

EDGE Mentors

Dennis Zaidi



[Dennis Zaidi](#) is Managing Director of [Checkmate Capital](#), a California-based venture capital and private equity firm. Mr. Zaidi is also a seasoned entrepreneur and currently advises a diverse portfolio of startups on matters related to corporate finance and capital structure. Mr. Zaidi is an official advisor to the Holt Accelerator and Lozard Institute Startup Incubator. Prior to joining Checkmate, Mr. Zaidi was the architect of three successful exits including his work as managing partner of Balsam Lake Green Energy, a 6MW solar energy facility in Ontario, Canada that was developed then sold to Panasonic sponsored private equity firm Coronal Group.

Mr. Zaidi is a passionate live long learner with executive education at Harvard Business School (Negotiation Mastery), Oxford's Saïd Business School (Fintech) as well as recently completing an Executive Master's degree (MSc) from HEC Paris in Innovation and Entrepreneurship, currently ranked the #1 business school in the world for executive education.

Areas of Expertise

- Social Finance
- Venture Capital
- Sustainability
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

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Shane Cullis



[Shane Cullis](#) joined the Oakville Chamber of Commerce in January 2018 as the organization's Vice President of Membership Development.

Prior to joining the Oakville Chamber, Shane gained experience working with companies in the small, medium and large categories, achieving #1 in sales at all of them. He attributes much of his success to his mentors, his network and all of the training he has done. Including the training he received as an improv/sketch comedian.

Shane refers to himself as a BurlOakTOtonian. He loved living in Oakville and Toronto and is now happily back home in Burlington where he was born and raised.

Areas of expertise:

- Business Development
- Management
- Marketing Strategy

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Lisa Kember





[Lisa Kember](#) is a serial entrepreneur with deep corporate leadership and management experience. After building a \$2 million marketing agency that saw 30% year over year average growth rates, she exited and launched a real estate investment company that averages 18% annual returns. Lisa built the Canadian operation for a US software company, growing the business to over 120,000 customers in 5 years, developing reseller, co-marketing, and partner channels that produced almost \$36 million in annual business, and built a team of 26 people across 9 provinces who sold product from the stage at 900+ marketing events a year. She now runs CEO peer groups and coaches entrepreneurial and owner-involved companies to drive profit and new revenue growth, seeing as much as 63% profit improvement within the first 6 months and year over year revenue growth of more than 35% in some of her clients.

- ✧ Revenue generation
- ✧ Sales team hiring and management
- ✧ Business development strategy and execution
- ✧ Partnership development
- ✧ Leadership development
- ✧ Presentation skills

[Book a session with Lisa](#)

Diego Cortes



[Diego Cortes](#) is a social entrepreneur, consultant, community builder, advisor, and mentor. He currently leads the mentorship program and mentors social purpose organizations at EDGE. He also supports various social impact organizations through advisory, and is part of the Alumni Network at [Enactus Canada](#).

Areas of Expertise:

- ✧ Ideation and Validation Methodologies
- ✧ Digital Marketing Strategy
- ✧ Program Development

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Garrett Hall

[Garrett Hall](#) is a business development and marketing professional with extensive business experience.

Garrett's business expertise is best demonstrated in the building of a multi-channel business from sales of \$70,000 to \$7.5 million; growing the customer base from 50,000 to 835,000 names (and digital customers from zero to 172,455). After selling the business to a larger company in 2009, Garrett has been involved with Business Development and Digital Marketing Consulting.



Areas of Expertise:

- ✧ Traditional & digital/internet marketing
- ✧ eCommerce
- ✧ Operations Management
- ✧ Product value proposition

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Geoff Hogan

[Geoff Hogan](#) is a serial entrepreneur and a graduate of Sheridan College from the Computer Science Technology program (now known as Software Development and Network Engineering). After 10 years of small and large corporate technology experience, Geoff started his own social entrepreneurship company, Osnium, which produces software for domestic violence and sexual assault centers across United States and Canada. In 2016 he stepped back from Osnium into semi-retirement.



Areas of Expertise:

- Bootstrap and grant funding
- Taxes
- Employment and contract law
- Sales and marketing
- Risk management

[Book a session with Geoff](#)



John Lam

[John Lam](#) started his entrepreneurship journey as an undergraduate and master's student at The University of Waterloo. Two startups later, he changed course and moved towards mentoring and coaching other entrepreneurs. John has helped numerous entrepreneurs grow their startup ideas through teaching entrepreneurship at Wilfrid Laurier University, and managing the incubators of The University of Guelph and Wilfrid Laurier University's Brantford campus. John's journey also took him to many entrepreneurship and innovation centres around the world to learn about entrepreneurship from outside of Canada. Some notable places include San Francisco and Auckland, New Zealand. John is currently the Entrepreneurship Lead for EDGE in Brampton's Davis Campus.



Areas of expertise:

- Entrepreneurship Process
- Sales
- Pitching to investors
- Social innovation

[Book a session with John](#)
