size of the market can be tricky. It’s easier to make a better product for an already-existing large market, like a better cellphone or wireless router. If you are coming up with something like Facebook or Twitter, then the guiding force is the rate of adoption for your product and/or technology.

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

Goes back to the definition of success, as there is a lot for me to do.

### **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

Focus on the plan and have the best people. When you face difficulties, just know that you have the right people coming up with the right solutions. Earlier in my career, I used to get stressed and overreact in trying to solve the problem, but that only makes things worse. Keep your calm and work on a solution. Have people with you that will support you through difficult times. When you are changing the world with your innovations, that’s all the motivation you need.

### **5. What is the greatest lesson you’ve ever learned?**

You can’t force timing. The ecosystem has to be ready for the product to succeed. Mobile companies largely failed until 3G and smartphones were introduced. Make sure you can scale without third party dependency.

There is no substitute for a great team, even if you have the right product, market, and timing. Having the right team is the only way to be successful. Most companies take longer than they should to bring experienced staff to their growing startups to help with the growth. It is very difficult for all the founding/early team members to be able to grow with a fast-growing company’s needs. Some entrepreneurs are great at starting an idea and bringing it to life and not so good at its growth, as they want to focus on the next one. Choose what kind of entrepreneur you want to be—serial entrepreneur: one that is product-focused and can bring innovation to the marketplace several times, or one that has the motivation to build a long-sustaining business. Either is the right answer, just knowing it is hard. Most of Twitter’s original founders are on their next companies that is actually a win-win, as Jack Dorsey (Twitter co-founder) is a very successful Square founder. Meanwhile, Steve Jobs and Larry Allison are classic entrepreneurs who built large successful businesses.

It’s also important to know when to exit. It’s a lot easier to exit a business at less than \$20 million than \$50 million+ and very hard over \$200 million. If you are looking to raise money and also have an offer to exit (sell) the business, you should think very carefully on which path to take. Because you will own a large part of your company early on and a lot less of it as you raise money, your eventual financial outcome could be similar. An example would be Facebook, which did not take a \$1 billion offer, and now it’s worth \$200 billion. On the other hand, companies like Digg and Color could have had a better financial outcome than it eventually turned out to be.

### **6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

My family just started a charity to help poor kids with the basics (education, food, etc.). That project is gaining steam. I love watching “Shark Tank” and will have an “As Seen on TV” idea one day!

### **7. What makes a great leader?**

The ability to listen. Ability to hire a great team. Be realistic (not overly optimistic or

pessimistic). Surround yourself with very smart people. And while doing all that, have time to take care of your family and friends.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

It's an exciting time with so much changing in how we spend our daily lives. Find something that defines success for you and do it.

# Frank Britt



Frank Britt is the CEO of Penn Foster, a leading career-focused online and hybrid education institution that supports over 100,000 active students and 1,000 institutions nationwide. His mission is to create a national movement to better connect education, career pathways, and job creation, and to promote debt-free and affordable learning. Frank currently serves as an operating advisor at Bain Capital Ventures, and prior to joining Penn Foster, he was CEO of Pri-Med, the largest primary care-focused medical education and media company in the world. He brings 20 years of experience in growing companies in the education, media, technology, industrial, and consumer goods industries, including a variety of senior-level positions at IBM and Accenture.

## **1. How do you define success?**

1) Finding something you have passion for so you can use that energy to make a real difference and generate a solid income for you and your family, 2) being in a position that allows you to maximize personal growth and to use that role to help elevate and enable success in others, 3) building a personal brand (reputation) that stands for high performance, and 4) being an outstanding person.

## **2. What is the key to success?**

1) The five people you spend the most time with will disproportionately impact who you become. Always be mindful of who you surround yourself with as these people will shape you and ideally enable you to be even better.

2) I feel strongly that you have to embrace the idea of putting yourself in situations where you have vulnerability and risk in order to truly grow. The fearless person is well-aware of that reality and it becomes a compass, not an obstacle. If you accept that life is a journey, you should assume it will often be hard. This is how you build grit and resiliency into your life management skill-set, which you will need over time as your scope of personal and professional responsibilities expands. If you dedicate yourself to the process of pushing your boundaries consistently, you will evolve as a person and generally have a more fulfilled life.

3) You have the power to choose to be happy. Making that deliberate decision each day will change what happens. Yes, you get to decide the weather at your life picnic most of the time, and thus happiness is almost always about creating options, rather than a byproduct of what actually occurs.

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

As you go through life, your concept of success changes a lot. Depending on your influences, you often start with a narrower notion of what is possible. In my case, I honestly never really thought about it; I just assumed that if I plowed ahead and was purposeful, I would become the best version of myself professionally and personally, as a manager, husband, father, and citizen. I remain a work-in-process.

### **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

I have seen that perseverance is generally the difference between the ordinary and extraordinary people. Learn to see the obstacles as joy, not pain, and by doing so, the harder parts of life that help you grow become privileges rather than burdens. This is hard to do, but comes with the territory of taking on big challenges. This will build grit, an essential element for success and a term often used, but not always understood. In practical terms, it means to build firmness of character and cultivate a spirit such that when confronted with the inevitable obstacles of life, you can persevere. With this mindset, I try to frame most things I am doing as either learning or training, whether good or bad, and with this approach, there is always value created. Regardless of the actual outcome and difficulty, I always end up growing throughout the process.

### **5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

Many people think about their five- or 10-year plans. I learned long ago to set goals in shorter intervals, such as three-, 12-, and 24-month horizons. Additionally, at the start of every year, rather than make a New Year's resolution which we often abandon along the way, I choose three words to focus my goals and efforts for the year. Each day, I seek to calibrate my experience and objectives against these imperatives which helps me set priorities, stay grounded, and make sense of the turbulence often involved in navigating a high-performance life.

### **6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

I enjoy spending time with my wife and three kids, giving back to the community, and lots and lots of reading. Fitness and brain functioning are also highly linked, and I use ice hockey to physically challenge myself multiple times per week.

### **7. What makes a great leader?**

Pericles once said, "What you leave behind is not what is engraved in mountains, but what is woven into the lives of others." This fundamental insight is recognized by many and has been a guidepost for the most successful people I have encountered in my life. These special people make a priority to focus on helping others succeed, and recognize that everyone shines given the right lighting. In fact, even Giorgio Armani, the famous designer, once said that, "Elegance is not about being noticed, it's about being remembered." Making a lasting difference in whatever you do should be the goal, and that is mostly about helping to augment the destinies of others. Help other people build wings for their own lives, and that will end up transforming you.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Success and happiness are not a matter of destiny, but a matter of creating options. It is a choice you make each day when you open your eyes, and that single decision will drive much of your life in both direct and indirect ways. It is far more than a state of mind; instead, it is a skill to be learned and practiced. Every single moment, you are writing your life story, the sum total of your choices, and as the author you get to define the narrative. Finally, once you have a job, regardless of the role or the company, make an earnest attempt to learn how it makes money. All sustainable businesses have a so-called profit formula, and even at a high level, you should understand how it works, why it works, and how your area fits into the master formula. This insight will expand your understanding, and likely help you better make the trade-offs in most roles, and maybe as the CEO yourself someday.

## Gary L. Malin



Gary L. Malin, president of Citi Habitats, is the principal figure in the day-to-day operations, strategic planning, and overall vision for one of New York City's largest and most successful real estate brokerage firms. Gary shapes the company's brand through his hands-on involvement with marketing and public relations initiatives, builds and maintains alliances with key real estate entities and professionals, and directs Citi Habitats' affiliates.

In addition, Gary built the company's corporate relocation division, Citi Relocation, from the ground up. He also oversees Citi Habitats' new development marketing division, Citi Habitats Marketing Group. In all of these functions, his primary objective is to ensure that Citi Habitats remains, as it has throughout its existence, the industry leader in forward-thinking, customer service-centered real estate firms.

### **1. How do you define success?**

While "success" can be defined many ways, I define it as working in an environment where the culture and values match your own. It's important to enjoy going to work every day. Being regularly challenged in your career is important, too; it helps get the best out of you. People tend to judge success based upon financial growth. While having enough money to live a comfortable life is important, the key is not to make the number on your paycheck the only measure of success.

### **2. What is the key to success?**

Hard work always plays a role in success. It's also important to act honestly and with integrity—always. The value of your word is very important, and once it's lost, it's very hard to get back.

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

I'm my harshest critic, but I've always had confidence in myself. If you don't believe in yourself, no one else will, either.

#### **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

When I am faced with adversity, I remind myself that it's not the adversity that defines me, but the resolution of this adversity that matters in the end. In addition, many times something good comes out of a challenge. We need to get shaken up once in a while to help us grow and become better people. I look at change not as an obstacle, but as an opportunity.

#### **5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

The greatest lesson I've learned is that change is inevitable. Although you may not understand the rationale behind the change, as soon as you embrace it, the sooner you can excel. You have to anticipate change and prepare how to react. Remember, having great vision is one thing, but delivering on that vision is what matters.

#### **6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

I spend most of my free time with my family. I have two very active kids! I also like to hit the golf course with my friends. I find it to be a great way to relax and decompress.

#### **7. What makes a great leader?**

A great leader is open to suggestions and fosters an atmosphere where every team member's contributions are valued. On that note, it's important to take steps to make the work environment a fun one. In addition to simply making the office a more pleasant place to spend time, it instills a sense of loyalty and teamwork among employees. A good leader also has faith in his or her team and gives them the tools to excel, but also allow them to make mistakes—it's a part of the learning process. He or she also needs to be proactive and always focused on the future. It's important for a leader to challenge their current business model, and to be on the lookout for new opportunities for growth.

