



Success story



## From gym workouts to business owner: One small step at a time.

Leading Seaman Bruno Guévremont needed new motivation upon his medical release from the Canadian Armed Forces in early 2014. The Naval Clearance Diver with explosives expertise had served his second tour in Afghanistan in 2009 as part of a bomb-disposal team, but was later diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

It was fitness that helped him to begin healing. Having small goals (like simply completing a workout) gave him a sense of accomplishment to build upon. Each small success helped. So, when considering what to do with his future outside the military, he stuck with what had worked so well for him and opened a gym. The community oriented fitness environment lets CrossFit Coach Bruno do what he finds most rewarding – motivating others, and helping them to accomplish goals of their own.

While Bruno had always had an entrepreneurial spirit (he'd run a small landscaping business before his military career), after almost 15 years in the Navy, he wasn't sure he'd be up to the transition to entrepreneur. "In the military, you're told what to wear, what to eat, when to show up, and where to live – it's done for you. When you own a business, you have to adjust. You have to figure out everything yourself."

As challenging as it sometimes was, Bruno looks on business ownership as a "breath of fresh air." He feels more in control of his own success. "You get a return that's more equal to the energy you put in. You can stand back and know that it's something you built." It seems to be working for Bruno. His CrossFit Stasis gym has grown from 60 to 160 members, and moved from its original location to one with three times the square footage. He admits that staff growth (from two coaches to five, and new admin and social media staff) has been more challenging than he had anticipated. But Bruno thrives in an environment of "constant learning." Like all those small workouts accomplished during his recovery, these are simply more small goals to achieve.

**Name:**  
Bruno Guévremont

**Military Branch:**  
Royal Canadian Navy

**Release Date:**  
January 2014

**Business Owner & Coach:**  
CrossFit Stasis  
[www.crossfitstasis.com](http://www.crossfitstasis.com)



He encourages other military members to consider entrepreneurship: **"It's all about action. You have to try. Sometimes it's going work, and sometimes not. But that's how you learn."**

One of the first steps Bruno took toward success was participating in Prince's Operation Entrepreneur's seven-day Boot Camp in 2012, which he likens to "getting information coming at you from a firehose." It was an intense week, but he believes it needed to be. "It provided me with first hand understanding of the complexity of running a business. It was eye opening." Because the other participants were from the military, it lessened some of the anxiety. "It was helpful to learn around others who were also injured. I could be myself, and asking for support came more easily." He credits Boot Camp with showing him the value of networking; Bruno and some of his fellow program graduates still check in on each other now and then. It's good to have others rooting for you!

Bruno's one-accomplishment-at-a-time approach continues to work for him, and not just in business. Shortly after opening his gym, he participated in a True Patriot Love expedition that brought corporate leaders and injured soldiers together to ski to the North Pole, raising \$2.1 million in support of military mental health. In late 2015, Bruno agreed to captain Team Canada's efforts in the 2016 Invictus Games, where he helped to train and motivate the 30-member team to 22 medal wins.

From where he started, motivating himself just one workout at a time, Bruno's built on each small accomplishment to take on goals that just five short years ago, he would have thought out of reach.

### About POE

Prince's Operation Entrepreneur is a unique national, bilingual program that provides provides the men and women who are leaving the Canadian Armed Forces with the education, mentoring, financing and tools they need to start up and run a successful business.

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