



MICHAEL BEZZINA

Michael Bezzina, property developer and founder, Bezzina Group

"I actually love what I do. If you're fortunate enough to enjoy the job you do, then the success trail is a lot easier. My intention was never to go out and make a whole lot of money – I wanted to build and build the best. My advice is that if you persist at anything, you will succeed in the long term. The only time you fail is when you give up. But you're only as good as the people you're working with; I've got people with the same passion who believe in the same things I do."

Marie Persson, director, TAFE NSW Sydney Institute

"You have to keep learning – from others and from your mistakes. Building and using networks is important but being totally focused on what you want to achieve and having a great team around you are essential. Of course, for mothers, affordable, high-quality child care and a supportive family are critical."

John McGrath, CEO, McGrath Estate Agents

"The key ingredients for success are a combination of commonsense, energy, courage and persistence. While talent can play some part, I believe almost anyone with a simple plan, the passion and courage to take action on it every day and the tenacity to persist in the face of adversity will get what they want."

Katie Lahey, chief executive, Business Council of Australia

"Hard work, persistence and being able to apply both theoretical knowledge and practical skills to your job. Attention to detail is also very important. Grasp any opportunity to manage large budgets and large numbers of people, no matter how unglamorous the subject matter might be. Choose high-performing people to work for you and always do the selection yourself – this is too important to delegate to others."

Graeme Clark, director, The Bionic Ear Institute, and pioneer of the multiple-channel cochlear implant

"As a 10-year-old, I had a creative urge to make discoveries and this led some years later to a great desire to break new ground in helping deaf people hear. To do this, I strove for excellence at every point and I believed in young scientists to share the vision. Finally, I could not have coped with all the difficulties that lay ahead without the love of my wife, family and faith in God. In realising a dream, my advice to anyone is never give up."

Caroline Pidcock, immediate past president, Royal Australian Institute of Architects NSW Chapter, and director, Caroline Pidcock Architects

"How did I get to the position I am in? Primarily by identifying what it was that I was really interested in

– sustainability – and then enthusiastically following that idea. The road I have subsequently travelled and positions I have held were not planned. Business is full of ups and downs – often at the same time. Try not to get too carried away by either as you continue to move forward to achieve your goals.”

Alannah Hill, fashion designer

“My success is a combination of many things. The fear of being ordinary, wanting financial security, my love of chocolate, having enormous energy and wanting to show Dad that I could be more than an apprentice hairdresser. The fear of falling, falling over, going mad, wanting things, to have respect and to be able to work on 10 different things at a time. Success only comes to a few of us and one can pay a high price for it. It overwhelms you. I was born with a terrible desire to be the best.”

**Hamish MacDonald, CEO,
Becton Property Group**

“I am not at the top yet. However, I am where I am today through good sponsors, good luck with great projects, timing and exposure and consistent hard work. I love what I do and the variety of people I meet. Where I am today, I believe, is through my loyalty and the loyalty I have received in return. My advice is to build a cumulative résumé and don't allow yourself to go backwards or sit in the wrong place for too long.”



Christine Cameron, director and company secretary, Rockcote Enterprises, and winner, 2003 Westpac Group Business Owner Award

“Never forget where you've come from. Our journey from the backyard shed has been a bumpy road at times but by adopting this attitude and trying to live in accordance with it, life has been a lot easier. Have fun, stay calm, keep balance in your life and remember that in order to achieve and enjoy success, you must always act with honesty and integrity.”

Giam Swiegers, CEO, Deloitte

“For me, the most important thing is to wake up every morning and live my personal motto: the

average never win. I tell ambitious young people to ask themselves, ‘What can I do today to make sure that it's not an average day or I'm not an average performer?’ I believe this helps them be recognised and get to the top.”

Evan Thornley, co-founder and director, LookSmart Ltd, and proprietor, Pluto Press Australia

“Unreasonable persistence is definitely the most important characteristic. I have never met anyone who was successful in business who hadn't had to face failure many times and push through. Know what you believe in and stick to it. Building an organisation that has integrity to a clear set of values leads to trust and trust is a very valuable thing. It also gives staff a sense that they are part of something bigger than just a money-making machine and that is very motivating.”

Elizabeth Cham, national director, Philanthropy Australia

“I have always had the good fortune to work with extraordinarily able, energetic and committed individuals and without them, I could have done very little. The cult of personality encourages leaders to forget that and to feel as if they're the only ones who do anything; they often see only their own face within the frame and the hundreds – or thousands – of people who work for them are the great ignored.” ●