



MELANIE PERKINS

Co-founder, Canva

In **2007**, **Melanie Perkins** was a **19-year-old** university student in **Perth, Australia**. She was teaching design programmes part-time at university, and she noticed how much students struggled to learn just the basics – it took a whole semester merely to teach them where all the buttons were. Microsoft Publisher and Adobe products were very complex and were old fashioned desktop-based softwares.

That was her Insight.

She had a big vision to take on these behemoth software companies but, as she was only 19, **she decided to start by solving a simpler problem that was closer to home**. She noticed that every year her mother (a schoolteacher) was under a lot of stress to manage the high-school yearbook . Teachers like her had no design experience and it was all a big headache for them. **Melanie knew this could be made easier with online collaborative software**. So, she and her boyfriend Cliff Obrecht took out a loan from their family and friends –

they were lucky enough to be able to raise \$50,000 from them. With this money, they interviewed every tech team in Perth to see which one could build the software for them. Most of the tech teams thought these teenagers were completely mad, but finally Melanie and Cliff found one who agreed to take on their project. **What they lacked in Status, because of their young age, they made up for in persistence and a willingness to learn from their mistakes, and to Educate themselves** and build up their entrepreneurial Expertise.



Canva

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