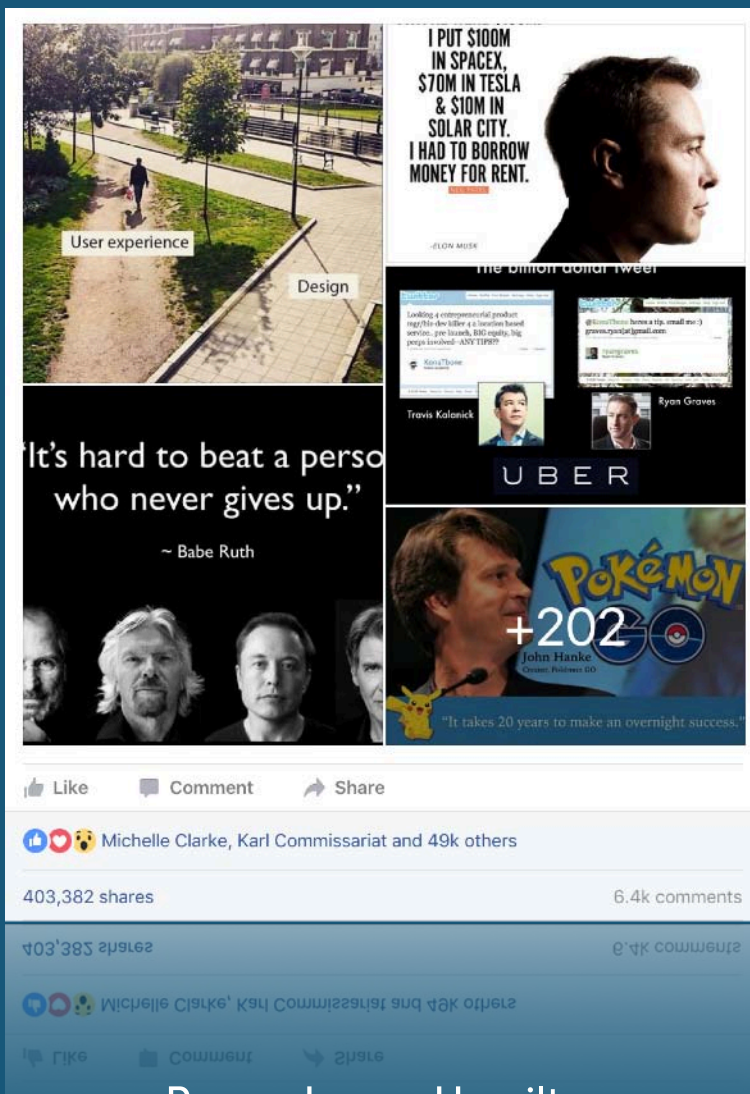


ENTREPRENEUR INSPIRATION



Roger James Hamilton

Edition 2



Welcome

Hello,

A few years ago, I began writing and posting images and stories on Facebook that inspired me as an Entrepreneur. Early in 2015, I put them into a Facebook album. The album went viral and has now been shared over 400,000 times and the different stories within the album had also been shared a combined 1,000,000+ times across different social media channels.

In 2016 I published the stories into an ebook. With the number of new stories in the last year, it was time for a second issue. That's what you're reading right now.

Here is the link to the [Facebook album](#).

Here is the link to the [download page](#).

If you have chosen to [subscribe by email](#), you'll get links to my stories.

And you can [subscribe to my FB profile](#), to get my new posts on your FB newsfeed.

As the Founder of [Entrepreneurs Institute](#), [Entrepreneur Resorts](#) and [GeniusU](#), and as the Creator of [Wealth Dynamics](#) and [Talent Dynamics](#), my mission is to support the entrepreneur movement.

I've made this book free so it's simple to share. If you are inspired by the stories within it, share the album and stories on Facebook, and share the link to this download with your entrepreneur friends.

Keep shining brightly,

Roger James Hamilton
www.rogerjameshamilton.com

Table of Contents

RESILIENCE	10
How tough is your journey?	11
The Monk Moment	13
Will Smith's story	15
Are you between a rock and a hard place?	17
A story of what's possible	20
How resilient are you?	23
Would you leave it all to come back for more?	26
What would you do without your body?	29
The key to overcoming anything	31
Tina Turner's story	33
Patience, perseverance and resilience	37
Who has your back in the hard times?	38
How Yolande Mabika got her family back	40
How to turn your problems into profit	43
You always get a second chance	46
Are you playing to win?	48
What does 2017 have in store for us?	50
PERSEVERANCE	52
It takes 20 years to create overnight success	53
The key to success	56
6 years, 35 attempts and \$180 million overnight	57
Never too old to dream a new dream	59
Jamie Vardy's story from underdog to champion	61
My 8 favorite famous failures	63
PATIENCE	65

The story of Aung San Suu Kyi	66
What product that you create will outlive you?	68
How Satoshi Tajiri created Pokémon	70
How focused are you at your one big thing?	73
Just think “Momofuku”	75
The inspiration behind Fawltly Towers	77
ENTREPRENEUR TIPS	79
Richard Branson’s top 12 tips for entrepreneurs	80
The 10 commandments of entrepreneurship	83
Academics vs entrepreneurship	85
Steve Jobs’ top 10 rules of thumb	87
Are you trying to be first or last?	89
How to build a Minimum Viable Product	92
How amazing are you?	94
Are you taking the path of working hard or hard work?	95
Top 10 entrepreneurs to follow	97
How do you avoid bottlenecks in your business?	100
Is your to-do list too long?	102
The best books to read this month	105
The #1 ingredient in entrepreneurs	107
The 12 best reasons to be an entrepreneur	110
Are you running your life by the Sun or the Moon cycle?	112
The Beatles strategy	115
Make your customer the hero	118
The 7 human rights we can do without	120
12 rules for startups	122
FAILING FORWARDS	124
Losing your way to billion dollars	125
What’s the price when you fail	128
Michael Phelps incredible story	130
The top five company comebacks	133

Repairing with gold	137
What is the cost of saying 'yes' or 'no'?	139
It doesn't take nine 'no's' to get to a 'yes'	142
6 tips to get to Gangnam	144
What's your big dream?	147
RESOURCEFULNESS	150
Rented out her garage. Made \$300 million	151
An ancient city discovery by this 15 year old	153
Year of the monkey	156
How big are you thinking?	159
Scarce resources vs entrepreneurial resources	161
Are you courageous?	163
The world's wealthiest self-made female billionaires	165
The graphic calculator	168
Is viral content more of an art or a science?	172
How do you keep up with the cutting edge of entrepreneurship?	174
CRITICAL MOMENTS	177
The billion dollar tweet	178
What's the possible outcome of Brexit?	180
How to make \$20 billion in one day.	183
What do you stand for?	185
5 things that happened on 11/9	188
When James Blunt prevented World War III	191
How to make a Mark	193
Would you turn down an offer like that?	195
How a near-death experience became worth \$2 billion	196
How much could you make with \$5 and 2 hours?	199
A lesson from "The Great Horse Manure Crisis of 1894"	202
The odd moment when I met Nelson Mandela	204
What were you doing during the US elections?	207
Whatsapp x Facebook = \$19 Billion(!)	210

Why Donald Trump is the new President	213
STARTUP STRATEGIES	215
User experience vs design	216
Rethink your business model	218
Instagram - 3 steps to \$1 billion	220
4 things make up 79% of all failures	224
3 steps to \$30 million	226
How do you sell a 3 month old company for \$680 million?	229
Turning a 200 year old invention into a billion dollar startup	232
The story of FedEx	234
How do you start your first startup?	236
Startup 101 - The AirBnb story	239
The 1st drone billionaire	243
The startup paradox	245
How do you scale a startup to over \$300 million in value in 3 years?	247
How to get (and forget) \$3 Billion in a snap	250
The world's most secretive startup	253
Are you thinking intricately enough?	256
GROWTH STRATEGIES	258
Warren Buffet's story	259
What does this english teacher know about math?	262
It doesn't take a genius	264
What is your mission?	267
The entrepreneur journey	270
Could you solve things faster by thinking bigger?	272
The man beating Steve Jobs at his own game	274
Alphabet - The most valuable company in the world	277
7 billion dollar questions	279
The biggest tech IPO ever seen	281
What do you do when you can't afford the original?	283
3 steps Blockbuster took to make Netflix a \$60 billion company	285

Pirate metrics for entrepreneurs	287
Happy Martin Luther King Day	289
Are we about to disrupt governments?	292
To do right, do the right thing	295
Amazon's secret sauce	297
LEADERSHIP	300
When Mark Zuckerberg asked Steve Jobs for advice	301
Our year in 4 buckets	303
Quantity vs quality	305
The sweet spot	307
New knowledge always beats most knowledge	309
How do I find my life purpose?	311
Fake it until you make it	314
Theodore Roosevelt's speech at the Sorbonne	316
If your brain was a garden	318
Be your own hero	321
You've already arrived	323
The difference between ordinary and extraordinary	325
PEOPLE & PARTNERSHIPS	327
Who's your hero?	328
3 steps to \$20 billion	330
Are you "networking while not working"?	333
Your network is your net worth	335
Lesson from Branson ~ Income = Incoming	337
Stop doing everything	339
Here's how Masayoshi Son made his first \$2 million	341
How fast do things change?	344
What would Alexander Hamilton do today?	346
Star Wars for entrepreneurs	349
Woman Power: This is Tory Burch	352

ENTREPRENEURS Vs EMPLOYEES	354
Brian Acton and the Whatsapp story	355
What work would you do if you didn't need to?	358
10 shocking stats about the millennial generation	361
Women hold up half the sky	363
One billion entrepreneurs	365
GLOBAL BUSINESS	367
World population as a village of 100 people	368
Start your own country	370
The history of opportunity	373
Not made in America	375
Which version of Facebook are you using?	377
What if governments were more entrepreneurial?	379
Why I applied for citizenship to the world's first space nation	382
THE FUTURE	384
Top 12 predictions of all time	385
3 steps to future presence	387
The rice and chessboard problem	390
Are you getting older or newer	392
Nikola Tesla	394
How fast are you disrupting your own company	396
Where will your company be 130 years from now?	398
Where will you be in 2027?	400
What crazy ideas are you putting off?	402
Artificial diamonds that can generate electric power for over 5,000 years	404
The quadrillion dollar asteroid	406
2017 : Chinese Year of the Rooster	409
The future is here	411
GIVING	413
The paradox of entrepreneurship	414

What could you achieve if you had this board?	416
Martin Luther King Day	418
Would you give all your money away?	420
11 things Michelle Obama achieved in 8 years	423
The rockstar formula that works	425
Remembering 2015 for the right reasons	427
Invent new tools	429
\$1 million in 10 days	432
ENTREPRENEUR SPIRIT	434
Wash the dishes to wash the dishes	435
Forgiveness	437
A story of Turkeys and a Unicorn on Thanksgiving weekend	439
When you get inspired, do you take action?	442
Have you found your Ikigai?	445
How Mark Cuban couldn't keep a job and started on his own	447
Definition of wealth	450
What are you doing with your spare time?	453
The value of nothing	456
Harmony	458
Give up the drop to become the sea	461
Pale blue dot	463
The Sneetches by Dr Seuss	465
How Olympian are you?	469
LETS CONNECT	471


RESILIENCE

Stories of struggles, setbacks, falling down and bouncing back

"Success is how high you bounce when you hit bottom"
~ George S. Patton



How tough is your journey?



**“ My message
at these Games:
Never give up.”**

Yusra Mardini
No country, No Flag, No Anthem
Swam the Aegean Sea to flee Syria.
Now swimming in the Rio Olympics.

Like Comment Share

Michelle Clarke, Simone Holt and 35k others Top comments ▾

13,629 shares 878 comments

How tough is your journey? A year ago, 17 year old Yusra Mardini was stuck in a broken down dinghy with 20 other Syrian refugees between Turkey and Greece.

Facing death like so many who had failed to make the trip, she and her sister jumped in the water and swam the boat all the way to land, saving everyone on board (almost all who couldn't swim).

The story could end there but - incredibly - today Yusra will be representing no country, with no flag and no National Anthem, when she enters the Olympic Stadium to compete as an Olympic Athlete as part of the very first Olympic Refugee Squad.

If you lost everything - your home, your family, your country... Would you quit on life? Would you lay low and rebuild? Or would you - like Yusra - go all in and make a stand for your greatness?

In 2012, Yusra's family home was destroyed in the Daraya Massacre, when Assad's forces killed hundreds of his own citizens in their homes.

For the next three years, Yusra and her family tried to return to normality, but school was cancelled practically every week "or someone is shooting, and then you have to run." So Yusra and her sister made a bid to escape - getting smuggled to the Turkish coast to board a dinghy heading to Greece. As Mardini remembers, "There were 200, 300 people there, everyone waiting until there are no police in the sea so they can go."

Yusra's crowded dingy's engine died within 20 minutes of leaving.

Only four in the boat could swim, but the two men who jumped in with Yusra and her sister soon gave up. Yusra says "*I'm thinking, what? I'm a swimmer, and I'm going to die in the water in the end?*"

So it was up to the two girls to keep going for the next three and a half hours: "The little kid kept looking at me, scared, so I was doing all these funny faces."

They made it to Lesbos, then were smuggled through Serbia to Hungary, Austria and finally, Germany - where she spent the winter queueing for days at a time to get asylum papers.

So how did she end up at the Olympics? Yusra says "*I remember everything... I never forget. But it's the thing that's pushing me actually to do more and more. Crying in the corner, that's just not me.*"

She continued her passion for swimming, and joined a local swimming club in Berlin, where her talent was seen by the National Team and IOC. She decided to make a bid for the Olympics despite having no country to compete for, and qualified for the 100m Freestyle & 100m Butterfly.

Now - one year after her swim across the Aegean Sea - Yusra is competing in the Rio Olympics as part of 10 athletes in the very first Refugee Olympic Team.

She will be in the Stadium tonight, for the opening ceremony, saying "*I want to show everyone that, after the pain, after the storm, comes calm days. I want to inspire them to do something good in their lives.*"

However tough things get, remember it's the tough times that make you tougher.

So when you've got the option to sink or swim, keep on swimming.

Pierre de Coubertin, who founded the modern Olympics, said about the Games: "*The important thing in life is not the triumph, but the struggle.*"

Yusra adds to that: "*My message at these Games: Never give up.*"



The Monk Moment

**MY PROCEEDS FROM
PAYPAL WERE \$180M.
I PUT \$100M
IN SPACEX,
\$70M IN TESLA
& \$10M IN
SOLAR CITY.
I HAD TO BORROW
MONEY FOR RENT.**

NEIL PATEL

-ELON MUSK

Like Comment Share

Shane Micheal Kenneth Bowen, Michelle Clarke and 20k others

6,196 shares 1.7k comments

The Monk Moment - Many great entrepreneurs have had a moment when they have lost everything. Monks create this situation intentionally through "Vairagya" when they give up all money and possessions. Many entrepreneurs end up in the same situation unintentionally. smile emoticon

Elon Musk lost \$180M and was in debt in 2008. Seven years later, he's worth \$13 billion, but he'd be ready to risk it all again. Steve Jobs lost his entire

Apple fortune by 1994, betting it on NeXT and Pixar. In 1995 everything turned around, he sold NeXT to Apple, Pixar to Disney and he passed away an icon. Walt Disney mortgaged away his entire fortune in the 1950s to build Disneyland, against everyone's advice. He too went from giving up everything to becoming a legend. Each bet everything material they had on something invisible - their purpose and vision.

Monks call the state that comes after giving up everything "Moksha" which means liberation from the illusion. We're not alive until we know what we'd die for.

I'm not saying great entrepreneurs are monks, but they do have 'monk moments' when they lose everything.

Many of the greatest entrepreneurs unintentionally find themselves in this state by betting everything on their dream. Maybe you're in this place right now. It is a place of pure power. When you have nothing to lose, you have infinite potential.

That is provided you don't focus on what you've lost, but on everything you have to gain. That's when everything turns around. As Walt Disney said "I don't make movies to make money. I make money to make movies".

That's the paradox of entrepreneurs having a 'near-death' experience where they lose it all. Steve Jobs wrote:

"Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life.

Almost everything--all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure--these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart.

No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet, death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it, and that is how it should be, because death is very likely the single best invention of life. It's life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new."

What mission is so important to you, that you'd be ready to clear out the old and make way for your new? - Image via Neil Patel



Will Smith's story



If you're up against adversity or overcoming challenges, this story is for you.

Will Smith's first career as a rapper led to him going broke in 1990 when the IRS came knocking. Will says, *“They wanted \$2.8 million and I had two dollars and eighty three cents.”*

“There’s nothing more sobering than having six cars and a mansion one day and you can’t even buy gas... the next.”

Overnight, his hip hop friends disappeared and he was left trying to figure out what to do next. Early success and fast spending had led to big failure.

It was producer Quincy Jones who became Will's white knight. Quincy was planning a new comedy for NBC, and thought of his own experience bringing up his kids in Bel-Air. He remembered one call from his daughter who was away at camp: *“Dad, the water here sucks. Please FedEx Evian.”*

So Quincy put his experience together with Will Smith's "Fresh Prince" image, and created "The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air". Will auditioned while struggling with no money, and took the job. The series became a hit, but Will had to keep paying 70% of his pay to the IRS for the next 3 years.

Given a fresh start, with just enough to money to survive, Will threw himself into acting: "I was trying so hard," he said. "I would memorize the entire script, then I'd be lippping everybody's lines while they were talking... My performances were horrible."

Will persevered, and set himself the goal of being "the biggest movie star in the world". He threw himself into studying other movie stars and what they did. Then he picked the right movies:

"The biggest movie stars make the biggest movies, so I looked at the top 10 movies of all time. At that point, they were all special-effects movies. So Independence Day, no-brainer. Men in Black, no-brainer. I, Robot, no-brainer."

His mix of failure, resilience, determination - and another 20 years of work-ethic - finally led him to his goal:

Will is the only actor to have eight consecutive films gross over \$100 million in the domestic box office, eleven consecutive films gross over \$150 million internationally, and eight consecutive films in which he starred open at the number one spot in the domestic box office tally.

He's been ranked as the most bankable star worldwide by Forbes and set a Guinness World Record for attending three film premieres of films he featured in a 24 hour time period.

The path to success is never a straight path, and it's the seeds we sow in our failures that create our success.

So cut out the noise on the outside, listen to the voice on the inside, and keep your eye on the prize.

All it takes is will.



Are you between a rock and a hard place?



Are you between a rock and a hard place? Then Dwayne The Rock Johnson has a story for you:

In Dwayne's early years, his dad, Rocky Johnson attempted to make it as a wrestler, which pushed their family towards bankruptcy. Dwayne remembers, at 14, seeing his mother's car being repossessed and then, a week later, being evicted from their house:

"We come home, and there's a padlock on the door and an eviction notice. My mom is bawling. She just started crying and breaking down. 'Where are we going to live? What are we going to do?'"

"It broke my heart. I remember saying to myself, 'I will do anything and everything I possibly can to make sure we never get evicted again.'"

Over the next 5 years Dwayne decided to focus his athletic talent and work ethic towards his dream of being a professional footballer.

Getting a full scholarship with the University of Miami to play defensive tackle, he made it on to the Miami Hurricane National Championship team. Then, at 19 years old, disaster struck, with a back injury putting him out of contention.

Dejected, he returned to Canada to play for the Canadian Football League's Calgary Stampeders, but only made it to the practice team. He lived in a two-bed apartment with three of his football teammates.

"Four of us were in a truck, and we needed mattresses to sleep on... back in this dumpster, behind this hourly-rates motel, I found the mattress that had the least amount of semen and blood on it and took that one. I bought a sheet set and a lot of Lysol. It was something."

Then, he was cut from that team too. As he remembers, *"There was no injury. It's just, 'That's it. You're not good enough.'"*

Then, his girlfriend dumped him. Dwayne said, *"The dreams I had, theyre dashed. There is no more football. My relationship was crushed. That was my absolute worst time."*

"I had \$7 in my pocket and knew two things: I'm broke as hell and one day I won't be."

That absolute low point is when he decided to take full responsibility for his future success, saying to himself: *"If you really want to do something, you'll find a way. If you don't, you'll find an excuse."*

Dwayne decided to start his own business. As a reminder of his starting point, he named his company 'Seven Bucks Productions'.

He began to promote himself as a wrestler with small-time matches in flea markets, earning \$40 a night, until he made it into the WWE where he took on the name *"The Rock"*. From there, over the next five years he grew into the biggest superstar in professional wrestling.

Then, in 2000, he was invited to host Saturday Night Live. His reaction? *"Bring it on! I get to wear a dress and do comedy? Sure, easy."*

That led to his first movie role in 2001, as the Scorpion King in *"The Mummy Returns"*. He only had one two-word line *"Haku Machente!"* in the entire film,

but he practiced them again and again, despite being sick through the entire shoot in Morocco. As he remembers, *"I get a call from my agent, and he says, 'Hey, they're watching the dailies of what they're shooting, and they want to make a movie just off your character.' And I said 'Great', as I leaned over to vomit more."*

That first film led to a decade of rising roles, leading to him being the highest grossing actor in Hollywood in 2013 with his films grossing \$1.3 billion worldwide.

Throughout this time, Dwayne has continued to build Seven Bucks Productions. The latest project? HBO's 2016 Documentaries' *"Rock and a Hard Place"*, giving young people a second chance in life, inspired by Dwayne's story.

What has driven all of Dwayne's successes has been his ongoing commitment to being the *"hardest working person in the room"*? Today, at 43 years old, he still gets up at 4am to stay in shape. His motivation? *"I like to use the hard times of the past to motivate me today."*

What is driving you? If you're between a rock and a hard place, look at them not as the cause of your present challenges, but the drivers to your future success.

And don't expect a door or window to open. If you don't see a door, make your own.

As Dwayne says, *"I grew up where, when a door closed, a window didn't open. The only thing I had was cracks. I'd do everything to get through those cracks — scratch, claw, bite, push, bleed. Now the opportunity is here. The door is wide open and it's as big as a garage."*

It's your turn now. So get out there. Rock the world.

A story of what's possible



A story of what's possible - In 1990 Jim Carrey, a broke, unknown 28-year-old comic in LA, decided to write a check to himself: For \$10 million.

"I wrote myself a check for \$10 million for 'acting services rendered', gave myself five years and dated it Thanksgiving 1995. I put it in my wallet and it deteriorated, and deteriorated."

Jim went from year to year, check in pocket, striving to make the money he had committed to pay himself, without luck.

Then, in year 4 of the five years, at 32 years old, Jim landed his first major role in 'Ace Ventura: Pet Detective, followed by 'the Mask' and 'Dumb and Dumber'.

Jim remembers, *“Just before Thanksgiving 1995 I found out I was going to make \$10 million on ‘Dumb and Dumber’”*

To understand what an amazing story this is, rewind to Jim’s early years.

When Jim was 12, his dad lost his accounting job and with it, their house: *“My father lost his job when he was 51 and that was the real “wow”, the kick in the guts. We lived in a van for a while, and we worked all together as security guards and janitors.”*

Jim had to work eight hours a day in a factory after school and went from being a *“straight-A student to not wanting to know anybody’s name, and not wanting to make a friend.”*

The poverty lasted for years, and added to Jim’s long-held fear of losing the one thing he cared most about, his family: *“My parents were heavy smokers. I remember locking myself in the bathroom and crying because I thought they were going to die. They banged on the door, telling me to come out.”*

“I remember being seven years old and my mother at the dinner table saying things like “My brain is deteriorating at an incredible rate!” or “My angina’s acting up; I could go at any time!” Things like that would just shake me to the core.”

Jim compensated for the dark times with humour. Asked why he wanted to be funny, he said, *“Depression. I had a sick mom. I wanted to make her feel better.”*

At 15, he got his first gig, at the Toronto’s Yuk Yuk’s club. His dad drove him there, and he wore a yellow suit his mother made. Jim’s debut bombed. But his father kept encouraging him, so Jim dropped out of school at 16, and moved to Hollywood to seek his big break at 19.