#### **8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

My advice would be to choose a profession that you are passionate about. When starting your first job, remember that there is no substitute for hard work. Do what it takes to prove your value to the firm. Don't pigeonhole yourself, and learn about other people's roles at the company. You may discover that you're interested in pursuing a position you never knew existed. Find a mentor, and ask him/her a lot of questions. Be a sponge and absorb all the knowledge you can. Most importantly, don't be afraid to fail. Learn from your mistake, brush yourself off, and keep moving.

# Jane Wales



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Jane Wales is CEO of the Global Philanthropy Forum and the World Affairs Council, vice president of the Aspen Institute, and host of the nationally-syndicated National Public Radio interview show, *It's Your World*.

Previously, Jane served in the Clinton administration as special assistant to the president and senior director of the National Security Council. She simultaneously served as associate director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, where her office was responsible both for advancing sustainable economic development through science and technology cooperation and for developing policies for securing advanced weapons materials in the former Soviet Union. During the Carter Administration, Jane served as deputy assistant secretary of state.

In the philanthropic sector, Jane chaired the international security programs at the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the W. Alton Jones Foundation, and she directed the Project on World Security at the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. From 2007 to 2008, she served as acting CEO of The Elders, chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and founded by Nelson Mandela. In 2008, Jane also chaired the Poverty Alleviation Track for the Clinton Global Initiative.

## **1. How do you define success?**

When opportunity is not only seized but shared, individuals are empowered and their lives are improved. Enabling others to excel is not only a privilege, but also a joy.

## **2. What is the key to success?**

Collaborative leadership. We never really walk alone.



### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

My parents taught my brothers and me that not only can you make a difference, you must. It wasn't until I was in my twenties that I heard a problem described as "too large to think about." Large problems are the ones that require us all. And, even if our individual contributions are so small as to be imperceptible, they are needed nonetheless.

### **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

The very fact that there is adversity and there are needs to be met. A powerful motivator is the sense that the solutions require us all.

### **5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

There are two. The first lesson is that opportunities arise from unexpected places in unanticipated ways. When we launched the Global Philanthropy Forum in 2001, the word "global" in the title referred solely to the issues that GPF members sought to tackle. Most were American. Many were the beneficiaries of globalization. All wanted to see its benefits more evenly shared, and its dangers addressed throughout the Global South. Fast forward to today, when the GPF's newest members are path-breaking philanthropists who have emerged in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, as economies are opened and enterprise is privatized. Several of them have helped to form GPF's newest affiliate, the African Philanthropy Forum, with the bold goal of Africa meeting its own development needs. Like their American counterparts, these philanthropists will not settle for economic growth that is robust; they want it to be broad-based. And they will use their giving, their investing, and their policy access to assure that outcome.

Because of change agents like them and those they support, the next great wave of philanthropic innovation will likely stem from emerging economies. And the transfer of knowledge will not only flow from north to south, or west to east, but rather the other way around, creating an unprecedented opportunity for us all to learn.

This opportunity to learn, improve, and enjoy will be seized if we act on a second lesson—taught to me by a Ghanaian woman, whose name I have never known—and it is that, "the ground is never insulted by poor dancing." So, give it a try whether you believe you will succeed or fail.

### **6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Lots of laughter. A seven-year-old named Luke. A five-year-old named Aliya—and three rescue dogs named Pogo, Wags, and Blue.

### **7. What makes a great leader?**

In a world characterized by fast-paced change, leadership requires the combination of collaboration and determination, agility and strategy, empathy and audacity—and a listening ear. These are the qualities that allow individuals and groups to adapt and inspire. Today's philanthropists have the opportunity to support extraordinary innovators who have these leadership qualities. And the philanthropists themselves, while bold in their objectives, are increasingly collaborative as leaders. They form networks to learn from one another. They partner with governments and harness capital markets to their social goals. When faced with complex, difficult problems, they make big bets on local and global leaders who change lives.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**  
Welcome change. Take pleasure in the success of others. Excel by helping others to do the same, and enjoy it every step of the way.

# Bobby Genovese



Bobby Genovese is known for his lust for life and knack for making money. The Bahamian resident founded his first company, Investor Relations Group (IRG), at the young age of 25, which he sold in 1995. He then formed BG Capital Group Limited and BG Capital Management Corporation, merchant banking and asset consolidator firms headquartered in Barbados, with over \$200 million in assets and \$150 million in revenue, and with associate and management offices in Fort Lauderdale and Boca Raton, Florida, Bahamas, Los Angeles, California, Toronto, Ontario and Vancouver, B.C.

That's not all. In 1996, Bobby also built one of North America's top-ranked polo teams by founding Vancouver International Polo, which has won the Canadian Open and numerous American, Argentinean and Chilean tournaments in the years that followed. Bobby was also the star of his own American television show, *Bobby G: Adventure Capitalist*, which premiered in 2008.

In 2012, he developed and launched BG Signature Properties, a portfolio of 12 exclusive retreats in the U.S., Canada, Bahamas, Europe, and South America, including its flagship property, BG Equestrian Resort in Ocala, FL.

## **1. How do you define success?**

Doing what you love to do.

## **2. What is the key to success?**

If you love what you're doing, then you will be successful.

**3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

I always knew that I wanted to be successful, but what I've accomplished was beyond my wildest dreams.

**4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

The fear of failure.

**5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

Never give up. Every time I feel like I lost a deal, I always wind up right back into it.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Playing with my children.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

Enthusiasm. People want to be heard and want to be loved. That attitude of acceptance and support inspires them to be the best they can be.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Back to questions 1 and 2. Look in the mirror and figure out what you love to do. Play your strengths. Success will come if you love what you're doing.

## John Chow



Blogger, speaker, and entrepreneur John Chow rocketed onto the blogging scene when he showed the income power of blogging by taking his blog from making \$0 to over \$40,000 per month in just two years—and he did this working only two hours a day.

Today, John Chow dot Com is one of the biggest blogs on the Internet, with over 200,000 active daily readers and followers. John Chow dot Com is ranked #16 on the AdAge Power 150 list and #1 on the list of the top 50 Canadian Internet marketing blogs. He also is the founder and CEO of TTZ Media, Inc.

John is the author of *Make Money Online: Roadmap of a Dot Com Mogul*, which rocketed to #1 on Amazon.com within the first week of release. He has been featured in such publications as *The Vancouver Sun*, *The Globe and Mail*, *The New York Times*, *Entrepreneur Magazine*, *Ming Pao Magazine*, and *BC Business Magazine*. He has also appeared on numerous radio and television shows, like *The Lab* with Leo Laporte and *Global Morning News*.

**1. How do you define success?**

Someone who makes more money than his wife can spend.

**2. What is the key to success?**

Passion, belief in what you're doing, and a super-supportive wife.

**3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

Yes. I was raised with the attitude that my life is decided by me and no one else.

**4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

My family.

**5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

If you can make something for a little less than your competition and sell it for a little more, then you're doing okay.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Hanging out with friends, spending time with family, traveling, and brainstorming.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

You measure leadership not by how greater the leader is, but the quality of the people who follow him. Great leaders have great followers.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Don't let anyone steal your dreams. Hold on to them and guard them. Above all, take action to achieve them.

# John McAfee



John McAfee is best known for founding McAfee Associates in 1987, a global computer security software company which he initially operated out of his house in Santa Clara, California. His company was the first to distribute anti-virus software using the shareware business model. He resigned from his company in 1994, and sold his remaining stake two years after the company went public to go on to other business ventures, including founding Tribal Voice, which developed one of the first instant messaging programs, Pow Wow. He also invested in and joined the board of directors of Zone Labs, makers of firewall software, prior to its acquisition by Check Point Software Technologies Ltd. in 2003. Even after his departure from McAfee Associates (now McAfee, Inc.), the company he originally founded remains one of the world's largest antivirus companies today.

## **1. How do you define success?**

Making it through life with the fewest number of enemies. Most problems with any business venture come from competition and the arguments it generates. I try to make it through without pissing a lot of people off.

## **2. What is the key to success?**

Doing what you love with a full heart and mind.

## **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

Absolutely not. I didn't even think I'd make it to see the age of 30 because of alcohol. Life is full of ups and downs. The person who works hard with a full heart and mind will be successful.

**4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

I'm not sure; it's something from within me. The higher the pressure, the more focused I become. There are two types of people: those who thrive under pressure, and those who don't.

**5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

Love is a very rare thing. It's very difficult to attain and it's the easiest to lose.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

I have not had any spare time. I always have 10 times as many projects as I could anticipate. I just recently got cable television. For the most part, I haven't had any spare time for the past 30 years.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

Someone who understands that they work for everyone in the organizational structure. Someone who knows to value all of their employees, because they work for them.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Make your own path. There's the 9-5 existence, working for an organization five days out of the week until retirement, which I've never valued. Or, you can look around you and ask, "What can I do?" and then do it.



