

BUSINESS

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SECTION D



Mark Vinciguerra, 54
Area managing director and general manager
Starwood Hotels and the Phoenician
Phoenix



Dan Clarke, 41
Chief executive officer
Vcommerce Corp.
Scottsdale



Frank Sbordone, 52
President and CEO
Peter Piper Inc.
Scottsdale



Jody Smith, 30
Owner
Vintage Villas
Scottsdale

Lessons learned

These business execs took good practices from their mentors and built on them

BIZAZ

Learning from another's business sense or people sense isn't a violation of intellectual property. It's perhaps the most sincere form of flattery in the business world.

Today, four business execs tell us who they admire, and what we can learn from them:

■ **Dan Clarke, CEO at Vcommerce Corp. of Scottsdale:**

"I worked at Intel under former CEO Andy Grove. While there, I found that Andy had a unique combination of approachability, personability and honesty that allowed him to execute strategies into actions."

■ **Frank Sbordone, president and**

CEO, Peter Piper Inc. of Scottsdale:

"Beyond having a great strategic plan, running a successful company means building a community within the walls of your business, dedicating yourself to helping others achieve goals and a willingness to take risks. These are all skills that were taught to me by Jim McManus, founder of Marketing Corporation of America, a private conglomerate in Connecticut."

■ **Mark Vinciguerra, area managing director and general manager, Starwood Hotels and the Phoenician:**

"To me, (Starbucks CEO) Howard Schultz has created one of the greatest examples of brand success.... I look to (Ap-

ple co-founder) Steve Jobs for inspiration about innovation.... My boss, Rick Suhl, is wonderful at building relationships."

■ **Jody Smith, owner, Vintage Villas of Scottsdale:**

"The person I admire most in business is my father, Roy Vallee. When I was in high school, I worked at Avnet, the company my father now runs as CEO. I remember the incredible respect his employees had for him and his vision, but it didn't make sense to me at the time because he was my dad; what did he know? Now as an adult with a small business, I realize his knowledge base is truly infinite."

Full comments, D5. Edited by Sarah Bannan/BizAZ

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Jody Smith, owner of Vintage Villas in Scottsdale, says her dad is on her personal "board of directors."

Father is filled with wisdom about business

Jody Smith, 30
Owner
Vintage Villas
Scottsdale

Since its launch in March 2002, Vintage Villas has grown to offer eclectic home furnishings and accessories from local and national artisans.

I admire many people for different reasons, but the person I admire most in business is my father, Roy Vallee. When I was in high school, I worked at Avnet, the company my father now runs as chief executive officer. I remember the incredible respect his employees had for him and his vision, but it didn't make sense to me at the time because he was my dad; what did he know?

Now as an adult with a small business, I realize his knowledge base is truly infinite. He affects my company on a daily basis because he, my husband and my mother are, essentially, my board of directors. Anytime

I call my dad with a question, I get an answer that is filled with intelligence, years of experience and a genuine belief in the power of people.

For instance, I called one day and asked how to get the most out of my employees. He said, "Clear direction, tools and training and honest feedback."

Why didn't I think of that?

On another occasion, I asked for advice on a problem with a customer. He said, "First of all, you can't please everyone. But if you have the conversation without assumption, without being emotional and with an open mind, you're likely to come up with a win-win solution." And I did.

His most profound statement was made just recently. I was telling him that I tend to downplay the success of the store.

In another moment of wisdom, he said, "Do not ever apologize for your success. You have worked extremely hard to get where you are. Be proud of your accomplishments because at the end of it all, you are the only one who looks in the mirror and gets to say, 'I did it.'"