

INTRODUCTION

- My name is Melissa Welch and I am 32 years old
- I work for Growthink, joined in August 2007
- Growthink is a boutique consulting and investment banking firm
- My role at Growthink is to manage our team of consultants and lead our high level advisory engagements
- My professional and personal passion is working with and surrounding myself with the “doers” of the world

The Early Years...

I was born and raised in a small town in New Hampshire – the “Live Free or Die” state. It was also known as the state with the “Man on the Mountain”... until his face fell off in 2003.



This is me at 3 months old. I was born 2 months early. I had things to do in the world!



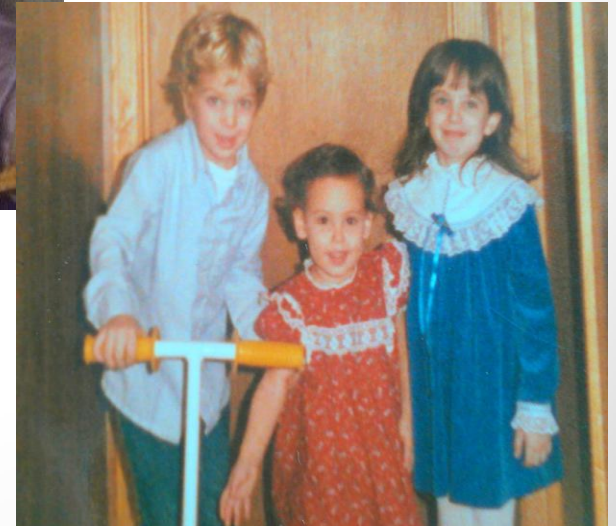
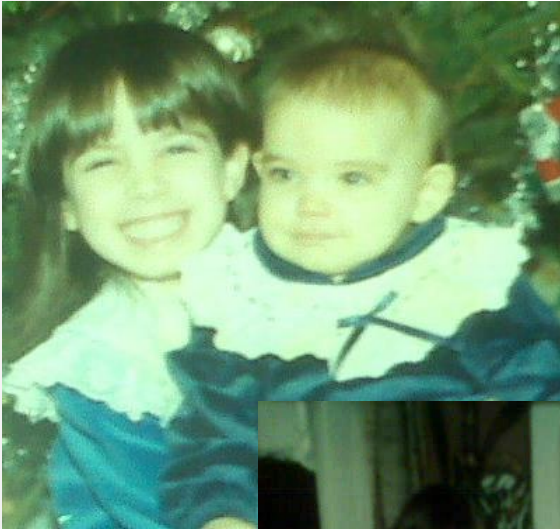
Me at 5 years old. I was never really considered shy 😊
Halloween remains my favorite holiday!



Just 2 months apart, my cousin Ryan was my best friend. We were inseparable and had our own language.

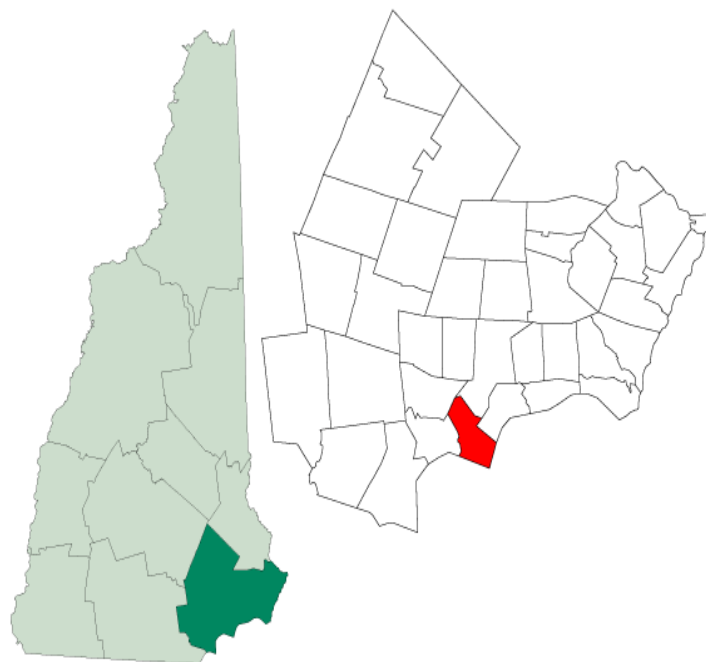
More Early Years...