It was a decade later that, still struggling, Jim wrote himself the check. After four years with the check in his pocket, Jim’s dad passed away in 1994. Jim slipped the check in his wallet into his dad’s casket at the funeral, to thank him for believing in Jim’s dream.

It was just a year after that, that Jim achieved his \$10 million success. Since then, his movies have gone on to gross over a billion dollars.

Whatever struggles you have had in the past, what commitment do you make to your future?

If you were to write yourself a check today, to cash in five years from now (that's 2021!), how much would it be for?

What do you commit your life to be like, in quality as much as quantity?

And what impact will you be having in the world?

"Things are only impossible until they are not." ~ Jean-Luc Picard

Once you've got your vision clear, go take action!

Because, as Jim says, *"You can't just visualize and then, you know, go eat a sandwich."*

How resilient are you?



\$0 TO \$2 BILLION IN 2 MONTHS

Jia Yueting
The Elon Musk of China

Two months ago Jia Yueting's company was so broke, he dropped his salary to 15 cents. Today, he raised \$2 billion cash, valuing his company at \$25 billion.

Like Comment Share

Marc Pinto, Daniel Priestley and 1.9k others Top comments

871 shares 101 comments

How resilient are you? Here's an amazing story of how to bounce back when things get tough:

The Elon Musk of China, 43 year old Jia Yueting, was under such financial stress 2 months ago, in November 2016 he wrote a letter to the staff and shareholders at his company, LeEco, telling them of the financial issues and saying he was cutting his salary to one yuan (15 cents).

To make things worse, he had used all his listed shares in Leshi Internet as security against the loans he had taken, but Leshi Internet's shares had dropped 30% and all the shares were at risk of being lost in a margin call. So the company suspended trading in its shares - and they have been frozen ever since.

What happened next? While the world was on holiday at the end of December, Yueting staged a turnaround as dramatic as the one Elon Musk achieved in 2010.

The result? Today he announced a \$2.2 billion cash investment from property developer Sunac China Holdings, for 8.61% of the company - which gives him the cash he needs and now values LeEco at \$25 billion.

Who is Jia Yueting, and how did he create a company that's now worth \$25 billion?

Born to a teacher and housewife in 1973, his first job was in a government tax office. When he was 31, in 2004, he launched "Leshi" (which means "Happy TV") as the first Internet streaming TV company. Over the next 6 years it grew into the Netflix of China, and in 2010 - when Elon Musk was broke - he listed the company and became a billionaire.

From there, he launched a series of new companies - LeMusic (live concerts), Le Vision (films), LeMobile (smartphones) and Le VR (virtual reality), which all became part of "LeEco".

Jia Yueting is 2 years younger than Elon, and has been largely unknown in the West - until January last year, when he launched "Le Supercar" at CES - to compete with Tesla. The car is being built by LeSEE - his electric car company in partnership with Faraday Future.

Then, in February 2016 LeEco made Fast Company's 2016 "Most Innovative Companies" list, and in July he bought America's leading smart TV maker, Visio for \$2 billion... and the US tech industry began to take notice.

So if Yueting has been so successful in growing a billion dollar business, how did he end up in such financial trouble?

Yueting, like Elon Musk, Richard Branson and many leading entrepreneurs, drive their businesses to the upper limit of growth. For Yueting, 2016 was the first year he entered the US market and costs rose dramatically.

In his November letter he described the situation as "a simultaneous time in ice and fire" and said "We blindly sped ahead, and our cash demand ballooned. We got over-extended in our global strategy."

Some think that when you achieve success, the problems disappear. The reality is that as things multiply, the risks grow with the rewards.

Success then, feels less like flying higher in the sky and more like sailing deeper in the ocean - with higher highs and lower lows.

So if you're on that journey, get ready for the ride.

Yueting, like other great captains before him, is on a journey which just became more epic.

He was on the verge of losing it all and then bounced back by using every great entrepreneur's secret weapons:

Resilience and perseverance.

"Never give up. Today is hard, tomorrow will be worse, but the day after tomorrow will be sunshine." ~ Jack Ma

Would you leave it all to come back for more?



Would you be willing to leave it all to come back with more?

Here's the incredible story of how LeBron James traded reputation for results, going from NBA Most Valuable Player to "most hated" and back - winning the NBA finals for his home team this week.

In the 2009-10 NBA Season, LeBron won his second MVP in a row, with a career high points score. The problem? His home team, the Cleveland Cavaliers, weren't succeeding in their attempt to beat their 2008-09 season, when they had made it to the NBA finals in a record-breaking year.

As Cleveland began losing games, blame was being put on LeBron and he was being booed off the court. At the end of the season, he had to make a big decision:

Should he continue to try and win the NBA with Cleveland, where he had been for his entire 7 year professional career - a team that had never won the NBA in its history? Or should he transfer to a team with experience of winning the NBA, learn what it takes to win, and then return and win with Cleveland in the future?

LeBron decided to trade the short term for the long game, saying "I have short goals - to get better every day, to help my teammates every day - but my only ultimate goal is to win an NBA championship. It's all that matters. I dream about it."

In what became known as "The Decision", LeBron announced his decision to transfer to the Miami Heat.

Overnight, he became the "most hated" player in the NBA - and the "most disliked" player in American sport. A Sports Illustrated poll showed fan support going from 78% positive before to 81% negative after his decision.

Through the 2010-11 season, LeBron was the villain. When he returned to Cleveland, he was booed every time he touched the ball. To make matters worse, Miami lost in the NBA finals to the Dallas Mavericks, with much of the blame going to LeBron's poor performance where he broke the wrong kind of record - with the largest point drop-off in league history.

LeBron persevered, saying "You can't be afraid to fail. It's the only way you succeed — you're not gonna succeed all the time, and I know that."

He spent the off-season working on his game. His work and determination paid off, and over the next 2 years he scored two back-to-back NBA championships with Miami. LeBron was voted MVP both years.

Then, In 2014, LeBron returned to the Cavaliers, saying "I'm a guy who believes in unfinished business".

Ironically, his homecoming was equally mocked - this time by Miami, with the Miami media taking out billboards across Cleveland with an image of two NBA rings and the words "You're Welcome LeBron; Love, Miami."

LeBron's reply: "I came back for a reason. I came back to bring a championship to our city."

LeBron got totally focused, saying "I treated it like every day was my last day with a basketball". In his first season back, Cleveland made it all the way to the NBA finals, but were ultimately beaten by the Golden State Warriors.

In the 2015-16 season, again, the Cavaliers made it to the NBA finals against the Golden State Warriors. Cleveland were the clear underdogs against the defending champions, who were stepping into the finals with an NBA record-breaking 73 victories in the season.

The finals began at the beginning of June, and they didn't start well, with Cleveland 3-1 down after the first 4 of the 7 games. LeBron kept focused, saying "The game always gives back to people that's true to the game. I've watched it. I know the history of the game, and I was just calm. I was calm. I was focused. I was locked in."

Cleveland fought back to 3-3. Then, on Sunday, Cleveland won the 7th game 92-89 in the last 2 minutes, following a block by LeBron and a winning shot by Kyrie Irving.

It was a fairy tale ending, with Cleveland being the first team in history to come back from a 3-1 deficit in the NBA finals, and the first time they had won the NBA championship.

After the game, LeBron said into the microphone "Cleveland, this one's for you!"

Yesterday he was unanimously named the 2016 Finals MVP, and joined Michael Jordan as the only players to ever win four regular season MVPs and three Finals MVPs. When asked in his speech what was special about this MVP, he said "Because I'm home. This is what I came back for."

It's one thing to grow from strength to strength. It's another to trade all the short term glory for the long term gain.

What short term sacrifice are you willing to make for your long term dream?

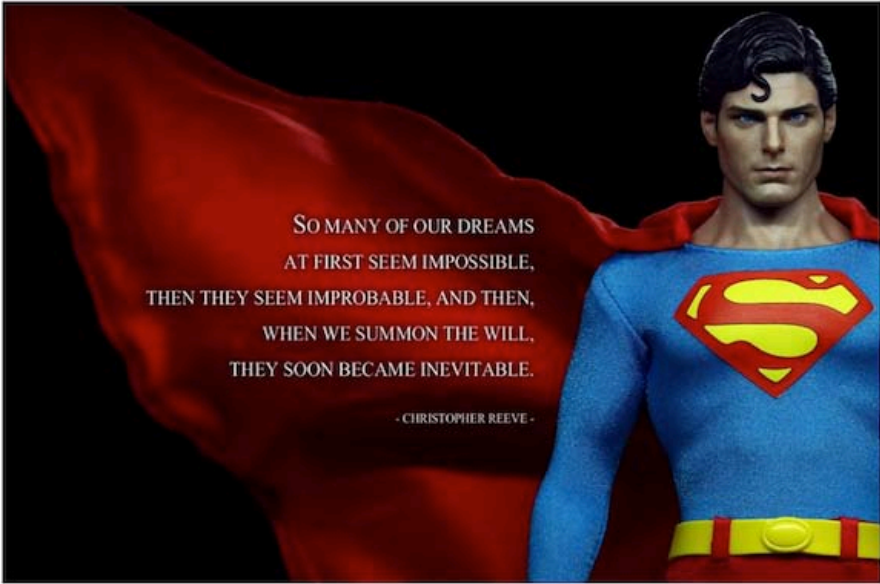
And how do you know how to cut through all the noise and criticism to make the right choice?

LeBron related advice he once got from Warren Buffett: "Warren Buffet told me once and he said always follow your gut. When you have that gut feeling, you have to go with it and don't go back on it."

Congrats to LeBron James & the Cleveland Cavaliers



What would you do without your body?



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65 comments

It's been 20 years since Christopher Reeve asked himself that question. After playing Superman in four Superman movies, Christopher fell off a horse and broke his neck, leaving him fully paralyzed.

He had his head reattached to his body with a titanium pin and looked ahead at a life without the use of his body. As an actor, it also meant the end to his acting career.

What did he do?

He said to himself *"Your body is not who you are. The mind and spirit transcend the body."*

He chose to live a bigger life in Part 2 than he had in Part 1. He co-founded the Reeve-Irvine Research Center which is now a world-leading spinal cord

research center. He created the Christopher Reeve Foundation, which has now given over \$70 million to disability research and quality-of-life grants to the disabled. He became Chairman of the American Paralysis Association, Vice Chairman of the National Organization on Disability and hosted the Paralympics in Atlanta.

The Research Institute, UC Irvine said, *"In the years following his injury, Christopher did more to promote research on spinal cord injury and other neurological disorders than any other person before or since."*

Not being able to act, Christopher became a director. For his directing, he won four Cable Ace Awards and was nominated for five Emmy Awards, a Golden Globe and won a Screen Actors Guild Award.

His book, *"Still Me"*, became a New York Times Best Seller and he won a Grammy Award for Best Spoken Word Album.

Christopher worked right up to his death in 2004, the last time it was the Chinese Year of the Monkey (which it is again in 2016). He died of a heart attack while co-directing *"Everyone's Hero."*

He achieved more in the 8 years after his accident than in the 44 years before. Instead of just acting as a fictional Superman, he became a real life Superman.

Simply by deciding to fly.

He said *"Some people are walking around with full use of their bodies and they're more paralyzed than I am."*

What decision can you make today to free your own superpowers?

What could you achieve in the next 8 years if you knew you had no limits?

"Never tell a child 'you have a soul. Teach him, you are a soul; you have a body.'"
~ George Macdonald



The key to overcoming anything



The key to overcoming anything:

It is in our darkest times that we find our greatest strength. Yesterday, one year on from the worst day of her life, Sheryl Sandberg, billionaire COO of Facebook, shared publicly for the first time how she faced adversity, and how you can to.

At an emotional commencement speech at UC Berkeley, Sheryl had this advice: *“When tragedy or disappointment strike, know that you have the ability to get through absolutely anything. I promise you do. As the saying goes, we are more vulnerable than we ever thought, but we are stronger than we ever imagined.”*

A year ago, while she was on top of the world with the growth of Facebook, where she is No.2 next to Mark Zuckerberg, her 47 year old husband and

CEO of SurveyMonkey, Dave Goldberg, suddenly died of a heart attack while exercising in a gym.

Sheryl said “We were at a friend’s fiftieth birthday party in Mexico. I took a nap. Dave went to work out. What followed was the unthinkable—walking into a gym to find him lying on the floor. Flying home to tell my children that their father was gone. Watching his casket being lowered into the ground.”

“Dave’s death changed me in very profound ways. I learned about the depths of sadness and the brutality of loss.”

“But I also learned that when life sucks you under, you can kick against the bottom, break the surface, and breathe again. I learned that in the face of the void - or in the face of any challenge - you can choose joy and meaning.”



Tina Turner's story



What would you do if your mum leaves when you're 11, your dad leaves you at 13, you then lived with your grandma who dies when you're 16, and you then marry a man who beats you for the next 16 years until you attempt suicide and fail?

If you are Tina Turner, you go on to start a new life, sell 200 million records and break the Guinness Book of Records for selling the most concert tickets of any solo performer in history.

Tina's mother ran away when Tina was 11, to escape the abuse of her father. As she remembers, *"I thought she was going to send for me, but she never did. She didn't have the money to take my sister and me with her."*

Two years later, her father abandoned Tina as well, and she went to live with her grandmother. Three years later, her grandmother died and Tina had to seek out her mother. She says, *"My mother didn't want a child, so I experienced being unwanted. But I found love when I was with myself. I went with nature, with animals, and I found love and harmony. I would come home at the end of the day*

—braids pulled out, my dress torn—and of course I got asked, “Where have you been all day!?” But I had been in a world of love and happiness.”

When she was 18, Tina met Ike Turner, who was singing with his band, the Kings of Rhythm. After a few years together, by a piece of luck, Tina got her wish to sing when Kings of Rhythm vocalist, Art Lassiter, failed to show up at the recording studio.

Tina stood in for him, and the song she sang, “A Fool in Love” found its way to R&B label, Sue Records, who bought the rights and launched Tina’s singing career.

But Ike had already begun abusing her, hitting her often while on cocaine, pouring hot coffee on her face, and burning her lips with cigarettes. It led Tina to attempt suicide in 1968, taking 50 valium only for the hospital to pump her stomach and for her to revive with Ike at her side.

Tina says, *“When I look back on that time now, it was just hell. So why didn’t I walk out? I had nowhere to go. I didn’t have money—and neither did my mother. We hadn’t had a hit for a while. He was spending most of the money on drugs. Expenses were mounting. I was upset because I wasn’t receiving a dime.”*

In 1974, at 34 years old, Tina turned to Buddhism: *“The women who sold drugs to Ike said, “What are you doing here, Tina? How can you live with this madness?” Then one day, someone told me, “Buddhism will save your life.” I was willing to try anything. I started to chant. Once, I chanted, went to the studio, and put down a vocal, just like that. Ike was so excited that he gave me a big wad of money and said, “Go shopping!” I thought, “This chanting stuff works.”*

The abuse continued, but Tina began chanting for three hours every day: *“Nam-myoho-renge-kyo”*

Tina explains: *“Nam-myoho-renge-kyo”* is a song. It is a sound and a rhythm and it touches a place inside you. I believe that it is the highest place and, if you communicate with it, that is when you receive information on what to do.”

What does the four-word buddhist chant mean? *“Nam”* is devotion. *“Myo”* is mystic. *“Ho”* is law. *“Renge”* means lotus blossom. *“Kyo”* means sutra. The message in the chant is that those who live normal lives but persevere will eventually triumph.

It was a full 16 years of abuse - and 2 years of chanting - before Tina left Ike forever in 1976. *"When I started chanting is when I started using my head. I started thinking, "I'm not going to kill myself, there's nothing here for me. This person doesn't realize that I am helping him, that I have tried to be good and kind."*

One night, after a violent and bloody row, she escaped with 36 cents in her pocket and fled to Los Angeles. She went for months living on food stamps, cleaning houses and singing in bars. Then, Ike found her: "When he finally found me, he asked if I would see him. I went out and sat in the car to talk with him. I knew exactly where the door handle was. So when he said, *"You motherf---er," I was out of the car and back in the house. I think he told my mother that he was happy I'd gotten out of the car because he had a gun and was planning to kill me."*

It took another two years to get a divorce, leaving her with even more debt from cancelled shows and unpaid taxes. Then, it took eight more years, until 1984, before Tina had her first solo album, "Private Dancer.

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Patience, perseverance and resilience



"I'm convinced that about half of what separates successful entrepreneurs from the non - successful ones is pure perseverance." - Steve Jobs

Patience = To be willing to wait longer to achieve your goal

Perseverance = Patience with perspiration

Resilience = Perseverance through failure

Patience, perseverance and resilience are three different shades of the same quality.

Some people have one or two, but not all three. Some people can persevere, but are not patient. Some are patient, but not resilient. Strengthen all three and you have the key quality shared by all great entrepreneurs: Endurance.

"Endurance is one of the most difficult disciplines, but it is the one who endures that the final victory comes." - Buddha



Who has your back in the hard times?



When Beyoncé was 16, her parents, Mathew and Tina filed for bankruptcy for the third time following a \$38,845 tax lien in 1995, with her mother getting sued for bouncing checks. The same year, her parents broke up.

Tina left home with the girls and moved into a tiny house. A friend, Sha Sha Daniels said “Tina would say that they were going to cut off the water or electricity to the town house. Or she needed money for food.”

It was a few more years before Beyoncé’s band, Destiny’s Child hit mainstream success but then, when the band broke up, Beyoncé went into a depression for two years. She says “I went through depression. I didn’t eat. I stayed in my room.”

“I was in a really bad place in life, going through that lonely period: ‘Who am I? Who are my friends?’ My life changed.”

Beyoncé finally decided she had two choices:

“I can give up, or I can go on.”

The result? Beyoncé has gone on to sell over 160 million albums, win 20 Grammy Awards to become the most nominated woman in the Grammy’s

history, receive Billboards' Millennium Award for being the Top Female Artist for the entire first decade from 2000, and be listed by Forbes as the most powerful female musician in 2015.

Beyonce credits the invisible early part of her life for her very visible future success:

"My parents taught me how to work hard and smart. Both were entrepreneurs; I watched them struggle working 18-hour days.

"They taught me that nothing worth having comes easily. My father stressed discipline and was tough with me. He pushed me to be a leader and an independent thinker."

My mother loved me unconditionally, so I felt safe enough to dream. I learned the importance of honoring my word and commitments from her."

"One of the best things about my mother is her ability to sense when I am going through a tough time. She texts me the most powerful prayers, and they always come right when I need them. I know I'm tapped into her emotional Wi-Fi."

Who has your back in the hard times?

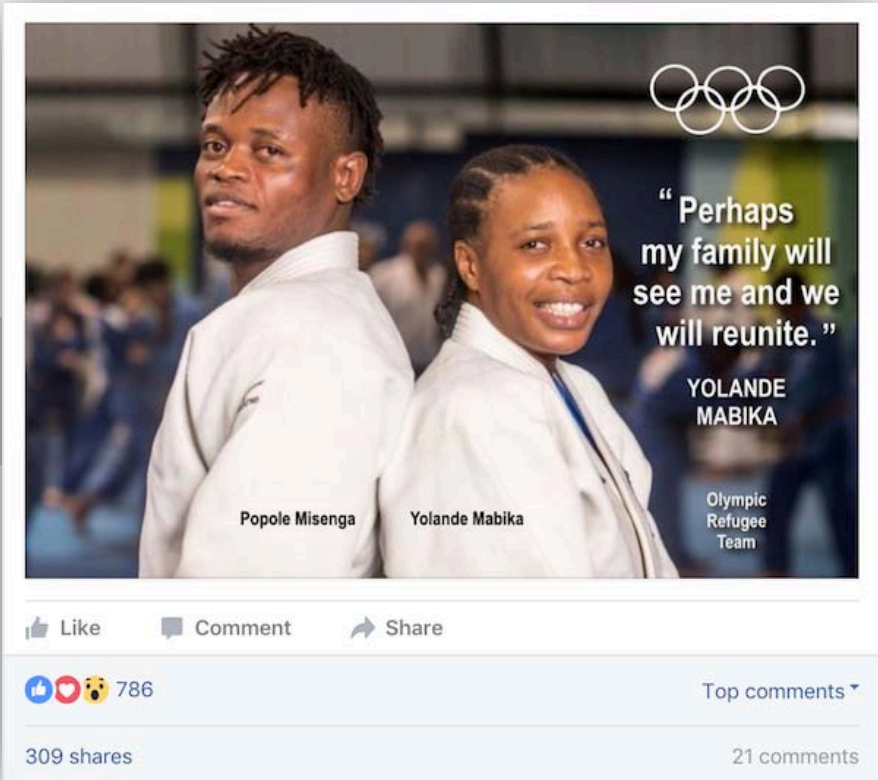
Most often its the ones who's back you had in their hard times.

So who can you reach out and help today?

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." ~ Winston Churchill

"It's really about changing the conversation. It's not about perfection. It's about purpose." ~ Beyonce

How Yolande Mabika got her family back



QUESTION: If you lost your family and were desperate to find them, what would you do?

ANSWER: Qualify for the Olympics in the off-chance that they would be one of the 4 billion who watch it on TV - and recognize you?

That's exactly what Yolande Mabika is doing...

As a young child Yolande was separated from her family during the Congo Civil War. This was during the deadliest conflict in modern African history that left more than 5 million dead and millions without a home.

All she remembers is running alone through her village, being picked up by a helicopter and left in a centre for displaced children in Kinshasa.

Yolande says "I got separated from my family and used to cry a lot." but then decided "I cannot cry every day...", so she joined the Judo sessions in the

camp, and it soon became her focus. She now says “Judo never gave me money, but it gave me a strong heart.”

Her skill led to her representing Congo, but when competing overseas, her coach would take away her and her teammate’s passports, leave them without food for days at a time, and cage them when they lost.

In 2013 while in Rio competing at the World Judo Championship, she and her team were left for three days in a Rio hotel before the competition with no food and no money. Yolande recalls “A few days before our fight, I was very, very hungry. I almost died.”

So she decided to escape the hotel with fellow teammate, Popole Misenga, and they ended up walking the streets looking for help.

Yolande and Popole sought Asylum in Brazil, and approached the Brazilian Judo Confederation who gave them food baskets, medicine - and judo uniforms to train in.

Brazilian Judo Coach, Geraldo Bernardes took them under his wing, saying “Their previous treatment seemed to be subhuman. Here, everyone supports them.”

He got them to train towards and try to qualify for the Rio Olympics.

This month - Yolande and Popole are two of the ten athletes competing in the Olympics as part of the first Refugee Olympics Team.

Having no country to represent doesn’t phase Yolande. She says “I represent everyone. I’ll get a medal for all refugees”. She and the Refugee Olympic Team will be representing over 66 million displaced people worldwide - a number larger than the populations of England and France

She says “I cannot fight for my country. I will fight for the Olympics.”

“I will fight for all refugees in the world, to defend all refugees in the world.”

If Yolande’s story inspires you, ask yourself “What am I willing to fight for? How far are am I willing to go?”

Lifting a torch instead of casting a shadow is a choice we each get to make every day. Yolande’s story is about her choice - and how every Olympian represents, above all else, the human spirit.

“The human spirit is stronger than anything that can happen to it.” - CC Scott

And her biggest goal of all? To reunite with her family: “If my family see me on television, I can give my number, everything. Because I want one day to talk even with my dad and my brothers... If I participated in the Olympics, I think it would change my life.”

Best wishes & positive vibes to Yolande in finding her family. Either via TV or - by sharing posts like these - right here via Facebook!

You can follow Yolande's progress at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games with the Refugee Olympic Team

You can also read the incredible story of fellow Refugee Olympian, Yusra Mardini, who swam the Aegean Sea to flee Syria, and is now swimming in the Rio Olympics, here: <http://bit.ly/2aMygLF>



How to turn your problems into profit



How has Oprah - at 62 years old - jumped from the 5th to 2nd richest self-made women in Forbes' 2016 US Rich List out this week? By turning her problem into her profit.

