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## Entrepreneurship Kaleidoscope Series Part 1 of 4



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## Entrepreneurship Kaleidoscope Series Part 1 of 4



November 19, 2013

BY SONIA MOTISCA | PIVOT WRITER

What advice would you give to other Canadians entering the startup world and aiming for global success?

**Sonia Bot** is an operationally accomplished global business and technology innovation executive. She is the CEO of The **BOT Consulting Group Inc.** and is a Board Member at Lead To Win and at Carleton University. She has been on the cutting edge of technology entrepreneurship for more than 30 years and has been an influential figure and trailblazer in the corporate-based ecosystems. She has worked at companies such as BlackBerry, Nortel, Bell-Northern Research, IBM, and TransCanada Pipelines. Over the last few years, she has been applying her knowledge and expertise to evolving startup ecosystems and is helping to bridge the



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gap between the startup and corporate-based ecosystems. Additionally, she partners with small-medium enterprises and large innovation-based companies and instills the entrepreneurial mindset, as she solves wicked business problems and helps them build, grow, and transform in order to survive and thrive both in the near and over the long terms.

Her advice to Canadians entering the startup world and aiming for global success comes in five parts. First, Sonia wants to ensure that entrepreneurs understand that global businesses and international businesses are not the same thing. International businesses are importers and exporters, and have no real investment outside of their home country. On the other hand, global businesses are invested and present in many countries worldwide.

Next, Sonia advises businesses to “think global from the onset”. By doing this, the business, customer, and partner value chains, as well as other core foundations of the business will already be influenced by a global perspective. Sonia’s third piece of advice is to think in present and future terms at the same time. “Always keep your eye on the end-game,” says Sonia. She advises entrepreneurs to continuously design and test their assumptions, and adjust the business model and development as needed.

Fourth, make sure to engage with high-value advisors, ones that have a vast amount of global experience and domain expertise. Lastly, Sonia wants Canadian entrepreneurs to think big! By producing goods and services that are higher on the value chain and have more productive potential, Canadian startups can excel and succeed in the global arena.



**Aaron Chu** is a Canadian entrepreneur making waves in China. He has (co)founded and runs six different businesses at the moment, two in furniture design and retail, and another four in the bar and restaurant industry. After finishing his degree in kinesiology at the University of Waterloo, Aaron decided to go abroad to China to teach English for a year before starting his Master’s degree. He maintained a good relationship with the school he taught at even throughout his Master’s in Aerospace and Environmental Physiology which he completed at Simon Fraser University. After finishing his second degree, Aaron moved to Guangzhou, China indefinitely to pursue his interest in business

development. He’s worked together with various colleagues and friends to establish some of his current businesses. Aaron has opened six different locations under four different brands in the restaurant and bar industry, with two more locations opening soon.

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Aaron's advice to Canadians aiming for global success as entrepreneurs is to not confine themselves or their ideas to one area, region or country. He says to think globally and to apply the education and access to contacts and resources that are available in Canada worldwide. "While there are many different customs and mannerisms in different cultures around the world, business is still business so don't be scared to step outside your comfort zone".



**Georgina Bassett** is the founder of BID Inc, and has worked for the federal government in various IT and communications roles. As a child of immigrant entrepreneurs, she's had the opportunity to work in a variety of different areas and participate in entrepreneurship at multiple levels. She enjoys analysing existing analog businesses to see how they can move to a digital model in order to serve their respective local markets while collaborating with their global counterparts. By founding BID, which stands for Build, Invest, Develop, Georgina aims to help those who seek to help themselves through entrepreneurship and small business startups. She is

based in Prince Edward Island.

Georgina's advice to other Canadians aiming for global success with their startup is to build for a larger market from the beginning. "While starting small is a great way to pilot your idea, you have to believe that you are building from the early stages for a greater market". She encourages networking and making connections with people who are already functioning at a global level. By embracing diversity and fostering relationships with different people from different cultures, entrepreneurs can create a solid connection with the global market through their networks.

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