I grew up with just one sibling and LOVED being the oldest because it meant I was the boss. Until she grew taller than me. Although just the two of us, we had MANY cousins in our large Irish Catholic family – and they were almost ALL boys. Contrary to the dresses in most of my pics – I learned how to hunt , fish, play hockey at a very young age!



HIGH SCHOOL

I attended Timberlane High School in Plaistow, NH



Four towns fed into my high school and we still had <900 students until early 2000s. My graduating class was 230 people. Though small, our school was known for being extremely competitive in most sports.

HIGH SCHOOL

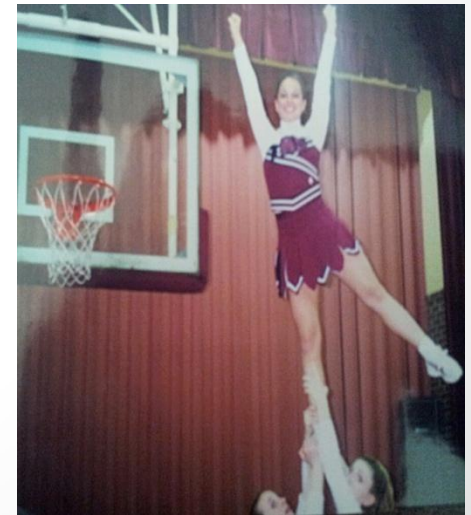
- As a HS student I was involved in varsity cheerleading (for soccer, basketball, football and competitively) gymnastics, yearbook and prom committee.
- As a HS student I was in the “popular” crowd but that comes with its own set of problems. (More people in your business 😊)
- I liked most of my teachers and classes - (there is always one or two teachers in high school that will impact the rest of your life)



Senior Picture



HS Graduation with Friends



Cheerleading

HIGH SCHOOL

Daily Life in High School

- I was extremely busy in HS – out the door by 6:30am and usually got home between 8 – 10:30pm depending on sports practice and/ or work. I would then eat a quick dinner and do homework. Fortunately I was a night owl then. (Not anymore)

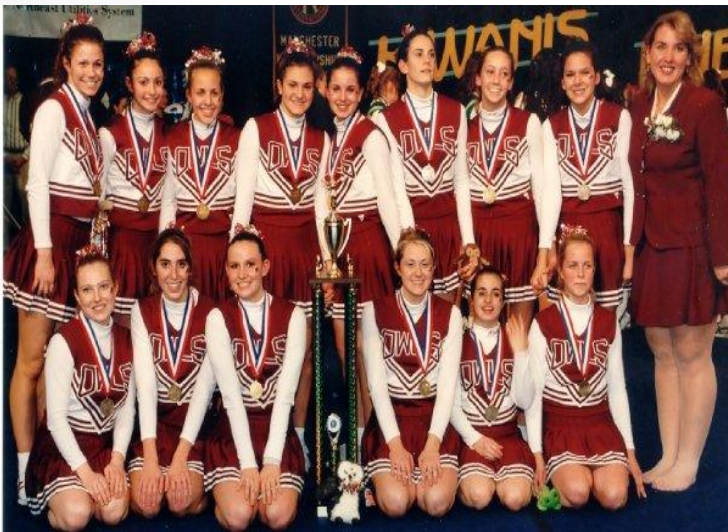
Jobs I worked while in HS

- I've been working since I was 13. Some of the jobs I had in HS were: babysitting (HATED it, wasn't enough money to be made)
- Hostess at Friendly's (felt like I could do more, make more)
- Asked to waitress, quickly got the good shifts and was pretty happy making \$400 bucks a week at 15 😊

HIGH SCHOOL

Fondest Memories

- Hanging out with my friends
- Competitive cheerleading
- Spirit Week
- Making my own money
- Football games on cool fall nights



Obstacles/Adversity

- Pretty abusive / draining home life so I was often tired during the day and often lived with my best friend Jackie & her family. Twenty three years later we are still best friends and her family is still like my family.
- Keeping the smile on that everything was OK was exhausting.



