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Passion drives hard slog to overnight success

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Whether you're helming an overnight success or bootstrapping away on two-minute noodles, the key ingredients to success are passion and "not being afraid to have a go".

For HR tech platform Expr3ss! founder Carlyne Burns, the journey began 15 years ago and led to the entrepreneur [selling everything she owned before success came a-callin'](#).

Burns, whose company now earns more than \$4 million annually, has 200 clients and employs 12 staff, was down to her last 10 grand when her first client finally cracked.

"The challenge is generating enough income to keep the wolf from the door and it got hairy – it got really hairy," she says.

"I had sold everything I had built up over decades. I was down to my last \$10,000. It wasn't a good feeling. Then I had one inquiry come over the web – a customer who's still with us today Spend-less Shoes. I'm now debt-free self-funded."

Burns, whose firm uses local, [cloud-based predictive hiring software](#) that profiles and assesses potential employees for her clients – says her biggest challenge was that her business was unique.

"You have to get people to believe in your passion and your story."



When people ask Burns where she finds such great staff, she tells them: “I use my own software.”

Burns says she has turned the whole approach to HR on its head.

'Personality drives behaviour'

“We look at the attributes of the person. Personality drives behaviour. We start with the person first then look at skills later.

“First you need to find that person and bring them to the front of the queue.”

One major pitfall is people mistaking your passion for sales-craft.

“People understand when you have a true passion people feel it. But a lot of people are also frightened by it. They think your passion is selling and that is something that can sometimes trip you up – that's one of the pitfalls for a founder.”

The company has also secured eight recruitment firms to use Expr3ss!, with two using it under their own white-label branding as a value-added service to their clients.

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