Throughout Oprah's rise to fame, she has had a life-time battle, played out publicly. Oprah's says her fight with her weight stemmed from abuse and abusive relationships:

"I was raped at 9 years old by a cousin, then again by another family member, and another family member," Oprah has said. As a result of the abuse she was pregnant with a baby son at 14, who she lost.

"I went back to school, and nobody knew. Because had anybody known at that time, I wouldn't have been able to be head of student council, I wouldn't have been chosen as one of the two teenagers in the state of Tennessee to go to the White House conference on youth. None of those things would have happened, and the entire trajectory of my life would have been different."

Oprah then got into a series of abusive relationships, saying “The reason I gained so much weight in the first place and the reason I had such a sorry history of abusive relationships with men was I just needed approval so much. I needed everyone to like me, because I didn’t like myself much.”

“So I’d end up with these cruel self-absorbed guys who’d tell me how selfish I was, and I’d say ‘Oh thank you, you’re so right’ and be grateful to them. Because I had no sense that I deserved anything else. Which is also why I gained so much weight later on. It was the perfect way of cushioning myself against the world’s disapproval.”

Calling her weight issues “the brown elephant in the room”, she has grown her TV career while yo-yoing in size. In 1988 she lost 67 pounds to get into a pair of size 10 Calvin Klein jeans, saying “I had literally starved myself for four months - not a morsel of food.” Just two days later, she began putting the pounds back on and could no longer fit in the jeans.

Ten years later she had put on so much weight she was skipping photo shoots saying “I felt like a cow”. She published her weight gain numbers in her magazine, ‘O’: “Yes, you’re adding correctly; that means the dreaded 2-0-0,” she wrote. “I was so frustrated I started eating whatever I wanted - and that’s never good.”

By 1992 she was up to 237 pounds, and has bounced 60 pounds up and down in the twenty years since.

Then, 7 months ago, Oprah decided to put her money where her mouth was, and invested \$43 million for a 10% stake in Weight Watchers, to be a part owner, board member and spokesperson.

When you’ve built a personal brand like Oprah, you can earn through book sales and advertising, or you can earn through the value of the businesses you invest in. The second way leads to far bigger results.

In January she tweeted “Eat bread, Lose weight. Whaaaattt?” with a video of her losing 26 pounds since she began Weight Watcher’s program 3 months earlier. As a result, Weight Watchers’ stock price jumped from \$11.35 to \$15.62 and Oprah made a \$12.5 million gain in a day.

Her “Oprah Effect” has brought over 1 billion new impressions to the company, and the company has doubled in value, to \$1 billion, since she invested.

That means, in the 27 weeks since she invested, she has lost one pound in weight, and she has gained \$2 million in profit, week after week.

In the April 2016 issue of O, Oprah put herself on the front cover together with her Weight Watcher’s group, and featured the weight loss progress they have made. It’s the first time the magazine has featured readers on the cover. Oprah said: “It was my idea to share the cover with other women who are on the same journey that I am.”

"My own struggles with the scale are well known. I've never believed in hiding them. Gone, for me, are the days of wanting to be thin to fit into anything other than my best body and best life. What I do believe in: strength in numbers."

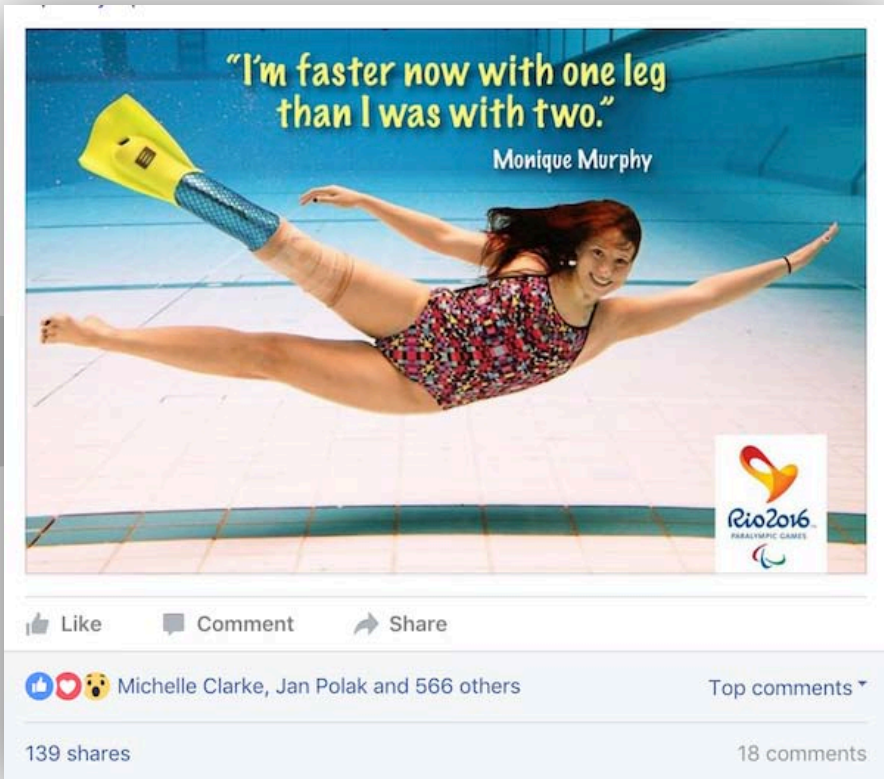
What can you do to turn your problems to profit?

Who can you bring along for the journey?

And how can you make sure they're with you for the purpose, not just the profit?

"Lots of people want to ride with you in the limo, but what you want is someone who will take the bus with you when the limo breaks down." ~ Oprah Winfrey

You always get a second chance



Two years ago, 20 year old Australian student Monique Murphy fell from a 5th floor balcony at a University party in a fall that left her in a coma:

Monique recalls: *"When I came out of the coma, the first people I saw were my parents and it was just instant confusion because I had no idea what had happened or where I was."*

"I woke up in hospital with a broken jaw in two places, a cut to my neck close to the main artery and windpipe, a broken left collarbone, a tear in my triceps tendon, three broken ribs and a tibial plateau fracture."

"I woke up from a week long coma without my foot... I remember when I found out that I'd lost my foot my mum was with me and initially we were both in tears... and then I just said to her 'is that it?'"

"And she said 'yes, that's the worst of it' and I was like 'ok, I can do this.'"

Monique took a year to recover, never remembering what happened that night - whether her drinks at the party were spiked, or how she ended up falling off the balcony.

As a competitive swimmer before the fall, Monique first gave up on the idea of going back to swimming. But then, she says *"I had a visit from a volunteer from the Limbs for Life Foundation and he's a below-knee amputee. He's also a scuba diver and he told me that he had these big flipper legs and threw out the idea that I'd be able to get a mermaid leg made."*

"I was like 'mum, I am going to be a mermaid!'"

"That was in hospital and I think in that moment I knew that if I wanted to get something like a mermaid leg I was going to have to swim to justify that."

Monique got back to swimming, and experts at the Royal Melbourne Hospital Amputee Rehabilitation Service designed her "mermaid leg" to help with her training.

In the last year Monique has cut 13 seconds off her personal best for the 400m freestyle (without her mermaid leg!) and says "I'm faster now with one leg than I was with two." She's now ranked number one in the world for her event and today - just two years after her accident - this week Monique is competing in the Rio Paralympic Games.

Monique says: *"To have this opportunity means everything to me. As a kid growing up I always dreamed of going to an Olympics. This has come around in a very different way than expected but it's a second chance to go after my dream."*

Whatever events happen to you in life, take a tip from Monique, and know that provided you're willing to keep going, you always get a second chance.

Are you playing to win?



Are you playing to win? Or are you playing not to lose?

The difference has never been more stark than in the most incredible comeback in Super Bowl history that just took place today.

With just 8 minutes remaining in the game, the Atlanta Falcons led the New England Patriots 28-12. No team in history had ever made a comeback from 10 points behind. Until today...

The last minute comeback began with Patriot defensive tackle, Alan Branch, stealing the ball on the Atlanta 25. Quarterback Tom Brady converted the advantage into a pass to Danny Amendola for a touchdown, with a conversion from James White. Score: 28-20.

The Patriots kept pushing with Tom leading a 91 yard touchdown drive and, with just 2 minutes 22 seconds remaining, Julian Edelman made an amazing catch against three Falcon opponents, setting up the field for a touchdown by James and a conversion by Danny evening the score at 28-28 with just 57 seconds left to play.

From a deficit which at its worst was what looked like an insurmountable 25 points down at 28-3, the Patriots had brought the game into the Super Bowl's first ever overtime.

Twelve minutes into overtime, and James White ran two yards for a touchdown, winning the game 34-28 for the Patriots with a 31 point streak.

What gives a team the ability to stage a comeback as epic as this one today?

Tom Brady (who was only picked by the Patriots as the 199th out of 254 players in the 6th round of the 2000 NFL draft) sums it up when he says:

"I think that at the start of a game, you're always playing to win, and then maybe if you're ahead late in the game, you start playing not to lose. The true competitors, though, are the ones who always play to win."

Late in the game, the Falcons were playing not to lose - and so ended up losing. The Patriots, on the other hand, had nothing left to lose - and so ended up winning.

How about you? What inspiration do you take from this epic comeback?

Are you playing life to win?

Or are you playing not to lose?

Tom himself, at 39 years old, is the oldest quarterback in the NFL. He started the season with a four game suspension as a result of "*deflategate*", but has turned everything around by becoming the first player to receive Super Bowls' most valuable player award four times, and finishes the season with a record five Super Bowl wins.

So take this inspiration for your own personal overtime. And get back in the game.

A big congratulations to the New England Patriots for creating history.

After the game, Tom Brady said of the team: "*We all brought each other back. We never felt out of it*", and then looking at the Lombardi Trophy said "*We're bringing this sucker home.*"

And Danny Amendola said of Tom: "*He was the same as he always is: cool, calm and collected. He's the leader, the general, the best ever and that is the end of the story.*"



What does 2017 have in store for us?



What does 2017 have in store for us? We're about to move from the 2016 Chinese Year of the Monkey (a year of mischief and surprise endings) to the 2017 Chinese Year of the Rooster (a year of early starts and new beginnings).

Here's what the Astrology Club says about the coming year:

“Consider a Rooster in a barnyard, protecting his hens and strutting his stuff. Well, that’s about it. The Year of the Rooster will be a year that the most vital promise made will result in a flawless job no matter what it takes to achieve it.

It will be a year when it is truly better to do less, but do it perfectly.

The year of the Rooster teaches the lessons of order, scrutiny and strategic planning. The sage advice of Sun-Zi which is still taught in modern military circles, advises one to *“achieve psychological advantage over the adversary and use force only as a last resort.”*

Roosters are also communal birds. That is why year of the Rooster 2017 predictions promises to be a lucky one for joint ventures. The Chinese astrology suggests signing as many business contracts as possible and form new partnerships in the upcoming year.

But a word of warning: General confidence may lead to new and daring ventures. The year of the Rooster 2017 heralds happiness, color and drama, but this has to be balanced with good old fashioned common sense and tried and tested values. Otherwise it could end up becoming a wild goose chase.

The motto for the year of the Rooster 2017 should be 'Kiss: Keep It Simple' and don't take offense at the slightest provocation.

There's a Chinese saying, *'If you take a step back, you will find the sea and the sky is boundless.'* Remember, good values never go out of style, no matter how hard it may seem to apply them. He who dares will have plenty to crow about in the end, with the pockets none too light at that - a perfect challenge for the rooster in all of us."

So there you have it - Time to switch monkeying around with a daily rhythm to rule the roost.

The rooster is the first creature to awake in the morning and wakes up the others with crowing.

Time to get up and get on with it.

"A rooster crows when it sees the light. I have seen the light and I'm crowing." - Muhammad Ali

(But as the Chinese New Year only begins on Jan 28th, there's still time for the 2016 Monkey's last tricks so be prepared!)

Read more at <http://astrologyclub.org/chinese-horoscope/2017-year-rooster>

PERSEVERANCE

Stories of pushing on, pushing through and never giving up

"It always seems impossible until it's done."
~ Nelson Mandela



It takes 20 years to create overnight success



How long does it take to create an overnight success? For John Hanke it's taken him 20 years to create Pokémon Go.

This week, the Pokémon Go app has broken all records, with 10 million+ downloads in the first week, exceeding Twitter in daily active users, and with higher average user time than Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram & WhatsApp.

How did John Hanke create such a massive overnight craze? Here's the 10 times he levelled up in his lifetime to reach Pokémon Go:

1st Level up: In 1996, while still a student, John co-created the very first MMO (massively multiplayer online game) called 'Meridian 59'. He sold the game to 3DO to move on to a bigger passion: mapping the world.

2nd Level up: In 2000, John launched 'Keyhole' to come up with a way to link maps with aerial photography, and create the first online, GPS-linked 3D aerial map of the world.

3rd Level up: In 2004, Google bought Keyhole and with John's help, turned Keyhole into what is now 'Google Earth'. That's when John decided to focus at creating GPS-based games.

4th Level up: John ran the Google Geo team from 2004 to 2010, creating Google Maps and Google Street View. During this time, he collected the team that would later create Pokémon Go.

5th Level up: In 2010, John launched Niantic Labs as a start-up funded by Google to create a game layer on maps. John explains why he called it Niantic:

"The Niantic is the name of a whaling ship that came up during the gold rush and through a variety of circumstances got dragged on shore. This happened with other ships, too. Over the years, San Francisco was basically just built over these ships. You could stand on top of them now, and you wouldn't know it. So it's this idea that there's stuff about the world that's really cool but even though it's on the Internet, it's hard to know when you're actually there."

6th Level up: In 2012, John then created Niantic's first geo-based MMO, "Ingress":

John explains: "In the case of Ingress the activity is layered on top of the real world and on your phone. The inspiration was that it was something that I always used to daydream about while I was commuting back and forth from home to Google."

"I always thought you could make an awesome game using all the Geo data that we have. I watched phones become more and more powerful and I thought the time would come that you could do a really awesome real-world adventure-based game."

7th Level up: In 2014, Google and the Pokémon Company teamed up for an April Fools' Day joke, which allowed viewers to find Pokémon creatures on Google maps. It was a viral hit, and got John thinking the idea could be turned into a real game.

8th Level up: John decided to build Pokémon Go on the user-generated meeting points created by players of Ingress, and the most popular became the Pokéstops and gyms in Pokémon Go:

As John says, "The Pokéstops are submitted by users, so obviously they're based on places people go. We had essentially two and a half years of people going to all the places where they thought they should be able to play Ingress, so it's some pretty remote places. There are portals in Antarctica and the North Pole, and most points in between."

9th Level up: John raised \$25 million from Google, Nintendo, the Pokémon Company and other investors from Dec 2015 to Feb 2016 to grow a team of 40+ to launch Pokémon Go this year.

10th Level: John and his team launched Pokémon Go on July 6th in USA, Australia and New Zealand. Since its launch, Nintendo's share price has risen \$12 billion, and the app is already generating over \$2 million daily in in-app purchases, making it an overnight phenomenon.

The overnight success of Pokémon Go has taken John Hanke 20 years to create. Throughout these 20 years, while he had a big vision of a game layer over the world, he didn't know what form it would take. At every step, he just focused at his next level up.

At each new level, he had new powers, new team members, and new items in his inventory...

Are you, like John, treating your own entrepreneurial journey like one big MMO?

Keep the end in mind, but focus today on simply levelling up.

At every level, grow your powers, your team, and your luck.

And know it takes many levels to win the game.

"It takes 20 years to make an overnight success." ~ Eddie Cantor



The key to success



In my 20's I would ask mentors what they thought the most important key to success was. They all had different opinions. Then one gave me the very best answer. He said "All the most successful people have many differences, but they only have one thing in common. They never gave up. The ones who gave up you don't see. You only see the ones who never gave up. So as long as you never give up, no matter what, you'll be fine."

"Winners never quit and quitters never win." - Vince Lombardi



6 years, 35 attempts and \$180 million overnight



Like Comment Share

Kelly Quessada, Emily Gowor and 10k others

4,509 shares

486 comments

Here's Charles. A month ago he was set to close his business. This week, he sold it for \$180 million. That's why he's smiling...

After six years trying to figure out how to make games on the iPhone, Charles Forman was about to give up, with his company, Omgpop, set to run out of money by this May. Things changes three days ago. He said in an interview

with the New York Times on Monday “I had \$1,700 in my bank account yesterday, and now I have a whole lot more.”

So what changed? After 35 attempts at making games that would be successful, the Omgpop team finally found a hit at the beginning of February. The game, called “Draw Something” is like Pictionary for the iPhone. Since it launched on Feb 6th, it has been downloaded 35 million times. It caught the attention of Zynga, the game company behind Farmville and other Facebook game hits. A month after the game launched, Zynga just bought Omgpop from Charles for \$180 million.

Do you have the perseverance to try to create a success after 35 failures? Is it worth the six years of trying and failing to reach the runaway success? This is another example of hyper-growth that comes from getting your surf board back out there again and again.

This story unfolded while I was on my recent Australia tour, where I was sharing similar stories of 'overnight' successes. This hit the headlines this week. Next week will be another story, and then another. Surf's up! Will it be your turn next?



Never too old to dream a new dream

“You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.”

- C.S. Lewis



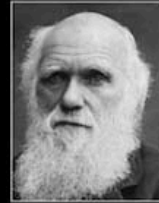
Ray Kroc
Bought McDonald's
Age 55



Col. Sanders
Franchised KFC
Age 62



Julia Child
First Cook Book
Age 50



Charles Darwin
Theory of Evolution
Age 50

Like Comment Share

Michelle Clarke, Jan Polak and 8.3k others

1,078 shares

301 comments

John Pemberton invented Coca-Cola when he was 55 years old.

Ray Kroc bought McDonald's when he was 59 years old.

Colonel Sanders began franchising KFC at 62 years old.

Tim & Nina Zagat were 51 yr old lawyers when they wrote the 1st Zagat guide.

Charles Darwin was 50 years old before he wrote "*On the Origin of Species*".

Julia Child was also 50 years old when she wrote her first cookbook.

Henry Ford was 45 years old when he created the Model T car.

Microfinance pioneer, Muhammad Yunus, launched the Grameen Bank at 43 years old.

Samuel L. Jackson was 43 years old before he had his first hit film, *“Jungle Fever”*.

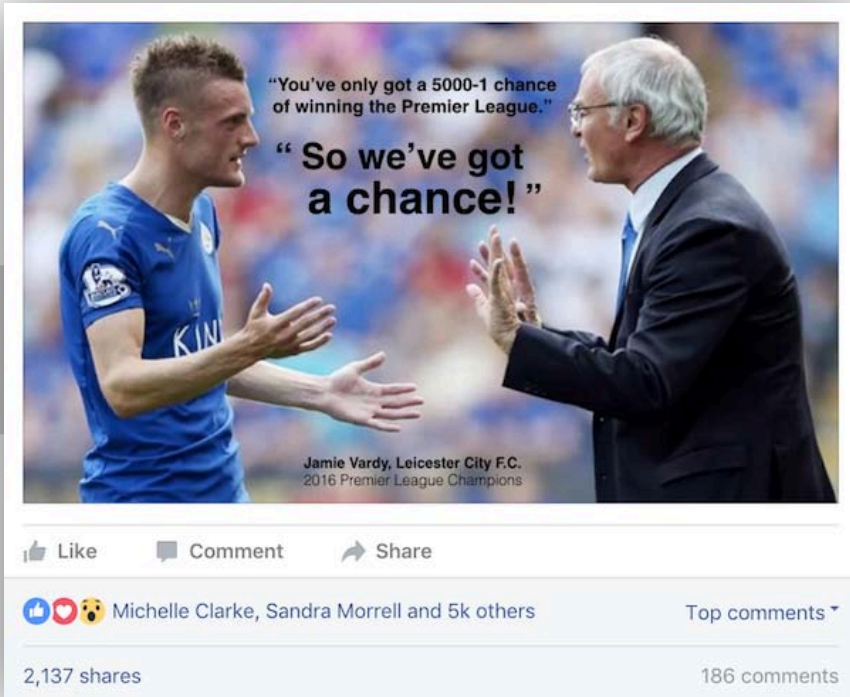
It’s never too late to succeed.

It’s always too early to quit.

“You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.”

~ C.S. Lewis

Jamie Vardy's story from underdog to champion



Jamie had dreams of being a footballer, but was rejected by Sheffield Wednesday F.C. when he was 16 for being too small

> Not giving up, he went to work as a labourer in a carbon fibre factory, working 12 hour shifts, so he could join 7th division team, Stockbridge Park, spending 3 years earning £30 a week.

> At 20 years old he was convicted for assault after a pub fight, but kept playing football, and had to play for 6 months with an ankle bracelet and a 6pm curfew.

> In a world where footballers are transferred for millions, he was transferred to Halifax Town for £15,000 in 2010.

> At 25 years old, he was sold to Leicester City in 2012, a team that have never won the Premier League. He only scored 4 goals all season and came under fire from the fans.

> He ended the 2014-15 season with the team on the threat of relegation, with a Thai sex tape scandal that led to three of the players (including the manager's son), and then the manager, leaving the team.

> He started this season with a new manager, Claudio Ranieri, who had been out of work for eight months after being fired from Greece after only four months on the job.

Then what happened in the last year?

Jamie breaks the Guinness World Record with 11 goals in 11 games and becomes the first player at Leicester to score 20+ goals since Gary Lineker in 1984.

He helps lead Leicester City from 5000-1 underdogs to winning the Premier League this week in what has been called the *"most unlikely triumph in the history of team sport"*.

Gary Lineker has said of his hometown team's victory that it is *"the biggest sporting shock of my lifetime. I can't think of anything that surpasses it in sporting history. It is difficult to put over in words.. It was hard to breathe. I was a season ticket holder from the age of seven. This is actually impossible."*

Alan Shearer has said *"For a team like Leicester to come and take the giants on with their wealth and experience - not only take them on but to beat them - I think it's the biggest thing to happen in football."*

This week Jamie has also been named the Football Writers' Player of the Year.

The inspiration in the story?

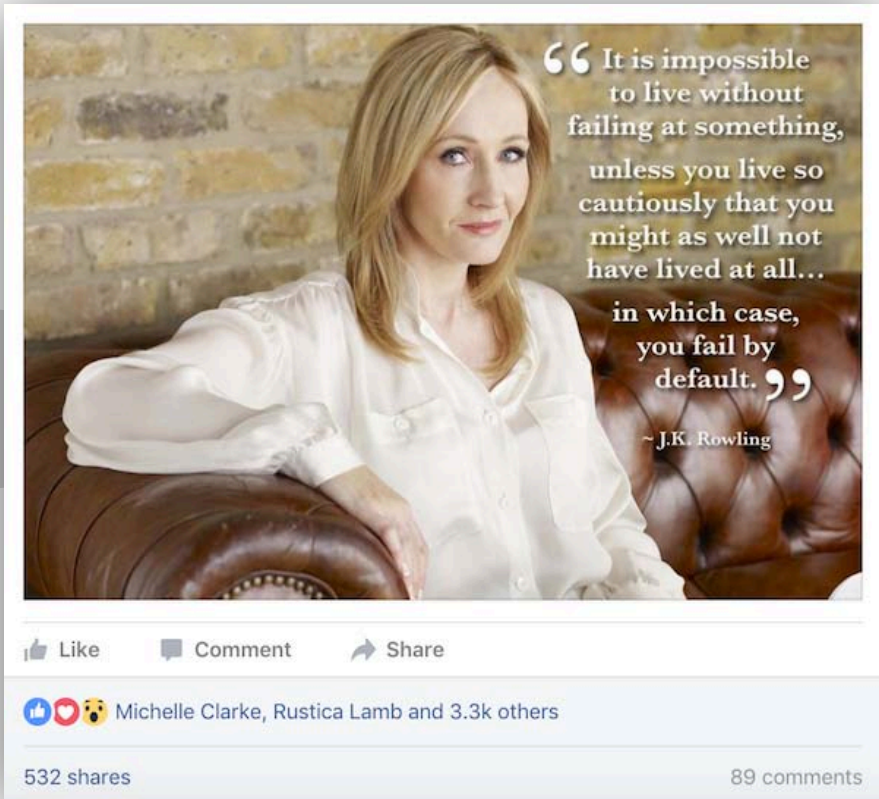
Never give up. Anything can happen. And sometimes it does.