College & Grad School

I earned my Bachelors in Legal Studies at Johnson & Wales in Providence, Rhode Island & my MBA at Pepperdine University here in Los Angles



JOHNSON & WALES
UNIVERSITY



PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY
Graziadio School of Business and Management

College

It's not where you came from, it's where you are going...

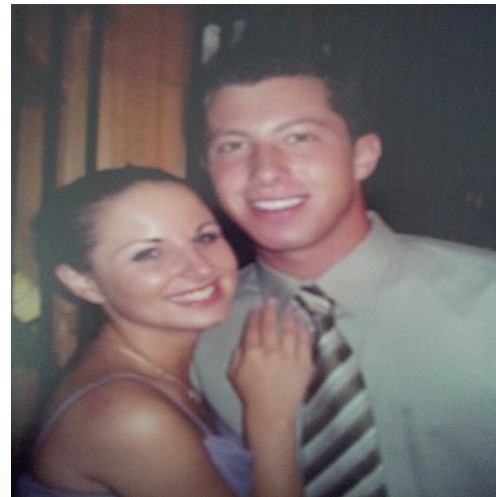
- I kept a VERY full schedule while others in my peer group partied. To avoid having massive student loans upon graduating, I worked 40+ hrs per week on top of full time classes and worked hard to graduate in 3 years instead of 4. I also graduated with the highest GPA in my major.

- My mother tried to talk me out of college because it was too expensive. I thought the opportunity cost of NOT going was too expensive. * Your parents are not always right / they don't always know what's best 😊

Regular Week Day

- 7am – 11 am classes
- 11:30 am – 3pm homework
- 3:30pm – 5:30pm set up work
- 6pm – 10pm class
- 10:30pm - 2:30am work
- 3am – 6am SLEEP

* (Thank goodness for coffee, youth and a very supportive boyfriend who is my friend to this very day!)



College

Favorite Classes

- Business & Contract Law
- Psychology
- History
- Sociology

Least Favorite Classes

- Accounting (wore odd bow ties and mumbled a lot)
- Economics (mostly because I was afraid of the professor – also wore odd bow ties and yelled a lot)

College

Fondest Memories

- Making GREAT friends
- City living!
- Wonderfully supportive boyfriend all throughout (except for my cat that he hated)
- Traveling (visited CA for the 1st time, my now home of 10 years)
- Interning at the Public Defenders Office – I felt like I was an adult/could make a difference in the world

Obstacles / Adversity

- Family support was little to none. I was the first to go to college and felt like I was “going it alone”.

Grad School

Favorite Classes

- Strategy
- Negotiations
- Business Law
- Global Marketing
- Leadership

Least Favorite Classes

- Accounting (professor had obsession with Enron)
- Economics (mostly because I was afraid of the professor – also wore odd bow ties and yelled a lot, just like undergrad!)

Grad School

Fondest Memories

- Making GREAT new friends
- Trip to top companies & NPOs in Nicaragua
- Great professors / surrounded by interesting and intelligent people – constant stimulation
- Being the first in my family to graduate with a Masters degree



Obstacles / Adversity

- Working full time in a very serious job while juggling school
- Worry about cost of student loans and if it would be worth it
- Not sleeping for 3 years. Not as easy as in undergrad!



Career

Also serving as Growththink's Director of Client Development, Melissa has extensive experience in sales, business development, project management, and executive search.

Melissa began her career in the healthcare arena at industry leader Emerald Health Services, where as the organization's Senior Business Development Manager, clients included some of the nation's largest hospital systems. Melissa left Emerald to join the Lucas Group, one of the world's largest retained executive search firms. Clients included companies in the software, entertainment, biotechnology, manufacturing, consumer products, retail, apparel/fashion, and real estate sectors.

Since joining Growththink in 2007, Melissa has developed and worked with a robust portfolio of clients and investment arenas ranging from startup SaaS and New Media/Web 2.0 models to early stage ISPs, Forex platforms, healthcare/medical device, biotechnology, and fashion/entertainment companies to a \$ 9billion dollar multinational manufacturing company.