## Jalak Jobanputra



Jalak Jobanputra is a founding partner of FuturePerfect Ventures, an early-stage venture capital fund in New York City (NYC). Previously, she was the director of mobile investments at Omidyar Network, a philanthro-capitalist fund started by Pierre Omidyar, co-founder of eBay. While there, she created a mobile investment strategy, invested in an East African mobile tech incubator, invested in an Indian mobile classifieds site, and closed Omidyar's largest for-profit investment (\$5 million) to date in Latin America. She has over 18 years of experience in venture capital, media, and technology. She was previously senior vice president at the New York City Investment Fund (NYCIF), a private economic development fund founded by Henry Kravis, where she managed the fund's technology and digital media venture investments. While there, Jalak spearheaded the formation of NYCSeed in 2008, a seed fund dedicated to funding early-stage tech entrepreneurs in NYC. She also was on the selection committee and served as a mentor and speaker for NYCSeedStart, NYC's first summer accelerator program, and helped launch the FinTech Innovation Lab, which has since been replicated in London. Jalak worked closely with the Bloomberg administration and NYCEDC to implement initiatives to help diversify the NYC economy through NYC's growing tech/digital sectors and served on Governor Paterson's Small Business Taskforce. Her portfolio at NYCIF included outside.in (acquired by AOL), Imagespan, Thumbplay, and TXVia (acquired by Google), in addition to seed investments Magnetic, Ticketfly, Enterpoid, and SeatGeek.

Prior to NYCIF, she was a principal at New Venture Partners (NVP), a \$300M early-stage venture fund which commercialized technology out of corporate labs. At NVP, she founded and served as interim CEO of Real Time Content (spun out of British Telecom), a personalized video ad platform, and was a director of Procelerate Technologies, a SaaS workflow management tool for the aerospace industry. She also incubated a range of other technologies, including speech recognition/NLP, 3D displays, video surveillance, 4G wireless broadband, and music recommendation software.

From 1999-2003, Jalak was at Intel Capital in Silicon Valley, where she invested in enterprise software, Internet and digital media startups, including Demantra (sold to Oracle), Extricity (sold to Peregrine), Viacore (sold to IBM), R Systems (IPO), Financial Engines (IPO), Yodlee and Zinio. In 1997, during the early days of Silicon Alley (in NYC), she launched and managed product development for online financial information startup Horseshmouth. She began her career in media, telecom, and tech investment banking at Lehman Brothers and Broadview in NYC and London.

Born in Nairobi to Indian parents, Jalak has invested, and traveled extensively, in North and South America, India, Europe, Africa, East Asia, and Latin America. She is also active in supporting education reform and social entrepreneurship and served as a trustee of Achievement First Bushwick Charter Schools (Brooklyn) and sits on the executive committee of the Social Investment Council of Echoing Green. She is on the board of directors of the Center for an Urban Future, advisory board of L'Oréal's Women in Digital Initiative, and Access to Capital subcommittee member of the U.S. Secretary of State Women's Leadership Council. She served as a mentor for the Unreasonable Institute in Boulder in the summer of 2010, a summer accelerator for social entrepreneurs worldwide. In 2003, she took a year-long sabbatical from venture capital to consult on replication strategy for Gates Foundation funded charter schools, including the Big Picture Company. Jalak spent four months setting up microfinance programs and training women entrepreneurs in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania after receiving her M.B.A. from the Kellogg School of Management in 1999. She graduated magna cum laude from the University of Pennsylvania with a B.A. in Communications from the Annenberg School and a B.S. in Finance from the Wharton School.

Jalak was selected as an Outstanding 50 Asian American in Business in 2010 by the Asian American Development Center. She was selected as a U.S. State Department delegate to Indonesia in the summer of 2011, where she met with entrepreneurs, angel investors, and business leaders to promote tech entrepreneurship. Jalak is a Techstars NYC mentor, Entrepreneurs Roundtable Accelerator mentor, charter member of TiE (The Indus Entrepreneurs), advisory board member of Astia NYC, the Wharton Private Equity Network, Kellogg Entrepreneurs, and is a frequent speaker and judge at entrepreneur and venture conferences, including Mobile World Congress, CTIA, TechCrunch Disrupt, Bloomberg and AlwaysOn. She has been asked to speak on entrepreneurship and innovation ecosystems by the Obama administration at the White House, as well as governments worldwide.

### **1. How do you define success?**

To me, success is staying true to your ideals and the life you set out to live (as long as you aren't hurting anyone else). I see too many people who are living a life that others have prescribed for them, whether it is society or another person. Life is too short to do that—a teacher in a small town who works part-time to also spend time with family and a CEO of a major corporation are, in my eyes, equally successful if they are doing what they want to be doing and treating those around them with respect.

### **2. What is the key to success?**

First and foremost, I believe self-awareness is key to the type of success I've defined above. Positivity, hard work, passion and resilience are also important components of success.

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

I was raised to follow my passions—in that sense, I knew I would always be successful. Whether it was working in the slums of Kenya, consulting with charter schools, working on an M&A deal in the boardroom of a Fortune 50 company or launching a VC fund (which I am doing now), I have, at any given point in time, done what I've wanted to be doing. If you love what you do, the inevitable obstacles you encounter along the way become surmountable. If you treat others with respect, you will find yourself surrounded by people who will support you—and you will be successful.

### **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

I was born in Nairobi and grew up traveling to the developing world when plumbing and electricity were luxuries. When you are exposed to those environments at an early age, you don't take much for granted. I am constantly aware that I am fortunate to have the opportunities that I've had—and that puts any adversity I face in perspective. Additionally, my parents left a good (although politically tenuous) life in Africa and moved us to the United States—it's a sacrifice I am so grateful for. Any adversity I face pales in comparison to starting completely over in a new country (with a family dependent on you).

### **5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

Life is too short for negativity or pettiness. I've lost quite a few people close to me over the past few years—some my age, some younger, and some older—and it makes you realize that health and good friends and family are gifts to be treasured. Any time you spend away from positive influences impedes the quality of your life. I've rooted out a lot of negativity—whether people, words or situations—and believe this is an important component of my success and happiness.

### **6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Along the same lines, I treasure spending time with friends and family. Traveling is a big passion of mine—especially off the beaten path and in nature. I'm quite adventurous—I hitchhiked around Burma in 2007 by myself and also went to Goma, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, to see firsthand the devastation that has transpired there. Gorilla trekking in Rwanda was an unforgettable experience. Bali is one of my favorite places to rejuvenate, and I love the food in Italy. I'm pretty much up for going anywhere and seeing as much of the world as I can.

### **7. What makes a great leader?**

I'm going to go back to self-awareness. I think knowing what you know and what you don't is paramount to being a great leader. That way you can surround yourself with people who complement you. You also need to be a good listener—too many people are too quick to talk and judge when they'd be better served by listening and learning.

### **8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Be open-minded and willing to learn. Don't forget that everyone starts somewhere and that it's a long-term game. I worked 100+ hour weeks in investment banking out of school, but learned so much and pitched in wherever I was needed. Some of the people I worked with back then are now investing in my fund, and others have become some of my closest friends—and this is 20 years later.

## Kevin Prine



Dr. Kevin Prine is the president and CEO of Outreach International, an organization that has been permanently abolishing poverty for more than three decades. Previously, he was a director and partner at Tradebot Systems and Tradebot Ventures, one of the largest and most successful trading firms in the world.

He was also an entrepreneurship and business strategy professor for almost 20 years, with the typical list of publications and atypical top 1% national student evaluations. During that time, he also built and led a Students in Free Enterprise (now Enactus) team that won the USA National Championship (out of 500 competing universities) and placed second (out of 34 countries) at the World Cup in Paris, France.

### **1. How do you define success?**

The full expression of the potential of the self in combination with magnifying the potential of others.

### **2. What is the key to success?**

The ability to focus on the actions that bring about joyful personal outcomes, rather than activities that temporarily eliminate boredom/sadness/pain.

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

“Successful” is a dynamic path, rather than a static destination. I continue to try to make progress and enjoy my surroundings and companions on that path, but I’ve never thought of myself as having achieved success.

### **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

The illumination from the lanterns held by others.

### **5. What is the greatest lesson you’ve ever learned?**

$A = (G + D + T) L$

Humans can achieve AnYthing, but that achievement is largely a function of Genetics (and epigenetics), Drive, and Time. Additionally, for reasons we don't seem to understand or be able to control, a periodic Luck factor intervenes.

And so, for example, even if I am not blessed with the perfect genetics to be an outstanding athlete, with enough drive and time, I'm still able to become world class. Too often, we forget about this important combination of factors, or, we focus on only one of those elements, including praying for a miracle during final exams.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Making measurable progress in at least a couple of areas (for example, investments or physical challenges), balanced with being mindfully present.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

Traditional intelligence. Emotional intelligence. Strategic intelligence. Finding oneself in the right place at the right time.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Consistently put yourself in situations where you can over-deliver on the expectations of others.

## Kirk Davis



After spending his first eight years working in publishing as a circulation and marketing executive, Kirk Davis served as publisher from 1990 to 1996 with dailies located in Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and California. In 1996, Kirk was recruited by Fidelity Capital (now Devonshire Investors), a subsidiary of Fidelity Investments, to become president of their TAB newspaper group in the Boston area, which was part of Community Newspaper Company (CNC). He was later named president of CNC in 1998, as the company grew to 113 daily, weekly and specialty publications, along with its townonline.com community websites serving eastern Massachusetts towns.

In 2004, Kirk was named CEO of Boston-based Enterprise NewsMedia (ENM), a multimedia company owned by Heritage Partners, Inc., a private equity firm in Boston, Massachusetts. While there, he developed a go-to-market community Web platform to serve southeastern Massachusetts towns under the domain Wicked Local.

GateHouse Media, based in Fairport, New York, acquired both Enterprise NewsMedia from Heritage Partners and Community Newspaper Company (CNC) from Herald Media in 2006 and named Kirk as CEO of GateHouse Media New England.