"Anything can happen. If the underdog wants a game bad enough, they can go out and get it. We just need to keep on playing as hard as we can." ~ Ashley Langen

Big congratulations to Jamie Vardy and Leicester City!

"It's not the size of the dog in the fight. It's the size of the fight in the dog." ~ Mark Twain

My 8 favorite famous failures



Thomas Edison was told by his teachers that he was *"too stupid to learn anything."*

Oprah Winfrey was fired from her first job as a television reporter and told she was *"unfit for tv."*

Walt Disney was fired from his first newspaper job because *"he lacked imagination and had no good ideas."*

Henry Ford went broke 5 times before finally creating the Ford Model T when he was 45 years old.

While first writing Harry Potter, J.K. Rowling's mother died, her marriage failed, she had no job, was on welfare, was diagnosed with clinical depression

and described herself being as *"poor as it is possible to be in modern Britain, without being homeless."* She kept writing anyway.

One of Elvis Presley's first singing gigs was at the Grand Ole Opry, but he was fired after just one performance with the manager telling him, *"You ain't goin' nowhere, son. You ought to go back to drivin' a truck."* He kept singing anyway.

Vincent Van Gogh only sold one painting during his lifetime, and that was to a friend. He kept painting anyway.

Famous philosopher Socrates's original ideas at the time led him to be named *"an immoral corrupter of youth"* and he was sentenced to death. He kept talking anyway.

Each of these 8 famous examples show the difference between mindful vs mindless failure.

Mindless failure is when you keep failing without growing skills and self awareness. Mindful failure is when each failure gets you clearer about who you are, why you're here, and how to do it better next time.

The key to mindful failure? Set up a rhythm of commitment, action, failure, learning, repeat - and keep persevering to create your own virtuous cycle maximizing failures that steer you and minimizing failures that sink you.

"The season of failure is the best time for sowing the seeds of success."

- Paramahansa Yogananda



PATIENCE



Perseverance

Agility

Tolerance

Intricacy

Empathy

Nimbleness

Care

Endurance

P.A.T.I.E.N.C.E. is a multi-dimensional mix of flexibility and steadfastness. Keep the balance and know that however tough things get, provided you're patient, everything you visualize will happen in time. In nature nothing is rushed, but all is accomplished.

“Genius is eternal patience.” ~ Michelangelo



The story of Aung San Suu Kyi



Congratulations to Aung San Suu Kyi. An incredibly inspiring leader. She endured 15 years of house arrest and decades of hardship under the Myanmar Military Government, and this week she takes a seat in parliament with her party having the majority of seats. A historic moment.

They threatened her life, and led the Depayin Massacre against her.

She would not leave.

They left her house in disrepair and powerless after a hurricane.

She lived for a year by candlelight.

They dared her to miss her son's lives and her husband's death by staying.

She stayed anyway.

She said: *"The only real prison is fear, and the only real freedom is freedom from fear. Fear is a habit. I am not afraid."*

In a world of too much fear-mongering and violence, her fearless non-violence is the kind of leadership I would love for us to have more of:

“Peace does not mean just putting an end to violence or to war, but to all other factors that threaten peace, such as discrimination, such as inequality, poverty.”

“The education and empowerment of women throughout the world cannot fail to result in a more caring, tolerant, just and peaceful life for all.”

~ Aung San Suu Kyi



What product that you create will outlive you?



Today, January 9th, is the 10th anniversary of Steve Jobs' unveiling of the first iPhone to the world. It was the first internet-connected smartphone with no keyboard, and with multi-finger touchscreen controls.

Everyone knows the Apple iPhone today. Over 1 billion iPhones have been sold and there are now 2 billion people in the world with smartphones. But when Steve Jobs first unveiled it, here's what Apple's competitors had to say about it:

Jim Balsillie, Co-CEO of BlackBerry (the leading Internet-connected phone at the time) said: *"It's kind of one more entrant into an already very busy space with lots of choice for consumers. But in terms of a sort of a sea-change for BlackBerry, I would think that's overstating it."*

But from the launch of the iPhone, BlackBerry never recovered, losing its smartphone leadership to iOS and Android. BlackBerry stopped making phones altogether in September last year.

Olli-Pekka Kallasvuo, CEO of Nokia said:

"I don't think that what we have seen so far (from Apple) is something that would any way necessitate us changing our thinking when it comes to openness, our software and business approach."

Nokia's dominance in mobile phones faltered after the launch of the iPhone, never recovered, and its entire mobile phone business collapsed and was eventually bought by Microsoft for \$7 billion (compared to Apple's market value, which grew from \$12 billion in 2007 to \$630 billion today).

Steve Ballmer, CEO of Microsoft said:

"There's no chance that the iPhone is going to get any significant market share. No chance. I'd prefer to have our software in 60 per cent or 70 per cent or 80 per cent of them, than I would to have 2 per cent or 3 per cent, which is what Apple might get."

Steve Ballmer laughed openly at the iPhone on TV, calling it "not a very good email machine". At the end of 2016, iPhone had a market share 30 times the market share of the Microsoft Phone.

Steve Jobs got resistance from all sides, including his own team. As iPhone designer Tony Fadell remembers (on whether the iPhone should have a keyboard):

"That fight raged on for around four months. It was a very ugly situation. So Steve put in place a rule: "Until you can agree with us you can't come back in this room. If you don't want to be on the team, don't be on the team."

Tony (who went on to become a billionaire by designing the smart thermostat, Nest) says "Whenever I create a new product - and I learned this with Steve - if the incumbents laugh at you and the press laugh at you, you go, 'we've hit a nerve'."

The end result of the iPhone: It spurred an entire industry to combine phone with music player with camera with Internet device - all as a result of Steve's vision.

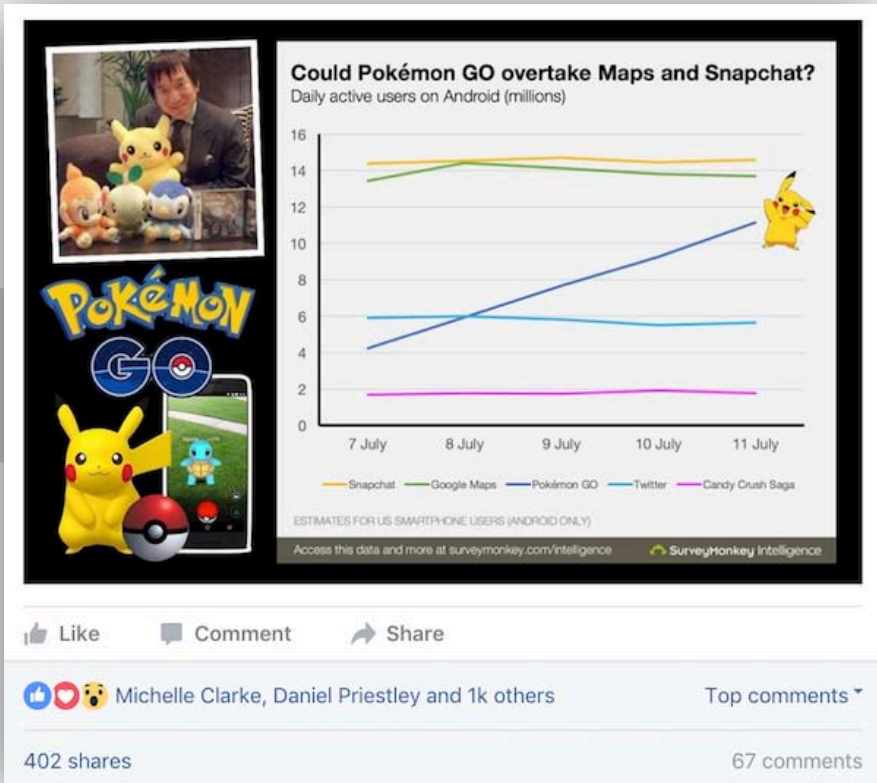
How passionate are you about your product?

How determined are you to push through in the face of all the obstacles and criticism, to fulfil your vision?

Use Steve's actions 10 years ago to be your inspiration today. And imagine your actions today will be similar inspiration for someone else 10 years from now.

"First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win."
~ Mahatma Gandhi

How Satoshi Tajiri created Pokémon



In the last week Pokémon Go has become the biggest mobile game in US history, and is now set to overtake Snapchat and Google Maps in daily mobile users.

A few days ago I wrote a post on John Hanke's 20 year journey to create Pokémon Go. Some people asked "what about the creator of Pokémon?" which is a great question. Because Satoshi Tajiri's story is even more extraordinary than John Hanke's.

This year Pokémon is 20 years old, and it's easy to think it was always a success. But the truth is the opposite. It took Satoshi, the creator of Pokémon, over 15 years from his first idea for the game until it took off, driving his company to the edge of bankruptcy in the process.

The inspiration for Pokémon came from when Satoshi collected insects as a child. His friends called him 'Dr Bug', and he remembers: "Every time I found

a new insect, it was mysterious to me. And the more I searched for insects, the more I found.”

“Then development started taking place, and as it grew, all the insects were driven away.”

As Japan’s cities grew and space for hunting bugs was lost, Satoshi dreamed of creating a video game that would give kids the same feeling of discovery.

Then, in 1981 when he was 17, Satoshi created a gaming magazine, ‘Game Freak’. Satoshi describes his first creation: “It was handwritten. I stapled the pages together. It had techniques on how to win games, secret tips for games like Donkey Kong.”

An early reader, Ken Sugimori, became a fan and 8 years later the two of them turned Game Freak into a video game development company to develop Satoshi’s ‘pocket monsters’ concept.

Satoshi pitched the idea of Pokémon to Nintendo in 1990, as a way for Game Boy players to play together. Nintendo didn’t really get the concept, and asked him to develop the idea further.

So the two of them began working on building the game with Satoshi coming up with the characters, Ken drawing them and a third partner, Junichi Masada, making the sounds and music.

The next 6 years of hard work took Game Freak to the edge of bankruptcy. Staff quit for not getting paid, and the team struggled with side-jobs to pay the bills.

Junichi remembers “It was a difficult time but we never thought about giving up, or throwing it all away. We were at the office the entire time. I remember thinking how dumb it was for me to be renting an apartment because I spent so little time there. I was always at the office. We lived in that place.”

Desperate to see the project finished, Satoshi took an investment from Creatures Inc, a company that ended up owning a third of the rights to Pokémon.

Then, when the first Pokémon game was finally launched, there was little media interest as the Game Boy itself had lost popularity...

Satoshi says of the launch, “Game Boy’s popularity was declining. Just when I finished the game and took it to Nintendo, I felt like a baseball player who slides into second base even though you know you’re going to be out... but then it turns out you are safe.”

Luckily for Satoshi, Shigeru Miyamoto (who created Super Mario & Donkey Kong) took a liking to Satoshi, mentored him through the tough times and championed Pokémon within Nintendo.

It was 15 years after Satoshi's dream of kids collecting pocket monsters like he had collected insects that Pokémon finally took off in 1996.

Pokémon has gone on to generate over \$40 billion worldwide, and continues to generate over \$2 billion each year.

This year is Pokémon's 20th birthday, and this week Pokémon Go has broken all records within a week to become the biggest mobile game in US history, with more daily users than the previous No.1 games, Candy Crush and Draw Something had at their peak.

It's hit those records just as the worldwide launch begins, with Pokémon Go released in Germany yesterday and UK today.

Was Satoshi (an autistic, introverted creator that has had Asperger's Syndrome since birth) just lucky? Or is there a take-away in his story that applies equally to all of us?

When asked by TIME magazine if all the Pokémon creatures names meant anything, Satoshi said:

"They all have meaning. Like Nyarth. It's from a Japanese proverb about a cat with money on his head that doesn't know it's there."

Most likely, like Nyarth, there's money on your head that's just waiting to be discovered... So while you're exploring the world around you, remember your greatest treasure is always a lot closer than you think.

"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes." ~ Marcel Proust

(Link to the article on John Hanke, the founder of Niantic Labs & creator of Pokémon Go - <http://bit.ly/JohnHankes-PokemonGo>)



How focused are you at your one big thing?



Today Elon Musk got the green light to merge two of his companies, Tesla and SolarCity - opening the way for a fully integrated solar powered solution to live a zero carbon life.

"We're trying to make an integrated product," Musk told Tesla shareholders today. "So you have an integrated solar roof with a Powerwall and an electric car, and you just go into a Tesla store, just say yes, it just happens. It all works, it's seamless and you love it."

Just five months ago, in June Elon was under serious fire for the first Tesla autopilot death and his plan to merge Tesla and SolarCity. His response? To double down on his commitment and publish his "Master Plan, Part Deux", explaining why he was bringing the two companies together:

"We must at some point achieve a sustainable energy economy or we will run out of fossil fuels to burn and civilization will collapse."

The next step in his plan was to “Create a smoothly integrated and beautiful solar-roof-with-battery product that just works, empowering the individual as their own utility, and then scale that throughout the world. One ordering experience, one installation, one service contact, one phone app.”

“We can't do this well if Tesla and SolarCity are different companies, which is why we need to combine and break down the barriers inherent to being separate companies.”

Since then, the negative press died down, Elon launched his new solar tiles and a news headline making the rounds last week is that Elon's Tesla made more money last quarter than the entire US oil industry did last year. (Which is technically true as Tesla made \$22 million while the US oil industry had a combined \$67 billion in losses in 2015).

In the face of distraction and disruption, how focused are you at your one big thing?

When you're feeling the heat, be like Elon and use the fire to burn bridges. When you cut down your options, your one big thing goes from a 'nice-to-have' to a 'must-have'.

Too many people do the opposite - keeping all their options open, never committing, and burning relationships instead.

“Burn bridges, not people.”

Elon has spent the last five months since announcing his plan speaking to shareholders on both sides to convince them that one focus on one billion dollar company is better than Tesla and SolarCity running as two billion dollar companies.

This month he wrote another blog saying “The acquisition of SolarCity will create the world's only integrated sustainable energy company, from energy generation to storage to transportation.”

“Our customers will have an entire sustainable energy ecosystem... This is our vision for the future – one that is sustainable, less expensive, and just better. We hope you agree that this is a future we should all want.”

After five months of deciding, his shareholders voted today for the merger, which means his Masterplan just got simpler - and we're all now moving to a sustainable future even faster.

“It's OK to have your eggs in one basket as long as you control what happens to that basket.” ~ Elon Musk

Just think “Momofuku”



If you ever feel like it's taking too long to achieve success, just think “Momofuku”.

One of Japan's most famous entrepreneurs, Momofuku Ando, kept persevering despite failure and bankruptcy until he finally reached his big breakthrough: Inventing Pot Noodles at 61 years old.

Momofuku was an early entrepreneur, starting a clothing company after leaving university. But trying to make a difference came with a price - The scholarships he paid for students to study were seen by the Japanese government as tax evasion, and he was thrown in jail when he was 38 years old. Then after he was released, his company went bankrupt.

Determined to try again, he said “I came to understand that all of my failure - all of my shame - was like muscle added to my body,”

With Japan short of food during the war, he went on to sell salt for the next ten years.

Then after the war, he saw the Japanese government trying to get the Japanese to eat bread from the United States because Japan's traditional form of food, noodles, were too expensive.

So Momofuku, who believed "Peace will come to the world when the people have enough to eat." went to work to find a cheap way to make noodles.

Finally after plenty of experimenting, in 1958 at 48 years old, Momofuku invented instant noodles.

Not satisfied with his first invention, he kept working at making noodles cheaper and easier to cook and finally, 13 years later in 1971 at 61 years old, he created Pot Noodles.

Over the next 30 years, his noodles have grown in popularity worldwide. Over 100 billion servings of instant noodle are now sold every year. That's 15 for every human on earth.

In a national poll, the Japanese people voted instant noodle as the greatest Japanese invention of the 20th Century. And at 92 years old, Momofuku was awarded "The Order of the Rising Sun": The second most prestigious Japanese decoration for Japanese civilians.

Imagine if Momofuku had quit before he had reached 61...

So the next time you're thinking of giving up, remember to say "Momofuku".

Momofuku went on to live to 97 years old. (And he credited his longevity to a daily diet of instant noodles).

"It is never too late to do anything in life." - Momofuku Ando



The inspiration behind Fawlty Towers



Sad to hear that Andrew Sachs, who played Manuel in Fawlty Towers, passed away today.

I was a big fan of Fawlty Towers, and of John Cleese who said of Andrew: *“If you met him you would never think for a moment that he was a comedian, you would think he was a rather cultivated bank manager... And then you stuck that moustache on him and he turned into a completely different human being.”*

I loved Fawlty Towers for how it started as much as for how funny it was. It began with John Cleese getting terrible service at a hotel and - while everyone else left - he stayed longer and got the material he needed for one of Britain’s most successful comedy series.

While Monty Python were filming *“Monty Python’s Flying Circus”* in Torquay in 1970, they stayed at Gleneagles Hotel, where the eccentric owner, Donald Sinclair, threw a timetable at a guest who asked for the bus times, hid Eric Idle’s briefcase behind a wall because he thought it contained a bomb and criticised Terry Gilliam’s *“un-British”* table manners for holding his fork with the wrong hand.

John described him as *“the rudest man I’ve ever come across in my life”* and while most of the team changed hotels, he stayed and extended his stay after filming ended so he could study Donald further.

The result was enough inspiration to create *“Fawlty Towers”*, which he took 7 years to write - with the main four characters being Fawlty Towers played by John Cleese, his wife Sybil, the Spanish waiter Manuel and the maid, Polly (played by John’s real-life wife and co-writer, Connie Booth)

Despite all the effort he had put into it, the idea was rejected by the BBC, with the exec who reviewed it saying: *“This is a very boring situation and the script has nothing but very clichéd characters. I cannot see anything but a disaster if we go ahead with it.”*

John persevered, and finally Bill Cotton, BBC’s Head of Light Entertainment read the first few scripts and said he could see nothing funny but trusted John knew what he was doing and gave him the go-ahead.

From that first inspiration from bad service, and the perseverance of the team, Fawlty Towers went on to win three BAFTAs and placed 1st in the list of 100 Greatest British Television Programmes drawn up by the British Film Institute in 2000.

Just goes to show, even bad service can be seen as either a problem or an opportunity.

#RIPAndrewSachs #RIPManuel

ENTREPRENEUR TIPS

Posts with the best tips to start growing and stay flowing

"The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing."
~ Walt Disney

Richard Branson's top 12 tips for entrepreneurs



This week, Richard is selling Virgin America to Alaska Airlines in a \$2 billion deal - less than 10 years after he launched the airline. Even after selling it, he will still keep getting income by licensing the Virgin brand to the company.

This is yet another billion dollar deal that Richard's Virgin Group has achieved while he spends eight months of the year on his Necker Island, where I've spent a few weeks with him over the last few years (here dressed as Pirates on his super-yacht, the Necker Belle).

What does it take to think more like Richard? Here's my list of his Top 12 Tips that I've used - and recommend you use - to be a smarter entrepreneur:

Tip #1 - Listen more than you talk. Nobody learned anything by hearing themselves speak.

Tip #2 - Three steps to success: Hire great talent, give them the tools to succeed, and get out of the way.

Tip #3 - Train people well enough so they can leave, treat them well enough so they don't want to.

Tip #4 - It is only by being bold that you get anywhere. If you are a risk-taker, then the art is to protect the downside. The brave may not live forever — But the cautious do not live at all.

Tip #5 - Have courage. Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak; courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen.

Tip #6 - I never get the accountants in before I start up a business. It's done on gut feeling, especially if I can see that they are taking the mickey out of the consumer.

Tip #7 - You don't learn to walk by following rules. You learn by doing, and by falling over. One thing is certain in business. You and everyone around you will make mistakes.

Tip #8 - There is no greater thing you can do with your life and your work than follow your passions — in a way that serves the world and you. As soon as something stops being fun, I think it's time to move on. Life is too short to be unhappy.

Tip #9 - Fun is at the core of the way I like to do business and it has been key to everything I've done from the outset. More than any other element, fun is the secret of Virgin's success.

Tip #10 - If somebody offers you an amazing opportunity but you are not sure you can do it, say yes — then learn how to do it later!

Tip #11 - I have always believed that the only way to cope with a cash crisis is not to contract but to try to expand out of it.

Tip #12 - For a successful entrepreneur it can mean extreme wealth. But with extreme wealth comes extreme responsibility. And the responsibility for me is to invest in creating new businesses, create jobs, employ people, and to put money aside to tackle issues where we can make a difference.

Which one or more of these could you start practicing today?

And to end, I'll add my own tip to this list - take the time each year to connect with the role models who inspire you and, in the words of Richard, "Listen. It makes you sound smarter."

For more on how Richard Branson thinks - <http://bit.ly/my-time-on-neckar>



The 10 commandments of entrepreneurship



#1 - Don't start a company for the money. Start a company for the mission and the money will follow.

#2 - Don't think small and start big. Think big and start small.

#3 - Don't sell to people you don't love, products they don't need. Find people you love, and serve them what they need.

#4 - Don't ask *"how can I make money"*. Ask *"how can I help others make money"*.

#5 - Don't find a team to work for you. Find a team you want to work for.

#6 - Don't ask *"what do I need to do"*. Ask *"What do I need to help others to do."*

#7 - Don't measure your wealth by quantity of money. Measure it by quality of time.

#8 - Don't have an "*exit strategy*" where you win when you end. Have an "*enter strategy*" where you win when you begin.

#9 - Don't set a goal to achieve a goal. Set a goal so you can be the person you need to be to achieve that goal.

#10 - Don't climb mountains so the world can see you. Climb mountains so you can see the world.

"It belongs to the imperfection of everything human that man can only attain his desire by passing through its opposite." ~ Soren Kierkegaard



Academics vs entrepreneurship



I worked hard through school and graduated from University of Cambridge, and then I had to spend 10 years unlearning everything I had learned before I could succeed as an entrepreneur.

In my early startups (which all failed) I kept approaching them like I approached exams. I would learn everything I could about my market, prep hard on my product development and rely on my IQ to predict how the market would respond to my product on launch day - The Exam...

When I launched my products and they didn't sell, I would think I had failed, get depressed, and then start all over again.

It took a long time to realize that entrepreneurs are the opposite of academics. They don't put knowledge before action. They put action before knowledge, and learn through practice not theory.

After that, I launched early, and all the learning happened once the exam had begun.

In my early days, I would try and do it all myself, thinking that if I had to get others to do the work for me I was cheating.

It was only later I realized that while at school the smartest people knew how to do it all themselves, in business the smartest people know how to not do it all themselves. Getting others to do the work wasn't cheating. It was leadership.

The reward of being smarter than those around you at school was high marks and class prizes. The reward of being smarter than those around you in business was guaranteed financial failure.

It was only when I realized that the smartest entrepreneurs weren't the ones who were smartest in their team, but the ones who surrounded themselves with people smarter than them, that my businesses had a chance to grow.

And the biggest lesson of all, was that while success at school came to those who worked hard to know the subjects best, success in business - and in life - came to those who worked hard to know themselves best.

Not to say that school wasn't valuable. It was. But just as the rules of football are opposite to the rules of basketball, the rules of academia are opposite to the rules of entrepreneurship.

So if you're going to be an entrepreneur, unlearn before you learn so you don't have to undo the things you do.

