

Three Things I Wish I Had Known in My 20's: Amy Friedman

September 10, 2014 by [Rebekah](#) in [3 Things](#)

To celebrate her 20th year in business, Amy Friedman is telling us the 3 things she wishes she knew in her 20s!!

In 1994, she and two other female business partners launched [Human Resources International](#). They knew they were off to a good start because they made a profit in Year One and have continued to do so. With Wall Street representing 75% of their first client base, Friedman pioneered a new business model that incorporated diversity, ethics, innovation, and cutting-edge techniques that positioned her firm as a trendsetter in the industry.

Success can be measured in a variety of ways, but as a business owner, it is often defined by the number of years that the business has not only operated – but has continued to flourish. In Friedman's case, not only has this important criteria been met, but she also has the unique distinction of being a pioneer in the Human Resources and Talent Development industry by becoming the first woman-owned and woman-led firm to reach critical mass twenty years ago and defy all statistical probabilities by remaining an industry leader.

Check out what she has learned along the way:

1. If I could go back to my 20's, **I would work hard to overcome a lack of confidence in my own business judgment.** While I was busy building my business, I was secure enough within myself to seek the advice of advisors and mentors. But, I wasn't secure enough to have faith in my own instincts and present a consistently confident leadership presence. This had an impact on how my leadership skills were perceived. The fifty-something I am now would advise the twenty-something I was then to solicit input from all of my team members. Then call them together and say, "Thank you all for your input. I have carefully considered everything you said, plus some thoughts from trusted advisors, and this is what I have decided to do."

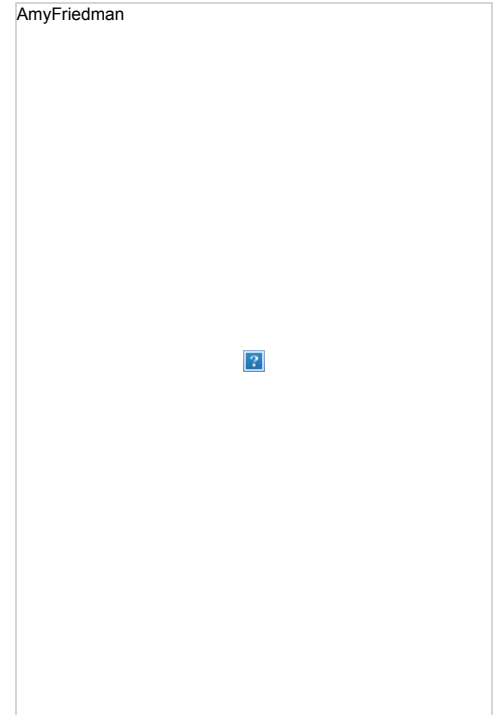
2. If I could go back to my 20's, **I would have made more time to "give back" to the causes in the community and world at large that are most important to me.** I can't get that time back but I am trying to ramp it up now which feels terrific. The fifty-something I am now would advise the twenty-something I was then to solicit input from my team members and use corporate community responsibility as an engine for creativity and innovation. I would have called them all together and engaged them in a conversation about what they felt were the most important causes in our industrial and geographical community. Together, we would have decided who to make a corporate donation to and why. It would have formed a strong bond among us and galvanized us around worthy work.

3. If I could go back to my 20's, **I would have stepped back to celebrate the successes we achieved as a team more often rather than quickly moving on to the next thing.** Put simply, I would have partied more (for business purposes of course). The fifty-something I am now would teach the twenty-something I was then that celebration serves several good purposes: #1, it reminds us we have completed a task (build a sense of accomplishment). #2, we would rejoice in our success (build our confidence). And #3, we our celebration would set the stage for our next accomplishment (we would be poised and eager to pursue our next celebration).



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