

CAPITAL IDEAS

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 30: MEET AND GEEK ECOMMERCE
Connect with other like-minded women and expand your technical horizons as you learn about e-commerce.
■ Where: Wine-Ohs (600, 237 8th Ave. S.E.)
■ When: 6 to 8:30 p.m.
■ Admission: Free. More info at thechicgeek.ca

APRIL 15: AWAKENED COMPANY
Support fellow Albertans who are working hard to launch or grow their social enterprises, shape our community and make a positive impact for people and the planet from the Alberta Boostr stage.
■ Where: Civic on Third (130 3rd Ave. S.E.)
■ When: 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.
■ Admission: \$50. More info at albertaboost.ca

MAY 6: AWE CELEBRATION OF ACHIEVEMENT
Join Alberta Women Entrepreneurs at this celebration luncheon which pays tribute to exceptional women entrepreneurs in the province.
■ Where: Hotel Arts (119 12 Ave. S.W.)
■ When: 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
■ Admission: \$50 and up.
More info at awebusiness.com

For more great events, visit capitalideascalgary.com/events

CAPITAL QUESTION

How do you know an innovative idea is worth pursuing?



ATB Business™
Inspiration for a new business idea can come from anywhere. The challenge, however, is finding the time and resources to turn the right ideas into successful ventures. That's why **Wellington Holbrook**, executive vice-president of ATB Business, wants to know:
How do you know an innovative idea is worth pursuing?
You can answer the question in two ways: Open today's Capital Ideas email if you're a member or visit capitalideascalgary.com.
We'll publish the best answers, along with your business name and website address, on Mar. 31.

CAPITAL IDEAS

Business owners helping business owners

JOIN US!

- ✓ Get expert advice on your biggest challenges
- ✓ Share insights with entrepreneurs like you
- ✓ Appear in the Calgary Herald

SIGN UP AT:
capitalideascalgary.com

COMMUNITY QUESTION

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED ABOUT RUNNING A FAMILY BUSINESS?

Calgary entrepreneurs discuss mixing family and business



Jolanda Slagmolen-Flores says she's been manager and co-owner of Casa Flores Cabinetry (casaflores.ca) with her husband for a decade, and has learned a few things along the way: "Humberto manages production while I am responsible for business development, marketing, sales, etc. I tend to get stressed, but he maintains a steady perspective. He grounds me and reminds me of what is important. We are yin and yang — that is how we have successfully worked together and built our business over the past ten years."

LIFE PHOTO STUDIOS (LIFEPHOTOSTUDIOS.COM)



"I learned my core values from my dad. He was a butcher and ran his small successful business on providing the best product and knowing what your customers want because no two are the same. He taught me to take customer service to a level of knowing your customer. There is a difference. My small family have been instrumental in helping with parades and ideas, support, filling in positions and contributing to a community that we call home."

Lois Jones, CEO of Here's the Scoop, heresthescoop.com



"Ours is a family business, created by my mother-in-law in 1978. We now own the business and have a third generation working with us. One of the most important lessons is that we need to treat our employees and contractors like they are part of our family. When they feel that connection, they do their best work and are most fulfilled. As business partners, my husband and I need to remember that we are married first, and business partners second, so we compartmentalize our time and at 7 p.m. every evening, we stop talking business."

Merri Lemmex, managing partner of operations at Lemmex Williams Training, lemmexwilliams.com



These answers are in response to a question posed to our community by **Tim Sprung**, vice-president of Sprung Structures (sprungstructures.com). Here are his thoughts on being in a family business that's been operating for four generations:

"Through the generations, Sprung has built its culture on four guidelines: hard work, respect, forgiveness and creating a safe zone. Hard work was something my parents instilled in us at a very young age. If you, as a leader, are not working harder than your employees they will resort to the lowest common denominator and output will fall to your level of dedication. Respect for employees (and family members) is perhaps the most important factor in any business. If respect is lost, everything falls apart. Also, we are all going to screw up so we have to remember to forgive and forget and move on. Finally, by creating a safe zone for you and your employees, it allows a positive working atmosphere."



Attendees listen to the Capital Ideas panel in Calgary on Feb. 25, 2016.
JENN PIERCE



"Family makes everything seem less scary. Anything is possible when they are in your corner, when it feels like the world might collapse. Having grown up in a family-run business, I learned at a young age it can be trying to work with family, resentment can come into play, and sometimes things aren't taken as seriously. I do believe if you have a strong relationship and secure ground rules in place you can make it work and really truly achieve a wonderful amount of success. Success seems to be a little sweeter when you can share it with the people closest to you."

Kelsey Kashluba, founder at Kommunity Konsulting, kommunitykonsulting.ca



"As someone who grew up in a family enterprise and now advises other families who have their own enterprise structures, there is much I have learned. The main thing is that the family business is just one aspect of the enterprise ecosystem and that the players need to be aware of what 'hat' they are wearing when making critical decisions."

Gena Rotstein, CEO of Dexterity Ventures, dexterityconsulting.ca



"My wife is also my business partner. We've been married for 10 years so I'd say I've learned a ton. For us, our success in business begins with working in separate offices — for us, sharing an office lead to conflict. Now, we over-communicate. The more we speak, the better things work out and clarity is key. We have defined (business) roles and work to avoid overlap. Also, know who you're speaking with: 'Should I answer that question as your colleague or your husband?' I've worked with many family-run businesses and I've learned a ton from them as well. Make time for family fun!"

Vince Fowler, head coach at Vested Interest Group, vestedinterestgroup.com



"Mixing family and business can be a recipe for disaster or success, it all depends on the strength of your relationship. Jim and I really love being together. We complement each other's strengths and weaknesses. When we work on the food truck we like to have a lot of fun with each other and our staff (including daughters and sons). The big thing for us is to maintain clear, honest communication and we ask the same of our staff. Feedback is huge and encouraged. It would be very easy to always think business, especially when we have the office at home, but we've set 'non-business time' boundaries which we truly respect and value."

Deb Lawton, owner and partner at Perogy Boyz, perogyboyz.com



"Like many families, mine is made up of completely different people. Sometimes the only commonality is blood or marriage. Communicating with such a diverse group of people isn't always easy, but knowing that we all have a common purpose of investing in each others lives gives us reason to work through our differences and look at the bigger picture."

Robert Schmidt, president of Rebox Creative, reboxcreative.com



"My parents have taught me invaluable lessons when it comes to running my company. My dad was never afraid of hard work. Sometimes I wondered why would he keep farming when times were so tough. It was his passion. It was his life. Value isn't always placed on dollars but rather the happiness it yielded. My mom is my biggest fan. When times are hard for me she reminds me that they too were once there and weathered the storms. It reminds me that this too shall pass. She also always says you never know how close you are to making it; keep going. Great advice for days when you want to just go get a 'real' job. My parents taught me that hard work pays off and passion drives success."

Ryan Townsend, CEO at William Joseph Communications, williamjoseph.com

NEXT EVENT

How do you do business differently?

When: Mar. 31, noon to 1 p.m.
Where: Glenbow Museum (130 9th Ave. S.E.)
RSVP at capitalideasyyc15.eventbrite.ca

Join three local entrepreneurs to discuss how they are innovating in business. Tickets are free, and a light lunch will be served.

Join our LinkedIn group: Capital Ideas Alberta • Follow us on Twitter: @capitalideasyyc