Steve Jobs' top 10 rules of thumb



Great entrepreneurs don't use rule books, but they do use rules of thumb:

Rule books are fixed. Rules of thumb are flexible.

Rule books put you in a box. Rules of thumb point you on a path.

Rule books instruct you. Rules of thumb inspire you.

All the ingredients of fast-growing companies - Creativity, culture, talent, team and trust - grow with the guidance of the right rules of thumb.

Here's Steve Jobs' Top 10:

Rule 1 - *"Be a yardstick of quality. Some people aren't used to an environment where excellence is expected."*

Rule 2 - *"Design is not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works."*

Rule 3 - *“One of my mantras - focus and simplicity. Simple can be harder than complex.”*

Rule 4 - *“My model for business is The Beatles. They were four guys who kept each other’s kind of negative tendencies in check. They balanced each other and the total was greater than the sum of the parts. That’s how I see business: great things in business are never done by one person, they’re done by a team of people.”*

Rule 5 - *“Sometimes when you innovate, you make mistakes. It is best to admit them quickly, and get on with improving your other innovations.”*

Rule 6 - *“The only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven’t found it yet, keep looking.”*

Rule 7 - *“For the past 33 years, I have looked in the mirror every morning and asked myself: ‘If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?’ And whenever the answer has been ‘No’ for too many days in a row, I know I need to change something.”*

Rule 8 - *“Your time is limited, so don’t waste it living someone else’s life.”*

Rule 9 - *“Overthinking leads to negative thoughts”*

Rule 10 - *“Stay hungry, stay foolish.”*

When you throw away the rule book, and write down your rules of thumb, you’re writing down your guiding principles. They give you a simple compass to follow instead of a complex map to remember. What are yours?



Are you trying to be first or last?

Famous Last Movers: "The last will be first."

FIRST MOVER	LAST MOVER	FIRST MOVER	LAST MOVER
 Jerry Yang & David Filo Yahoo!	 Larry Page & Sergey Brin Google	 Tom Anderson MySpace	 Mark Zuckerberg Facebook
 George Eastman Kodak	 Kevin Systrom Instagram	 Martin Eberhard Tesla	 Elon Musk Tesla

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Marie Ruzicka, Penelope Wee and 1.3k others Top comments ▾

660 shares 92 comments

Are you trying too hard to be first when you should be trying to be last?

Peter Thiel, Facebook's first outside investor, calls this the *"Last Mover Advantage."*

As he explained in one of his Stanford startup lectures, *"People often talk about 'first mover advantage.' But focusing on that may be problematic; you might move first then fade away."*

"More important than being the first mover is the last mover. You have to be durable. Chess Grandmaster Jose Raul Capablanca put it very well: to succeed 'you must study the endgame before anything else.'"

Peter is also a Chess Grandmaster and likens business to chess. In Chess, the winner isn't the first to move. The winner is always the last to move.

Here's some famous entrepreneurial examples of how the first to move are forgotten while the last to move remain:

Jerry Yang & David Filo were one of the first to create a global search engine for the Internet in 1994, Yahoo! Larry Page & Sergey Brin started Google two years later, and found a better way to organize search than Yahoo! - through algorithms instead of manually.

It took longer to get going, but Google eventually overtook Yahoo! as the leading search engine and this year Google became worth \$550 billion while the Yahoo! website (which was once valued at over \$100 billion) sold to Verizon for \$4.8 billion (less than 1% of Google's value).

Similarly, in 2003 Tom Anderson and a group of employees from Friendster launched MySpace as one of the first globally recognized social networks. A year later Mark Zuckerberg looked for ways to improve on MySpace's concept and launched Facebook.

Despite MySpace becoming the most visited site in the US in 2006 and the leading social network in the world from 2005 to 2009, it eventually fell to Facebook's more popular interface and sold to Justin Timberlake and a group of investors for just \$35 million in 2011. Meanwhile, Facebook has gone on to grow to \$330 billion in value.

Kodak invented the digital camera in 1975, but did nothing with the idea. In 2010, Kevin Systrom saw digital photos as the future and launched Instagram. Two years later, in 2012, he sold Instagram to Facebook for \$1 billion - in the same year Kodak went bankrupt.

And a fourth example: Tesla. Founded by Martin Eberhard and Marc Tarpinning in 2003 to build electric cars, the company burned through money from the beginning. The pair brought on Elon Musk as an investor, and despite being the ones with the initial idea, few have heard of either of them today.

Martin got fired as CEO from the Board in 2007, and Elon Musk took over in 2008. Because it isn't the idea that counts as much as the execution. Today, after a series of crises and near-bankruptcies Tesla's share price has grown in the last 5 years from 22c per share to \$213 per share, and is worth \$35 billion today.

How can you think like a last mover instead of a first mover? Last movers think of the execution more than the ideas, they think of the future more than the past, and they think of the market more than the product.

How do you do this? In his book, Zero to One, Peter boils it down to asking one simple question - the *"Durability Question"*:

"Will your market position be defensible in 10 and 20 years into the future?"

"Every entrepreneur should plan to be the last mover in her particular market. That starts with asking yourself: what will the world look like 10 and 20 years from now, and how will my business fit in?"

As we reach the end of 2016, every move you make is one of the last moves. But the end game of 2016 sets up the new game in 2017. So play well.

"Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end." ~ Seneca



How to build a Minimum Viable Product

How to build a Minimum Viable Product

Not like this....

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1 2 3 4 5

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Michelle Clarke, Simone Holt and 1.2k others

693 shares 101 comments

If you're working on your startup, this image is for you. The wrong way to launch is to spend too much time planning and building your product without any customers. The right way to launch is to get out a Minimum Viable Product so you can earn and learn as soon as possible.

As Eric Reis says: *"A Minimum Viable Product is that version of a new product which allows a team to collect the maximum amount of validated learning about customers with the least effort."*

How to create an MVP in the fastest time possible:

- 1) Define who your ideal customer is
- 2) Focus on the problem you're going to solve for them

3) Create a solution with the minimum number of steps to results

Collect a small number of beta users, and launch your MVP to your beta group to test and measure:

- 1) How happy are they when they use it?
- 2) How often do they continue to use it?
- 3) How many others do they refer the product to?

Then create a version 2, 3, 4 based on what you learn and what they tell you:

- 1) What would make the product even better?
- 2) What are they willing to pay for?
- 3) How much are they willing to pay?

An MVP isn't about getting your ideal product, but getting your ideal customer, and then co-creating the next version from their feedback. If in doubt if you're ready to launch, launch first and check later.

"If you are not embarrassed by the first version of your product, you've launched too late." ~ Reid Hoffman, LinkedIn

How amazing are you?



Your entrepreneurial journey isn't meant to be simple or straightforward. It's meant to be amazing.

The word "*amaze*" comes from "*maze*", which is a symbol of self-discovery in many ancient cultures. Choosing to be an entrepreneur is a modern path to self-discovery. So every time your journey looks too challenging or too unclear, remember it's meant to.

Then look inside, make your choice and keep going.

The point of the maze is not to find your way, but to find your self.

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us." ~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

Are you taking the path of working hard or hard work?



Are you taking the path of working hard or hard work?

The **RIGHT WAY**: Working hard is about doubling down on what you're best at and love most. When you work hard in your genius and in your flow, it doesn't feel like hard work. The reward is in the work, because you keep getting better at what you're best at.

That's why two of the wealthiest men in the world, Bill Gates and Warren Buffett, keep on working hard even though they don't need to.

As Warren Buffett says, "Take a job that you love. You will jump out of bed in the morning. I think you are out of your mind if you keep taking jobs that you don't like because you think it will look good on your resume. Isn't that a little like saving up sex for your old age?"

The **WRONG WAY**: Hard work is the opposite of working hard. It's when you work on the things you're not greatest at. It's when you feel like you're

swimming upstream, and life becomes a struggle. Instead of every hour leaving you more energized, it leaves you more exhausted.

We all have the same 24 hours of time. Use yours wisely. Are you in your flow? Or out of flow? What do you need to change and who do you need to surround yourself with so their strengths match your weaknesses and everyone can work hard at what they're best at?

Benjamin Franklin said: "Hide not your talents. They for use were made. What's a sundial in the shade?"

10 more second opinions:

"Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do." ~ Steve Jobs

"If you do what you love, you'll never work a day in your life." ~ Marc Antony

"Talent is good. Practice is better. Passion is best." ~ Frank Lloyd Wright

"He who would learn to fly one day must first learn to stand and walk and run and climb and dance; one cannot fly into flying." ~ Nietzsche

"Everyone has been made for some particular work, and the desire for that work has been put in every heart." ~ Rumi

"Your work is to discover your work and then with all your heart to give yourself to it." ~ Buddha

"There is no passion to be found playing small - in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living." ~ Nelson Mandela

"My philosophy has always been, 'do what you love and the money will follow.'" ~ Amy Weber

"The more enjoyment you get out of your work, the more money you will make." ~ Mark Twain

"If you are born poor its not your mistake, But if you die poor its your mistake." ~ Bill Gates



Top 10 entrepreneurs to follow



Who are the top 10 entrepreneurs to follow on Facebook? Here's a list of ten entrepreneurs who have the most active pages, with the most shareable posts and videos for fellow entrepreneurs:

#1 - Sheryl Sandberg

The COO of Facebook and author of *“Lean In”*, Sheryl is always posting the latest on women leadership, entrepreneurship and her own personal journey at Facebook.

#2 - Arnold Schwarzenegger

Arnie is a pro at Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram. He's constantly posting on his latest adventures, and his mission to support climate action.

#3 - Richard Branson

One of the world's most recognizable entrepreneur, Richard's facebook page is a mix of personal photos, how-to articles and inspiring posts.

#4 - Randi Zuckerberg

Older sister of Mark and founder of Zuckerberg Media, Randi is one of the most prolific users of Facebook live video, with plenty of content for entrepreneurs and women leaders.

#5 - Mark Cuban

Star of Shark Tank and owner of the Dallas Mavericks, Mark is always posting provocative entrepreneur-related comments and articles

#6 - Mark Zuckerberg <https://www.facebook.com/zuck>

Mark Z has over 54 million followers, which isn't surprising given it's his social network. His posts are a mix of his personal moments at work, his baby and his dog.

#7 - Marie Forleo

Marie's page is packed with videos, interviews and articles to support entrepreneurs, linked to her blog and youtube channel.

#8 - Gary Vaynerchuk

Gary Vee is at the forefront of what's new in social media and is the king of the hustle. Plenty of live video and q&a's, also on youtube, snapchat.

#9 - Mari Smith

If you're looking for the latest tips and developments to support your Facebook marketing, Mari's the go-to-person - brought to you in partnership with Facebook Business.

#10 - Roger James Hamilton

That's me - Posting Entrepreneur Stories from around the world. My "*Entrepreneurs Inspiration*" album, shared 149,000+ times, is a collection of 100+ shareable stories. You can read them here: <http://bit.ly/entrepreneur-inspiration>

Have one or more entrepreneurs to add to the list? Add them in the comments below...

Everyone on this list aren't "*Teaching teachers*" but "*Leading learners*", constantly staying up-to-date with the cutting edge of entrepreneurship. The world is moving fast, so keep connected to those at the sharp end. Keep learning, keep sharing and keep nimble.

"Stay hungry, stay foolish." ~ Steve Jobs



How do you avoid bottlenecks in your business?



How do you avoid bottlenecks in your business? Don't design it as a bottle.

All the fastest growing businesses aren't designed as bottles. They're designed as plumbing systems. Take Grab (formerly GrabTaxi) as an example - Malaysia's four-year-old ride-sharing startup just raised another \$750 million this week, at a valuation of over \$2 billion.

The company began after Tan Hooi Ling and her co-founder, Anthony Tan, were runners up of Harvard Business School's Business Plan Contest in 2011 with the idea of launching GrabTaxi in Malaysia.

Hooi Ling says "Right after graduation, I flew back and went straight to a storeroom in Segambut (In Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia). It's in the middle of nowhere. There was a storeroom that we could use for free."

That's where GrabTaxi started, before growing rapidly into Malaysia's first Unicorn, relocating its Head Office to Singapore, and raising over \$1 billion from China's Didi and Japan's Softbank.

Today, Grab is in Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines and is on track to reach over 3 million rides a day within the year.

Hooi Ling took on the role of COO and says "I like to fix plumbing. I think a couple of things I spend most of my time on these days is, firstly, on product. Secondly, is our people and, thirdly, is customer experience or customer support... I call them plumbing because once you get them working really well, it's amazing what kind of output comes from them."

So what's the difference between designing a business as a bottle where you're the bottleneck, compared to designing a business as a plumbing system, where you're the plumber?

Business in a Bottle:

When you design your business as a bottle, it has a hierarchy structure where everything from decision making to marketing to sales to production have bottlenecks. The focus for daily improvement is on the management and product. Scaling x10 or x100 rapidly is impossible as breaks in flow lead to exponential growth in management, service and resource problems. Most often you become the bottleneck.

Business as a Plumbing System:

When you design your business as a plumbing system, it has a network structure where everything is decentralized, automated, self-correcting and self-improving. The focus for daily improvement is on the user experience and platform. Scaling x10 or x100 rapidly can happen by matching growing demand with growing supply. Flow grows exponentially provided you focus at being the plumber.

All today's exponential businesses, from Uber to AirBnB (which just raised \$850m this week at a \$30 billion valuation) to Grab, have grown into billion dollar businesses in a matter of years by being designed like this.

What can you do to turn your business from a bottle to a plumbing system?

How can you switch from product to platform?

How can you create a self-improving user experience?

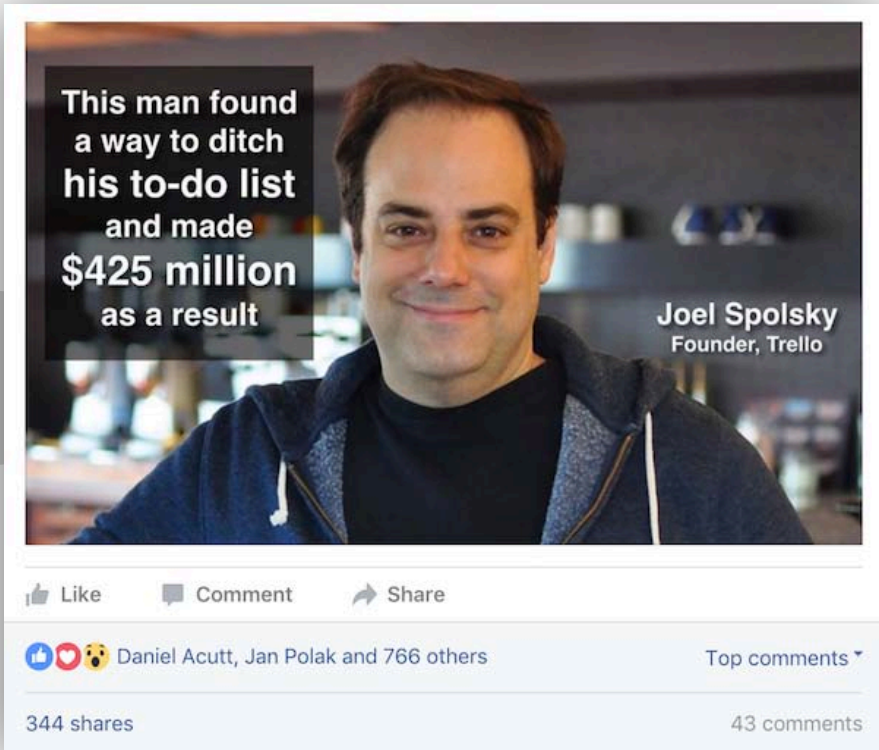
How can you decentralize and automate everything?

And if you don't make any changes, don't be surprised if you keep on finding yourself as the bottleneck in your bottle.

"In most organizations, the bottleneck is at the top of the bottle." ~ Peter Drucker



Is your to-do list too long?



Is your to-do list too long? Joel Spolsky found a way to solve his to-do list. If that wasn't reward enough, he sold his solution - Trello - to Atlassian this week for \$425 million.

How do you solve a to-do list? Five years ago, Joel and his team at Fog Creek Software took a tip from the East to solve theirs with the Japanese concept of 'Kanban'.

'Kanban' (which means 'signboard' in Japanese) was created by Taiichi Ohno in the 1940s for Toyota. Known as the father of 'Just-in-time' and 'Lean Manufacturing', Taiichi's philosophy valued flow over queues. Things like 'stock' and 'to-do lists' were queues.

Taiichi lived by 'ten precepts' which are today at the heart of fast-growth startups:

- 1) You are a cost. First reduce waste.
- 2) First say, "I can do it." And try before everything.
- 3) The workplace is a teacher. You can find answers only in the workplace.

- 4) Do anything immediately. Starting something right now is the only way to win.
- 5) Once you start something, persevere with it. Do not give up until you finish it.
- 6) Explain difficult things in an easy-to-understand manner. Repeat things that are easy to understand.
- 7) Waste is hidden. Do not hide it. Make problems visible.
- 8) Valueless motions are equal to shortening one's life.
- 9) Re-improve what was improved for further improvement.
- 10) Wisdom is given equally to everybody. The point is whether one can exercise it.

When looking at the excess stock in Toyota's factories, he asked "How can we replace our 'push' system with a 'pull' system?"

'Push' systems grow waste and grow queues. 'Pull' systems cut waste and cut queues.

Creating products, having stock and then trying to sell them is a 'push' system.

Having a customer, getting their order and creating just what they need is a 'pull' system.

Coming up with things to do, and then trying to get them all done in the time available is a 'push' system.

Knowing what's most important to do now, and just doing what is possible with the time available is a 'pull' system.

Taiichi and his team studied supermarkets, which only stocked what was needed to meet demand. They converted this system that minimized stock and queues into the 'kanban' system for Toyota.

As startups began to take on lean principles, kanban boards began appearing to turn 'to-do' lists into 'doin'g schedules.

In its simplest form, a kanban board has three columns: To-do, doing, done. With post-it notes or cards moving from one column to the next as they progressed.

The result? The flow of work can be seen and creates a feeling of achievement. Whereas to-do lists create a feeling of anxiety.

In 2011 Joel and his team turned this 60 year old system into a mobile app and called it 'Trellis' as it allows you to grow. Then, when they couldn't get the URL, they changed the name to 'Trello'.

Then, they launched the app at Techcrunch Disrupt. Joel describes the launch:

"After months of toiling away, the feeling you get from seeing real-world people actually start using your product is the best feeling you will ever get as a software programmer in your professional life.

These are the great moments that make it all worthwhile. We *made* something. People used it. It matters. It's like sex, with clothes on."

The app took off and grew, first to a million users, then to 10 million. This week, with 19 million users, Trello was sold to Atlassian (the Australian tech company that launched Jira and HipChat) for \$425 million.

What if the smallest problems bugging you are also bugging millions of others as well?

And what if - like Joel - the real reason you have your current business (or job) is to find and solve a problem within it, which then becomes the business that really matters.

In fact, what if every problem you have is just an opportunity in disguise?

"Having no problems is the biggest problem of all." ~ Taiichi Ohno



The best books to read this month



What's the best books to read this December?

By coincidence both Richard Branson and Bill Gates each came out with their Top 5 recommended books of 2016 yesterday, so here are 10 books to add to your reading list from the UK's and USA's best known entrepreneurs!

RICHARD BRANSON'S TOP 5 BOOKS

- 1) If I Could Tell You Just One Thing (Richard Reed) - Written by the founder of Innocent Drinks, on the advice he's been given by leaders from Judi Dench and Simon Cowell to Andy Murray and James Cordon.
- 2) Winners (Alastair Cambell) - Written by Former UK PM's Tony Blair's chief strategist, based on interviews with winners from Garry Kasparov to Nelson Mandela to Floyd Mayweather.
- 3) Black Box Thinking (Matthew Syed) - A book on why most people never learn from their mistakes, and how to shift your thinking so that you do.

4) Ending the War on Drugs (Richard Branson) - With a foreword by Richard himself, and contributions from global opinion leaders, this book explains how to tackle a global challenge.

5) Travels with Charley (John Steinbeck) - The story of how John Steinbeck travelled across almost forty states of America with his dog, and what he experienced on the way.

BILL GATES' TOP 5 BOOKS

6) Shoe Dog (Phil Knight) - A memoir by the founder of Nike, this book goes through how he built a global brand and the challenges along the way.

7) The Myth of the Strong Leader (Archie Brown) - In a year where there has been radical changes in leadership in both UK and USA, this book is about the myth of 'strong leadership'.

8) The Grid (Gretchen Bakke) - A deep dive into how America's electrical grid was created, and how it needs to be re-imagined for the green energy future ahead.

9) The Gene (Siddharta Mukherjee) - The New York Times #1 Bestseller and Washington Post Best Book of the Year takes you on a journey to the centre of your genetic code.

10) String Theory (David Foster Wallace) - A book not about science, but about tennis. As Bill Gates says, "This book has nothing to do with physics, but its title will make you look super smart if you're reading it on a train or plane."

Enjoy the books, and add any recommendations of your own in the comments below.

Here's more details on the 10 books above from Richard and Bill's blogs:

<https://www.virgin.com/richard-branson/read-lead>

<https://www.gatesnotes.com/About-Bill-Gates/Best-Books-2016>

"I do think something very magical can happen when you read a good book."
~ J.K. Rowling



The #1 ingredient in entrepreneurs

the #1 ingredient in entrepreneurs

willfulness discipline

drug addict good worker robot

one-hit wonder determination career executive

dreamer

ambition

Based on management essay by Paul Graham

Presented by Pina Vital

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Simone Holt, George Eadie and 611 others

234 shares 29 comments

Do you have the #1 most important ingredient in entrepreneurs?

Paul Graham is co-founder of the entrepreneur incubator, Y Combinator (Its start-ups - including AirBnb & Dropbox - are now worth over \$65 billion). Here he explains the #1 ingredient:

“Like all investors, we spend a lot of time trying to learn how to predict which startups will succeed... At first we thought it might be intelligence. But while it certainly helps to be smart, it's not the deciding factor. There are plenty of people as smart as Bill Gates who achieve nothing.”

“We learned quickly that the most important predictor of success is determination.”

“The simplest form of determination is sheer willfulness. When you want something, you must have it, no matter what.”

WILL vs DISCIPLINE: THE SLIPPERY MELON SEED

“Being strong-willed is not enough, however... The more willful you are, the more disciplined you have to be.”

“We can imagine will and discipline as two fingers squeezing a slippery melon seed. The harder they squeeze, the further the seed flies, but they must both squeeze equally or the seed spins off sideways.”

“The stronger your will, the less anyone will be able to argue with you except yourself... and if you have more will than discipline you'll just give into them and end up on a local maximum like drug addiction.”

“Another consequence of the melon seed model is that the more willful you are, the more dangerous it is to be undisciplined... In some very energetic people's lives you see something like wing flutter, where they alternate between doing great work and doing absolutely nothing.”

“There's one other major component of determination: ambition. If willfulness and discipline are what get you to your destination, ambition is how you choose it.”

Each of these on its own can be seen as a weakness or fault, but together, they make a great entrepreneur:

Willfulness alone = addict

Discipline alone = machine

Ambition alone = dreamer

All three together = addicted dream machine = success!

DETERMINATION = WILFULNESS + DISCIPLINE x AMBITION

“So here in sum is how determination seems to work: it consists of willfulness balanced with discipline, aimed by ambition.”

The good news? You can grow these now: *“You may be able to increase your strength of will somewhat; you can definitely learn self-discipline; and almost everyone is practically malnourished when it comes to ambition.”*

The bad news? You won't easily find others that think like you, so you need to hunt them out: *"Most people don't know how ambitious to be, especially when they're young... And this problem is exacerbated by having few peers. Ambitious people are rare, so if everyone is mixed together randomly, as they tend to be early in people's lives, then the ambitious ones won't have many ambitious peers. When you take people like this and put them together with other ambitious people, they bloom like dying plants given water."*

What part does your natural talent, purpose and passion play in this equation? As Paul says, *"Note too that determination and talent are not the whole story. There's a third factor in achievement: how much you like the work. If you really love working on something, you don't need determination to drive you; it's what you'd do anyway."*

So now you have a simple formula to improve your chances of success - be OK with being strong-willed, balance it with discipline, and get around ambitious people to think bigger:

Which one of the three do you need to step up in?

