



Grade your company's security. Take our quiz today!

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HOW MELANIE PERKINS FOUNDED A GLOBAL UNICORN

According to the Small Business Administration, nearly 627,000 businesses open each year, but at the same time, around 595,000 businesses close for good annually. Further, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics research states that 45% of new companies go out of business within their first five years. It's no surprise that building a successful business is easier said than done, but once in a blue moon, an entrepreneur breaks the mold to reach new heights. We saw it with Jeff Bezos and Amazon, Bill Gates and Microsoft, and now, we're watching it happen with Melanie Perkins and Canva, an online graphic design tool.

While most tech startups originate in Silicon Valley, Canva's inception took place on the other side of the Pacific Ocean. Born in 1987 in Perth, Australia, Perkins first tasted entrepreneurship as a teenager. She designed and sold scarves to shops and markets across her hometown at 14. A few years later, she enrolled at the University of Western Australia, where the idea for Canva was born.

Needing extra cash, Perkins worked as a tutor, teaching fellow students how to use graphic design programs. It often took months for them to learn the basics; not only were the programs difficult to use, but they were also expensive! She wondered if there was a



way to create a graphic design program that was simple, affordable, and easily accessible online.

Perkins took her idea to her boyfriend, Cliff Obrecht, and the two determined that the initial concept for Canva was too ambitious. Instead, they started smaller by creating Fusion Books, an online school yearbook design business. They

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TAKE OUR CYBER-SECURITY TEST TODAY!

DON'T LET CYBERSECURITY FEARS HAUNT YOUR BUSINESS

Take Action This Halloween!

nightmares from a scary movie. Fear is a constant in our lives, and I'm more than happy to avoid anything that might bring more fear into my life.

As most of you know, being a business owner can open us up to new anxieties we must persevere through. I still remember how concerned I was when I hired my first employee. I was responsible for someone else's livelihood for the first time, which was a terrifying reality. My business gradually became more secure, which kept my hiring fears at bay, but many other worries appeared throughout the years.

We work with many clients who share their fears with us regarding the cybersecurity world. You likely work with sensitive information, so you want to do everything you can to protect that information, your customers, and your business. You're probably already running through various risk management scenarios in your head, but are you also looking at your cybersecurity risks?

Often, business owners don't know what to look for, so they hire someone to address their cybersecurity needs. This is a great idea, but it's essential that you have continuing conversations with your cybersecurity partner to ensure they're keeping you protected. Don't assume the business you hired will take care

of your needs because you paid them. You must have ongoing conversations to stay aware of new risks threatening businesses in your industry.

At Christo IT, we're committed to helping quell our clients' fears regarding cybersecurity and IT. We meet with our clients regularly to discuss what's changing in the industry. We take an in-depth look at your business to determine how recent developments in the IT world could affect your business and create a game plan to protect you. It's a changing landscape, and we want to ensure you stay current on any industry changes.

We have clients who have worked with us for over 25 years, providing them with knowledge and awareness of changes in the IT world while mitigating their fears. To see how your business stacks up against cybersecurity threats, scan the QR code attached to this article or head to **ChristoIT.com/cybercheckup** today to request a cybersecurity checkup.



I hope you all have a happy Halloween. Don't let your fears overwhelm you!

Close More Sales by Transforming Objections into Opportunities

A strong sales team is the root of every successful business, but sales can be challenging. You've probably experienced this firsthand, as many entrepreneurs got their start in sales or, at the very least, developed their sales skills to pitch their businesses and products to potential investors successfully. In most cases, after a business starts to bring in profits, the entrepreneur will step away from the sales role, hire salespeople, and delegate all sales responsibilities. But once you step away from the sales game, it can be challenging to jump back in, especially if it's been several years since you've practiced your sales pitch.

"Just like that, you're no longer a salesperson — you're someone they want to converse with."

So, why is sales such a difficult job? If you're comfortable socializing, then trying to sell to people can feel like a normal conversation. Unfortunately, most people have developed a negative impression of salespeople. You might have that negative outlook yourself without even realizing it. When you enter a furniture or retail store, do you actively seek help, or do you push away any salesperson who tries to assist you? Most customers who shop at your store believe salespeople want nothing more than to make a sale. They don't think salespeople have the customer's best interests in mind. So, how do you shake this stigma? It all has to do with sales tactics.

One of the most challenging situations salespeople face daily is hearing a customer say "no" to them. Some try to read the customer to decide if it's worth pushing further. Others might refuse to quit until they hear "no" three times. There's nothing wrong with asking again after an initial



rejection or probing further to find their concerns. But if your salespeople push the sale too hard, customers grow frustrated and take their business elsewhere.

The trick is to find the sweet spot. How can you turn their "no" into a "yes"? Here are two fresh tactics that can deliver the results you're looking for.

