



Victor Caban-Diaz

Fort Lauderdale, Florida



Building Ingenuity

Learn about Florida Entrepreneur Victor Caban-Diaz:

Victor Caban-Diaz, Owner of Building Ingenuity, left a very good position as an upper level architect with Stiles Corporation to pursue his own architecture firm in Dec of 2016. "I had a great job with great pay, but I felt like it was the right time to go out on my own," he said. "The stars aligned and I went for it." Victor admitted that doing his own thing was a scary proposition and that, to this day, it still scares him. "You never know when that next contract will come in," he said.

Even though Victor didn't generate any revenue his first two months at the helm, he accomplished and exceeded his goal of matching his previous income within his first year in business. Much of Victor's success can be attributed to his involvement in the architectural community. "I've built good relationships with a lot of people," he said. "I'm also the President of the Ft. Lauderdale Chapter of The American

Institute of Architects. This provides for good networking and helps to generate referrals."

Victor is proud to offer an array of architecture, development and BIM consulting services that all compliment one another. Building Ingenuity refers to itself as an "Architect as Developer" firm. Whether it's Architectural Programming and Design, Permit Drawings, Construction Administration, As-Built Documentation, Due Diligence, Feasibility Studies/Analysis or BIM Consulting Services such as Building Information Modeling, Building Ingenuity can do it all.

In 2016, Victor competed in the Architecture Business Plan Competition in Philadelphia. The event is hosted by Charrette Venture Group, one of the world's only investment companies focusing on growing small-to-mid-sized architecture firms. Victor made the top five with an idea that's progressive and very entrepreneurial. Victor explained, "I created a business model where the architect owns, designs and builds the building. The architect would cut out the client and the contractor. They own the building and would be paid for the design and construction of it. My model teaches architects the process of how to do that. That includes coaching and one-on-one time." This model would be franchised out to allow Victor to maintain some control and create an additional revenue stream.

We asked Victor about learning curves associated with small business ownership and any advice he has for aspiring entrepreneurs. "Figuring out which clients are good and which ones aren't has been challenging," he said. "Pricing has also been a challenge. There are certain thresholds of what to charge in certain markets and a lot of that depends on

whether it's a residential or commercial project. My biggest piece of advice is don't be afraid to fail and make mistakes. Look at mistakes as learning opportunities. If you don't take any risks, you won't move forward." For those interested in architecture and entrepreneurship, Victor recommends two podcasts: EntreArchitect by Mark R. LePage and The Business of Architecture Podcast by Enoch Sears.

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