Which one of the three needs to be balanced out?

And which one of the three is doing just fine?

Who can you connect with to think bigger?

And who do you know who should also read this?

You might be one small tweak away from your sweet spot: Get a bigger pot to grow your melon and your melon seeds - then get growing and keep adding water and sunshine!

Read more from Paul at <http://paulgraham.com/determination.html>

Infographic by Anna Vidal, Funders & Founders



The 12 best reasons to be an entrepreneur



The 12 best reasons to be an entrepreneur:

“The best way to predict the future is to create it.” ~ Peter Drucker

“Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, the mind can achieve.” — Dr. Napoleon Hill

"I think if you're an entrepreneur, you've got to dream big and then dream bigger." ~ Howard Schultz

"If you can dream it, you can do it." -- Walt Disney

"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover." ~ Mark Twain

"You miss 100 percent of the shots you don't take." ~ Wayne Gretzky

"As an entrepreneur you have to feel like you can jump out of an aeroplane because you're confident that you'll catch a bird flying by. It's an act of stupidity, and most entrepreneurs go splat because the bird doesn't come by, but a few times it does." ~ Reed Hastings

"Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage." ~ Anais Nin

"For a successful entrepreneur it can mean extreme wealth. But with extreme wealth comes extreme responsibility. And the responsibility for me is to invest in creating new businesses, create jobs, employ people, and to put money aside to tackle issues where we can make a difference." ~ Richard Branson

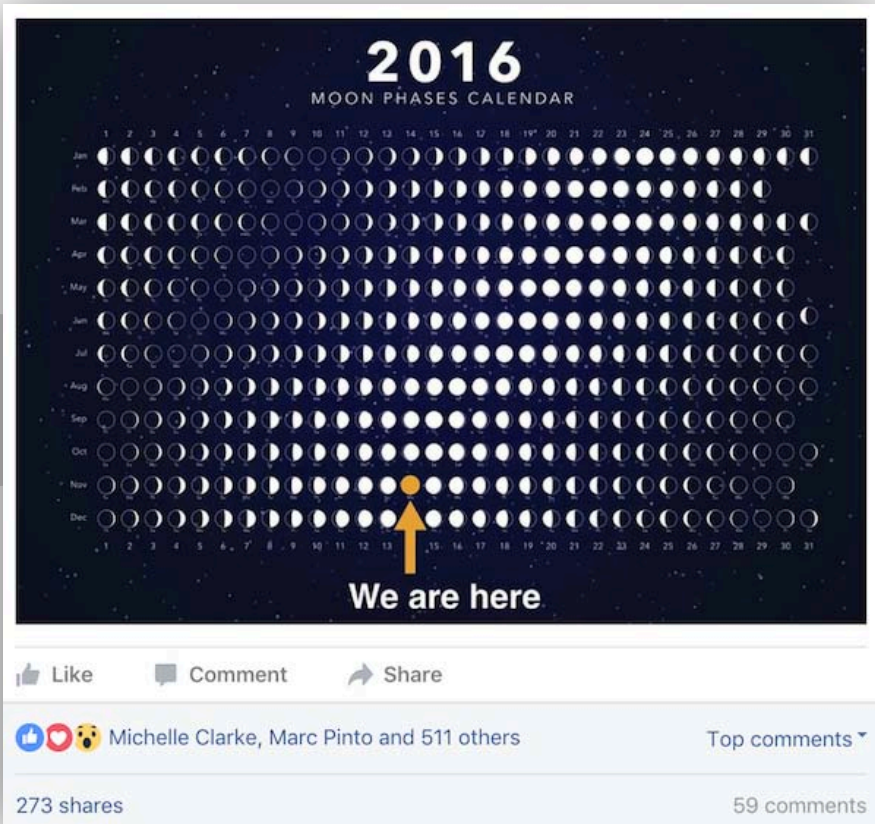
"When you cease to dream you cease to live" - Malcolm Forbes

"Choose a job that you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life." - Confucius

"Any time is a good time to start a company." ~ Ron Conway



Are you running your life by the Sun or the Moon cycle?



On the night of the largest supermoon in 69 years, what better time to ask the question: Are you running your life and your business by the Sun cycle or the Moon cycle?

The Sun cycle is based on the seasons and the year - four quarter cycles and one full Earth cycle around the Sun.

The Moon cycle is based on the weeks and months - four quarter cycles and one full Moon cycle around the Earth.

Since we adopted the Gregorian Calendar as our standard, most of the Western World works mainly by the solar calendar. We make annual plans, get annual pay reviews and file quarterly reports.

Yet most of the East still works by lunar calendars. The Chinese and Hindu Calendars are both lunar, and here in Bali every new moon and full moon is celebrated.

Which calendar is best for a business today? The answer is that the lunar cycle is far more effective for a modern-day startup and fast growth company. For three reasons:

Reason #1: Flow vs Grow

In today's fast-moving times, what is even more important than how well you grow (your size), is how well you flow (your speed). While the sun cycle gives four seasons to grow, the moon cycle gives four seasons to flow:

The four solar seasons to grow:

Spring: Sow

Summer: Grow

Autumn: Reap

Winter: Rest

The four moon phases to flow:

Waxing new moon: Plan

Waxing first quarter: Act (push)

Waning full moon: Connect (pull)

Waning third quarter: Complete

By breaking each week into a specific stage of flow, as the Chinese have done for over 5,000 years, there's a right time to move fast and a right time to move slow.

"As in nature, all is ebb and tide, all is wave motion." ~ Nikola Tesla

Imagine the moon as a wave, which begins with the last wave washing back from shore (New moon), building up into the next wave (First quarter), cresting as the next wave (Full moon) and breaking towards the shore (Third quarter). A surfer doesn't fight the flow, but moves out with the wave, gets ready for the full moon, and surfs. When I see entrepreneurs tune in to this cycle, it is amazing to see how much more results they achieve with far less effort and stress.

Reason #2: Frequency

The word “Month” comes from the word “Moon”, and the word “Week” comes from “Turn”, with each week representing a seven-day quarter turn of the moon.

When you work with a weekly frequency, there is a far more rapid review and renew spiral within your business. Having weekly metrics, weekly financials, weekly review sessions and weekly goals.

Set each month as a cycle in itself, and treat the four weeks as four seasons. In the week after the full moon, maximise your creation (This is ‘Dynamo’ / spring frequency). In the second week, maximise your action (This is ‘Blaze’ / summer frequency). In the third week, maximise your connection (This is ‘Tempo’ / autumn frequency) and in the final week, maximise your recovery and review (This is ‘Steel’ / winter frequency). By doing the right thing at the right time, you’ll find each week far more effortless and effective.

Working to this rhythm, you can achieve as much learning in one quarter as it used to take in one year. Every 13 weeks, run a quarterly review which is the equivalent of an old annual review, and renew the business for the quarter ahead.

Reason #3: Feminine Energy

If you travel to Bali, India, China or any country where the culture is more connected to the moon cycle than the sun cycle (and where the biggest celebrations and festivals are linked to the moon), you will notice a distinct difference in the energy, which is a more “Yin” energy than a “Yang” energy.

In these cultures there is more of a focus on “flow” than “grow”, and more focus on connection than competition.

The entire world of business has moved from hierarchies to networks, and from products to people. When you tune in to a lunar frequency, you upgrade the energy within your culture to one that is more in sync with the world we live in today.

Never underestimate the power of the moon. With this supermoon, earthquakes were predicted before the tragic quakes in New Zealand yesterday. Supertides will be hitting tonight.

Our bodies and brains are 70% water, so tune in to the moon’s cycle, and surf.

“Never give up, for that is just the place and time that the tide will turn.” ~ Harriet Beecher Stowe



The Beatles strategy



To succeed in business, use “The Beatles Strategy”

Most startups fail because the founders are too busy trying to build a business instead of simply following flow. Following flow means creating cash flow as you’re building trust with your market. It isn’t about your record. It’s about your track record.

For example, the Beatles took six years playing, earning and learning before they even recorded an album of their own original music.

Here's the three steps the Beatles took to achieve their overnight success:

STEP 1 - PLAY COVERS!

From 1957 to 1960 The Beatles played covers of other bands. In fact, Buddy Holly and the Crickets were such a hit with them, that's where their name came from.

As John Lennon said *"I was looking for a name like The Crickets that meant two things, and from crickets I got to beetles. And I changed the BEA, because 'beetles' didn't mean two things on its own. When you said it, people thought of crawly things; and when you read it, it was beat music"*

When you try and start your business by building original products with no track record, it's a long climb up the mountain.

When you already partner with products or brands that people trust and know, you don't need to climb. You can parachute in.

Who can you partner with in your industry? All the top brands already have partnership programs you could easily join, allowing you to learn and earn in flow from day one.

STEP 2 - THE OPENING ACT!

From 1961 to 1963, the Beatles were invited by the Cavern Club, a Jazz club in Liverpool, to play in between the more popular Jazz acts. Now they had a captive audience! They could now start playing their own music as they had earned the right to under their own brand.

At the Cavern Club, the Beatles were earning while they were learning and experimenting. That's where they met Brian Epstein, who became their manager.

When you're ready to offer your own original products, who are you partnering with to ensure you have a captive audience? Only in this flow can you build your reputation while you are earning, and it is in this flow where you find all your opportunities and synchronicities.

STEP 3 - THE MAIN STAGE!

In 1963, the Beatles finally recorded their own album with Brian Epstein and George Martin, at Abbey Road. It took a number of releases and a national tour before they got their first No.1 with *"Please Please Me"*. It was another

year before they traveled to the US in 1964, which kicked off Beatlemania. That then led to a string of number one albums from 1964 to 1970.

Six years without their own product, earning while they were learning. Followed by six years of an overnight success.

That's "*The Beatles Strategy*" - To have the attention of others, we need to start by earning the right to their time. Once we earn their trust, we earn the right to redirect their attention to our own original work.

In your business, are you digging in a desert, or are you following flow?

You need to dig to create your own river of flow. If you dig off an existing river of flow, over time it's easy to create your own flow. But if you dig in a desert, you don't dig a river. You simply end up digging a hole.

Give to get. Step by step.

"In the end, the love you take is equal to the love you make." ~ Paul McCartney



Make your customer the hero



This week Snapchat launched their Snapchat Spectacles to the public. Why have they been such a hit when Google Glass wasn't?

Because Snapchat's founder, Evan Spiegel, took a page out of Apple's launch of the iPod 15 years ago:

Instead of focusing on the product, the launch focused at the customer. Why would someone want Snapchat Spectacles? Just to shoot 10 second videos? No. Because they're fun to use and cool to wear.

Instead of launching the high-tech glasses worldwide or through retail stores, Snapchat put one minion-like bright-yellow vending kiosk in Venice, California on Thursday.

The first buyers lined up - some for hours - to get their spectacles, making anyone who got one wear it like a badge of honour.

The kiosks will keep showing up for just 24 hours in different locations around the US. The quirky branding and packaging make the Snapchat Spectacles prized possessions - just like the very first Apple iPods.

Are you focusing on your product, or your customer?

Are you making your customer the hero, or the victim?

Media-led marketing of the 20th Century sold to customer's fears:

"Are you sick? You need this pill! Are you fat? You need this diet! Buy this technology or you'll be left behind..."

21st Century marketing has flipped 180 degrees, from stoking your customer's anxieties to appealing to their aspirations. Why? Because with social media, when your customer is the hero instead of the victim, they stay loyal - and they share.

"Marketing is no longer about the stuff that you make, but about the stories you tell." ~ Seth Godin

Earning word-of-mouth is far more effective today than buying media space. So spend less time thinking about your product, and spend more time on making your customer the hero.

It doesn't just make for better business, it makes for a better world.

That one bright yellow Snapchat Spectacles vending machine has led to mass global media coverage and trending hashtags for Snapchat. But asked why he even came out with the Spectacles in the first place, Evan just said "Because it's fun."



The 7 human rights we can do without



Today - Dec 10 - is Human Rights Day! In a day when we celebrate the rights that all of humanity deserve, are there any rights we should be taking away?

My experience of the top leaders and entrepreneurs is that their success comes directly from depriving themselves of certain rights that others take for granted.

By sacrificing these rights, they don't sink, chained to an "anchor of entitlement", but fly free, lifting themselves and others to our highest spirit.

You won't find these rights mentioned in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but it's easy to see where they show up in our modern culture, and in our own lives if we're not careful.

Here's 7 rights that all top leaders deprive themselves of (most of the time):

- 1) The right to complain instead of taking action
- 2) The right to blame others instead of taking responsibility

- 3) The right to be a jerk instead of showing compassion
- 4) The right to be selfish instead of sharing fairly
- 5) The right to be comfortable instead of facing the truth
- 6) The right to suffer in lack instead of spreading abundance
- 7) The right to live small instead of fulfilling your true potential

Which ones do you find yourself falling into? Use Human Rights Day to make a new commitment to delete them from tomorrow. Then delete them from the next week. Then the next month and year.

When you see the positive impact in what you do and who you become, then delete them for life.

"There is no passion to be found playing small - in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living." ~ Nelson Mandela



12 rules for startups



MARK CUBAN'S 12 RULES FOR STARTUPS

RULE 01 Don't start a company unless it's an obsession and something you love.

RULE 02 If you have an exit strategy, it's not an obsession.

RULE 03 Hire people who you think will love working there.

RULE 04 Sales cure all.

RULE 05 Know your core competencies and focus on being great at them.

RULE 06 Lunch is a chance to get out of the office and talk.

RULE 07 No offices. There is nothing private in a startup.

RULE 08 As far as technology, go with what you know.

RULE 09 Keep the organization flat.

RULE 10 Never buy swag.

RULE 11 Never hire a PE firm.

RULE 12 Make the job fun for employees.

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Entrepreneur

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Mark Cuban's 12 Rules for Startups via Entrepreneur - My top 5 favourites:

Rule 05: Know your core competencies and focus on being great at them

Rule 12: Make the job fun for employees

Rule 09: Keep the organization flat

Rule 01: Don't start a company unless it's an obsession and something you love

Rule 02: If you have an exit strategy, it's not an obsession

The last two echo Jeff Bezo's comment to Peter Diamandis on mercenaries and missionaries:

"It's so hard to catch something that everybody already knows is hot. Instead, position yourself and wait for the wave to come to you. So then you ask, Position myself where? Position yourself with something that captures your curiosity, something that you're missionary about."

I tell people that when we acquire companies, I'm always trying to figure out: Is this person who leads this company a missionary or a mercenary? The missionary is building the product and building the service because they love the customer, because they love the product, because they love the service. The mercenary is building the product or service so that they can flip the company and make money.

One of the great paradoxes is that the missionaries end up making more money than the mercenaries anyway. And so pick something that you are passionate about, that's my number one piece of advice."

FAILING FORWARDS

Stories of success born out of failures

"A winner is just a loser who tried one more time."
~ George M Moore Jr



Losing your way to billion dollars



How Sara Blakely lost her way to a billion dollars: 8 years ago Sara lost in the finale of Richard Branson's reality TV show "Rebel Billionaire". The loss was one of many that turned Sara into the world's youngest self-made female billionaire...

Sara's entire life has been about failure. She says "My dad encouraged us to fail. Growing up, he would ask us what we failed at that week. If we didn't have something, he would be disappointed. It changed my mindset at an early age that failure is not the outcome, failure is not trying. Don't be afraid to fail."

In the 1990s Sara became an expert in failure by selling fax machines (remember those?) and was often so terrified of meeting prospects she would burst into tears and drive around the block to calm down before her sales calls.

Overheating from the stress of it, she decided to cut the feet off her pantyhose to cool down. That was her 'aha' moment. As she says "When I cut the feet out of my pantyhose that one time, I saw it as my sign."

She decided to start a business to sell the footless pantyhose in 1998 with just \$5,000 - all of her savings - and called the company "Spanx".

Did the failure stop then? No - "When I invented Spanx I heard 'no' for two years. It didn't faze me. I didn't have a special ability, it was sheer drive and telling myself to keep going."

FAILING BIG

Working from her kitchen, she made a push for publicity, which simply means your failure becomes more public. For example, her experience with the English: "On the BBC, I was asked what Spanx could do for women in the U.K. I said, 'It smoothes and separates your fanny.' The interviewer looked mortified. I had no idea what was going on, so I kept rambling on about fannies until he stopped me and said, 'I think you mean bum.' The word fanny means vagina in England."

Her publicity led her to Oprah and Richard Branson's "Rebel Billionaire" in 2005. She ended up losing that too, but the show gave her a chance to realise what she really wanted to do with her future success - Start a charity for women. Branson gave her \$750,000 to start her charity, the Sarah Blakely Foundation, to support women leaders.

What happens when your failure rate goes up? Your luck rate goes up too.

To face her failures, Sara had luck on her back - literally!

"I found my lucky red backpack from college in my mom's attic and became determined that it was going to change my path for Spanx because I kept hearing no, no, no. It went with me every step of the way, to the point of being made fun of because I went to Neiman Marcus headquarters with this old backpack as my presentation bag. Now, with the Sarah Blakely Foundation, every woman we send to college or help start a business

receives a lucky red backpack. They're usually more excited about that than the money, which I totally get. The backpack is a symbol of their potential."

THE BIGGEST RISK

This year Sara Blakely became the youngest female Billionaire in the world, with Spanx generating over \$250 million in annual revenue. Sara puts this down to her sheer determination:

"The biggest risk in life is not risking. Every risk you take in life is in direct proportion to the reward. If I'm afraid of something, it's the next thing I have to go do. That's just the way I've been."

What are your big dreams? Where are your greatest risks?

Get your own lucky charm on your back, cut off the feet of whatever is holding you back, turn on the music and take the path that Sara took.

Today, 41 year-old Sara makes many speeches to inspire other entrepreneurs, and even the song she uses to get in her zone is the anthem to failure. As she says - "Eminem's 'Lose Yourself' is my go-to song to pump myself up if I'm having a tough time or if I get really nervous right before a speech."

Now that she's a billionaire, her mission is "World Butt Domination" through Spanx and supporting women through her foundation, which has donated \$17.5 million to charities supporting girls and women in South Africa.

Her failure has meant her wealth has come with humility, which is a different kind of wealth: "I feel like money makes you more of who you already are. If you're an a**hole, you become a bigger a**hole. If you're nice, you become nicer. Money is fun to make, fun to spend and fun to give away."

Use Sara's story to inspire your day: Lose yourself and win the game.

What's the price when you fail



This week, Elon Musk watched as his latest attempt at landing his Space X Falcon 9 rocket went wrong, ice froze one of the legs and the entire rocket toppled over and exploded.

That's another \$60 million up in smoke. What was Elon's reaction?

First, he tweeted *"Well, at least the pieces were bigger this time!"*

Then, he posted a video of the explosion on Instagram.

And finally, he posted yesterday *"My best guess for 2016: ~ 70% landing success rate (so still a few more RUDs to go), then hopefully improving to ~90% in 2017."*

"RUD" stands for *"Rapid Unscheduled Disassembly"* which is another way of saying *"it blew up"*...

What can we learn from Elon happily blowing up his rockets?

Most people would see this as an expensive failure, but Elon is a master of learning by failing, and he expects to fail epically and often.

It doesn't cost Elon to fail as he builds it into his business model. Each Falcon rocket is expected to be lost anyway if he wasn't testing how to land them. This one had already done its job of delivering an ocean monitoring satellite in orbit, which had already paid for the rocket.

This year, there are another 10 to 20 falcon rockets scheduled for take-off, each already paid for by the companies and governments paying Elon to send their cargos to space. With revenue secure, he focuses his time on how to test new innovations (like landing the rockets back safely).

We've moved from the industrial age where product development and testing took place BEFORE delivery, to the technological age where product development and testing takes place DURING delivery.

How can you increase the testing you can do? When in front of customers? When serving your customers? When delivering an existing product to develop the next product?

In the old paradigm, it was easy to dismiss testing as being too costly.

In the new paradigm, it's NOT testing that's far more expensive.

When Elon finally works out how to return his rockets each time, he'll be saving himself over a billion dollars of lost rockets each year - and he'll be able to cost his trips to be far ahead of the competition.

You don't need to be a billionaire like Elon to test like him.

But you do need to test like Elon to be a billionaire like him.

Failing isn't where the price is. Failing is where the profit is.

"If things aren't failing, you are not innovating enough." ~ Elon Musk

Michael Phelps incredible story



With 3 gold medals this week, Michael Phelps is now equaling the 2,168 year old record set by Leonidas of Rhodes (in 152 BC) for the most individual Olympic gold medals and has a chance to beat it with his two final races this Thursday (200m IM) and Friday (100m fly).

(*update - He also won Gold in the 200m IM, Gold in the 200m IM & Silver behind Joseph Isaac Schooling in the 100m Fly)

This is all the more incredible, given the story of his 2 year climb from the verge of suicide, which I wrote in July. Here is Michael's story from rock-bottom:

One night in September 2014, less than 2 years ago, Michael's world came crashing down when he got arrested for drink driving. He says "I thought the world would just be better off without me. I figured that was the best thing to do - just end my life."

Struggling to come out of retirement for one more Olympics, Michael's training wasn't going well. So he had headed out to the Horseshoe Casino to binge on alcohol and poker. At 1am his Range Rover was pulled over by police and he was arrested.

It was the second arrest for DUI in 10 years. After the first time he was publicly shamed and promised he would never do it again. Now it looked like his chances of making a comeback were over.

Out the next day on bail, he locked himself in his house for the next 72 hours, texting to his agent “I don’t want to be alive anymore.”

What caused the breakdown? After his 4th Olympics in London, Michael was crowned “the most successful Olympian in history” with 18 gold, 2 silver and 2 bronze Olympic medals. He said “It’s like we dreamed the biggest dream we could possibly dream and we got there. What do we do now?”

In the two years after the Olympics, he went from the highest high to the lowest low, losing all purpose and meaning in life. Then, in 2012 he told his coach, Bob Bowman, that he wanted to try for the Rio Olympics, despite being older than any other competitor.

They started training, but Bob said “It was very difficult for him to get back in shape. I think he got discouraged. I got discouraged.”

That discouragement led to the night of his arrest and Michael wanting to kill himself.

What flipped the switch from self destruction to his record-breaking success today?

One of the first people that Michael called when he was arrested was his friend, retired Baltimore Ravens linebacker Ray Lewis. Ray said “I basically told him, ‘Okay, everything has a purpose, and now, guess what? It’s time to wake up.’ ” and he gave Michael a copy of Rick Warren’s “The Purpose Driven Life”.

Despite facing 18 months probation with a one year suspended sentence, and suspension from the US swimming team, Michael was moved enough by what Ray said that he stepped away from the pool, took the book and checked into a rehab centre.

At the centre, he soon became known as “Preacher Mike” as he would begin each day by reading a chapter of “The Purpose Driven Life”.

That then led to him reading more books like Viktor E Frankl’s “Man’s Search for Meaning” and Joseph Murphy’s “The Power of Your Subconscious Mind”. Instead of focusing on his body, he focused on his mind and spirit.

Michael left the clinic a changed man. Within months, he had asked his girlfriend, Nichole Johnson, to marry him. A year later, this May, they had a baby boy, Boomer.

As for the training, Michael got back in the pool with a new energy.

Realising that what he did out of the water affected him enormously in the water, he said of his previous life: "I tried to fake it, pretty much. That's what I was doing." and of his life today, "I'm just living a freer, happier life now. I don't feel like I'm carrying weights around anymore."

Michael was the youngest competitor to ever swim in the Olympics, and now he is also be the oldest to ever swim in the Olympics (At 31 he is 2 years older than the 2nd oldest at the Rio Games). Asked how he feels, he says "I'm thankful, I'm sitting here alive today."