In January 2009, Kirk was promoted to president of GateHouse Media. GateHouse Media is one of the largest publishers of locally-based print and online media in the United States, as measured by its 78 daily publications, 261 weekly newspapers, 92 shoppers, six yellow page directories, and over 400 locally-focused websites and mobile

sites. The company currently serves local audiences of more than 10 million per week across 21 states.

### **1. How do you define success?**

Truly enjoying what you do and knowing that you are making a difference in people's lives. Some of us have the privilege of managing others, which is a serious responsibility. Watching others grow and prosper is yet another way to define success. Managing family and work in tandem is gratifying, too—we need both working to be successful.

### **2. What is the key to success?**

The key for me is knowing when “good enough” really is, and to be able to recognize that. That's not to say that there isn't always another goal worth setting, but if you or your staff feels there's never really a “good enough,” then that's a tough sell. Life happens in stages and so does success. One must be able to celebrate each stage—individually and with those who contributed and should share in it.

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

No. In fact, I grew up worrying that I might not be. That led to me a near insatiable drive to be successful, measured by promotions and hours worked, getting ahead at a young age—the wrong things. I was on a “treadmill” that was happy to sustain my running until I figured out what I was running to. Eventually, I had to figure that out.

### **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

I certainly possess a competitive nature, but if I'm being totally honest, I want to lead. Most often, the adversity I face presents challenges for others as well. I have always sought to have as much leadership responsibility as possible because I will commit whatever it takes to work through it. I've always wanted the ball in my hands with only seconds left in the game.

### **5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

That leadership is leading while being led. People may not always want to lead, but they sure appreciate being able to contribute. A leader who can draw out those “inputs” will get to better decisions and have more support for them.

### **6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Spending free time with my family. Then, if time permits, I squeeze in tennis, running, travel, reading, theater, and dreaming of the next big idea.

### **7. What makes a great leader?**

A great leader thinks about where we are, yet has a realistic view of where we could be. A leader combines aspirational notions with a practical road-map to get there, and provides inspiration, education, and the right tools to achieve our potential.

### **8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Focus on balancing what you've learned with what you've yet to learn in doing your job. Most of the time it's the “people-related” skills that trail education. I think you need to learn the truly powerful dynamics of emotional intelligence, along with being reasonably smart. Also, it's not so much about “friends and likes” as it is about “connecting.”

## Maria Klawe



Harvey Mudd College (HMC) is led by Maria Klawe, HMC's fifth president, who began her tenure in 2006. A renowned computer scientist and scholar, President Klawe is the first woman to lead the college since its founding in 1955. Prior to joining HMC, she served as dean of engineering and professor of computer science at Princeton University. During her time at Princeton, Klawe led the School of Engineering and Applied Science through a strategic planning exercise that created an exciting and widely-embraced vision for the school. At Harvey Mudd College, she led a similarly ambitious strategic planning initiative, "HMC 2020: Envisioning the Future."

Maria joined Princeton from the University of British Columbia (UBC) where she served as dean of science from 1998 to 2002, vice president of student and academic services from 1995 to 1998, and head of the Department of Computer Science from 1988 to 1995. Prior to UBC, Maria spent eight years with IBM Research in California, and two years at the University of Toronto. She received her Ph.D. and B.S. in Mathematics from the University of Alberta.

Maria has made significant research contributions in several areas of mathematics and computer science, including functional analysis, discrete mathematics, theoretical computer science, human-computer interaction, gender issues in information technology, and interactive-multimedia for mathematics education. Her current research focuses on discrete mathematics.

Maria is one of 10 members of the board of directors of Microsoft Corporation, a board member of Broadcom Corporation and the nonprofit Math for America, a fellow of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, a trustee for the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute in Berkeley, and a member of both the Stanford Engineering Advisory Council and the Advisory Council for the Computer Science Teachers Association. She was elected as a fellow of the Association of Computing Machinery in 1996 and as a founding fellow of the Canadian Information Processing Society in 2006.



**1. How do you define success?**

I'm very goal-oriented so, to me, success is making progress on my key goals.

**2. What is the key to success?**

It's a combination of picking the right goal (namely, something important), creating a strategy to achieve the goal, assembling a team or network to work on the goal, persisting in the face of difficulty (everything important is hard to achieve), being willing to re-evaluate the strategy when needed, and asking for help from others.

**3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

When I was young (under 30 or so), I was sure I would be successful. As I grew older (and became more successful), I developed the imposter syndrome which was exacerbated by a serious head injury at the age of 43. So, these days I feel like a failure most of the time, but I don't let that stop me from constantly trying to make the world a better place.

**4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

It's a combination of having a strong support system (my husband, my children, my sisters, and my friends) and an intensely stubborn nature. The easiest way to get me to work on something is to tell me that it's impossible.

**5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

That I learn more from failure than success. I hate failing, but over time, I have recognized that each time I fail, I have to learn new skills and approaches to overcome the failure.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Watercolor painting, kayaking, hiking, reading, bird watching, being with my family and friends, and being with my cats.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

A leader creates a community and a vision that empowers everyone to do their best work and to support each other in jointly making progress toward the vision.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Choose a workplace with a mission you believe in and that has a supportive environment and a manager you respect. Try to help others be successful. Volunteer for projects that will help you learn new skills and knowledge. Build a professional network outside your workplace. Don't let fear of failure stop you from taking on ambitious challenges. Mentor more junior colleagues or students. You will learn as much from them as they will from you. If you can't find work that inspires you, learn some new skills that will increase your opportunities. For example, no matter what your area of interest is at the moment, learning some computer science will make you more desirable as an employee.

## Mark Casady



Mark Casady is chairman and CEO of LPL Financial. He joined the company in May 2002 as COO, became president in April 2003, and became chairman and CEO in December 2005. Previously, Mark was managing director, mutual fund group for Deutsche Asset Management, Americas (formerly Scudder Investments). He joined Scudder in 1994 and held roles as managing director, Americas, head of global mutual fund group and head of defined contribution services. He was also a member of the Scudder, Stevens and Clark board of directors and management committee. He is former chairman and a current board member of the Insured Retirement Institute and serves on FINRA's board of governors.

### **1. How do you define success?**

By how we help others be successful. Sort of the network effect of joint success. The more success my customers, employees, or my family has results in more success for me.

### **2. What is the key to success?**

Hard work. Knowing what you are trying to accomplish with others and not stopping until you attain your goal or beyond.

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

I have always been very focused and have tried to give any activity my all. I am still wondering if I will be successful!

### **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

My motto is "one step forward." I don't worry about getting all adversity solved today, just some part of it. Eventually, you overcome it by pushing ahead.

### **5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

Be good to others. Nice guys and gals do finish first, so keep your elegance and humanity.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

I love spending time with my family and friends. Boating on Cape Cod or taking long walks wherever I find myself are enjoyable. I also like to travel, especially to new places, to understand other cultures and people.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

Awareness of others' needs and goals. Getting alignment and trust are critical to leading.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Look for experience in areas where you are passionate. Try it, and if you don't like it, you can always change later. Your early career is all about getting experience, so get as much as you can the first few years out of school.

## Mark Peter Davis



Mark Peter Davis is a venture capitalist and incubator. He's the founder of Interplay Ventures, a venture partner at High Peaks Venture Partners, and a co-founder of Kohort, DevSpark, Founder Shield, and Venwise. Prior to that, Mark was a venture capitalist at DFJ Gotham Ventures, where he invested in information technology companies. He has a B.A. in Economics from Duke University and an M.B.A. in Venture Finance from Columbia Business School.

### **1. How do you define success?**

Obtaining happiness.

### **2. What is the key to success?**

This is a difficult question, but I suspect it's a mix of 1) understanding what dynamics make you happy, and then 2) pursuing a life structure that facilitates those dynamics.

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

I'm an optimist, so I always assumed I would be. "Assuming" and "knowing" are, however, very different things. While there were times when I doubted my assumptions, in general, with enough persistence, I expected a good outcome.

### **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

When I was younger, I was motivated by achieving a goal. I aimed to overcome to reach an arbitrary destination. Now, I fight to continue doing what I enjoy most: innovating.

### **5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

Difficult to pick the greatest, but here are a few things that have formed my approach to life and business: "The more you give, the more you get." "Say what you're going to do and do what you say." "Nothing is business, and everything is business, if you're in the right business."

### **6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Entrepreneurship is my hobby—and it also happens to be my job. I consider all of my time the same. I'm either working on one passion or another—just some other people

would call it work. What I enjoy doing includes spending time with my family, starting companies, reading, playing Rockband, and writing.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

I'm not sure that I am one. If the question was, "What makes a great leader?," then the answer is most definitely supporting the team in their effort to achieve a common goal.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Until you know what you want to do, obtain generalist skills. Once you know what you want to do, back into a plan to get there. Out-hustle anyone who tries to hold you down.

# Mike Albanese



Mike Albanese is the president of Observer Media: the publisher of *The New York Observer*, *Betabeat*, *VeryShortList*, *SCENE*, and other digital and print titles. Prior to joining Observer Media, he was the publisher of SPIN Media, where he oversaw a 25-site digital network, and the sale of SPIN to Buzz Media (re-named SPIN Media). Mike is also an investor/advisor in Galore Media and other startups, including Chefsfeed, Topcoder, and Suitey.

**1. How do you define success?**

Creative and financial freedom.

**2. What is the key to success?**

If I had to make a laundry list, it would be a) always taking pride in work, b) knowing your strengths and weaknesses, c) challenging yourself and the people around you daily, and d) leading by example.

