

# TRANSCRIPT: JOE SWINBANK INTERVIEW

Joe Swinbank · Serial Entrepreneur

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## TRANSCRIPT

An interview with Mr. Joseph Swinbank. Co-Founder of Sprint Industrial Services. Swinbank is a 1974 graduate from Texas A&M and an inducted member of the Tyrus R. Timm Honor Registry.

This video was posted June 7, 2011 on the Tyrus R. Timm Registry YouTube Channel.

Could you please introduce yourself and tell us a little about your career?

I'm Joe Swinbank, the Class of 1974 from Houston, Ag Economics major.

Could you tell us a little about your experiences at Texas A&M?

My academic experience at A&M was, was a not fabulous. I was a B and C student. I paid my way through college, and I had part-time jobs every semester. And, think I learned as much did my part time jobs as I maybe did it in the classroom. But as luck would have it, I have become a serial entrepreneur, and the skill set that that next curriculum of work in academics was a foundation that I've been able to exploit in my career.

Would you recommend a similar work-study approach for students today?

I absolutely would, and I think it's a mistake that today the students get student loans, where we just paid as we, as we went. And if you have interest in entrepreneurial activities, I would suggest that the student would change jobs every semester, and just try random different businesses and there's learning opportunities in all those experiences, and you can learn what to do, and you can learn what not to do – they're both learning. And I had occasions to, to do both of those. And you learn leadership, how to lead people, how not to leave people. And I think a part-time job should be part of – it should be required. It never will be, but it's a, it's a great foundation to, to build with.

What are the lessons that you've learned as a serial entrepreneur?

One of the things I think you learn in your college career is you should uncover what you're good at and what you're not good at. And in academics, they tend to want you to perfect the whole spectrum of knowledge, and I think maybe we should admit what we're good at and, and take that skillset into the marketplace, at the same time admitting what you're not good at and try to surround yourself either in the company or with other partners or employees but with the complementary skillsets so your team addresses all the issues. And at A&M, I definitely found out what I was good at and what I was not good at.

What advice do you have for a student unsure of career decisions?

I think you need a general knowledge. I have a degree in Ag Eco, I think one of the, the beauties of the Ag Eco degree is that it is a broad knowledge, and you, you get exposure to accounting, finance, sales management, farm management, statistics, and there's a, there's a lot of electives that are available to you. And if you, if you desire to be an entrepreneur, you need to be a generalist. And the Ag, Ag Economics degree will provide that for you.

Is there anything else that you would like to tell A&M students?

One of the things I think it's really important for, for all people, in particular young people is that, I've learned that you – you need to work harder than your competition. In whatever field you elect to go into, if you – by virtue of being an Aggie, you're, you're, you're intelligent. You wouldn't have got into school today if you weren't intelligent. So you have the God given intelligence that you, that you have. If you take that plus work harder than the competition you're competing with, and you do that in an honorable way by telling the truth and doing the right thing, that mix of, of skills will make you successful. I think the definition of wisdom is what you've learned from your previous mistakes. And so I, I think it's important that all young people are not afraid to make mistakes. Enter the arena, to be successful you have to be on the playing field. You will make mistakes. I challenge you to learn from them, not beat yourself up. And that knowledge from your mistakes is what, what will become your wisdom as you get older.

Thanks for listening

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