

Beth Pride, BPE Global

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When Beth Pride was laid off from her job, her boss told her "you're ready." He knew that she wanted to become a CEO and felt it was time. Beth found Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center and immediately signed up for a Business Planning class. "Being unemployed was scary, but Renaissance gave me direction, took away the fear."

Beth finished the class with a business plan for BPE Global, an import and export compliance consulting firm. She stuck to her action plan and met her goal to land her first client within six months of graduation. She used the same practice pitch that she gave in class with her first client. Unfortunately, her first client also turned out to be a practice client and didn't end up paying. But as Beth learned in class, business plans are living documents that should continuously evolve and adapt to circumstance. She is now careful to set goals with *paying* clients in mind!



Keeping strong relationships with all of her clients, Beth is still in touch with her first real (i.e. paying) client, and even attended their wedding. For Beth, one of the greatest benefits of being in business is to create the kind of lifestyle, relationships, and business culture she wants. Although she has received offers to buy her out, she has always refused because she knows it would mean giving up the business and life that brings her so much fulfillment and sense of purpose.

A tour of BPE Global's 'world headquarters' is a walk up two flights of stairs into Beth Pride's apartment in San Francisco's lower Haight District. She loves working from home in her converted living room office, as do her five remote employees.

Now 13 years and going strong as the boss, Beth gets to call the shots. She's proud to have put in her 10,000 hours and knows her industry inside and out. She takes pride in her team being fast and efficient, but most of all she is thrilled that everyone is enthusiastic and excited about their work. "I tell clients we're going to have fun!" Beth says. And with Beth they do.

Forever grateful that Renaissance helped launch the business she had long dreamed of, Beth continues to give back to Renaissance and the small business community. Though her target customers are medium to large companies, Beth recognizes the need that many small businesses have for BPE's services, but can seldom afford or prioritize. As such, Beth volunteers her time as a consultant for the smaller businesses that Renaissance helps to start.

It's not only an increase in income and revenue that Beth enjoys as a business owner, business ownership enables her to live by her core values—giving back to her community, delivering excellent products and services, and taking care of the people she loves.

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