**3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

Success is incredibly relative, and I really feel it's more of a process rather than an end. Try to get better at something every day, treat people well, and the rest will take care of itself.

**4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

I don't like failing or losing, so more times than not, it's less of a conscious choice and more a reflex to push onward.

**5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

I learned at my first job, which was at a startup magazine in San Francisco, that there is no pre-ordained roadmap for businesses or people. Anything is possible, both positive and negative. It's a simple insight (something I probably could have picked up in Philosophy 101 had I paid more attention), but a very powerful (and empowering) realization.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

I am a photographer and also invest and advise in start-ups. I also love dinner and brunches with friends, and a good steam on weekends.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

A great leader is able to get different people, with different backgrounds and different individual goals, all driving toward the same place with passion and vigor. A great leader is able to attract great people, and hold everyone, including themselves, to account.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

When I started at *The New York Observer*, Jared (owner) shared with me his philosophy about being “long-term greedy.” That is good advice. Be patient in the near term, find opportunities where you can pick up experience, learn from great people, and be associated with something worthwhile. And when opportunities open up, seize them!

## Mitchel Rothschild



Mitchel “Mitch” Rothschild brings two decades of entrepreneurial experience to his role as co-founder, chief perfectionist, and CEO of Vitals. Prompted by personal medical experience that could have turned out badly, Mitch helped found Vitals. Today, Vitals helps more than 150 million people annually make intelligent decisions about choosing the right healthcare provider. Combining deep data, millions of patient ratings and out-of-pocket cost calculation tools, Vitals allows patients to find the highest-quality, lowest-cost providers.

Prior to Vitals, Mitch founded Raspberry Red Marketing, Awards.com, NetWorks, Tuff Rhino, RUSS CandyBears and Time Warner Viewer’s Edge. He has also been involved in the rapid growth of Popcorn Indiana, Blue Moon Mexican Cafe, and IT’SUGAR.

### **1. How do you define success?**

Accomplishing whatever you set out to do, with an inner sense of satisfaction that you’ve done it.

### **2. What is the key to success?**

Persistence, shifting the methods you need to get to your goal as situations change, and the ability to recognize when you’ve gotten there. Luck, too.

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

No, of course not. You try your best, are optimistic that you can accomplish it, have confidence that you can, but you can never be sure until it actually happens.

### **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

Eye on the goal, sense of perspective, and not letting the bad moments get you down.

### **5. What is the greatest lesson you’ve ever learned?**

It is far easier to get forgiveness than permission. It works in business, less so in marriage.



**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Keeping my brain and curiosity active with new and exciting things to do, and with friends and family.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

Clear sense of vision, clarity about how to get there, ability to inspire others to follow, and exuding a clear sense that no obstacle will stand in the way.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Decide what you really like to do with your work time, whether you prefer interacting with people, data, or things. Your first job may not get you there, but your third should.

## Penny Herscher



Penny Herscher leads FirstRain with a passion for growing companies in new markets. As CEO since 2005, she has transformed FirstRain into the leading provider of solutions that find and transform high-value business web content into actionable intelligence for sales and marketing professionals around the globe.

Before FirstRain, Penny was CEO of Simplex Solutions, an electronic design automation company serving the global semiconductor industry. As CEO, Penny grew Simplex from just a few engineers to a profitable, high-growth software company. She led the company to a very successful IPO in 2001 and then through its sale to Cadence Design Systems in 2002. At Cadence, Penny was general manager of a major division and also chief marketing officer. From 1988 to 1996, Penny was an early employee and senior executive at Synopsys. She began her career in 1982 as an R&D Engineer with Texas Instruments and then Daisy Systems. She holds an M.A. in Mathematics from Cambridge University.

Penny serves on the boards of JDSU and Rambus. She is also active in the nonprofit world and serves on the board of directors for the Anita Borg Institute. She volunteers teaching business classes at Stanford Business School, the Haas School of Business at UC Berkeley, and Santa Clara University. She is also a speaker on leadership and career growth at various industry organizations.

### **1. How do you define success?**

Achieving happiness while making a positive difference to the people around you.

### **2. What is the key to success?**

To know what you want to make happen (in work or out of it) and then go after it. Don't stop for anything or anyone.

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

I knew I had the chance to be successful, but I didn't know if I could pull it off. I still worry about it every day. I'll probably worry about it until the day I die.

**4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

Fear. Fear of disappointing my father. Fear of what people will think about me if I fail.

**5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

To be truly interested in the well-being of other people. Life's not easy for anyone and a little caring and kindness goes a long way.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Wandering around art galleries, gardens, and ancient ruins in Europe.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

The ability to inspire people to be greater as a group than they can be alone. It's a combination of ideas, brains, beliefs, and charisma—and good old-fashioned guts.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Seek a path that you are totally passionate about. If you love what you do, you'll be good at it. And if you want a great job, take a good look at tech—it's the future.

## Peter Brandt



Peter Brandt entered the commodity trading business in 1976 with ContiCommodity Services, a division of Continental Grain Company. From his start in the commodity industry, Peter's goal was to trade proprietary funds; however, he first needed to learn the business. From 1976 through 1979, Peter handled large institutional accounts for Conti, including Campbell Soup Company, Oro Wheat, Godiva Chocolate, Swanson Foods, Homestake Mining, and others.

In 1980, Peter founded Factor Trading Co., Inc. In his capacity as CEO, Peter was primarily engaged in trading proprietary capital. Factor Trading also produced market research and managed the trading activities of several large institutional clients. Among Peter's institutional trading clients was Commodities Corporation ("CC") of Princeton, New Jersey, at the time one of the world's largest trading houses.

In May 1995, Peter retired from full-time involvement in the commodity business to pursue not-for-profit interests. He remained inactive from the commodity trading business until January 2007 when he, once again, began trading proprietary capital.

In 2011, John Wiley and Sons published Peter's book, *Diary of a Professional Commodity Trader*. The book became Amazon's #1 ranked book on trading for 27 weeks. His first book, *Trading Commodity Futures with Classical Chart Patterns*, was published in 1990, and is considered a classic by many traders. In 2011, Peter was named among the 30 most influential persons in the world of finance by Barry Ritholtz' website, The Big Picture.

### 1. How do you define success?

The old saying about beauty being in the eye of the beholder applies to the measurement of success in my business. My business is market speculation. I am a gambler. The most obvious answer would deal with how much money I might make, or worded in a slightly different way, what my rate-of-return will be. I get all kinds of traders who come to me wanting to work for my company, claiming huge rates-of-return. So

what! ROR is not a very good measure of trading success. I dismiss out of hand young traders who tout their rate of return. ROR is meaningless.

In my own opinion, the best statistical measure of a trader's success is the "gain-to-pain" ratio. GtPR is calculated by adding the monthly rates of return and dividing the figure by the absolute value of the sum of the negative monthly rates of return. Thus, success must be measured by comparing upside profitability to downside volatility. A GtPR above 1.0 is good, above 1.5 is excellent, and above 2.0 is world class if it covers many years. The best traders in the world have GtPRs of 2.0 and above.

By the way, the investment industry is consumed by the Sharpe ratio, which in my opinion is worthless because it penalizes upside volatility. A trader wants upside volatility—it is downside volatility that is unwanted. There is yet another measure of success that is important to me. As a discretionary trader, I constantly battle the emotional pulls of the market. Over a period of time, I can grade myself by comparing how I have traded versus how I should have traded. Experienced discretionary traders instinctively know when they are making a questionable trade. There have been years with low net profits during which I have been very proud of my trading activity. There have also been highly profitable years during which I traded like an idiot. So, I am very critical with myself and have developed a number of metrics to grade myself.

## **2. What is the key to success?**

Again, success is relative, so the question is highly loaded. For me, success is simple. I trade long-duration classical chart patterns. In any given year, I can look back and identify in hindsight the best 10 to 20 examples of classical charting. Three questions follow:

1. First, what proportion of these "best dressed" patterns did I trade?
2. Second, how well did I trade them (following my rules on sizing and entering and exiting trades properly)?
3. Third, how many trades did I execute on patterns that in hindsight were inferior from a classical charting perspective?

I know exactly what I want in a trade, and I know how I should trade the setups I get. The key to success is improving my patience and discipline. This is a never-ending process for a discretionary trader.

## **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

Absolutely not. In fact, I had a Plan B in case I did not make it as a trader. I did not know if I was going to be successful. I only knew what my game plan was. I did not know if my game plan would work though. It takes three to five years for a trader to make enough mistakes to learn how to correctly trade in a manner that fits their personality and capitalization. Most traders do not make it out of this trial period. In a sense, then, it takes three to five years for traders, if they are honest with themselves, to anticipate their chance for eventual success.

## **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

Adversity is a way of life for a trader. There are good days and bad days, good weeks and bad weeks, good months and bad months, and yes, even bad years. I have had a few negative years. There are two things that can push a trader forward during

adversity. The first is solid risk and money management that can contain a drawdown to under 20% of assets. Traders who go through losing periods of 30% or more of their assets will eventually tap out.

The second is to stick with sound trading principles, even when such principles are not working. Sound principles will eventually have a payoff if combined with solid risk management. Unsound principles are destined for failure. Sound trading practices would include not taking bets that are too large and trading a market in the direction of its trend.

#### **5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

That I have absolutely no idea where any given market will go. I may think I know what a market is going to do, but in the final analysis, markets will do whatever they will do. A related lesson is that I must anticipate that my next trade will be a loss. This should be a trader's default expectation.

