

**About Dave Grutman:**

*Dave Grutman is one of the most successful hospitality entrepreneurs in the world. He's the owner and partner in multiple world renowned Miami venues. He was named by Rolling Stone as one of the most 50 most influential people in dance music. He opened Lift nightclub—the fifth highest grossing club of all time. He sold a majority stake in his company to Live Nation*

**On his start:**

He had graduated from University of Florida and was going to go back home to Naples, Florida to do title insurance, instead went to bar tend in South Beach for a year. It's a cool place. And no one would hire him...South Beach nobody. He was a chubby Jewish guy. The only place he could get a job to bar tend was one block next door at a restaurant in the Aventura mall. The owner of the mall, Jeff Sofer, is now his partner in all his nightclubs today.

**"So guys, you never know what's gonna happen."**

**A critical point that defined his life:**

He was making \$100,000 a year as a bartender. But he knew he wanted to be a leader. He became a manager that only paid \$33,000 a year. But it's okay. He invested in myself.

**"And that's what I encourage all you guys to do. It worked out okay for me but don't ever be afraid to take that step back and pay or whatever it is to move forward in life...for me, it's the biggest critical path that I ever move I ever made in my life was to do that."**

**"I can't tell you enough. always invest in yourself."**

**On money:**

**"I never worry about the money I always look for what's gonna, what's gonna push me and my team to go bigger, better...I always try to do the unexpected."**

**On entrepreneurship:**

**"Listen, it's so important to be around other entrepreneurs. Right? I love that. And that's why it's so important that we're here together today because that's what drives business that's drives America. That's what drives inspiration—you guys."**

**On competition:**

"In my space, yes, it's cut-throat. It's competitive. That being said, **I stay competitive by setting my own trends.** I don't follow everybody else. Because for me if I just follow everybody else that I've already missed it...So I have to set that trend the way it's going so fast."

Miami is like the hottest market in the world and we were able to capitalize and **be able to pivot** and activate outdoor areas and do stuff like that. And we took the time during the during the pause to focus on the food, focus on the surface, kept all the chefs on because we wanted to come out of COVID bigger and better than we were before. We didn't stop any construction. We signed more deals because a lot of people, of course, closed their doors

**On mindset:**

**"It's a little bit of everything. But if you have that mentality where you're just always trying to grow, grow, grow, grow a bit that mix not going to stop you right."**

**On Connection and Trust:**

"How do you how do they trust you enough to want to hang out with you and how do you create that really? So that's people asked me this all the time. How can they feel safe around you? And I think because in our business, a lot of people will sell people down the river because I think that's the only way to get press...And guess what, you just burn that relationship and you burn their publicist and their manager and everyone else's relationship with you. So we never do bad press and they feel safe with that...Not only do they feel safe with you, again, their entire team who controls 10 or 15 other people feel safe with you. So you want to be that key holder to an area of market... People know they could they could let loose and I'm going to protect it."

**On Handling the 'Haters':**

**"I do it by dominating...I put everyone to sleep by dominating. Because I'm the leader in the market."**

**On Scaling**

I want to scale as quick and as big as I possibly can. And for my team, it's important if people feel like they're [going to grow with you, if] there's not growth with you, they're not gonna stay. **It's not about the money. It's not about that. It's about growth. So I have to create those opportunities for my team to grow.** And if I don't do that, and I'm just sitting back, you know, I had a great axe. So 51% of my company to Live Nation. I could have

just said okay, cool. Let's have a great life. But instead we use that to push us further. And I think that's the most important thing with growing a company and scaling a company.

**On the effect of COVID on his business:**

[When Miami did the 10 pm curfew] I didn't open my places because the experience that I give people is not 10 pm kind of experienced. From a profit standpoint they're losing money just to open. Just to open and lose money is not always the best decision...But I just wanted to see how it went and I could see that it was just a burn and you have to make those tough decisions. Should I open? There's people's lives that are waiting for me to be open...But you also have to think of the business as a whole and make sure that it's safe...**I think that the thing that isn't discussed enough is the hard decision that the owner has to make that now's not the time.** I got a bunch of employees. Yes, I know. I got a bunch of people that are hungry. I got people calling. I got partners calling. Yeah...Hey, the priority right now is I don't need to go out and bleed and die. Listen, it's not easy, right? **Like it's better to have a safe company. It's better to be able to be strong** to know that this is a temporary thing and not a permanent thing. So you want to place yourself in the right position for to be able to grow when you when you're able to dig in today.

**On taking things personally:**

I mean, not just in hospitality but in life guys, take it personal, I can't tell you enough. I preach it nonstop to my team to myself to everyone I see. **If you take it personal and it's really personal to you, you're going to be successful.** Why is that person eating at another restaurant not my restaurant? Why is that? [Or the] person buying a drink in another nightclub or not mine? I take it personally.

**On being fired up!:**

How important is money to the game? I mean, it's part of the engine **but money comes as an end result for you doing what you love.** And I know it's such a cliché thing to say do but guys, you may be fired up to go do what I do. I go to sleep thinking 10 steps ahead. What do I have to do tomorrow? It's your business at the end of the day. You have to eat that's what you care about. But what you care about is your quality of life too. This is what makes me happy this is what I thrive on. Yeah, being a father and having great kids and an amazing wife is what pushes me even farther. But guys, I wake up every day so excited...