

## [Transcript] My First Million / Greatest Hits #1 - Turning it Around: From Failure to a \$100m+ Success

All right.

Quick break to tell you about another podcast that we're interested in right now, HubSpot just launched a Shark Tank rewatch podcast called Another Bite.

Every week, the hosts relive the latest and greatest pitches from Shark Tank, from Squatty Potty to the Mench on a Bench to Ring Doorbell, and they break down why these pitches were winners or losers, and each company's go-to-market strategy, branding, pricing, valuation, everything.

Basically all the things you want to know about how to survive the tank and scale your company on your own.

If you want to give it a listen, you can find Another Bite on whatever podcast app you listen to, like Apple or Spotify, or whatever you're using right now.

All right.

Back to the show.

All right.

What's going on?

So today we are doing a My First Million Rewind, where we look at some of the best episodes that we've ever done, and we're going to give an update on them and replay some of the episodes because we've been growing quite a bit, and not everyone has heard some of this great stuff.

So today's episode is actually the first episode that we ever did, and at the time, it was just Sean.

He basically called me one day, and he goes, Hey, I just recorded this podcast idea thing that I have.

Tell me what you think.

And it was awesome.

I was totally blown away, and that's what this episode is, is the very first one that he ever did.

And at first, it wasn't Sean and I coming up with ideas and brainstorming.

It was just him interviewing people, and it was really wonderful.

And this episode is the story of Suley Ali, Suleyman Ali, is his full name, who's a good friend of Sean and I, and his story is crazy, fascinating.

It's about how he started and sold a company called Tiny for \$100 million.

But since then, Sean and I have talked about this guy constantly on the podcast because he's someone that we really look up to.

So this business that he had, it was called Tiny.

He grew it to like 85 million in revenue, 15 million in profit.

It was this great success, but it was a horrible company for a lot of the time, for a lot of the time that he ran it, and they had so many issues.

And in this episode, we're going to talk to Suley and figure out what those issues were and how he got through them and how the company ended up selling for \$100 million.

It's incredibly fascinating.

But what makes this more interesting is Suley currently has a new company that's doing roughly 40 to 50 million a year in sales right now.

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And he asked us not to talk about it yet, but we will one day, and I want you to listen to this episode now because you'll kind of get to see before everyone figures out what his new thing is.

You're going to figure out why he thinks the way he does, and you're going to figure out the frameworks he uses and things like that.

And it's kind of cool, I think, to see someone become successful rather than just looking back.

And I want to point out a few of my favorite moments from this episode.

So first of all, at two minutes and 40 seconds into the episode, Sean basically said something like, Suley, what's going on?

This episode is going to go out to hundreds of thousands of people.

The reality is is that we didn't know that that was going to happen, but Sean totally predicted it, and he was right.

At four minutes and 30 seconds, you're going to hear a story about how when Suley got his first job, he was making like 76 grand a year at Microsoft, and his dad was like, okay, that sounds good, but when are you going to quit and start a company?

And I think that's really important to see your parents support you and how big of a difference that makes.

At 36 minutes, you're going to hear Suley talk about confidence.

And basically, Suley is someone who I've always looked up to because he seems very confident.

He goes, I'm going to do this.

I'm going to do this.

I'm going to do this.

And he's very accepting of the fact that he's going to succeed, which is actually quite hard.

But in this episode, he talks about when he's incredibly confident, but he also says, but I know that my confidence is going to get really low when I launch something because it's always really bad.

And here's how I get through that.

And I think that that, that ebb and flow of confidence and how he overcomes is quite interesting.

At 37 minutes, you're going to hear about how he started tiny, the company that made him his first hundred million bucks.

At minute 47, you're going to hear his journey and when he decides it's time to quit.

So basically he, which metrics he looks at and how he determines when it's time to quit wasting time on an idea, which is actually, I think is like one of the hardest things to do.

And then throughout the episode, you're going to hear about his journey.

So he's done a lot of amazing stuff.

So him and his brother, before this episode aired or right when this episode aired, his brother started a company and sold it for a hundred million dollars.

It was called native and we're actually going to profile him soon.

But when this episode aired, they were still kind of in the thick of it and you're going to be able to hear how he's describing that.

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And I know I'm describing like I'm throwing around all these huge numbers like a hundred million dollars, yada, yada, yada.

But you really hear in this episode how things aren't always as it seemed.

So he invested his life savings.

He laid off a ton of people.

He thought it was going to go bankrupt.

It almost went bankrupt many times and he kind of willed it into existence and to succeed.

And well, just listen to the episode and tell me what you think.

Make sure you hit subscribe.

So if you're using an Apple device, go to iTunes or the podcast app, click that subscribe button so you get notified when we're doing the next episode.

This is called the Rewind series and this is our first one over the next couple of weeks and the next couple of months.

We're going to be reviewing some of the greatest episodes we've ever done.

So there's going to be stories like what Sean did with Suley.

And then we're also going to look at some of the ideas that we've talked about in this podcast and we're going to update you on, well, has someone launched this?

And if yes, how well has it gone and also where was Sean and I just totally wrong about some of the predictions that we made and what those updates were.

But we're only going to be launching those as we get the content because we got to go back and listen to 150 episodes, which is 150 hours of content.

So make sure you click subscribe.

If you're in Spotify, click follow so you get notified whenever we launch one of these new episodes because it's not going to happen on a regular cadence.

So without further ado, here it is.

The first edition of My First Million Rewind.

Just like, okay, I got to move on with the rest of my life.

This chapter is over and the bet that we made failed.

So I fall asleep, I wake up the next day, I immediately go and look at our stats and

I'm like, oh, we just generated \$400,000 in revenue yesterday.

So this is working.

Holy fuck.

This is actually working.

We're winning.

We have a entrepreneur and investor, Suleiman Ali.

He is the founder of several companies, Tiny Co, which if you ever played the Family Guy mobile game or the Harry Potter mobile game, you were playing with his handiwork.

He has built and sold multiple companies.

He's an investor in over 40 companies and we're here to hear that story of how he made his first million.

It's a wild, wacky story where you won't believe the way that he did it.

You have to hear it to believe.

He's going to be telling us about his first company, his second company, some of the investments

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he's made.

It's an awesome conversation.

I'm excited for you guys to listen to it.

Here we go.

All right.

We're rolling.

Let's do it.

This is my first million podcast where we talk to entrepreneurs, investors to find out the back stories of their businesses.

We want to hear the good, the bad, the ugly, the untold stories behind how they built their company.

Then we have our guest here today, Suleiman Ali of Ali Capital and of Tiny Co. Fame.

I guess the best way to describe you would be you're an entrepreneur.

You started and sold multiple companies now, maybe three companies, invested in 40-some-odd other companies.

You're a great friend of mine and I'm glad to have you on the pod.

You don't usually do podcasts.

My first question is why is that?

I think I'm just a little shy about talking about myself in this public way, but since you're doing it, I had to get on and be supportive of what you're up to.

Okay.

Good.

Of course, this is the podcast where I'm looking to find the back stories.

We often hear, I remember when I moved to Silicon Valley six years ago, before then I was sitting in Australia and I was reading TechCrunch and I was reading books and blogs.

At first, I wanted to know tactics, but what I realized I actually liked a lot more was hearing the back stories, the failures, the successes, the trials and tribulations that it took for people to achieve what they did achieve.

Because everybody's story ends up being different, but when you hear so many hundreds of entrepreneur

stories, you end up finding the commonalities, the patterns, and that could be the motivation for you to continue.

So my hope with this podcast is to find guests like you who have incredible stories.

Hear them.