Melissa is known for being out and about the city of Los Angeles representing Growththink at entrepreneurial, finance, and other industry related networking events.

Melissa earned her Bachelor's in Legal Studies from Johnson & Wales University and her MBA from Pepperdine University's Graziadio School of Business and Management. Melissa is also an active member of the Junior League of Los Angeles, Santa Monica Junior Chamber of Commerce, and the National Association of Women MBAs.



Career Path at Growthink



I began my career at Growthink doing business development & project management in August 2007

I moved into management of business development team of 4 after graduating with my MBA in 2011

I am now in senior management overseeing team of 15 full time Growthink team members, 10 external team members and working closely with our Board of Advisors

Career

My First Job

- My first real job was as a hostess at a Friendly's restaurant. I loved that I could meet new people, see friends. I quickly asked if I could waitress because I saw an opportunity to earn more cash doing what I liked to do – meet new people. The ugly pink shirts that smelled like fries even after washing though was the downside...

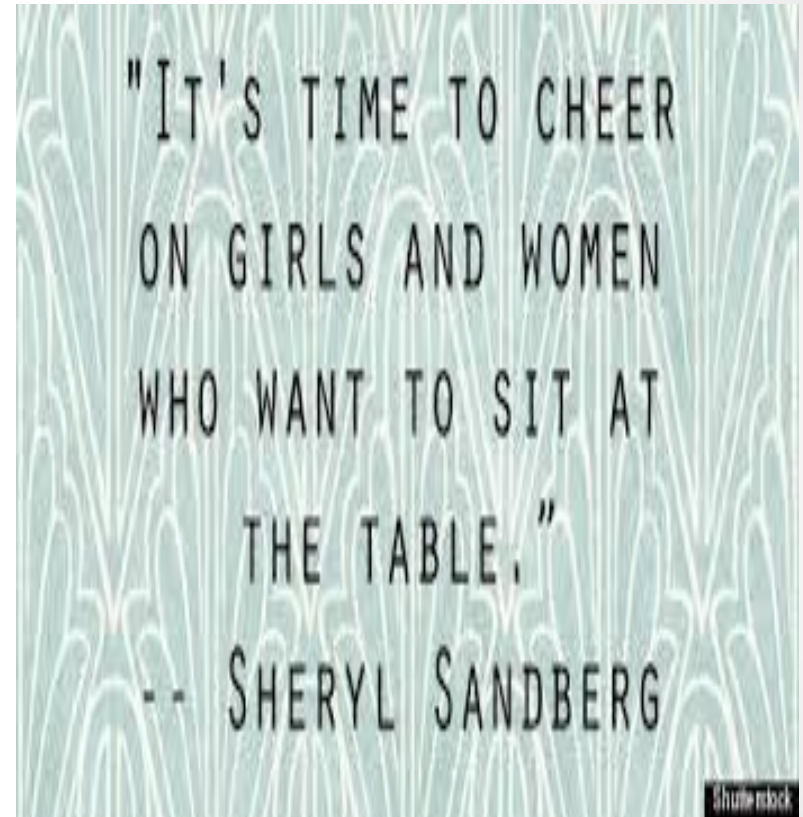
My Worst Job

- My worst job was working retail. I hated it. It should have occurred to me that since I don't enjoy folding my own clothes, I wouldn't like folding strangers any more. Found it boring and income limiting.

Career

Some challenges I had to overcome in my career

Working in a male dominated industry can be hard. Many entrepreneurs (our clients) DO fit a certain profile as do investors – and a very small percentage of them are women. Not being confused for a secretary / assistant and showing confidence, intelligence, leadership, resiliency and determination in a 5'1 frame can be negatively received by some that are used to the Good Ol' Boys Club. Too bad 😊



CURRENT COMPANY

History

- Growththink was formed in 1999 in Venice, CA when co-Founders took 1st & 2nd place in a business planning competition in their MBA program at Anderson – they decided to combine forces

Size

- Growththink has approximately 18 full time employees (have had low of 8 to high of 35)
- We have 20 in our Los Angeles office and 5 in our New York Office and approx. 10 affiliate bankers

Location

- Headquarters in Los Angeles, office in New York and San Francisco
- Our clients are through out the US as well as South America, Europe, Australia, Africa and Asia– still searching for Antarctica based client– no such luck yet.

