

A Startup's Vision

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Jennifer Noonan has a vision, one that she is working hard to realize. Her business, College Sports Quest (formerly College Athletic Recruiting) offers a prep program for college bound student athletes. For the last 3 years Noonan, herself a decorated high school and college athlete, has been counseling young athletes on how to negotiate the maze of the college recruiting process and fulfill their hopes of playing college sports. Her firm is the official academic partner for the CIF Southern Section. Business was good.

And then, a godsend...an opportunity to move her office into one of the premiere sports facilities in Southern California, the Anaheim-based American Sports Centers. This state-of-the-art building houses a variety of sports-oriented companies such as specialty trainers and companies that create video recruiting tapes for clients. Noonan decided that in order to take her business to the next level, she had to be part of this supermarket of sports. But that would take money.

"To be honest, in the beginning I just went into business. I had low overhead because it was just myself." Now, she would need capital. "My advisors suggested I get a business line of credit and to use my own cash as a reserve." Which she did. "To get into the sports center, I really had to sell myself. They wanted a guarantor and everything."

Noonan's business coach and friend told her, "Go in there and tell them you're a woman and you want to do it on your own."

Armed with her new line of credit, a 40-page portfolio and the spirit of a competitor, she did. "I went in with all my ducks lined up," Noonan recalls, "and got in." And like a true entrepreneur she's thinking about the next step. "If this works, and is successful, potentially we'll put a team together in other facilities such as this throughout the U.S."