#### **6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Markets, markets, markets, pursuing my Christian faith beliefs, my family, and "geek" TV.

#### **7. What makes a great leader?**

Vision and self-confidence. The ability to see the sweat spot in an employee's ability and exploit it (I mean this in the best way).

#### **8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

1) Understand your strengths and weaknesses. Be honest with yourself. You will be very good at certain things and very bad at certain things. Come to an early understanding of what you can do well.

2) If you are not graduating with a specialized professional skill (physician, engineer, etc.), your education is worthless. You have just bought time in your life, which is okay, but if you are a history major, a journalism major, an international business major, a philosophy major, etc., know that your future will be in some profession you cannot even imagine at the present time.

3) Do not go into the world thinking about all you can offer. The world has made it without you and will continue to make it with or without you. Instead, go into the world ready to be a student of the generation that has gone before you. Be a sponge.

4) Know that 10% of what you will learn will be truly beneficial to your future and 90% of what you learn will be worthless. Your job is to develop the discernment to recognize the 10% that will help you.

5) During your life, you will have two or three really great ideas. These great ideas, if pursued correctly, will bring you wealth in a fulfilling way. All other things you do will be just staying busy until the great ideas come.

## Peter Harrison



“What could be more inspiring than a company that helps millions of people advance themselves,” Peter Harrison once said. And Peter’s passion for Snagajob’s mission and his plans for the future of America’s largest hourly employment network are nothing short of contagious. But let’s back up.

Peter Harrison is a seasoned software executive with more than 25 years of experience leading and growing tech companies. Before joining Snagajob, he served as CEO of GlobalLogic from 2002 to 2012, building it from 20 employees to more than 6,000. Prior to this, Peter was senior vice president of field operations at Versata, a leader in business automation software. While at Versata, he grew revenues from \$1 million to \$56 million in just four years culminating in an IPO in 2000 that, at the time, ranked in the top 25 best openings of all time. Prior to Versata, he was a co-founder of Seer Technologies, where as vice president of sales, he helped grow revenues to \$120 million in five years, which resulted in the company completing an IPO in 1995.

### **1. How do you define success?**

With care! I find I rarely make goals I don’t set carefully. The best goals always involve the triple bottom line of “profit,” “people,” and “planet,” but don’t forget “self” and “family” count as “people.”

### **2. What is the key to success?**

Persistence!

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

Yes, because I set the bar low at first and kept raising it.

### **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

If success is elusive, I focus on turning “time” into my “friend” and doing my best to enjoy the journey.

### **5. What is the greatest lesson you’ve ever learned?**

Be transparent. It’s much easier to keep your story straight.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Skiing, paragliding, and kite-boarding.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

Passion, curiosity, and compassion.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Make [www.snagajob.com](http://www.snagajob.com) your first stop!



## Richard K. Howe



Richard K. “Rich” Howe is a 25-year operating, marketing, and M&A executive who has identified, defined, and implemented numerous breakthrough uses of information with applications in marketing, risk, and fraud, delivered both online and off. He has been a C-level executive and board member in companies ranging in size from startup through billions in annual revenue across three continents.

Rich is currently the chairman of the \$55 million annual micro-cap public internet marketing technology innovator, Inuvo, Inc. (INUV), which he grew from \$39 million in 2009. Previously, Richard was chief marketing, M&A and business strategy officer at public billion dollar mid-cap marketing services leader Acxiom Corporation (ACXM), where he led the company’s transition into big data consulting and digital marketing services, successfully growing its business units to \$300 million in annual revenue.

Prior to Acxiom, Rich was the general manager of the \$110 million annual revenue marketing services division of public mid-cap analytics & software powerhouse, Fair Isaac Corporation (FIC), where he led the transition to online services. Before joining Fair Isaac, Rich founded and was the CEO of private Internet search pioneer, ieWild Inc., which he sold to HNC Software, a public company (HNC) innovator of fraud technology and software, where he had worked in both sales and product leadership capacities.

Rich has been involved in more than 10 M&A transactions, totaling many hundreds of millions of dollars. The transactions have involved websites, marketing agencies, consulting firms, digital marketing companies, and numerous other online and offline information technology businesses. Additionally, he has successfully undertaken the turnaround of three underperforming business units or companies.

**1. How do you define success?**

Success is achieved when shareholders are making money as a result of a company's ability to introduce a product or service that has added value to their clients' businesses.

**2. What is the key to success?**

Creating a work environment that is stimulating, respectful, collaborative, focused and devoid of politics.

**3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

Success is a combination of controllable factors like "education" and "hard work" and "perseverance," and random factors like "timing" and "luck" and "location." Of all of these, perseverance stands out as a key trait, and it has been my experience that almost every successful individual I have come across has had "determination" in their DNA from the get-go.

**4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

The fear of failure.

**5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

As a manager, always remain calm in the face of adversity. Tomorrow often brings with it a new solution.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

I ride motorcycles, ski, play golf, and travel with my family.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

Intelligence combined with great people skills. These two things translate into respect, and people will follow individuals they respect.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Learning doesn't end with college. Make education a lifelong pursuit. Every engagement or project or interaction provides an opportunity to learn. Listen, then talk.

## Rick Barry



Rick Barry is a Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame member and is widely considered to be one of the greatest National Basketball Association (NBA) players of all time. For over 30 years, he proved to be an accomplished sports broadcaster, having covered a wide range of sports on both radio and television. He is also the two-time world champion in the Grand Champions Division, a one-time world champion in the Legends Division, and a one-time world champion in the Masters Division of the ReMax World Long Driving Championships. Rick is now involved in a myriad of businesses.

**1. How do you define success?**

Setting a goal and reaching that goal.

**2. What is the key to success?**

Confidence in your abilities.

**3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

Didn't know for sure, but believed I would be.

**4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

I look at the adversity as a challenge and commit to overcoming that adversity.

**5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

To always give your best effort and to never be afraid to fail.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Fly fishing.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

Someone who leads by example and shows that he cares about the people he leads.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Find a business you have a passion for and learn the fundamentals of that business so

you can have a great foundation to build on. Then, give your best effort in all that you do and learn from your mistakes. Gain confidence in yourself and your abilities and you will succeed.

## Scott Cohen



Scott Cohen is the co-founder of digital distribution pioneer, The Orchard. The Orchard is the largest digital distributor in the world, with offices in more than 20 countries. As a well-recognized public speaker and lecturer, Scott travels the world evangelizing new business models for the digital age. He is a visiting professor at London Metropolitan University and sits on the BPI Council.

Scott's music career started in the late 80's in independent and major label artist management. In addition to his responsibilities at The Orchard, he manages the Raveonettes, the Dum Dum Girls, the Deer Tracks, Queen Kwong, and Bleech. Scott is a minimalist and a strict vegan.

**1. How do you define success?**

Being happy, while excelling professionally.

**2. What is the key to success?**

Patience and happiness in the moment. It is a marathon, not a sprint. You need to put in the time, but not be so goal-focused that you are not present in the moment.

**3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

Yes. I never thought there was another option.

**4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

Fear. Fear of disappointing myself, my family, and my friends. Fear of having to get a day job. Fear of being wrong.

**5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

In business, to sell the dream of the future, while offering something of value in the present.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Spare time? I just like discovering new things.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

Supporting the people you are leading, rather than controlling the people you lead.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Network and work. Start to carve out a career before you ask someone to give you a job. Walking around with a CV/resume in hand is the worst way to get a job. Start doing what you want so you become valuable to an organization. However, I am not a big believer in people getting day jobs. Entrepreneurship is a much safer long-term strategy.

## Timothy C. Draper



Timothy Draper is the founder and a managing director of Draper Fisher Jurvetson, a venture capital firm based in Menlo Park, California that has more than 30 offices around the world and \$7 billion in capital commitments. Some notable investments include Baidu, Hotmail (acquired by Microsoft), Skype (acquired by Microsoft), Tesla Motors, and Box.net. Draper also founded or co-founded Wasatch Ventures (Salt Lake City), Zone Ventures (LA), Draper Atlantic (Reston), Draper Triangle (Pittsburgh), Timberline Ventures (Woodland, WA), DFJ EPlanet (global), Polaris Fund (Anchorage), Draper Fisher Jurvetson Gotham (NYC), DFJ Frontier (Sacramento and Santa Barbara), and DFJ Dragon (Shanghai).

Timothy is regularly featured as a keynote speaker in entrepreneurial conferences around the world. He is ranked #52 on the list of Harvard University's most notable alumni and recently founded the Draper University of Heroes in San Mateo, California where 18-24 year olds learn to become proactive entrepreneurs. Timothy has a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from Stanford University and an M.B.A. from Harvard Business School.

### **1. How do you define success?**

I wouldn't know. I never seem to get there.

### **2. What is the key to success?**

To fail and fail again until you succeed.

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

I always knew I would work toward success with whatever I tried. I have failed a lot, and the more I fail, the more successful I become.

### **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

I love the challenge. I like to think differently when faced with a problem. I like to redefine the problem so the solution is easy.

**5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

My father taught me to always make the deal work for both parties. It has helped me negotiate with more creativity in mind. I have also learned that life is much easier if you are honest.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

I love games. Board games and sports, mostly because they are social. Basketball, risk, chess, football, volleyball, Monopoly, and Settlers of Catan. But what I really do in my spare time is my work, which I believe is unending, as long as I keep coming up with things to do.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

Someone who leads by example. Some great leaders have been able to separate their own actions from their words, but the very best ones say it and do it too.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Do it with gusto and enthusiasm, and if you run up against a roadblock that you can't overcome, take a quarter off and apply to Draper University of Heroes, where your heroic side will come out and shine.



