



Andrew Mininger
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At the time of this interview, Andrew Mininger worked with Imagedog where he started in the multimedia technology sector in a variety of departments; graphics, customer service, and billing. Since then, Andrew escalated to senior management and then held a position as Executive Vice President of Business Development. In his free time, Andrew enjoys a variety of hobbies including soccer, skateboarding, and motorcycles. He and his wife,

Sara, have two children, Jacquin and Piersol.

professional

What are top 3 principles for success in your industry?

The adage that image is everything is something that we've been able to play off of because the name of our image is "Image Dog". But we think that image is really important and it has become more important in this society where people are constantly entertained. The MTV generation and the graphics on ESPN, all these things lend itself toward entertainment value for people. And even PS2 is hot for adults ... the Play Station Two. When we talk about image, there has to be more credibility lent to image. When you're talking about business leaders and they're actually on stage or presenting something that we've created for them, I see that it's really important that they know what they're talking about, they're prepared and that they have done their homework. They have done their time to make their presentation a good presentation. So when we talk about image, we talk about those aspects. Preparedness, credibility, knowing what you're talking about and if those things are all coming together, then you've succeeded in your presentation. You've succeeded in the image you're trying to portray.

What character qualities do you look for when hiring?

One of the biggest things that we would look for is integrity. And with that we also like to see that there is self-discipline and hard work ethic. I think that comes from a lot of our backgrounds, anyway. But with that, I look for the ability to maintain honest and true relationships in the work environment. We feel that relationships are actually the core of what we do and so if we can't enhance communication and build relationships, internally, and then also do that for our clients, externally, then we're not really accomplishing our mission.

What makes a great leader?

Truth I think is extremely important. There is a sense that business can't be done without spin and white lies. What I look for is somebody who can speak the hard truths honestly with compassion. But yet, speak the hard truths. Without that, we lack leadership. You degrade your leadership if there isn't truth and honesty behind what you're saying. And I think that can be whittled down into integrity, as well.

Who are your heroes and why?

For leadership, again, one of the buzzwords of the past four or five years has been coaching and mentoring. I've gone to several conferences that discussed that mode of management in trying to do that. There have been several people that I've gleaned aspects of mentoring from, but probably one of the people that I've been most impressed with is Dee Hawk. A lot of people don't know the guy and he's actually the founder of Visa. He brought Visa to life. I've heard him speak several times on several occasions and he really speaks to soul and spirit. Business is not just a capitalistic ploy as much as it is an ability for us to use gifts.

What are the 2-3 most valuable lessons you learned in your career?

A lesson that I have learned is flexibility. It's really important to be flexible with your own expectations. That's the opposite of having goals and driving after them, but I think it's really exciting to take on change. That's where it's a little bit different. I think change is actually great. It brings you to new



experiences and to new levels. I invite change, even though I'm often afraid of it or even though I don't want to have to face it. Once I realize that there's a purpose there or can understand or believe that there will be a purpose for this change, then I can kind of move through that. And that's helpful. So I think flexibility is really important, with your own expectations.

How did you get involved in the career you are in?

It's an interesting story. After college, I actually went home, which I think a lot of people do nowadays. I was living at home and working out of Washington D.C., looking to do something, maybe as a lobbyist. In the meantime, taking a job as an associate pastor for Christian education. I actually dealt with kids from pre-K through sixth grade, about 250 of them, coordinating the summer ministries and activities for the kids. I was offered the full-time job after that and hadn't found out anything else in Washington D.C., but was offered one opportunity up here with my partner to come up and try something in the technological realm, which I had no exposure to. I tried to consider that greatly and felt like New York was a good call to make. Image Dog, we've been doing multi-media presentations for corporations for the past 12 years. At the core of that is technology. And 12 years ago, technology wasn't the buzzword that it is today. The dot coms have come in and infiltrated business at large. But then we were using quite primitive technology in comparison to today. When you're with a start up company ... we were three at the time, three people ... you do everything. The basis of our company is service. So you're looking to provide the service to the clientele that you have and a lot of times that requires 24-hour supervision and quick turn around time on the jobs that you're working on. And if you're trying to make a name for yourself in the environment or the industry that you're in, it is cause for a lot of time put into the job. And so we persevered probably three or four years of all of us doing everything, pitching in, one big team, to accomplish the task at hand. And then we started experiencing some growth pains as we started getting larger and larger. Once we approached 50, it's not a small mom and pop shop anymore. You realize that the lessons that you've learned in doing everything, now you have to delegate to those that can do partial tasks, partial responsibilities for running the business. So the leap from 25 to 50 employees was just a huge change for us and having to cope with that. But I think how we did that was to employ really good, solid people.

p e r s o n a l

How do you define success? How has your definition evolved?

