

B I L L I O N A I R E

OPINIONS

In each issue we ask a different question of three thought leaders. This time: What do you think is the best philosophy for success?



Kurt Zdesar

I believe success is all about mindset and self-belief. Don't let anyone tell you that there's something you can't achieve. You must actively practise positivity and wake up every day to take steps towards your goals.

Sometimes that involves going against the grain and trusting your instinct. When I envisioned Ping Pong, I was told by many industry notables, all whose opinions I highly respect, that the concept wouldn't work. But I knew that I had recognised a gap in the market and felt in my gut that it was worth the risk. Ping Pong ended up becoming one of the UK's fastest-growing restaurant chains.

Equally, be prepared to make sacrifices and commit fully to everything you do. There's never going to be a perfect time, but I always say that if you just start, you'll figure it out along the way. Train your mind to look for both the good, and the learnings in every situation. See obstacles as challenges and take your time to visualise the journey.

Try to do and see things differently, for example when others are making cuts, it can be the best time to invest. When they are making staff redundant, it's a great time to hire new starters. Do more when others are doing less and always show up and persevere with total belief.

Kurt Zdesar is founder of dining chain Ping Pong and founder and CEO of restaurant Chotto Matte.



Kristin Hjellegjerde

As an entrepreneur, I think the key to being successful is trying to remain completely independent, not following trends and creating a safe, loyal environment for your team.

Interference from investors can create limitations. You might find great success does not come immediately, but with time and patience, you can build the company or create the product you really want.

As a gallerist I have been free to make my own choices regarding programming, which has led me to have an internationally strong and diverse group of artists.

Without the pressure of an investor, you can instead follow your instincts and set the scene for the future. It gives you creative freedom that I think is the key for the success of long-term goals.

The first artist I started working with, Soheila Sokhanvari, is now having a major solo show at the Barbican 10 years after we opened the gallery.

Without following trends, we have grown to be a solid gallery family where care, warmth and longevity are there where the climate can change very rapidly.

Kristin Hjellegjerde founded and runs an eponymous gallery with spaces in Berlin, Norway and London.



Eddy See

For me, success is measured in lasting, positive impact, in people, the environment and societies. The pandemic has underscored the importance of building resilience amid crisis, as well as taking care of ourselves and one another. We learnt to be more humane.

We believe success can only be measured by the wellbeing of our associates, who are the heart and soul of the brand experience. Our service culture guides our belief that we can only look after our business when we look after our associates. Happy and healthy associates result in satisfied and repeat guests.

Recognising that Earth is our only shareholder is crucial; to this end, the only success that we need to measure is protecting the planet and people. Our goal is to raise awareness with activities that contribute to the land and local communities. The Banyan Tree group globally has planted more than 500,000 trees since 2007.

This is an example of one of our many sustainability projects, which also include reef conservation, sea-turtle protection and single-use plastic elimination.

Eddy See is president and CEO of Banyan Tree, a luxury hotel group.