

# A BIOGRAPHY

# ERIK KIKUCHI

*"Great leaders rise from passion and experience, not from position and power."*  
- Erik Kikuchi

Erik Kikuchi was born in Ottawa, Canada in 1974, to an Irish/Scottish mother and a Japanese father. When he was only seven years old, Kikuchi's mother, decided to leave his father because of the abuse she suffered at his hands. For five years, they lived in shelters, cheap motels, parks and public housing. Erik's mother worked several jobs to support her children. Consequently, Erik Kikuchi and his younger brother were often left to fend for themselves, or, worse, were left with babysitters who turned out to be abusive as well. Violence, confusion, poverty and homelessness filled Kikuchi's early years. His attendance at school was sporadic at best, missing months at a time and attending numerous schools in different cities due to always being on the move.

*"What is possible for one is possible for all."*

- Mahatma Gandhi.

When Kikuchi was 12, his mother was remarried, and, for the first time, he had stability in his life. But life was still far from easy. Although he attended school regularly, as the only mixed race student in an entirely white high school, he was mercilessly bullied. Kikuchi's academic performance was poor for the most part, but he discovered he had a gift for art and he consistently won awards and recognition for his creativity and public speaking. Kikuchi's entrepreneurial spirit also showed itself at this early age. From age 12 to 14 he delivered newspapers, sold a self-illustrated comic series to a local newspaper and worked at a convenience store.

After high school, Kikuchi attended college, where he studied both Fine Arts and Graphic Arts. Although he chose not to finish his coursework, his studies gave him a strong foundation on which to build his future successes. It was not unusual to find him at school from early in the morning until late at night, working on class projects. He was passionate about his work and committed to ensuring his presentations and results were unmatched in merit.

In 1994, Kikuchi moved to Toronto where he worked as a supervisor at a Taco Bell restaurant. At the same time, he began working for Katkov Enterprises, a screen-printing awards and signage company. He also took evening classes in graphic design, travelling from one city to another.

In 1996, Kikuchi continued his work at Katkov as Operations Manager, serving as the liaison between the manufacturing and the sales departments.

In 1997, Kikuchi was hired at a graphics agency as Intermediate Designer.

The following year, he was promoted to Manager. Also in 1997, Kikuchi started his first company, Kikuchi Graphics, with one client. Kikuchi took a leap of faith, quitting his job to focus his energies on his new venture, and while the first few years were a struggle financially, persistence paid off. Each year, Kikuchi was able to double the previous year's sales. The key to Kikuchi's growth lay in his ability to envision and create partnerships and associations with complementary industries. He was always looking to evolve opportunities, solve bigger problems and expand himself professionally.

By 2004, Kikuchi Graphics was a full-fledged design agency and the name was changed to Kikuchi Inc. When Kikuchi sold the company in 2006, annual sales had reached well over \$1 million. With the proceeds from the sale of his business, Erik began investing in properties and apartments, strategically creating enough passive income to semi-retire.

Not satisfied with resting on his laurels, Kikuchi started a second company, Transplay Inc., translating and redesigning video game packaging for the Canadian market. With an initial investment of a few thousand dollars, he generated \$250,000 in sales within the first year without a formal address or office, it's rapid growth was by simply anticipating and solving problems for his target industry.

*"Leadership must be defined by our actions, not by our titles."*

- Erik Kikuchi

The same year, Kikuchi began planting the seeds for his own foundation, dedicated to helping children and families in Peru, Argentina, Chile and Colombia. He moved to Colombia and spent two busy years — and most of his money — in this endeavor, before moving to Mexico to launch his personal and professional coaching career.

In 2009, the utility company Luz Y Fuerza closed its installation in Mexico, leaving over 40,000 people suddenly unemployed. Tensions were high, riots ensued and parts of the city came to a standstill. Kikuchi contacted the union, laborers and the media, and delivered a personalized seminar to the angry employees, giving them strategies for building new careers and finding new opportunities for themselves and families.

In 2011, Kikuchi launched a free publication in which he shares his vision for Latin America, and teaches thousands of entrepreneurs how to achieve success with integrity. In addition his blog has been visited by over 100,000 readers.

Kikuchi has invested the past six years of his life in serving all classes of people throughout Latin America. Now with his expertise in human needs psychology and experience building his own companies over the past fifteen years from the ground up, Erik Kikuchi is launching his 2013 CULMEN Tour. Through this effort, he seeks to unite and prepare those who want to succeed with integrity, so they may lead Latin America in the 21st century and prove that prosperity with integrity is both a possibility and a right.

*"Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible."*

- Francis of Assisi



Although as a child Erik Kikuchi was occasionally homeless and lived in shelters and public housing, he overcame those early challenges and went on to built three successful companies by the age of 38.

Without financing support, a formal education, or connections in the industries, Erik has proven to be a self-made professional through his resourcefulness and constant independent study of human behavior, human needs psychology, verbal and non-verbal communications, organizational systems and business development.

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