Change the Topic

This might sound counterintuitive, but you don't want to push immediately after a customer rejects your offer. Instead, change the subject altogether. Take the no in stride, and ask them about something else, like a local sports team, their clothing, or literally anything else that isn't the sale. This should open up a dialogue, allowing you to redeem yourself in their eyes. Saying something like, "Did you catch the game last night?" or "Your handbag is really cool. My wife bought a similar style over at Macy's. Where did you get yours?" will completely change their perspective. Just like that, you're no longer a salesperson — you're someone they want to converse with. Once you've built rapport, start your pitch again and try to sell. You'll be surprised by how many positive responses you'll receive!

Restate Their Answer

Have you ever received an outlandish objection from a customer? They likely don't even realize how crazy they sound, so repeat what they said right back to them. First, this demonstrates you were listening, but more importantly, it gives them a chance to reconsider what they just said. In most cases, the customer will change their tune and story, giving you something to work with. They may even open up, sharing the real reason for their immediate rejection of your sale. If you stay quiet and listen to what they say, they'll likely give you enough ammo to make a sale without additional digging.

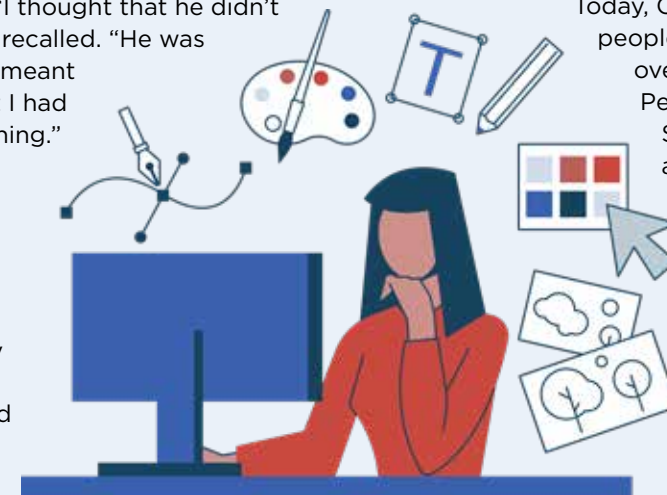
Anyone can make these sales tactics work with enough dedication, practice, and charisma. Teach them to your sales team, and prepare to watch your customers say "yes" more often.

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made a website that allowed students to design their profile pages and articles, while Obrecht and Perkins printed and distributed the yearbooks to Australian schools. The couple secured an investor, and the Fusion Books application went live in 2008. Within five years, Fusion Books became Australia's largest yearbook company.

In 2010, Perkins received her big break when Silicon Valley investor Bill Tai visited Perth. Perkins, Obrecht, and Tai met briefly for dinner, and Tai invited Perkins to San Francisco to pitch her ideas. When Perkins met with Tai in California, she thought she blew the pitch. "I thought that he didn't really like what I had to say," she recalled. "He was on his phone, and I thought that meant he wasn't really engaged in what I had to say about the future of publishing." Tai was actually connecting Perkins with other investors and tech entrepreneurs.

Unfortunately, Perkins' pitches to Silicon Valley investors and executives proved fruitless. Many were concerned about a tech company starting in Australia and decided against funding it. Tai wouldn't give up on Perkins



and Canva that easily, though. He encouraged her and Obrecht to take up kitesurfing and come to his unique retreat for investors and kitesurfing enthusiasts. At the retreat, Tai introduced the couple to their future tech advisor and co-founder of Google Maps, Lars Rasmussen. They also met an ex-Google employee named Cameron Adams, who would become a co-founder of Canva. With these new advisors, Canva secured \$1.5 million from investors and another \$1.5 million from the Australian government to keep the business in Australia.

Today, Canva is used by 125 million people every month, bringing in over \$1 billion annually in revenue. Perkins isn't doing terribly, either. She's worth over \$6 billion and is still Canva's CEO. Canva has continued to be at the frontline of graphic design programs, continually releasing new features and tools. With AI usage on the rise, they're developing new ways to utilize it in Canva. Perkins' journey proves that if you have a good idea, you should stick with it until it sells.

HAVE A Laugh!



3 REASONS 536 WAS THE WORST YEAR IN HUMAN HISTORY

When Mount St. Helens erupted in 1980, dark ash drifted to Idaho, forcing temperatures down by as much as 15 degrees F. Residents experienced a fraction of the horrors back in 536 — a time Harvard University historian Michael McCormick once called "the worst year to be alive."

For decades, the year 536 was a historical mystery. Records showed that it was a terrible time, stricken by the triple threat of:

1. Unexplained, unending darkness
2. Unseasonably frigid weather
3. Crop failure and famine

Those horrors ravaged the globe, and experts puzzled over the tipping point in 536. Then, in 2018, researchers discovered a Swiss glacier riddled with volcanic glass. Further study revealed enormous volcanic eruptions in 536 likely caused "The Dark Ages." As we write this, volcanoes in Iceland and Alaska are the most likely candidates. We've already survived a pandemic this century, so let's hope both regions stay quiet for everyone's sake!