## Ryan Hodson



Ryan Hodson is the managing director of Kodiak Capital Group, LLC, a private investment fund based in Newport Beach, California. Ryan's credentials include raising capital and advising clients for Laidlaw & Co. in private equity and hedge fund investments. His broad-based career spans the capital markets as a commodities trader for Iowa Grain, a financial analyst for Lincoln Financial, and as managing director of New York Consulting Group, a private equity fund specializing in special situations investments.

**1. How do you define success?**

Success is freedom—the ability to do what you want, when you want.

**2. What is the key to success?**

The key to success is being able to dedicate yourself to reaching your objectives and making effective decisions along the way.

**3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

Yes—I have always had very supportive family and friends. Surrounding yourself with an inspiring team motivates you and makes preparing and executing that much more rewarding.

**4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

A great leader needs to possess a balance of traits, and the ability to share them with others, including commitment, communication, confidence, creativity, honesty, inspiration, intuition, loyalty, prioritization, and the ability to laugh and learn from mistakes—what I like to call experience.

**5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

The greatest lesson that I have ever learned is to focus on what matters to you the most and not get caught up in the maze of mediocrity.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

In my spare time, I enjoy fishing and skiing. When I need to burn off some steam, a good game of rugby or attending a punk rock show always helps.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

A great leader needs to possess a balance of traits, and the ability to share them with others, including commitment, communication, confidence, creativity, honesty, inspiration, intuition, loyalty, prioritization, and the ability to laugh and learn from mistakes—what I like to call experience.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

I would advise recent college graduates to be patient and take risks—surround yourself with people you enjoy, focus on being better today (you can't change the decisions you made yesterday, but the future is yours for the taking), and do what you enjoy—with a positive mind, everything will be fine.

## Todd Harrison



Todd Harrison, founder and CEO of Minyanville Media, has 23 years of experience on Wall Street. He served as vice president on the global equity derivatives trading desk at Morgan Stanley, as managing director of derivatives at The Galleon Group, and as president of the \$400 million hedge fund Cramer Berkowitz. He has appeared on FOX, CNBC, CNN, and Bloomberg TV, and in *The Wall Street Journal*, *BusinessWeek*, *The New York Times*, *Worth*, *Fortune*, *Barron's*, Dow Jones & Company's *MarketWatch*, *New York Magazine*, and Canada's *National Post*.

Todd has lectured at numerous academic institutions including Harvard University, Syracuse University, New York University, and the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. He has also been active in research of financial market learning tendencies among college students, and was a contributing author to "Threat, Intimidation, and Student Financial Market Knowledge: An Empirical Study," published in the *Journal of Education for Business*. Todd was featured in the 20th anniversary documentary of Oliver Stone's movie *Wall Street* (1987), and in 2008, he received an Emmy Award from The National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences for his role as Executive Producer of "Minyanville's World in Review," the first and only animated business news show.

### **1. How do you define success?**

Being able to look yourself in the eye each day as you brush your teeth and like the person you see staring back at you. Profitability begins within.

### **2. What is the key to success?**

Humility, resolve, surrounding yourself with people you trust and perhaps most importantly, the realization that your failures, of which there will be many, are an integral part of future success.

**3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

I don't measure success by the size of my bank account or the title on my business card; I measure it by the husband and father I am to my wife and kids. It's a process, not a point. By the time you get to where you want to be, it will be over.

**4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

If you're not moving forward, you're moving backward, and I've been there already.

**5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

All you have is your name and your word, courtesy of my grandfather Ruby.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Playing with the kids, watching football, and exercising.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

Truth and trust.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Do what you love and the money will come, and find someone you trust to take you under their wing and show you the ropes.

## Ziad K. Abdelnour



Ziad K. Abdelnour was born in Beirut, Lebanon, where he earned a B.A. in Economics, summa cum laude, from the American University of Beirut. After graduation, he came to the United States, and earned an M.B.A. in Finance from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania in 1984. Since 1985, Ziad has been involved in over 125 transactions worth, in aggregate, over \$10 billion in investment banking high-yield bond and distressed debt markets, and has been widely-recognized for playing an integral role in those three key market sectors. According to *The New York Times*, Ziad “made a fortune on Wall Street...as a junk bond salesman/trader during Michael Milken’s glory days at the powerhouse investment banking firm Drexel Burnham Lambert.”

Ziad is a prominent pro-Lebanon activist and lobbyist on behalf of a free Lebanon and has published, as early as June 2000, a research report entitled “Ending Syria’s Occupation of Lebanon: The U.S. Role” that became the blueprint for a series of policies and activities that led to the Syrian military withdrawal from Lebanon back in 2005. Ziad, labeled the “Baasha of Wall Street,” publishes his own research report, “Ending Syria’s Occupation of Lebanon: The U.S. Role,” which is a major force in shaping the U.S. Lebanon Policy debate toward freedom in his native land. Since 2001 and post 9/11, Ziad has been part of the right wing political establishment, and was instrumental in funding a number of projects, including the bestseller *Funding Evil—How Terrorism is Financed and How to Stop It*.

Ziad K. Abdelnour is currently president and CEO of Blackhawk Partners, Inc., a New York-based private equity “family office” that focuses on originating, structuring, advising and acting as equity investor in management-led buyouts, strategic minority equity investments, equity private placements, consolidations, buildups, and growth capital financings in companies and projects based both in the U.S. and emerging markets. Blackhawk Partners is also a reliable trader and supplier of a wide range of

commodities to industrial and financial consumers globally. The firm's customers, around the world, rely upon Blackhawk as a source of metals, minerals, crude oil, and oil products. Ziad also serves on the advisory board of DPG Investments, a recognized premier multi-strategy global merchant banking, alternative investment, management, and advisory firm.

### **1. How do you define success?**

Lasting success is stumbling from failure to failure with even more enthusiasm. Keep going like it's your last day on earth, with a burning fire inside. You can bend, but never, ever break.

### **2. What is the key to success?**

Happiness is the key to success. If you are truly passionate with what you are doing and are relentless in overcoming any obstacle that will come your way, you will be wildly successful. On the other hand, I know for sure that the key to failure is trying to please everyone.

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

Success is really all relative. If you brag about starting at the bottom and making it to the top, you are probably still closer to the bottom. There is no top for people really at the top. There is always more.

### **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

My desire to succeed and crush any adversity that comes my way. After all, the most significant opportunities are usually found in times of greatest difficulty. And if you want to be great, you must develop the capacity to face trouble with courage, disappointment with cheerfulness, and triumph with humility.

### **5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

Learned more than one lesson. One of the most important being that no one in the entire world cares more about your own well-being than you. You've got to look out for yourself first. Others being: Never give up, trust your instincts and always keep your integrity in check.

### **6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

I practice intense sports, as it keeps me young and alert.

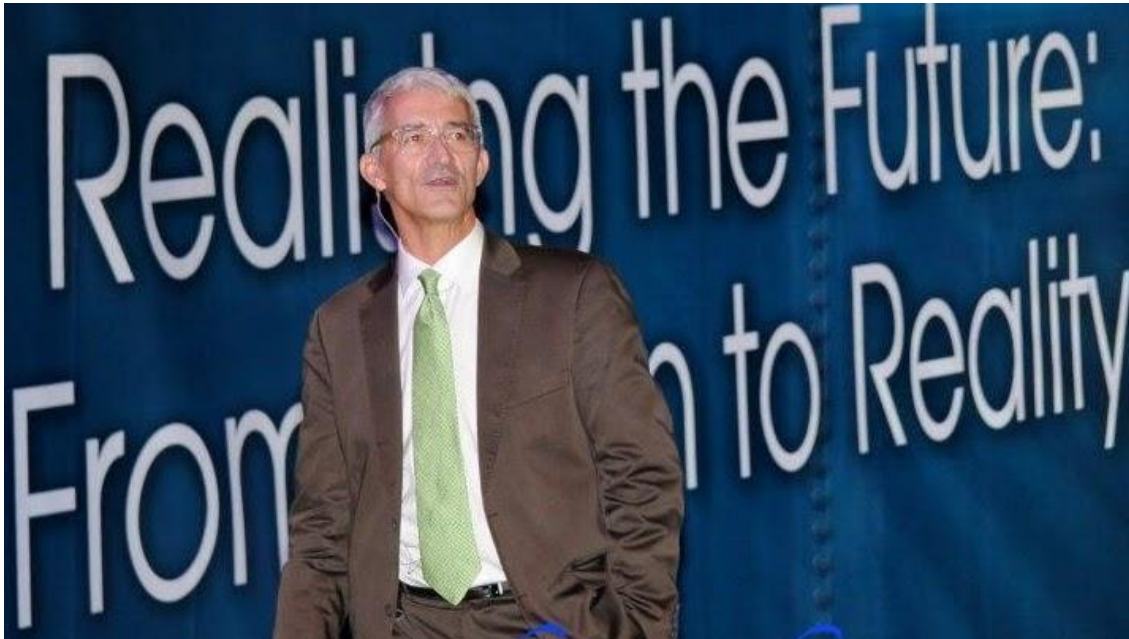
### **7. What makes a great leader?**

The greatest leader is the one that gets his/her people to do the greatest things.

### **8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Never rely on the government or any company to earn a living. Build your own self and net worth, and then shape the world according to your own vision, working with the smartest people you can find who share your philosophy.

