

Small Business Spotlight:

Brianna Blaney | Founder & Managing Partner

Envol Strategies, Est. 2016

Life Story

Raised in a family-owned trucking business, Brianna saw firsthand the difficulties that organizations have with building and retaining great teams. After graduating from UBC with a BComm in 2012, Brianna got into the recruitment business with a Vancouver-based company and saw an opening in the market she knew she could fill.

That's why Brianna built Envol, an employer branding, recruitment marketing and talent acquisition firm specializing in helping businesses grow. Primarily working with small and medium-sized BC businesses, Envol helps organizations identify who they are as an employer, what makes them unique and then attract the right people to support ongoing growth. Through strategic talent acquisition, Envol provides invaluable support on the full employee life cycle. Envol prides itself on helping smaller companies grow – it's very much a hands-on partnership.

What was the motivation behind starting your own business?

I was actually reluctant to start a business; it wasn't an immediate path for me. I never believed in starting a business for the sake of starting a business, and I knew that whatever I built, I wanted it to be a true solution to a problem. When I realized there was a significant gap in the market, and that this gap was especially painful for small businesses, I decided to start Envol.

Who inspired you to become an entrepreneur?

Without question, my parents, who are both entrepreneurs. Also, the communities we are part of and the businesses we partner with. Community is incredibly powerful – especially as a woman entrepreneur, community is everything.

How has mentorship or networking played a role in where you are today?

My most poignant mentorship moments have been around leadership. I've been very lucky to be surrounded by incredible business people and community leaders. Just watching people in their element and being open to feedback can shift how you interact with people in life.

What has been your greatest reward to date as a small business in your industry?

The greatest reward for me has been seeing the tangible impact we have on our clients' businesses every single



day. To date, our growth has been entirely organic through referrals and word of mouth. We have spent zero dollars on advertising or marketing, and I think that is a real testament to us. Someone once told me that the greatest compliment you can receive is a referral.

What unique challenges have you faced as a woman entrepreneur and how did you overcome them?

Being a woman entrepreneur is really only as big a limitation as you allow it to be. I try not to focus on the 'woman' part. As an entrepreneur, you realize that you will never stop facing challenges – that it will never be easier than it is today. The nature of the challenges you face will evolve, but you will never stop actively investing in your business.

Your motto is?

"Say yes and figure it out later." I ripped it off from Richard Branson, but it is 100% how I operate.

Where is your favourite B.C. destination?

Definitely the Okanagan, I love wine country!

Bottom Line

- Envol employs five full-time staff and continues to grow its team with satellite offices in Toronto and Calgary to complement its Gastown HQ
- BC Business Top 30 Under 30 Award winner
- Envol sees itself becoming an even more full-service solution for small business clients in the next few years and is already expanding their service delivery to the United States
- Once Envol masters their North American market, they will look to expand their scope and adapt a more global focus