

Dr Kia Pajouhesh accepts Telstra Victorian Medium Business of the Year Award 2014 - Smile Solutions

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Business of the Year Award 2014 Dr Kia Pajouhesh accepts the Victorian Medium Business of the Year
Award at the 2014 Telstra Business Awards. Acceptance speech transcript. Announcer: The 2014
Victorian Medium Business of Year is... Smile Solutions. Dr Kia Pajouhesh: Thank you. It's actually
wonderful to accept this award... from a patient of Smile Solutions. [laughter from the audience] I
suppose with at 65,000 patients, we had a fair crack. When I realised the competition I was up against,
I've got to tell you, I really thought I was beat. 5AM Yoghurt, I have their yoghurt in the morning
everyday. Enchanted Garden, I've taken my kids there. VINOmofo makes me want to drink. All of these
guys I recognised and I knew, and I knew I was up against it. And I had serious doubts. I'm going to tell
you a little story, just a short one, hopefully. What is a business? A truly successful business – what is
it? I believe that a great business is a life form, a species, a child, a mother. Smile Solutions was
conceived just over twenty years ago when I decided that the business of dentistry had room to
improve. Her addition to the world could change things for the better. Just like any parent, I had no idea
what I was in for. The child was born a few months later in the morning of the 23 rd of March 1999, in
Collins St in humble surrounds with hand-me-down dental chairs and looking a little jaundiced. I must
add, the water broke 24-hours earlier when the last nail in the carpenter's bag set to fix a door stop
ruptured the floor heating pipe and flooded six floors of our neighbours. Well, they certainly found out
that a new baby had arrived. But they certainly found she was a happy baby. And as a parent I was just
there to guide her growth. She had her very own particular traits – points of difference as we like to call
them in business. Some of them through my own vision, some of them through the influence of others;
my team, commercial pressures and competition. Nature versus nurture, as they call it. Who would
have known that those little individual 'antics' would have this little baby grown into such a unique
business model; realistically unmatched anywhere in the country. And so she grew. And I fed her when
I myself so often went without. As a parent you push hard to make this child your obsession, your
ambition and your legacy. But as every parent knows – the child has a mind of it's own. And as she
blossoms, she decides where her own full potential lies. AS time passes, your grip over her diminishes,
as peers, influences and the commercial machine takes control. The parent must learn a valuable life

lesson, that is – total control is a myth. A little while later, another lesson – any control what-so-ever, is a myth. You learn to delegate your precious tasks to those you trust; you battle your demons everyday; fear of failure still looms its ugly head. You finally wise up – that your expectations need to be tempered and that every soul on earth beats to a different drum. And whilst all this is happening, you take a moment to reflect and look over your shoulder and realise that your little baby has blossomed into a mother herself. She's now nurturing so many within her. You and your team who have travelled the journey reap the benefit from her, learn from her, and even sometimes find refuge within her. Can anyone put a price on such a business? I would like to thank Telstra for this recognition. My team, the clinicians and the management, my wife, my kids and finally, a much loved soul who is otherwise engaged in the Manchester Unity Building this evening, Smile Solutions.

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