

'Experience is not what happens to you; it's what you do with it'

Darragh Richardson, the founder of Agile Networks, talks about his life as a business owner, the challenges he has met and the lessons he has learned.

What has been your biggest lesson in business to-date?

I've learned the value of being focused. Following the management buyout of Telindus, we dropped 70% of our portfolio because we knew that we could only take care of 30% of the business really well. Being this focused on what we could do well, from the very beginning, has stood by us. We didn't try to be all things to all clients. This focus has helped us grow.

Customers. Discuss.

We have a very clear profile of our customer. I think that's important for all businesses to have. Know your customer, know their needs and know them well. Our customers are mid to large companies with complex networking needs. Our customer acquisition strategy has been forged to our business plan from the very start. We are focused on having long-term relationships with our customers. We ask our customers regularly how we are performing and what we can do better.

What's the best piece of advice you have received?

'Experience is not what happens to you; it's what you do with what happens to you.' I think the quote is from Aldous Huxley. I admit that I have failed a few times, failed in jobs, failed in other aspects of life. I think if you fail and fail to learn from your failures, you have failed. Learn from your experiences and put that knowledge into action.

If you were to start a business tomorrow and know it would be a success, what would that business be (and you can't say the one I have)?

I would open a hotel in Balscadden Bay, Howth, Co. Dublin. It would be a great success. There used to be five hotels in Howth. Not one remains. The Grand Hotel in Malahide is doing very well. A hotel in Howth, something along the lines of the Cliff House in Ardmore, Co. Waterford, would do very well I believe. I don't know anything about running a hotel, so that may be a problem.

What's the most interesting thing about your business?

The team. The people I work with. We have a great company culture. I enjoy coming into work.

Agile Networks is an [award-winning](#) company.