Maybe you haven't risen as high as Michael, or fallen as low.

But what new purpose could transform your own success and fulfilment in life today?

What could you do differently out of the water, which would change what you do in the water?

It's never too later, and you're never too old.

"Life minus love equals zero."
~ Rick Warren, The Purpose Driven Life

(Original July 1st post here: <http://bit.ly/2aNjvHG>)



The top five company comebacks

“Never too small to start.
Never too big to fail.
Never too late to start again.”

				
Howard Schultz STARBUCKS	Reed Hastings NETFLIX	Jørgen Vig Knudstorp LEGO	Steve Jobs APPLE	Elon Musk TESLA, SPACEX

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Proof that entrepreneurship doesn't depend on your company size, but on your mindset: Here are the top five company comebacks - each from the jaws of billion dollar failures.

STARBUCKS

In 2008, Starbucks' over expansion into music, movies and too many loss-making stores led to an exodus of customers as quality fell. 977 stores closed and its stock price plummeted 80% from \$40 to \$7.83. In the midst of the crisis, founder, Howard Schultz returned as the CEO, saying Starbucks had *“forgotten what we stand for.”*

He refocused 100% on the coffee, closed all stores for a day to retrain the baristas, brought all 10,000 store managers to New Orleans to rediscover their sense of mission and purpose. As he says, *“If we hadn't had New Orleans, we wouldn't have turned things around.”* Since then, Starbucks has

doubled in size and profitability, growing to over 23,000 stores, \$16 billion in revenue and \$3 billion in profit. Howard remains as both Chairman and CEO today.

NETFLIX

In 2011, Netflix announced: *"We will no longer offer a plan that includes both unlimited streaming and DVDs by mail."* forcing subscribers to join two separate services and pay \$16 a month instead of \$10. The massive backlash led to more than 800,000 customers quitting Netflix in a single quarter. Netflix's stock plunging fell 77% in 4 months from \$300 a share to around \$65.

Founder, Reed Hastings, took personal responsibility for the miss-step and apologized, saying *"I messed up. I slid into arrogance based upon past success. Inside Netflix I say 'Actions speak louder than words,' and we should just keep improving our service."* He reversed the changes, refocused the company on quality and the customer, launching original content like *"House of Cards"*, and over the next few years the company has recovered to be the fastest growing video streaming company with over \$6 billion in revenue.

LEGO

In the late 1990's, Lego lost money for the first time in its history, with its traditional blocks struggling against the rise of video games and other toy makers. Jürgen Vig Knudstorp stepped in as CEO in 2004, and says *"When I became CEO, things had gone awfully wrong at Lego."* He began by refocusing the entire staff of 14,000: *"We had to ask, 'Why does Lego Group exist?' Ultimately, we determined the answer: to offer our core products, whose unique design lets children learn systematic, creative problem solving - a crucial twenty-first-century skill. We also decided we want to compete not by being the biggest but by being the best."*

He began involving Lego fans in product development and rewarding 'Super users'. The Lego brand was reignited, and Lego has now become the most profitable toy company in the world. As Jürgen says, *"We used to be seen as a bit of a basket case. Our competitors were ten years ahead of us. Now we've passed them."*

APPLE

In 1997 Apple had lost its way, was in disarray and just a few months away from bankruptcy when Steve Jobs returned as Interim CEO. His first step shocked the Apple faithful: A \$150 million deal with arch-rival Bill Gates to put Microsoft products on all Apple computers. The move sent a message to the market that Apple had to be a serious business that made smart commercial decisions, and rebranded Steve from being a dreamer and visionary to also a serious business leader.

He refocused the team, brought on Tim Cook from Compaq (who now leads Apple), and then began the chain of innovative product launches from the iMac, to iPod, to iPhone. Apple's market cap grew from \$3 billion when Steve Jobs returned to the company, to more than \$740 billion today. Its cash went from deficit to over \$200 billion today: The biggest corporate turnaround in history.

TESLA & SpaceX

In 2008, both of Elon Musk's companies, Tesla and SpaceX, were out of money and he was broke. As he says *"I could either pick SpaceX or Tesla or split the money I had left between them. If I split the money, maybe both of them would die. If I gave the money to just one company, the probability of it surviving was greater, but then it would mean certain death for the other company. I debated that over and over."*

That was on top of his personal challenges: *"You have these huge doubts that your life is not working, your car is not working, you're going through a divorce, and all of those things. I felt like a pile of sh_t. I didn't think we would overcome it. I thought things were probably f*@king doomed."*

He went knocking on all the doors he could, getting Sergey Brin to put up \$500,000 and Bill Lee to put up \$2 million. Elon managed to pull together all the parts for a \$40 million round of funding, but wasn't able to close. Then, on Christmas Eve, SpaceX announced a \$1.6 billion contract to SpaceX, and the Tesla deal closed hours before Tesla would have gone bankrupt.

Elon broke down in tears and said *"I hadn't had an opportunity to buy a Christmas present for Talulah or anything. I went running down the f*@king street in Boulder, and the only place that was open sold these sh%*y trinkets, and they were about to close. The best thing I could find were these plastic monkeys with coconuts—those 'see no evil, hear no evil' monkeys."*

He bought the monkeys, turned both companies around, and eight years later - in the last month -has reached new records with the sea landing of his Falcon 9 rocket and the largest product launch in history with the Tesla Model 3.

Each of these five comeback stories show that any company of any size can be turned around when approached with an entrepreneurial mindset. What would Steve Jobs do if he were in your shoes? What would Elon Musk do if he owned your company?

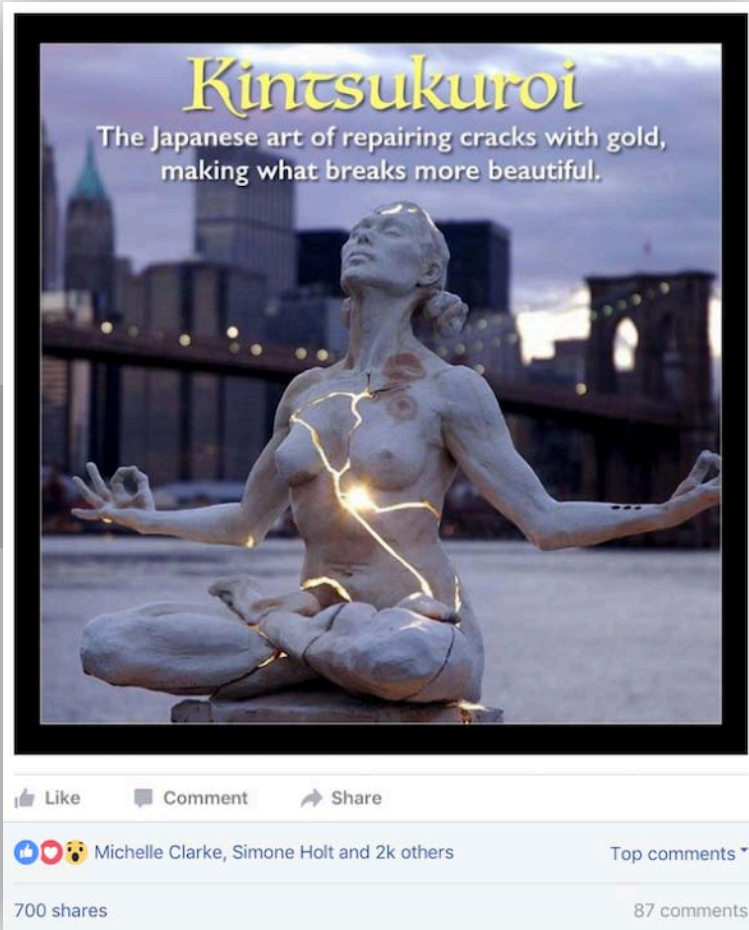
Shift your mindset, and set your mind free.

You're never too small to start, never too big to fail, and it's never too late to start again.

"I don't measure a man's success by how high he climbs, but how he he bounces when he hits bottom." - George S Patton Jr.



Repairing with gold



If you're chasing perfection, give yourself a break. Literally.

In my 20's, I tried to do things perfectly. The more I tried, the more I failed. No matter how good things were, I thought they could be better. No matter how well I did, I thought I could do better.

Then a mentor told me that each of us are unique in our imperfections. That it is our failures that shape us. That it is our heartaches that make us human.

The Japanese have turned this idea into an art. Kintsukuroi is the art of *“repairing with gold”*.

When a pot breaks, instead of throwing it away, craftsmen repair it with a gold lacquer that celebrates its flaws. In doing so, the pot becomes more valuable than when it was *“perfect”*.

It’s the flaws that tell the pots story, and it’s your challenges that tell your story. So celebrate them, embrace them, and know you are all the more valuable for having them.

“There is a crack in everything. That’s how the light gets in.” ~ Leonard Cohen

What is the cost of saying ‘yes’ or ‘no’?



Mark Cuban said “I’m out” and Richard Branson said “I’m in” to entrepreneur, Jamie Siminoff.

Today, the change in that one word became worth over \$28 million after Ring, the company that Jamie founded 5 years ago, raised \$109 million from Goldman Sachs and Qualcomm Ventures.

This, after an amazing 5 year journey that brought Jamie face-to-face with two of the world’s most recognized billionaires.

In September 2013, a year after launching “DoorBot”, Jamie got on ABC’s ‘Shark Tank’ trying to raise \$700,000 for 10% in equity for his company

He pitched his product - an app-controlled smart doorbell and video system for your front door - but then Mark Cuban and his fellow sharks all closed the door on Jamie.

'Mr Wonderful', Kevin O'Leary, was the only one who gave an offer. He had no interest in buying equity. So instead he offered the \$700,000 as a loan, repaid from 10% of all sales and then once paid off, he wanted 7% of all ongoing sales forever. Plus he wanted 5% equity for free thrown in.

Siminoff said no and Kevin replied "It's that moment when I say you're dead to me".

After leaving the Shark Tank, Jamie turned the mass rejection into a positive, saying "We think we got at least \$5 million of additional sales through the airing of 'Shark Tank'. Everything just popped after that."

Jamie rebranded the company as "Ring" and doubled down on his focus. He grew the smart doorbells into app-controlled security devices with motion-detection technology and said "We're definitely focused on the ring of security we can build around a community, around a home. We're stopping one burglary a day, and we've caught multiple burglars, so we've already become a very important part of homes."

Then by luck, one of his new customers ended up on Necker Island, sitting next to Richard Branson when his smartphone rang. A delivery person was at his door. The customer spoke to him and then with one press of a button the app let him in.

Richard was so impressed, he got Jamie's number and called him, wanting to invest. What was Jamie's reaction?

"When Richard Branson asks if he can invest in your company, I think there's only one answer you can give".

Richard invested in the company, and in August 2015 he led a \$28 million funding round for Jamie.

That was followed by a \$61 million round in March 2016. Then, today, Jamie raised another \$109 million at a likely valuation of around \$500 million.

That means if Mark or any of the other sharks had taken Jamie's 10% equity offer just over three years ago, their \$700,000 investment would have grown after dilution by around 40x to \$28 million today.

Jamie, who's products are now in 100 countries worldwide, is now aiming for an IPO at the end of the year. By then, the cost of that "no" could be between \$50 million and \$100 million.

While billionaires like Mark Cuban won't suffer greatly from missing such a multi-million dollar opportunity, this story highlights the greatest cost in business: Opportunity cost.

What is the cost of you saying "no" to the right opportunity?

What is the cost of following the wrong opportunities?

What is it costing you by delaying or avoiding action?

Whenever you're worry about the cost of taking action, remember that the cost of not acting is often far greater.

"There's no wrong time to make the right decision." ~ Dalton McGuinty



It doesn't take nine 'no's' to get to a 'yes'

“Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to **SUCCESS when they gave up.”**

THOMAS EDISON

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It doesn't take nine 'no's' to get to a 'yes':

If you've ever done any sales training, the old adage goes that the ratio of 'no's' to 'yes's' is 9 to 1. So it takes nine 'no's' to get to a 'yes'.

If you're an entrepreneur, you know this isn't true.

Sylvester Stallone had to survive over 1,500 rejections before he got Rocky to be made on his terms (many by the same agents multiple times).

Thomas Edison had to endure thousands of attempts to invent a reliable, commercial version of a light bulb before succeeding, famously saying "I have not failed, I have just found 10,000 ways that won't work."

Walt Disney was rejected over 302 times from banks before he got funding.

Jack London was given over 650 rejection slips (which he stuck in a pile on a tall spindle next to his typewriter) before getting a yes.

Colonel Sanders failed to sell his chicken recipe over 1,000 times before deciding to start KFC to sell it himself.

James Dyson said "I made 5,127 prototypes of my vacuum before I got it right. There were 5,126 failures. But I learned from each one." Today his inventions have made him worth \$5 billion.

As an entrepreneur, it doesn't take 9 'no's' to get to 1 'yes'.

It can take hundreds - or even thousands of rejections or failures - before your first big success.

That's why most people give up before they get there.

"Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up." ~ Thomas Edison

Imagine if one of the inventors, writers or entrepreneurs above gave up after getting their 20th, 50th or 100th rejection or failure?

But if - like them - you persist and learn from each failure, the success eventually comes. Then the next success comes sooner, the next comes faster, and eventually success breeds success.

The payoff is in the persistence, and the redemption is in the reward for those who persevere.

"It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop." ~ Confucius

6 tips to get to Gangnam



I was in Korea this week, and looked up Gangnam on the map (Gangnam is an upmarket district of Seoul). I also looked up Gangnam Style's PSY. How many trips did it take to get to 1 billion views on Youtube? Wow. It took 6 eventful trips, and here they are -

TRIP 1 - Park Jae-sang was groomed to take over his father's business, and sent to Boston to get his MBA in 1996. Instead, he blew all his tuition funds on musical instruments after being inspired by Queen's performance of 'Bohemian Rhapsody'. He dropped out of university, renamed himself 'PSY' (after 'Psycho') and returned to South Korea as a singer, having failed to get a degree.

TRIP 2 - His first album in 2001, 'PSY from the PSYcho World!' led to him being fined by the government for 'inappropriate content'. With his strange dance moves, he was now in the bad books of his dad, the government, and even the public, who named him 'The Bizarre Singer.'

TRIP 3 - To make matters worse, he was arrested for possession of marijuana. While in jail, he missed his grandfather's funeral, leading PSY to say 'I was not there at the funeral. I will regret this for the rest of my life.'

TRIP 4 - His second album in 2002, 'Sa 2' earned him a country-wide ban to under 19s for additional inappropriateness. His saving grace was the football World Cup coming to Seoul, which made his 'appropriate' song 'Champion' his first hit.

TRIP 5 - Off the back of his first success, he was enlisted into the South Korea military (which has mandatory service) in 2003. He snuck out to hold concerts, leading to state prosecutors accusing him of neglecting his work. PSY sued the government but lost, and got re-drafted, having to stay in the army until 2009.

TRIP 6 - PSY entered 2010 broke, with no money to release new songs. With the help of a friend he launched a new single 'Right Now' which was promptly banned by the government from under-19s.

In fact, it was only in January 2012, at 35 years old, that PSY had his first foreign TV appearance. While on stage in Japan he put up a sign "*I'm a famous singer well-known for driving the audience wild in Korea, but here, today, I'm just a little chubby newcomer*". Fuji TV picked it up, and PSY realised his winning formula to go international would be in making fun of himself.

For a month he worked on the cheesiest dance moves he could come up with, rejecting panda and kangaroo moves for a horse trot. In July 2012 'Gangnam Style' was released on Youtube, and rapidly grew to become the No.1 video in history on Youtube, breaking the 1 billion views mark on 21.12.12 (and now approaching 1.2b).

It took six big trips that led to PSY dancing to his success. Many others would have stopped at the first. How many would have persevered through all six to make it to their 'overnight success'?

"When you trip in life, make it part of the dance"

How can you make your trips and stumbles in life a part of your dance? Make each of your trips a trip worth taking.

.....

Postscript - What about PSY and his father? PSY, who was born in Gangnam district, went against his father's wishes, embarrassed the family multiple

times and ended up mocking his own family's neighbourhood in 'Gangnam Style'.

The story, however, has a happy ending. The family is now closer than ever, PSY and his wife have twin daughters, and his father's company, DI Corporation, has seen its shares increase by 300% over the last year due to being in the spotlight of PSY's success - and is now worth over US\$130 million in value.)

What's your big dream?



What's your big dream? From his early teens, Jimmy Fallon's big dream was to star on Saturday Night Live.

That was after he gave up on the idea of being a priest...

Brought up in a Roman Catholic School in New York, Jimmy remembers watching the priests and saying, *"I loved like how this priest can make people feel this good... I loved the whole idea of it. My grandfather was very religious, so I used to go to Mass with him at like 6:45 in the morning, serve Mass. And then you made money, too, if you did weddings and funerals."*

"You'd get like five bucks. And so I go 'Okay, I can make money too.' I go, 'This could be a good deal for me.' I thought I had the calling."

But then he saw his mom failed attempt at being a nun.

“My dad was in Vietnam, and he was in a doo-wop group. My mom was like a total square... she was a nun for about a month, but then she was like, ‘You know what? I didn’t get the calling!’”

So Jimmy had a rethink. But as his parents were so protective, Jimmy didn’t see much of the world, recalling *“Like, my parents had a fence, a chain-link fence, and my sister and I were not allowed outside it. I was only allowed to ride my bike in my backyard.”*

Jimmy rode his bike around in circles, carving a dirt track in the grass: *“Like Gus the polar bear at the zoo? That was me. Kids would say, ‘What are you doing, man? Come out.’ I was like, ‘I can’t.’ We got a rope swing. On a tree. We had to wear football helmets to ride the swing. Kids could see us. They would pull up on their bikes so they could watch the Fallon kids, so weird. You know, ‘Why are you wearing football helmets?’ We’re like, ‘So we don’t hit our heads!’”*

Then, he began watching Saturday Night Live.

His parents would cut out the ‘rude parts’ and let him watch the rest. So, as an early teenager he got his big dream - to be on SNL.

“I wanted to be the next Dana Carvey. This was my ultimate goal. If I ever cut into a birthday cake and made a wish, I would wish to be on “Saturday Night Live.” If I threw a coin into a fountain, I would wish to be on “Saturday Night Live.” If I saw a shooting star, I would wish to be on “Saturday Night Live.”

Jimmy kept dreaming, through his college (which he left in 1995 a semester early to pursue his dream), through the next 3 years (as he practiced his stand-up comedy).

Throughout the 10 years in which he was set on being on SNL, Jimmy only had one goal. He remembers thinking *“‘If I don’t make it on [the show] before I’m 25, I’m going to kill myself.’ It’s crazy. I had no other plan.”*

He applied every year, with most years being rejected.

He was finally invited to audition for SNL in 1997, at 22 years old, and failed.

He auditioned again at 23 years old, and made it.

Jimmy remembers the second audition vividly: *“As I was leaving, Marci Klein grabbed me and said, “That was great.” And I remember just floating out of the building. They gave you flowers in your dressing room. Do I take the flowers? I don’t think I did. Because I didn’t want them to be like, ‘This guy’s a greedy bastard.’”*

In 1998, at 24 years old, he first appeared on SNL.

By 2000, he was the star of SNL.

The rest is history.

What’s your big dream?

How single minded are you to achieve one big thing?

Most people get distracted from their dreams. Or they sell themselves short. Don’t do that. Be uncompromising. Focus on your dreams and go for it. The World will thank you for it.

“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.” ~ Eleanor Roosevelt

RESOURCEFULNESS

Posts on how anyone can start anything, anywhere, anytime

"The defining factor is never resources; it's resourcefulness."
~ Tony Robbins



Rented out her garage. Made \$300 million



What one small step you take today could lead to a multi-million dollar chain reaction? That's what happened to Susan Wojcicki when she was 30 years old: "I had just got out of business school and bought a house. So I needed to get some renters in order to help pay the mortgage..."

So she rented out her garage to two Stanford students, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, who used it to start up their new company, Google. Susan remembers the first year, with many "late nights together in the garage eating pizza and M&Ms, where (Larry and Sergey) talked to me about how their technology could change the world." They finally convinced her to join as Employee No.18 and their first marketing manager, when she was four months pregnant. First job? Relocate them all to a proper office.

Called the “Mom at Google”, Susan was the first in the team to have a baby, and her “family first” philosophy led to Google topping the ‘Fortune 100 Best Companies to Work For’ list.

The “family” grew, literally, with Sergey Brin marrying Susan’s sister, Anne, and having two kids. Susan herself had five kids. All while growing the marketing side of Google.

In charge of products, it was Susan who came up with the idea of AdSense, which grew to become 97% of Google’s revenue within the next 10 years. That earned Susan the nickname “The Money.”

She then focused at video, only to find a new start-up, Youtube, was growing much faster than Google video.

While working out what to do to compete, Susan stumbled on a Youtube video of two boys in China lip-syncing to the Backstreet Boys. She recalls “That was the video that made me realize that ‘Wow, people all over the world can create content, and they don’t need to be in a studio.’”

Instead of trying to compete, Susan convinced Larry and Sergey to buy Youtube, and six months later Google bought Youtube for \$1.65 billion.

In February 2014, Susan became the CEO of Youtube, and today she is worth \$300 million.

What began with a simple decision to rent out her garage has led Susan on a journey that has included being named No.1 on the Adweek 50 list in 2013, being called “The most important person in advertising” and “The most powerful woman on the Internet” by TIME in 2015.

And for Susan, the journey is still just beginning. As she says, “Google is fascinating, and the book isn’t finished. I’m creating, living, building, and writing those chapters.”

Now it’s your turn. If Susan can do it (while raising five kids) you can too.

Take a step forward today.

Any step.

There’s no guarantee it will lead to the same magical journey that Susan has been on.

But there’s no guarantee it won’t, either.



An ancient city discovery by this 15 year old

old



This 15 year old just discovered an entire ancient city by looking at the stars. What might you discover today?

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Can you see order in chaos? Can you hear the signal in the noise?

Today 15 year old Canadian student, William Gadoury, hit the news for discovering an entire ancient Mayan City - by looking at the stars.

3 years ago, William got interested in Mayan cities when he learned about the end of the Mayan Calendar in 2012. As he began learning he said *"I didn't understand why the Maya built their cities far away from rivers, in remote areas, or in the mountain."*

So he began studying the patterns of the cities, and then studied the patterns of 22 Mayan star constellations. He saw the links, and when he superimposed the constellations on a map of the Yucatan Peninsula on Google Earth, they linked perfectly with 117 ancient Mayan cities.

He also found the brightest stars linked to the largest cities.

Despite being only 15 years old, William is the first person to make the correlation.

William then looked at a 23rd constellation of three stars, and found only two cities. So he guessed there must be a city in the third spot.

What do you do if you think you've found a city? He contacted the Canadian Space Agency, who then got satellites from NASA and JAXA, the Japanese space agency.

Scientists were blown away when they found evidence of a previously undiscovered large, 86m high pyramid and thirty buildings exactly where William predicted.

Not only was it a new city, based on its size some experts predict that it could be one of the five largest.

As Canadian Space Agency's Daniel de Lisle says, *"Linking the positions of the stars to the location of a lost city along with the use of satellite images on a tiny territory to identify the remains buried under dense vegetation is quite exceptional."*

William's discovery is now being published in a scientific journal and he will present his findings at Brazil's International Science Fair next year.

Also, Mexican archaeologists have promised William he can join their expedition to the area to verify the find. William says *"It would be the culmination of three years of work and the dream of a lifetime."*

If 15 year old William can discover an entire city, what could you find by looking more closely?

When I met Richard Branson on Necker Island last year, a friend asked him *"Do you analyse data or use your gut when making decisions."* Richard replied, *"It's not really one or the other. I see patterns. If things fit, I do it."*

Science, exploration, art, music, sport - and entrepreneurship - all share a common theme: Patterns.

