

2/1/2022 Meeting Minutes

Speaker: Greg Levin – CEO of BJ's (restaurant)

Background:

- Graduated from UCSB in 1989
- Started at EY in entrepreneurial services
- Transitioned from public accounting to industry role
 - o Manager at CPK
 - o CFO, President, and CEO of BJ's

Q/A:

- How many restaurants were there when you joined?
 - o Approximately 30
 - o Now at over 200
- What was your favorite food from BJ's?
 - o Double Bone-In Pork Chop, Tri-Tip
 - Courtesy of slow roast ovens
- Advice for seniors?
 - o Try to have everything finished before senior year
 - Get the interviews, classes, etc. out of the way
 - o Nothing wrong with taking a starter job
 - Doesn't have to be goal job
 - o If you like what you're doing, you'll do good work
- Advice for future CEOs? Thoughts on an MBA?

- Think about business beyond accounting
- At the time, investment bankers were being hired as CFOs
 - So, it made sense to pursue an MBA at the time
- An MBA isn't necessary, but it can broaden the understanding of a business
- When you became CEO, did you have to create your own systems?
 - Day-to-day stuff was kept (ex: on-boarding system)
 - Had to create strategies when brought on board for growing sales and improving business
- Any plans on expanding to Santa Barbara?
 - Probably not – difficult market
 - Hard to get managers (probably due to cost of living)
- Career mistake?
 - Elephant Bar – just wasn't a good fit
- How has the shift from CFO to CEO been?
 - Difficult
 - COVID
- How was the shift from EY to restaurants?
 - Knew public accounting wasn't a fit long-term
 - Great learning experience
 - Getting to meet people in start class