I think success nowadays is being your own company. Not working for a company, but being your own company. I think success is retiring early to do what you really want to do. When I think of the generation that I am maybe on the end of, I think about the younger generation. They're really striving to put their time in now, to stock their money away for a rainy day. And to be able to do what they really want to do, maybe 15 years from now, maybe ten years from now. And I think while some of the goals that they have are quite amiable, I think a lot of younger people would say, "Oh, I would like to set up a foundation, I'd like to be able to have a namesake." I think that very often or more often than not, they can establish patterns in these early years that are hard to break later on, and maybe that success won't come as quickly as they expect, but they're still going to push for it and push for it and push for it. And before they knew it, 30 years has gone by. They're going to be looking back and saying, "What have I really accomplished? What have I really left as a legacy?" And I guess my encouragement to people that think about that now is think big like that. That's great. But recognize that there are paramount truths greater than yourself, greater than your identity or your business that you need to focus on and that is what's going to give you success in the long-term.

How do you prioritize your time/values? What are your priorities?

Time management is critical to success. I think on a daily level, though, you have to draw in flexibility. Your king can't be your schedule. You have to have that flexibility and so if there's a problem at home or there's an emergency that needs to be tended to or maybe there's just one of your kid's soccer games to go to, or one of your friends is in need, I think you have to build into your relationships the flexibility to say, "You know what? That's what's important and that's what's critical." When you do that, I think you'll find your days become successful in that manner and you're not locked into a schedule or a time frame, but you're actually able to live and build into relationships, which I think is

what we're called to do.

s p i r i t u a l

Can you follow Christ and still have a successful career, family and such?

Absolutely. In fact, I think that that's the most exciting way to walk a path. I think what's great about that is if you were following Christ, He can change what it means to be successful wherever you're at. He can change that. So you might not even know that, but you can be walking a different path. What's great about it is that if you're walking on a path with Christ, that's where you want to be anyways. So success, then, is meted out by Him and by your faith or your development of the relationship that you have with Him.

How does your faith help you in your professional life?

The first thing that comes to my mind is that faith is the substance of all things hoped for. I think that without faith, it is impossible for us to do all things ... or anything. Faith is important to me because it is the foundation for my belief system. It is the foundation for my priorities in life. It's the foundation for my future. And without that faith, I would be lost. But with that faith, I have stability. I have assuredness and I have a place where I can go and grow.

How does your faith help you in your personal life?

This may sound a little bit trite, but I'll risk it. There's a lot about priorities. There's a lot of talk about writing down your mission statement and your own personal goals and your family goals. And taking that to heart and living those. I think that's a lesson that I've learned. You cannot make any one thing your king without it failing you in some way. I think that the only thing you can make your king is our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. You can't make that king your family, you can't make that king your kids or your business or the bottom line. Those things will fail you and in some way, shape or form, they do not supply the bread of life. They don't supply that. And so I think that trying to bring that into the work place and to say, "Look, this is my job, this is my calling, this is how I mentor, this is how I coach". The fact that I don't put all my eggs in that basket, I think is a great lesson because you're not so attached to it that it can destroy you. It also makes it that much more fruitful, because it is something that you can say is of significant importance, but not of ultimate importance.

How much faith can you put in yourself versus faith in the eternal?

I think that the faith in God produced an ability to have faith in the God who indwells you. God created us all. And so with that, he actually gives us the faith to believe in Him. He gives us the faith, then, to believe in ourselves as children of Him. It is important to actually have faith in ourselves because we are created in His image and He is the creator of that faith.