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Spotlight

Linda Wolstencroft

September 2014



Linda considered a career as a professional musician, but family guidance and a love for math and science brought her to study Engineering at UBC. Now she's an entrepreneur and business expert, and helps aerospace and defense businesses achieve significant growth. Learn about her career path from music to business in this month's alumni profile.

Linda Wolstencroft is the President of Aerospace BizDev Inc., a consulting company she established in 2006 to help companies maximize growth. Over the past 25 years, she has succeeded in winning new business accumulating over \$2.5 billion. Major achievements include leading a campaign to win over \$250 million in new business over a three-year period and leading successful bids for major aircraft engineering and maintenance projects. With her extensive business network, and experience in more than 24 countries worldwide, her work covers both domestic and international markets. Linda is passionate about the contributions of business to international security.

Linda holds a Bachelor of Applied Science in Mechanical Engineering from the University of British Columbia and a Master of Business Administration degree from York University's Schulich School of Business. She has attended the Canadian Forces College National Security Studies Seminar and is a graduate of Shipley Proposal Management programs.

Linda is a regular columnist for Canadian Defence Review, conducts speaking engagements, and is an active member of aerospace, defence, engineering and community associations.

Q&A with Linda Wolstencroft

CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE WORK THAT YOU DO?

I am an expert in helping companies in complex business environments, such as aerospace and defence, achieve significant business growth. I work with companies, government and associations, domestically and globally. My primary experience is the aerospace business, fixed wing and helicopter, domestic and international, commercial and military, manufacturing and after-market support.

IF YOUR WORK HAD A SLOGAN, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

"Helping businesses that are engaged in providing complex products and services achieve significant growth."

WHAT IS A FACT ABOUT YOUR WORK THAT PEOPLE MIGHT FIND SURPRISING?

My work is all about relationships, and all about setting people and businesses up for success.

DO YOU HAVE A PERSONAL HERO, EITHER ALIVE OR DECEASED? IF SO, WHO ARE / WERE THEY?

I admire anyone who does business with absolute integrity and has a true passion for helping our world.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT IN LIFE SO FAR (PERSONAL, PROFESSIONAL, OR BOTH)?

Family is number one and my greatest achievement. My business achievement is finding a career in which I can work to my own objectives and continually learn, grow and develop.

WHAT IS ONE PIECE OF TECHNOLOGY THAT YOU COULDN'T LIVE WITHOUT, AND WHY?

My laptop contains everything – my schedule, my communications, my contacts, my work, my business strategy.

WHAT WAS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE DURING YOUR TIME AT UBC, INSIDE THE CLASSROOM OR OUTSIDE?

When I ended up with a “First Class” in Math 150 after living in fear of failure all year. It showed me that the ability to persevere and be successful exists in all of us; we simply have to find it.

WHAT WAS YOUR “LIGHT BULB MOMENT” IN ENGINEERING? IN OTHER WORDS, WHAT MADE YOU REALIZE THAT ENGINEERING WAS YOUR CHOSEN PROFESSION?

I wanted to be a concert pianist, but was encouraged toward a career in which I could get a job and make a living. My father is an engineer, both my grandfathers were engineers, and I was good at math and science, so it seemed like a natural fit. Not long into my career as an engineer I changed my focus to be primarily business, with an engineering basis. I find that the engineering training is essential for effective work in managing business. Not everyone can understand the discipline that mitigates business risk.

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVOURITE THING TO DO ON CAMPUS AS A UBC STUDENT?

Mid-morning tea and cinnamon buns.

WHAT ARE THE TOP THREE THINGS THAT YOU WOULD RECOMMEND CURRENT ENGINEERING STUDENTS DO BEFORE THEY GRADUATE?

1. Engage in work experience in engineering, either through the co-op program or separately.
2. Establish strong and lasting connections with your classmates.

Take every opportunity to analyze yourself and your strengths. Do not ignore mitigating your weaknesses, but focus on your strengths as the key to progressing.

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