

**IF I KNEW THEN...**

In this ongoing series, we ask executives, entrepreneurs and business leaders about mistakes that have shaped their business philosophy.

# Jessica Goldman Srebnick

CEO, GOLDMAN PROPERTIES

By Robert K. Elder | [@robertkelder](#)

**About the company:**

[Goldman Properties](#) specializes in redeveloping neighborhoods with new real estate including hotels, restaurants, retail and residential spaces. The company was founded by Tony Goldman, Jessica's father, in 1968. Jessica was named CEO of the company shortly before her father died in 2012.

**The Mistake:**

A lot of my lessons I've learned from my experiences working in the family business for 18 years, and from my father for 15 years. So I would say that if I had to do something different, if I felt like there was a mistake that I have made, I wish in my dad's lifetime I paid more attention to the lessons. There were so many brilliant opportunities for me to learn, and I didn't appreciate them at the time.

We had a process where he would say to me, "OK, whether it's every day, or every week, pick a topic, Jessica, and we're going to talk about it. We're going to take an hour, and we are going to talk about it." It could be about mortgages. It could be about finance, whatever. It could be about anything. And I struggled at times to understand some of the reasoning behind it.

It's like when someone says to you when you're going off to college, "Appreciate it," because you have no idea the benefit you have that your job is to learn.

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“ I wish in my dad's lifetime I paid more attention to the lessons. ”

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**The Lesson:**

I've always been a learner. I think it's very important as a leader to be a good learner, and I want to be a life-long learner.

I became a better student, after my dad passed away. What I recognized from losing my dad is that it was my responsibility to learn and teach in a balanced way. Nobody knows everything. We don't gain success by ourselves; we gain it as part of a team. I recognized my need to learn from just not one place, but to learn from a lot of different places, whether it's other people or leadership courses.

Nobody knows everything. We don't gain success by ourselves; we gain it as part of a team. I am much more focused on looking at an opportunity and finding what I can extract from it, learn from and be better from.

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