
OLIVA PARTNERS



Zack Oliva

Born and raised in Youngstown, Ohio and I live in Houston, Texas. Graduated from Ohio State (undergrad) and Capital University (law school).

- Co-founded Oliva Gibbs LLP (law firm) in 2013; currently managing partner
- Co-founded Eiffel Trading LLC (online marketplace in the construction industry) in 2013; exited in 2018
- Founded Oliva Partners Management LLC (investment fund) in 2021; currently managing partner

Entrepreneurship: Lessons learned

- The team that got you to where you are might not be the team that will get you where you want to go
- It doesn't have to be perfect...70-90% will usually get the job done
- No matter what your business model, you build it with people...the quicker you learn how to hire and retain A players (and only A players) the better
- Reflection time is just as important as "building the business" time
- The only limit to your success is in your head
- Invest in good advisors and coaches (and listen to them)
- Revenue is vanity, profit is sanity and Cash is King

Entrepreneurship: Lessons learned

- Most of your good ideas don't come to you in the office – don't work so hard
- At the end of the day, it's your fault
- There are different stages of businesses – Start-up, Grow-Up, Scale Up, Beyond (IPO, etc.) – Know which stage that you're in because your skill set and the skill set of your team changes with each stage...at each stage, evaluate if you want to go further...your life isn't a tragedy if you decide to not Scale Up or go Beyond
- Figure out your weaknesses (or what you don't want to do) early and hire around them
- Keep it light and fun
- Think about what success means to you and how this business serves that definition

Investing: Lessons learned

- Experiment with different types of investing until you find the style that clicks for you and your psychology – there are many roads to Babylon and money doesn't care where it comes from
- Stay away from margin
- Cultivate a peer network of investors that you respect
- Buying earnings or assets at a significant discount usually does not result in tragedies
- The great ideas usually slap you in the face
- If you just outperform the indexes by a small amount over a long period of time, that is serious outperformance (do the math)
- Your best investment will always be in yourself and your business

Things I've learned along the way that I wish I knew earlier

- Learn how to work (organize, prioritize)
- Get rid of head trash
- Free yourself from societal/cultural conditioning about your capabilities
- Think about your definition of success
- Cultivate your tribe
- Figure out what works for you – frameworks vs. other



Questions?