

What business advice would you give your younger self?



KELLY ZENKEWICH, CAPITAL IDEAS

More from [Kelly Zenkewich, Capital Ideas](http://CALGARYHERALD.COM/AUTHOR/KELLY-ZENKEWICH-CAPITAL-IDEAS) ([HTTP://CALGARYHERALD.COM/AUTHOR/KELLY-ZENKEWICH-CAPITAL-IDEAS](http://CALGARYHERALD.COM/AUTHOR/KELLY-ZENKEWICH-CAPITAL-IDEAS))

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Capital Ideas members were asked the kind of business advice they would give their younger selves.

Here's what members of our community of Calgary business owners helping business owners had to say about tapping into the wisdom they've gathered:

“Two ears, one mouth. Shut up and listen!”

— Danilo Terra, VP, equipment leasing and corporate finance, [Leasex Financial Inc](http://leasefinancial.com) (<http://leasefinancial.com>).

“The same advice I get from my future self: think for yourself — you can get the answers you need if you start there. Try harder to listen better — to yourself, and others. Master the juxtaposition and the ‘AND’ of things; like ‘stay the course’ AND ‘go with the flow.’ But most of all, try harder to listen better, to yourself and others.”

— Len Nanjad, partner at [COREinternational](http://coreinternational.com) (<http://coreinternational.com>)

“So many things! But mainly there are two: First, ‘Stop doing everything yourself!’ I think a lot of entrepreneurs take on too much and really struggle with letting go which nearly always leads to burnout. Second, implement systems early on. Take the time to create, organize and implement systems for all aspects of your business, from POS to naming internal documents. What's not systemized can't be automated or scaled,

so the sooner you get that first step out of the way the sooner you will be on your way to more business and success!”

— Kamea Zelisko, owner of MKT Communications

(<http://mktcommunications.ca>)



Stefan Radeta *RICKY LAM / FOR THE CALGARY HERALD*

“*Even though I am only 23, I feel like I have learned a tremendous amount in the last year with my startup. The advice I would give my younger self is to be extremely patient. Success does not happen overnight and looking too far ahead at “what could be” or “what should be by now” can often be counter productive.*

Surround yourself with the best team possible and work like there is someone who is working 24 hours a day to take it away from you. If you keep these things in mind, your business and life will figure themselves out.

— Stefan Radeta, co-founder & CTO, [TLink Golf Inc \(http://golftlink.com\)](http://golftlink.com).

“Do not be afraid to fail. In failure comes great growth and learning. Failing also helps you to determine how committed you are to the idea. The more the failures, the bigger the successes.”

— Loretta Gotmy, co-owner, [Vin Gogh Paint & Sip Studio \(http://vingogh.ca\)](http://vingogh.ca)

“The world is full of naysayers. Ignore them. If you have a great idea, go for it.”

— Dave Cunningham, mortgage broker, [Axiom Mortgage Solutions \(http://DaveCunningham.ca\)](http://DaveCunningham.ca)

“When I was younger, I owned a couple of cycling stores which are obviously very seasonal. In a small business environment, it’s often hard to separate the work from the friendships that develop working long hours together. So my mistake was hanging on to staff too long into the fall to the detriment of my own paycheque.”

— Rob Price, director, Alberta for [Futurpreneur Canada \(http://futurpreneur.ca\)](http://futurpreneur.ca)

“That failure is a huge part of success and not to be so hard on myself when things didn’t go as expected regardless of the amount of effort and pre-planning that went into them.”

— Lara Presber, owner at [Studio Presber Architecture + Design \(http://studiopresber.com\)](http://studiopresber.com)

Advice to my younger self? Consider business as a career! I spent my

early career working in government and not-for-profit. When I joined global consulting firm, Accenture, I found my true calling – business. I leveraged my experience and expertise from previous roles to found four companies in four different industry sectors and have never looked back!
— Wilma Slenders, president and founder of Transcend Management Advisors Inc (<http://transcendmgt.com>).

“I would explain to understand the difference between PRICE and VALUE. Whether investing in your education, your skills, your relationships, your health, your finances... everything has an opportunity cost and some kind of price, and yet value is more esoteric, and harder to research, learn, and understand. Yet those who understand value as a lifetime of expected income (whether in business, academics, relationships, spirituality, etc.) tend to derive a multiplier on their time and resources that is wildly improved to those who only understand price.

— Evin Enry co-founder of Tullii (<http://tullii.org>)

“Write out your goals, determine strategies and don’t worry about the outcome until it happens. Worrying about things you cannot control takes away from precious moments that could otherwise be filled with positive thoughts. You cannot control the past or future, only the present.”

— Karen Hope, owner of The Marketing Edge (<http://marketingedge.ab.ca>)

“GO BIG OR GO HOME! I currently run what I call a ‘scrap’ business because it was developed using scraps of time and money. Don’t get me wrong — ‘scrap’ doesn’t mean ‘crap’ — but I sure wish I had gone to the bank or investors for financing right from the start rather than financing the business myself. Despite a solid business plan, I ran into way more obstacles and delays than I ever could have planned for, which put a real strain on my personal finances. The good news is that persistence will usually get you where you need to go — you just arrive a little later!”

— Richelle Skrilec, founder and CEO ShopandShare.ca (<http://shopandshare.ca>)

“Whenever you feel like stepping back, you need to step forward. The result will be many breakthroughs.”

— Dean Kendall, CEO and financial coordinator at Ideal Life Experience Ltd (<http://linkedin.com/in/IdealLifeExperience>).