## Jeremy Geelan



Jeremy Geelan, a domain expert on the future of the future, is chairman & CEO of the 21st Century Internet Group, Inc., a collection of innovative websites and social applications, all of which reflect the fundamental importance of the Internet in 21st-century business, politics, education, entertainment, and culture. Core values revolve around the guiding principle of co-intelligence, in that “None of us is as smart as all of us.”

Educated at Cambridge University and trained at the British Broadcasting Corporation, Jeremy’s professional stock-in-trade is to anticipate and explore alternative social and technological futures, and from among them, to pinpoint and then help showcase and evangelize only the most promising and productive alternatives. He writes profusely and speaks all over the world about cloud computing, big data, the Internet of things, and the trajectory of collaborative technology (which he calls co-technology) in the second decade of the 21st century.

He is the founding editor-in-chief of the following publications: *Web 2.0 Journal*, *Social Computing Magazine*, *Cloud Computing Journal*, and *New Paradigms Journal*—and served, since its inception in 2008 to the 13th Cloud Expo in November 2013, as conference chair and resident emcee of the International Cloud Expo series, which is widely acknowledged to be the largest cloud computing event in the world. He is also the winner of the Roundarch 2006 Interactive Experience Award, “given to companies and individuals that best represent the advancement of Web experiences through the integration of user-centric design and advanced technology.” Formerly president and COO of Cloud Expo, Inc., Jeremy is now an executive academy member of the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences and a founding adviser to Kaazing Corp.

### **1. How do you define success?**

Success is nothing more really than having a strong sense that the life you have lived has left the world around you a better place for having had you alive.

### **2. What is the key to success?**

The key to success is to always, wherever possible, stick to doing what only you do uniquely well, thereby making yourself and your services indispensable.

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

A sense of success is part nature, part nurture. I was born blessed with many gifts, and grew up in a family that called out achievements big and small, and inculcated in me a taste for piling them up!

### **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

The knowledge that all things are ultimately possible and all hurdles, over time, surmountable. No one expressed it better than Winston Churchill: "Success is not final, failure is not fatal; it is the courage to continue that counts."

### **5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

In February 2011, I was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, the deadliest of all the cancers, and the one with the worst prognosis: a 5% survival rate after five years. It didn't seem fair to me that I was suddenly not going to be 80, nor possibly even 60 years old. So I accepted major invasive surgery, and afterward, chemotherapy, trading two years of my life for the prospect of gaining 10 times that. The lesson: if the return on any investment is 10x, make it unhesitatingly. The worst that could have happened was that I died on the operating table, the best that I lived for 20+ more years. In that event, it looks very much as if I won the bet. Not many people have managed ever to kick pancreatic cancer in the butt; how about I tell you more about it in 2020?

### **6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Marathon running and reading (though not at the same time)—and listening to music, always music.

### **7. What makes a great leader?**

Great followers.

### **8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

You have arrived at the edge of a great and glorious cliff: beneath you, the most global job market in the history of humankind stretches out in every direction. It is yours to explore, it is yours to impact, and it is yours to astonish. What are you waiting for?! 😊



## Usama Fayyad



Usama Fayyad, Ph.D. is the chief data officer and group managing director at Barclays PLC. He also leads Oasis500, a tech startup investment fund, following his appointment as executive chairman in 2010 by King Abdullah II of Jordan. He was also chairman, co-founder, and chief technology officer of ChoozOn Corporation/Blue Kangaroo, a mobile search engine service based in Silicon Valley.

In 2008, Usama founded Open Insights, a U.S.-based data strategy, technology, and consulting firm that helps enterprises to deploy data-driven solutions that effectively and dramatically grow revenue and competitive advantage. Prior to this, he served as Yahoo!'s chief data officer and executive vice president where he was responsible for Yahoo!'s global data strategy, architecting its data policies and systems, and managing its data analytics and data processing infrastructure. The data teams he built at Yahoo! collected, managed, and processed over 25 terabytes of data per day, and drove a major part of ad targeting revenue and data insights businesses globally.

In 2003, Usama co-founded and led the DMX Group, a data mining and data strategy consulting and technology company that specializes in big data analytics for Fortune 500 clients. DMX Group was acquired by Yahoo! in 2004. Prior to 2003, he co-founded and served as CEO of Audience Science. He also has experience at Microsoft, where he led the data mining and exploration group at Microsoft Research and also headed the data mining products group for Microsoft's server division.

From 1989 to 1996, Usama held a leadership role at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory where his work garnered him the Lew Allen Award for Excellence in Research from Caltech, as well as a U.S. Government medal from NASA.

Usama has published over 100 technical articles on data mining, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and databases. He holds over 30 patents, is a fellow of the Association for Advancement of Artificial Intelligence, and a fellow of the Association of Computing Machinery. He has edited two influential books on data mining and served as editor-in-chief on two key industry journals.

Usama earned his Ph.D. in Engineering from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He is active in the academic community with several adjunct professor posts and is the only

person to receive both the ACM's SIGKDD Innovation Award (2007) and Service Award (2003).

### **1. How do you define success?**

To me, success is about learning and gaining knowledge, so as long as you are learning (with depth of experience), you are succeeding.

### **2. What is the key to success?**

Being clear and focused on what you are doing, always observing and understanding what is happening, as well as reacting deliberately and thoughtfully, because that allows you to evaluate if a situation is good or bad. Many people reach the wrong conclusion because they did not evaluate properly. Give it your all and a serious effort, and you will succeed. Most fail to succeed because they never try hard enough.

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

I am always maximizing learning, and by my definition, success then becomes easily attainable. How much you learn and how much you choose to analyze, understand, explain, and then reach insight, is all under your control. In my model, it is very difficult to fail. You fail when you don't try hard enough. Life is too precious to waste my time on things I am not willing to try hard enough to achieve.

### **4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

The certainty of two things: 1) things will always get better, especially if you are trying honestly and seriously, and 2) things can always be so much worse. People sometimes let things get to them and depress them. I try not to take it seriously. It is rare that your physical survival is at risk—compared to that, any situation is trivial.

### **5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

Life is filled with so many great lessons. It is hard for me to choose a greatest or best. I never understand when people ask what is your favorite book or song, or "What have you..." Some great lessons include, in science for example, that simple theories and simple explanations are truly more likely to be correct. It can be demonstrated mathematically! Also, more generally, that the deepest and most elegant of learnings or theories can be found in the most mundane situations. So, always get your hands dirty with work and you will uncover amazing gems.

### **6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

These days, I truly enjoy sleep. I thoroughly enjoy "work," and I hate to call it "work." So, I have no spare time. Work is pleasure. Family and kids are pleasure. Being with good friends and companions is pleasure. Overcoming problems is pleasure. Skiing is pleasure. Chess is pleasure. Teaching others is pleasure. Teaching my kids is pleasure. Reading is pleasure. I wish I still had time to do science. I miss deep research in science. But then there is only so much time, and we choose what to prioritize. Come to think of it, I need to start exercising again.

### **7. What makes a great leader?**

A great leader is a leader who leads by example. Great leaders understand that they are about enabling their team members to succeed. Hence, leadership is service, not

glory and visibility. When people understand that, they realize that leading means sacrificing achieving their own goals for the sake of helping their team achieve theirs.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

I loved being a student. I did five degrees in university and I wanted to stay a student forever. Thankfully, I grew up. All of education is a beginning and not an end. It is preparation for what you are about to do. Find something that people really need and make sure you truly enjoy it. Passion at work will change your life, and passion will make work feel like pleasure. Work hard, give it your all, and great things will unfold.

## Gary L. Easterling



Gary L. Easterling has been serving as president and CEO of the United Federal Credit Union since 2007. He has more than 30 years of credit union experience, most recently as CEO of Century Credit Union in Cleveland, Ohio, and Wright-Patt Credit Union in Fairborn, Ohio, where he held leadership roles in almost every functional area. He holds a B.S. in Computer Science from Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, as well as an M.B.A. from Indiana Wesleyan University in Marion, Indiana. His certifications include the CUES Institute's Certified Chief Executive designation and CUNA's Management School—Part I and Part II.

### **1. How do you define success?**

Success is bringing your best to the game, the meeting, the event, the role, and the mission.

### **2. What is the key to success?**

Aligning your opportunities with your skills. Stretching beyond past performance without stretching beyond your capabilities. Achieving your personal best.

### **3. Did you always know you would be successful?**

There are no guarantees, but I have always been optimistic. Success is the journey. There are as many challenges ahead as there are behind. Making a difference every day is living a successful life.

**4. When faced with adversity, what pushes you to keep moving forward?**

I don't like losing, but more than that I don't like letting people down. I usually am in roles that impact the lives of others. These people depend upon me. The prospect of letting them down and causing harm to them keeps me pushing forward regardless of the adversity.

**5. What is the greatest lesson you've ever learned?**

It can be found in the Serenity Prayer. Learning to discern what I can change from what I can't change and then summoning the courage to change what I can.

**6. What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?**

Reading, walking, golf, fishing, and most of all—time with family.

**7. What makes a great leader?**

Vision and humility. Having the vision to energize others and the humility to allow them to succeed and receive the accolades.

**8. What advice would you give to college students about entering the workforce?**

Take people with you on your journey. Help them succeed and let your contributions highlight themselves. Don't get overly focused on getting credit. Don't be lured into a battle for the spotlight. Those who can be the greatest positive influence in your life will see the truth; they don't need your help. Stay true to your faith and values. No shortcut is worth it. There is no right way to do a wrong thing.



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