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Career profile: 'Best job' led to own business

Yeghiaian helps companies improve profits, production

By **Lori Lodes**

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When David Yeghiaian began his career, he did so knowing that the corporate marketing, branding, strategic planning, market research, organizational development, acquisitions, and other experience he obtained was all a training ground for starting his own business. But it wasn't until he acquired the "best job he ever had" that Yeghiaian was ready to take the plunge into self-employment.

With more than 14 years' experience in private and public companies (including Fortune 500 companies), as well as government and not-for-profit industries, Yeghiaian launched Unique Business Solutions in April 2004. Its "mission is to help organizations continuously improve by becoming more productive and successful, resulting in maximized profitability and productivity," Yeghiaian said.

Unique Business Solutions has four employees who work in a variety of capacities ranging from business development to analysis, and function as a group of strategic business advisers, Yeghiaian's preferred moniker for the often looked-down-upon term "consultants." They primarily team up with high-performing businesses that are doing well and looking to take their business to the next level, and focus on any — or all — of three core issues to a business' success: strategy, people and customers.

Yeghiaian said, "In addition to having to educate people on the value of a consultant, I also spend a lot of time educating about those components."

Education and training: Yeghiaian earned his bachelor's degree in liberal arts from Marquette University and his master's in managerial communication from Concordia University. He worked in the manufacturing and dairy industries, for the government, and for a few nonprofit associations, primarily in corporate marketing or corporate communications roles, as well as in human resources and organizational development.

What I love most about my job: "That I'm responsible for my passion, which is to help companies become more productive and successful and striving for the perfect organization. I wrote my own mission statement, a difficult exercise that Stephen Covey recommends in his book, 'The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People,' and discovered mine was ultimately related to helping people and the environment around me."



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David Yeghiaian runs Unique Business Solutions in Howard. Corey Wilson/Press-Gazette

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Bio

- Name: David Yeghiaian
- Business: Unique Business Solutions
- Family: Married for 13 years to wife Kim
- Favorite books: "Less Is More" by Jason Jennings and "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" by Stephen R. Covey
- What I like to do when I'm not at work: Spend time with Kim, vacation in tropical destinations, reading business-related things, golf

A typical day: "There is no typical day for me. I normally begin by responding to e-mails and phone calls, move on to business development work and networking, work with my staff (focusing on training, development, and coaching), and, of course, focusing on my clients. I practice what I preach as far as strategy, customers, and people with my own company."

Advice for someone looking into this career: "Get out into the real world and work in a few different industries and roles, especially leadership roles, network, and experience the business world. Have patience. I say that because I wanted to start my own company several other times, but a couple of good colleagues made me realize I needed more experience, exposure, leadership, and patience."

Last word: "My philosophy is that between 8 and 5, it's people and customers, and outside that, it's strategy for me personally. That's where some businesses have issues; they don't take the time to focus on strategy because they're so focused on day-to-day tactics. But you have to walk the walk. I also follow a quote by James Dean: 'Dream as if you'll live forever. Live as if you'll die today.' "