Products

- DIY business plan templates, marketing plan templates, Crowdfunding Formula, etc. for the first time / not a fit for consulting practice entrepreneurs

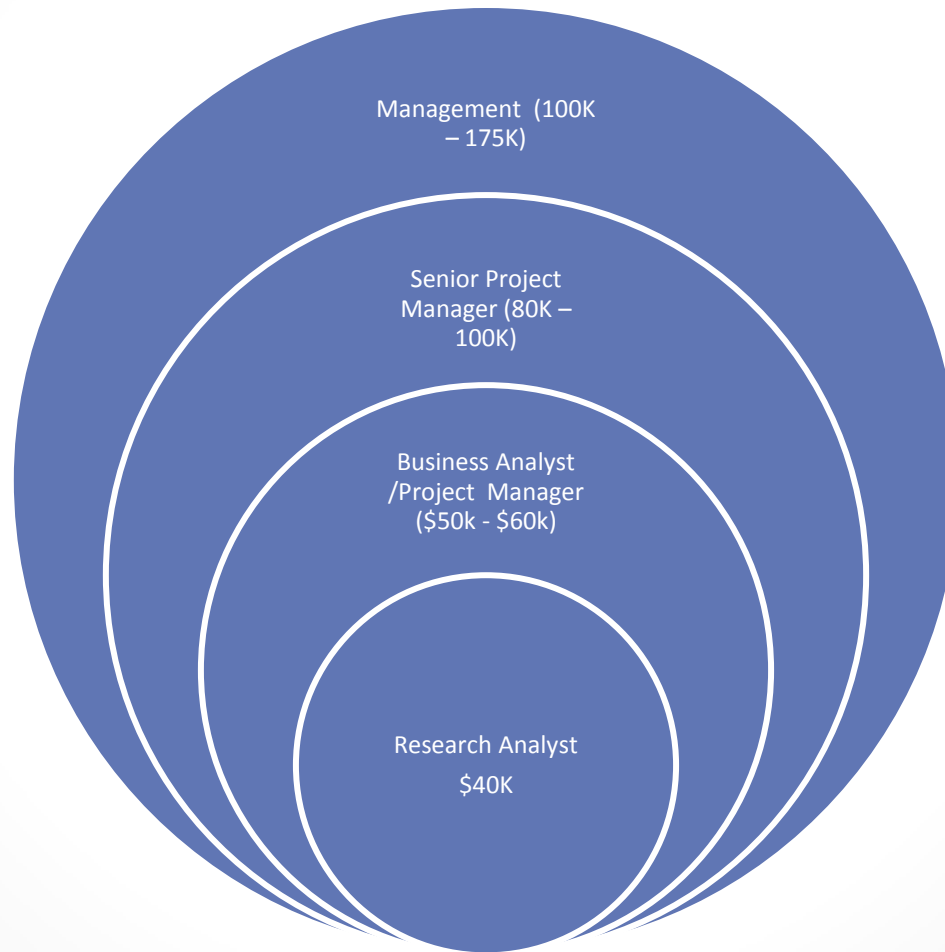
Services

- Feasibility Studies / Business Planning
- Capital Raising / M&A
- Management Consulting

Current Role



Career Compensation



ACADEMIC EXERCISE

- We will now spend several minutes discussing the day's academic module and how it is relevant in the 'real world'

QUESTION AND ANSWER



YOUR TIME IS LIMITED

SO DON'T WASTE IT LIVING

SOMEONE ELSE'S LIFE

DON'T BE TRAPPED

BY DOGMA - WHICH

IS LIVING WITH THE RESULTS

OF OTHER PEOPLE'S THINKING

DON'T LET THE NOISE

OF OTHERS' OPINIONS

DROWN OUT YOUR OWN INNER VOICE.

EVERYTHING

ELSE

& most important
HAVE THE

COURAGE

TO FOLLOW

YOUR HEART

THEY SOMEHOW ALWAYS KNOW

AND INTUITION

WHAT YOU TRULY WANT TO BECOME

IS SECONDARY.

- STEVE JOBS