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CEO Survey: A Fine Mess

Inc. 500 CEOs name their biggest mistake in business.

From: [Inc. Magazine, September 2008](#) | By: Inc. Staff

"Launching what is essentially a technology company without having a technology expert at the table."

-- Clint Smith, Emma

"Not listening more."

-- Fadi Cheikha, Electronic Cash Systems

"Not owning a majority control and having others be able to drive the boat."

-- Trent Latshaw, Latshaw Drilling & Exploration

"NDA, NDA, NDA. Never provide confidential information without an NDA."

-- Genevieve Thiers, Sittercity

"Taking too long to fire someone. I learned that as soon as you know someone is no longer contributing, and you do not see that it is going to improve, you need to fire them immediately."

-- Edmund Scanlan, Infra-Strategy

"Not being ethical. I paid a very high price for it and will never make that mistake again. Unfortunately, I cannot reveal the details due to an out of court settlement."

-- Bharat Singh Talwar, TalentBurst

"I made a bad financing deal with a hedge fund. What I learned from it is that things that appear too good to be true usually are."

-- Guy Morgan, BlueStar Energy Services

"Giving everyone the benefit of the doubt. I am not near as trusting today as I was earlier in my career."

-- Todd Crosland, Interbank FX

"Not charging enough. When you give deals to clients, they assume you do cheap work. Charge every penny you can, and it will be valued more."

-- Michael Hubbard, Media Two Interactive

"Agreeing to sell my company and be part of the dowry as a poorly treated slave for new owners, who decimated a wonderful business. Lesson: Buyers rarely want the same thing you want -- just like suitors have different views of my daughter than I have."

-- Leib Lurie, One Call Now

"Not leaving a public company to start my own business sooner."

-- Larry Rigdon, Rigdon Marine

"I am sure my biggest mistake is yet to come."

-- Trey Hollingsworth, Hollingsworth Capital Partners

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