“Don’t over-plan it, just start and build as you go. The business might not look exactly look like what you thought it would but sometimes life has better ideas than we do. Part of our job as entrepreneurs is to identify the opportunities that are right in front of us and make the most of them.”

— Lindsey Boycott, founder of Cents, Sense & Sensibility

(<http://centsandsensibility.ca>)

“I would have reached out for help earlier in areas where I did not have business strengths. We started to move forward when I began thinking of service providers like bookkeepers, bankers, suppliers and key subcontractors as partners. They became so important we now think of some of them as departments within our company.

“The second thing I would have done is to seek out successful business people from within my circles who would have helped me as mentors. I knew lots but was too proud to ask for help.

Calgary is full of highly successful people who will offer advice and answer questions. Many started with nothing and have build significant companies. They are eager to share what they did right and what they did wrong.”

— Robyn Braley, president of Unimark Creative (<http://unimarkcreative.com>)

I would tell my younger self, ‘If you want to grow your business, grow YOURSELF!’ Develop confidence in your own knowledge, skill and abilities, because your business will grow to the level you grow to.”

— Carmen Goss, HR consultant and career coach

(<http://linkedin.ca/carmengoss>)

If I was giving my younger self business advice I would say be on the lookout for those I considered successful and surround myself with them. They can be the coaches and mentors for the future; watch, learn and ask questions. It is not so much to totally emulate but follow the example of behaviors and attitudes.

— Laura Pierce, president of LP Human Resources Inc

(<http://lphumanresources.com>).

These answers are in response to a question posed by Kris Hans, strategist at Market Grade (<http://marketgrade.com/>). Here’s his take:

“Don’t fear failure, embrace success! I’m a big believer that everything happens for a reason and for the best. By making mistakes and failing, you grow as a person and learn from your experiences. If failure happens, it happens. Fearing failure can create self-imposed limits on your potential success. With time, these life experiences reflect and define you as a person to help you become stronger.”

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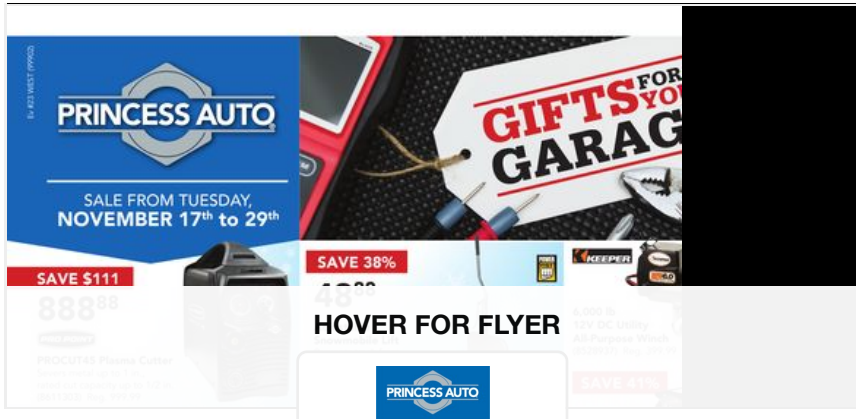
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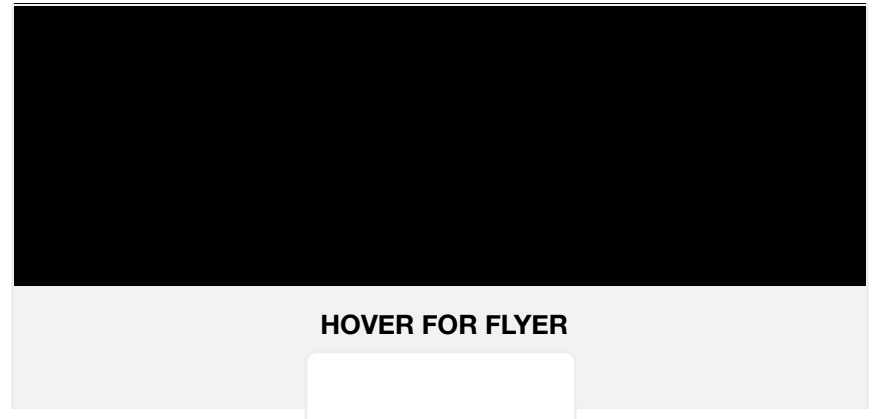
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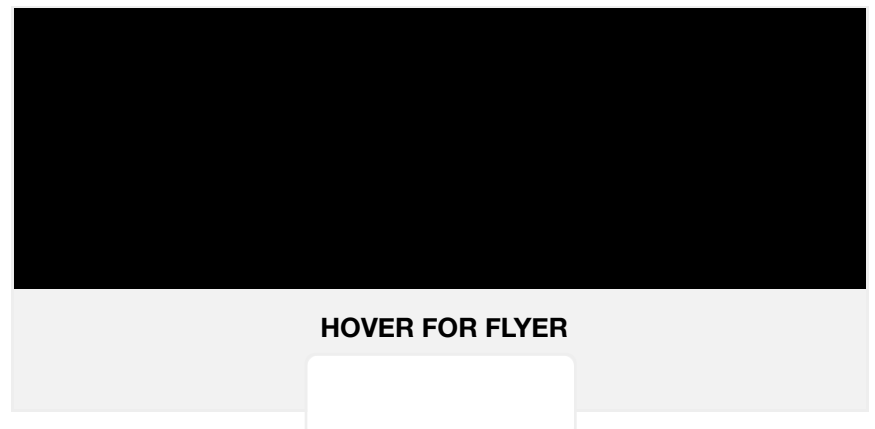
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