

May 2019

How this CEO Pivoted from Near Closure to the Creation of Bacon, the ‘Uber of Hourly Jobs’

[David K. Williams](#) CONTRIBUTOR

Opinions expressed by Forbes Contributors are their own.

I’ve written quite a bit about “failing fast” and the art of pivoting when needed. But what fascinated me about Sebresos’ experience was that he enacted perhaps the most brilliant pivot in history. In a nutshell, he was successful in rescuing the prior company he’d had a leadership role within from a decision of closure to its current business model and new funding in the space of 90 minutes. It may be a world record.



Hunter Sebresos is the Founder and CEO of Bacon.

BACON.WORK

To be fair, the greatest inspiration in all of us often arises at the moments of highest desperation and stress. Some of this may have come into play in Sebresos’ fortuitous meeting. But here’s how [Bacon](#), a company that provides an app to match up qualified hourly workers who can be available on-demand with employers to meet near term or seasonal needs.

As Sebresos sat with his investors in the close-down meeting for the company he’d served as CMO for eight years, his mind was racing. He thought about the jobs that would go away in the business closure. He was also recalling the thousands of conversations he’d been having with individuals in retail, hospitality and other industries about what they needed most. Invariably, one of their biggest pain points was this: “We are always in need of great people.”

“As I thought about it, inspiration struck,” Sebresos recalls, thinking about all of the clients repeatedly saying, ‘I just want some good workers.’ They need people with a strong work and integrity ethic, such as a manufacturing plant who needs 10 people for a day. They need people who can run deliveries, assist with phone calling, help with retail and hospitality service, who dress and behave appropriately and are willing to work hard.”

Then he thought about all the people needing or willing to work in non-traditional shifts, such as a mother who needs just a few hundred extra dollars a month toward living expenses, or a grandparent wanting some income for birthday activities with grandchildren, or retired professionals looking for productive things to do with a bit of their time.

Even more than this, Sebresos thought about veterans coming back into the workforce or the people who've felt unemployable and had difficulty entering or re-entering the workforce due to gaps, etc., who were finding it difficult to get employment through traditional jobs. In that moment, the mission for Bacon emerged.

“We need to build up self confidence in people who choose to succeed,” he said, which applies to employers as well. “Work and purpose are closely aligned,” he continued. “Purpose builds self-confidence. By providing work, we provide self-confidence, too, and keep people from falling into a negative spiral.”

In the Bacon model, employers save the time and expense of interviewing and hiring and the cost of working through a typical agency for “temps.” They benefit in another important way as well: Bacon has the ability to accomplish background checks quickly and en masse to whatever degree is required for the role as an assurance of safe hires—something hiring companies in a pinch tend to overlook.

The biggest assurance Sebresos is quick to note, however, is each employee's recent reviews.

“We and our clients have found that those who've worked a number of prior roles and received five-star reviews are the most reliable. Also, the more complete their profile, the greater the indication they will show up and work hard.”

The model is good for engagement and morale of the employees as well, as they realize they are often showing up to save the day for a company that would have otherwise been left in a difficult bind.

What allows a founder or executive to be skilled at enacting an effective pivot?

In Sebresos' case, he brings discipline, focus and the training that comes from his eight years of prior service in the U.S. Marines. His military background has also contributed to his desire to do something to benefit current veterans. In

But let's go back to the moment of the incredible pivot. Because Sebresos was thinking about the specific feedback he'd received from thousands of conversations in his prior role, and because he knew intimately the abilities of the team of employees at hand, he was able to show the investors on the spot how advantageous it would be to pivot the resources from a bad situation into a new opportunity with proven customer interest and already working examples based on the similar sharing economy models like Uber and Lyft.

Inside of 90 minutes the new organization was born, and the investors moved from a decision of “It's over” to “Yes, we want to play.” The company's operating creed and motto is “Never be jobless,” which the leadership team has taken to heart. In 11 months, the company has established its strongest base in Utah (its home base), has now opened for business in Texas, has fulfilled requests in California and is expanding to Arizona as well. Sebresos' current goal is to establish a strong foothold in the Mountain West area; then consider moving beyond.



Startup strategy session at Bacon.

BACON.WORK

addition to the creation of positions for job re-entry, the program invites workers and companies as they complete a job to contribute a bit of their income to a veteran as well. Thus far, Bacon has 50 participating companies and has

registered 3,000 workers, growing at a pace of approximately 1,000 per month. Participating companies include Utah's Hogle Zoo, Waffle Love, Utah Valley Convention Center, e-commerce company First Mile, Alphagraphics, and several catering and events companies.

Keeping a solid knowledge base on what customers want and on their biggest pain points is vital at all times but is especially crucial when there's the need for company to pivot. The vivid and quantifiable customer interest made Sebresos' case clearly, as did his firsthand

knowledge of other sharing economy examples that have expanded people's thinking and have met with success. It also made his idea for leaping into something that hadn't been done before a logical progression and less of a wild-eyed risk.

"Always be ready and always be thinking" had been a part of Sebresos' military training in the years before his career. But they are also a principle that can serve every entrepreneurial leader and executive well



David K. Williams

I am the founder and chairman of DKW Ventures. I am a serial entrepreneur, have led divisions and companies and a C-level executive for companies ranging from startups to multi-nationals. I am a consultant to C-level executives throughout the world, from South Africa to America, Canada, Europe, and Australia. I have over 40 years of experience in selling, innovation, and on using the soft skills of character to substantially increase personal and organizational success. I've led divisions and companies that are venture backed, partnerships, bootstrapped, high growth, retail, commercial real estate, technology, and energy, I am the author of *The 7 Non Negotiables of Winning: Tying Soft Traits to Hard Results*, from Wiley & Sons.

Follow me on [LinkedIn](#). Check out my [website](#).