When, like William, you see the patterns, you can fill in the gap - Whether it's your next step, a new innovation, or a new, ancient city.

"Learn how to see. Realize that everything is connected to everything else." ~ Leonardo Da Vinci



Year of the monkey



What's in store for 2016? It's the Chinese Year of the Monkey! I was born in 1968 so I'm a Monkey, along with Elizabeth Taylor, Will Smith, Tom Hanks, Mick Jagger and Leonardo Da Vinci.

In Chinese mythology, Monkeys are metal & water creatures. Metal is connected to gold and water is connected to wisdom and danger. So this is a year of financial events and - as it's a Red (fire) Monkey year - that means dramatic financial events (which could be positive or negative).

Ready for some big changes?

Here's the forecast according to Astrology Club:

"A particularly auspicious time for new inventions, the Year of the Monkey is for taking risks and being rebellious, a year where agile, inventive minds, sheer guts and bravado will win out. Now is the time of courage, action, anarchy, and true

devotion to even the wildest of schemes, a time to start new endeavors, for they are destined to succeed under Monkey's influence.

A lot of global economic growth can be expected in the Year of the Monkey. Expect a lot of life changing inventions to be released.

The key to success this year is education. This is not meant as mere college or graduate school but to take up courses that matter for your everyday life not just for your career or status.

Don't be too shy to take up silly little courses at your books shop or join those financial groups to help manage your money or start up a small business. The monkey is all about being creative and innovative with what you have.

The Year of the Monkey 2016 is a good year to break free and take calculated risks as there is nothing more powerful or rewarding than following your heart's desire. The energies are supporting these changes.

Mr. Monkey can be menacing as he can easily overthrow old conventions that no longer work. This could mean toppling of old empires or iron fisted bosses.

On the individual level, do go ahead with your life. Move forward, make strides, and stretch out for what may lay ahead. Run with ideas, embrace the inventive, and don't look back."

So there you have it. Have a prosperous Monkey year ahead!

Note - The beginning of the Chinese New Year is Monday Feb 8th so you've still got time to party before the monkeying around starts.

"Anything worth doing is worth overdoing." ~ Mick Jagger

(Read more at <http://astrologyclub.org/chinese-horoscope/2016-year-monkey>)The Year of the Monkey 2016 is a good year to break free and take calculated risks as there is nothing more powerful or rewarding than following your heart's desire. The energies are supporting these changes.

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(Read more at <http://astrologyclub.org/chinese-horoscope/2016-year-monkey>)

How big are you thinking?



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How big are you thinking? Will Marshall is thinking so big, he's thinking out of this world. Literally. He's just bought all of Google's satellites with his 6-year old start-up, Planet Labs.

Paradoxically, Will can now think bigger because he began by thinking smaller.

In 2010 he asked himself "Why are most satellite images years old, and satellites so expensive?" (The NASA satellites launched at the time cost \$850 million to build and launch).

The lightbulb moment came when NASA Director of Engineering gave a talk and pulled out his smartphone, saying it had a faster processor and better sensors than many satellites, at a fraction of the price.

That's when Will, who was at the talk, said "Pete, don't put that back in your pocket. We're going to make that into a satellite".

Will then launched Planet Labs with two NASA scientists with the mission "To use space to help life" and the goal "To image the entire planet, every day." Their first goal? To launch a "phonesat" into orbit, and send back photos of earth in real time.

Three years later, the first three were launched for just \$7,000 each. Will called them "Alexander, Graham and Bell".

The team came up with the phrase "Agile Aerospace" where they improved their "flock", which became known as "Doves". In 2014, 28 Doves were released from the International Space Station. Each even sent a "Tweet" via Twitter once they turned on.

By 2016, Will said "We have launched 133 satellites to date, which is the largest constellation in human history... We can track deforestation, we can track the ice caps melting. We can help people respond to natural disasters like earthquakes and floods."

And that's Will's big dream - to save the environment by being able to prevent the damage before it happens. For example, with the Amazon: "If you wait until the end of the year to take a picture - which is the typical rate - at the end of the year you have a big hole in the Amazon. If you take it every day, you can catch people in the act who are logging in the wrong place and send the co-ordinates to the response team who go and stop them."

So how did Will end up buying Google's satellites? Google realized Planet's small team were doing a better job than they were at managing satellites. So they sold their \$300 million satellite company, Terra Bella together with their seven high-res SkySat satellites in orbit to Planet in return for shares and a long-term licensing deal for all Planet's images.

So while many startups dream one day of being bought by Google, Will has done the opposite and bought from Google.

Are you thinking big enough?

What would you do different if you were thinking 100x bigger?

When asked what advice he would give startup entrepreneurs, Will said "Check that the idea can be 100x better (/lower cost etc) than anything out there - there will be all sorts of practical reasons you've not thought of and if it's only a 10x that will be eaten up."

In the meantime, Will isn't resting after his big buy. He has another 88 satellites being launched this Valentine's Day. When your business is in space, the sky's no longer the limit.

"If people aren't calling you crazy, you aren't thinking big enough." ~ Richard Branson



Scarce resources vs entrepreneurial resources



How do great entrepreneurs always manage to give more than they take, and still end up with more? By knowing the difference between scarce resources and entrepreneurial resources.

When you share a scarce resource, you end up with less. Share your money, and you end up with less money. Share your time, and you end up with less time.

When you share an entrepreneurial resource, you end up with more. Share your best ideas, and the idea will grow as others add to it. Share your connections, and your connections grow in strength and size. In turn, your entrepreneurial resources can be traded for scarce resources and in time you'll have the time and money you need - for yourself or to give away.

Your vision, mission, trust, reputation, passion, power, determination, responsibility, experience, wisdom, happiness, care and love are all entrepreneurial resources where the more you share them, the more they grow.

While governments focus at fighting over a shrinking world of scarce resources, entrepreneurs focus at sharing and growing a whole new world of abundant resources.

Focus at scarce resources, and you will never have enough. Focus at your entrepreneurial resources and you will always have more than enough.

Your resources are like a candle. Focus at the wax, and you'll always be in lack where the more you give, the less you have. Focus at the flame, and you'll always be in abundance, where it costs a candle nothing to light another candle.

(And if we each keep lighting others, it's just a matter of time before we light up the world).



Are you courageous?



Courage is a trait shared by all great leaders. And it's the key to living a bigger life: "Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage." ~ Anais Nin

Are you courageous?

When people are asked what the opposite of *"being courageous"* is, most say *"being fearful"*. But most courageous leaders also have plenty of fear.

So what is the true opposite of *"being courageous"*? It's *"being comfortable."*

It's comfortable to do what is easy. Being courageous means doing what is hard.

It's comfortable to do what you know. Being courageous means to step into the unknown.

It's comfortable to follow the status quo. Being courageous means standing for your truth, no matter how disruptive it may be.

It's comfortable to be liked. Being courageous means being willing to take criticism and ridicule for what you believe in.

It's comfortable to want to stay right when you're not. Being courageous means admitting that you're wrong when you are.

Courage isn't fearlessness, but directed fearfulness. The word comes from "Cor" - The Latin word for heart. Both courage and fear come from the heart.

Courage occurs when your fear of not trying becomes greater than your fear of failing.

I'm in South Africa right now, reading about Nelson Mandela's life. He's famous for being willing to give up a comfortable life to be a true leader - and to direct his fear into action.

"I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it." -
Nelson Mandela

What comforts should you give up to live your greater truth? What fears can you harness to reach your greatest power?

With courage, you can transform your world.



The world's wealthiest self-made female billionaires



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What's the rags to riches story that has led a young girl in poverty to become the World's wealthiest self-made female billionaire?

There's a good chance the mobile phone you're using has a screen made by her: "*The Touchscreen Queen*", Zhou Qunfei. How can her billion dollar journey help you on yours? Here's her three big steps to success:

STEP ONE: BE RELENTLESS

Qunfei was born to a poor family in a tiny village in China. Her father was blinded in a factory accident, and her mum died when she was five. Determined to be successful, she quit school at 16 and went to live with her uncle in Shenzhen, saying "*I don't want to die regretting what I didn't do.*"

She got a factory job making watch faces for \$1 a day, and sent the money back to her father.

Bored with the job, after three months she quit, but was given a promotion instead. Guessing why, she said *“Maybe it was because my resignation letter was well written and this attracted the attention of the factory supervisor”*.

She kept being promoted up to management but then in 1993, at 22 years old, her factory shut down. So she decided to take her knowledge, connections and \$3,000 in savings and begin her own watch face factory, which she started next doors to her old factory.

The early days weren't easy: *“Twice I even had to sell my house in order to pay my employees salary. Much like climbing a mountain, it's not your physical strength that will get you to the top, but your tenacity and persistence.”*

Then, in 1997 the Asian financial crisis hit. This is when her persistence really paid off. She went to the watchmakers who owed her money and settled their debts in exchange for their equipment. So while other factories closed down, she gradually assembled an entire production suite for glass processing for next to nothing.

STEP TWO: BE OPEN TO CHANGE

Six years later, in 2003, she got a call from Motorola, who wanted a glass screen for their new Razr V3 mobile phone: *“I got this call, and they said, ‘Just answer yes or no, and if the answer’s yes, we’ll help you set up the process. I said ‘yes’.”*

Her success with Motorola led to HTC, Nokia and Samsung also calling. Then, in 2007, Apple launched the iPhone, and picked Qunfei's company as the supplier.

Ten years later, Lens Technology has 32 factories in seven different locations and employs more than 90,000 staff. Their glass is used in over 50% of all smartphones in the world, and in all Apple iWatches.

A year ago, Qunfei listed her company on the stock market, making her the wealthiest self-made female billionaire in the world. Today she is worth \$6.4 billion.

STEP THREE: KNOW YOU'RE UNIQUELY QUALIFIED TO BE YOU

Qunfei says when she was a child she would watch the rain falling on lotus leaves. That's what later inspired her to create Lens Technology's patented, scratch-resistant coating on smartphones.

'Droplets of water would roll around the surface of a lotus leaf and not leave any trace,' she said.

'If it wasn't for my primary school teacher reminding me to be observant I may not have had the inspiration to think of my invention.'

Ms. Zhou also credits her detailed-oriented approach to her childhood. *"My father had lost his eyesight, so if we placed something somewhere, it had to be in the right spot, exactly, or something could go wrong,"* she said. *"That's the attention to detail I demand at the workplace."*

How open are you to new opportunities that could transform your own success?

How can you use your past experiences to support your future vision?

Use Qunfei's story as an inspiration for your own journey.

As a self-taught expert in glass, she's a living example of how, with persistence, every glass ceiling can be broken.

The graphic calculator



Are you so driven to create something great, you would do it for free? That's what Ron Avitzur did - By working at Apple when he didn't even work there...

20 years ago, Ron was hired by Apple as a contractor, but his project was suddenly cancelled. As he recalls: *"A year of my work evaporated, my contract ended, and I was unemployed. I was frustrated by all the wasted effort, so I decided to uncancel my small part of the project. I had been paid to do a job, and I wanted to finish it. My electronic badge still opened Apple's doors, so I just kept showing up."*

Determined to create *"something great"*, he teamed up with a friend, Greg Robbins, who's contract had also ended. They would come to work each day, working on Ron's idea of a graphing calculator for the new Apple Power PC which was soon going to launch. He remembers the conversations whenever anyone asked them what they were doing:

Q: Do you work here?

A: No.

Q: You mean you're a contractor?

A: Actually, no.

Q: But then who's paying you?

A: No one.

Q: How do you live?

A: I live simply

Eventually, an Apple team tried to move in to the empty offices where they were working, discovered them there, cancelled their badges and called security.

But then luck struck: *"We were saved by the layoffs that began that month. Twenty percent of Apple's fifteen thousand workers lost their jobs, but Greg and I were safe because we weren't on the books in the first place and didn't officially exist. Afterwards, there were plenty of empty offices."*

"We found two and started sneaking into the building every day, waiting out in front for real employees to arrive and casually tailgating them through the door. Lots of people knew us and no one asked questions, since we wore our old badges as decoys."

The story of their dedication and secret project spread: *"We had become a kind of underground cause célèbre."* That led to them attracting the help they needed, when they needed. For example, when they needed professional quality assurance to test the product, *"Out of nowhere, two QA guys we had never met approached us, having heard about our venture through the rumor mill. They volunteered to help us, saying, "Let's not tell our boss about this, OK?"*

Then, the fateful day:

"In October, when we thought we were almost finished, engineers who had been helping us had me demonstrate our software to their managers. A dozen people packed into my office. I gave a twenty-minute demonstration, eliciting "oohs" and "ahhs.""

“Afterward, they asked, “Who do you report to? What group are you in? Why haven’t we seen this earlier?” I explained that I had been sneaking into the building and that the project didn’t exist. They laughed, until they realized I was serious. Then they told me, “Don’t repeat this story.””

“Then things got really weird. The QA manager assigned people to test our product. (I didn’t tell him that those people were already working on it.) The localization group assigned people to translate it into twenty languages...I was at the center of a whirlwind of activity.”

“Nevertheless, Greg and I still had to sneak into the building. The people in charge of the PowerPC project, upon which the company’s future depended, couldn’t get us badges without a purchase order. They couldn’t get a purchase order without a signed contract. They couldn’t get a contract without approval from Legal, and if Legal heard the truth, we’d be escorted out of the building.”

Then, another stroke of luck: *“The director of PowerPC marketing was the son of a math teacher. Seeing the value of putting this educational software on every Macintosh in every school, they promptly adopted us.”*

“We finished in January 1994. Graphing Calculator has been part of the Macintosh ever since. Teachers around the world use it as an animated blackboard to illustrate abstract concepts visually. It shipped on more than twenty million machines. It never officially existed.”

Thinking about why he did it, Ron says *“I had neither budget nor headcount. I answered to no one, and no one had to do anything I asked. Dozens of people collaborated spontaneously, motivated by loyalty, friendship, or the love of craftsmanship. We were hackers, creating something for the sheer joy of making it work.”*

What would you do for the love of it?

What would you happily do for free?

Do that, and the world will bend to you.

As Jeff Bezos says, *“I’m always trying to figure out: Is this person who leads this company a missionary or a mercenary?”*

“The missionary is building the product and building the service because they love the customer, because they love the product, because they love the service.

The mercenary is building the product or service so that they can flip the company and make money.”

“One of the great paradoxes is that the missionaries end up making more money than the mercenaries anyway.”

Today, 20 years later, Ron still runs his company, Pacific Tech, based on the Graphing Calculator.

For Ron’s full story - <http://www.pacifict.com/Story>

via Theresa Hamilton

Is viral content more of an art or a science?

The Secret Sauce of Viral Videos
and why Discovery is investing \$100 million in this family...

Kenneth Lerer
Father

Izzie Lerer
Daughter

Ben Lerer
Son

Like Comment Share

Rory Callaghan, Terri Christine Billington and 413 others Top comments

181 shares 41 comments

Is viral content more of an art or a science?

Discovery is betting \$100 million on it being a science. And they have bet it not on one person, but on a whole family. The Lerer Family: Father, Kenneth Lerer (who created [NowThis](#)), his son, Ben (who created [Thrillist](#)) and his daughter, Izzie (who created [The Dodo](#)).

After the investment from [Discovery](#) this week, the new Group Nine Media company they own (run by Ben) is worth \$550 million. What's the secret to their viral success?

1) Learn the Secret Sauce

The journey began when Kenneth met Jonah Peretti - famous for his viral pranks - in 2005 and said "I know business, you know the Internet, let's do something together."

As Jonah remembers "We weren't sure what we were going to do. Then he went out to LA and met with Arianna..." The Arianna was Arianna Huffington, and the two worked with her using Jonah's viral formulas to launch [The Huffington Post](#) (sold to AOL six years later for \$315 million).

2) Add extra flavors

Inspired by their first venture, the two launched [BuzzFeed](#) in 2006 (which reached a \$1.5 billion valuation after a \$200m investment from NBC last year).

While Jonah continued on there as CEO, Kenneth kept repeating the formula, first as investor & Board Member of [Business Insider](#) (which sold at a value of \$400m+ then with made-for-mobile NowThis, then with made-for-men Thrillist, run by his son, and made-for-animal-lovers The Dodo, run by his daughter.

3) Share the recipe

In the process of starting so many multi-million dollar viral ventures, what creates viral content has been an open secret all this time. Jonah Peretti shared a presentation six years ago called "How to make your content go insanely viral" (which you can see here: <http://bit.ly/insanely-viral>)

"Sometimes the best hiding place is the one that's in plain sight" - Stephenie Meyer

In the same year, he gave a presentation on 5 viral metrics (which you can see here: <http://bit.ly/5-viral-metrics>) Or in summary...

1. Viral Media - Activate the BWN (Bored at Work Network)
2. Mullet Strategy - Business upfront, party in the back!
3. Big Seed Marketing - Pay for the seed, optimize for viral lift
4. Maniacs - Target crazy people, not couch potatoes
5. Mormonism - Quality is not enough, build evangelism into your ideas

Kenneth, Izzie, Ben and Jonah have followed these steps to create one business after another, each worth over \$100 million and together with a combined value of over \$3 billion.

What similar steps could you take in your business today?

How do you keep up with the cutting edge of entrepreneurship?



How do you keep up with the cutting edge of entrepreneurship?

While Facebook gives many great posts to share, Twitter gives the train of consciousness of many of the World's top entrepreneurs in real-time.

Following their tweets and using Twitter as a receiver more than a broadcaster is one of the best entrepreneur educations you can get.

Here are 25 of the most followed entrepreneurs on Twitter:

1) OPRAH WINFREY (33.3M followers)
<https://twitter.com/Oprah>

2) BILL GATES (29.8M followers)
<https://twitter.com/BillGates>

3) RICHARD BRANSON (8.08M followers)
<https://twitter.com/richardbranson>

- 4) MARK CUBAN (5.32M followers)
<https://twitter.com/mcuban>
- 5) LORD ALAN SUGAR (5.19M followers)
https://twitter.com/Lord_Sugar
- 6) ELON MUSK (4.64M followers)
<https://twitter.com/elonmusk>
- 7) JACK DORSEY (3.8M followers)
<https://twitter.com/jack>
- 8) MARTHA STEWART (3.19M followers)
<https://twitter.com/MarthaStewart>
- 9) BIZ STONE (2.87M followers)
<https://twitter.com/biz>
- 10) TONY HSIEH (2.85M followers)
<https://twitter.com/tonyhsieh>
- 11) TONY ROBBINS (2.83M followers)
<https://twitter.com/TonyRobbins>
- 12) EV WILLIAMS (1.97M followers)
<https://twitter.com/ev>
- 13) TIM O'REILLY (1.97M followers)
<https://twitter.com/timoreilly>
- 14) KEVIN ROSE (1.61M followers)
<https://twitter.com/kevinrose>
- 15) MARISSA MAYER (1.59M followers)
<https://twitter.com/marissamayer>
- 16) GUY KAWASAKI (1.48M followers)
<https://twitter.com/GuyKawasaki>
- 17) TIM FERRISS (1.34M followers)
<https://twitter.com/tferriss>
- 18) GARY VAYNERCHUK (1.3M followers)
<https://twitter.com/garyvee>
- 19) ROBERT KIYOSAKI (1.02M followers)
<https://twitter.com/theRealKiyosaki>
- 20) STEVE CASE (768K followers)
<https://twitter.com/SteveCase>

21) ROGER JAMES HAMILTON (604K followers)
<https://twitter.com/rogerhamilton>

22) ROBERT HERJAVEC (599K followers)
<https://twitter.com/robertherjavec>

23) SETH GODIN (555K followers)
<https://twitter.com/ThisIsSethsBlog>

24) KEVIN O'LEARY (537K followers)
<https://twitter.com/kevinolearytv>

25) DAYMOND JOHN (497K followers)
<https://twitter.com/TheSharkDaymond>

You could follow each individually, or simply follow this one Twitter list to see tweets from all 25:

<https://twitter.com/rogerhamilton/lists/top-25>

While number of followers isn't the best measure, it's the most measurable measure. Each of these entrepreneurs post all or most of their own tweets. I've skipped the accounts that are personalities in film, music, sport or politics where their posts and followers aren't mostly entrepreneurial.

If I've missed any entrepreneurs who have equally high followings and that you follow, post a link to them in the comments and use this as a resource for yourself and your network.

Happy reading and re-tweeting!

"I see life like one long university education that I never had - Everyday I'm learning something new." ~ Richard Branson

CRITICAL MOMENTS

Stories on seizing the moments where and when they appear

"To hell with circumstances; I create opportunities."

~ Bruce Lee

The billion dollar tweet



Here's a tweet Travis Kalanick sent in January 2010. The reply from Ryan Graves happened 3 minutes later. That tweet was worth over a billion dollars.

January 2010 was the month Travis was doing a test run with 3 cars in New York for a mobile app that he and his friend, Garrett Camp, had just created.

They had decided it was time to start a company around the app and, needing to find a General Manager to run it, Travis took to Craigslist and Twitter looking for the right person.

Ryan's reply to Travis came as he was looking for something new. He had some experience at GE, and had worked for Foursquare for a while for free after the company turned him down for a job. He was ready for a new opportunity - and took a chance with this tweet.

Travis replied back, they met, they hit it off, and Ryan joined Travis and Garrett on March 1st as their first hire.

With their new company started, the three of them then invited all their friends to demo the product and they officially launched in San Francisco just 3 months later on May 31st.

That was five years ago.

This week, the team that started with that tweet has built their company, Uber, into a company that is currently valued at over \$60 billion (they just announced another funding round of \$2 billion this week <http://bit.ly/ubers-next-2-billion>).

Today, Travis and Ryan are worth over \$6 billion, and that tweet from Ryan (who today is Uber's Head of Global Operations) began a journey which has made him a billionaire today as well.

How are you using Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Youtube today?

As a wall of content? As a broadcasting tool?

Or, like Travis and Ryan, as a way to find the resources, connections and opportunities you need when you need them?

Depending on how you use it, social media can make you feel apart from everyone, or one step to anyone.

It can overwhelm you, or empower you.

It can be a time waster, or a time saver.

"Never confuse motion with action." ~ Benjamin Franklin

What do you need or who can you help today? It may just be a tweet away.

Of course, there is no promise that one connection or one tweet will result in you making a billion dollars or impacting a billion lives.

But there is no promise it won't either.



What's the possible outcome of Brexit?



I've just landed in London to learn that the UK has voted for #brexit. What's next? Here's one possible outcome...

In a similarly dramatic referendum 50 years ago, Singapore citizens voted to leave British colonial rule and join the new Federation of Malaysia. But following race riots that ran out of control, Singapore was expelled from Malaysia and left as an island to fend for itself.

At the time, the skeptics saw a bleak future for Singapore.

At the time, the leader of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew spoke with tears on National TV: "Every time we look back on this moment when we signed this agreement which severed Singapore from Malaysia, it will be a moment of anguish... because all my life... I have believed in merger and the unity of these two territories."

Then, realizing Singapore had no one to depend on but themselves, Lee Kuan Yew decided to reinvent Singapore - and focus the newly independent island on becoming a world leading nation.

He looked beyond their relationship with the British Empire and Malaysia to the rest of the world. He looked beyond the present to 50 years in the future.

Suddenly, what looked like a crisis was turned into an opportunity, with Singapore being the first nation to be deliberately designed for the 21st Century.

50 years after that separation and new focus, here's what that separation has led to...

Today Singapore has been recognized globally as:

> The No.1 most educated country, according to the OECD Global Education Report.

> The most innovative country, based on the Global Innovation Index published by INSEAD, WIPO & Cornell University.

> The world's easiest country to do business in, according to the World Bank (7 years in a row)

> The No.1 country with the best business environment, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit.

> The No.1 city with the best investment potential, according to BERI.

> The most transparent country in the world, according to the Global Competitiveness Report.

> The 2nd most competitive country in the world, according to the World Economic Forum.

> The 2nd most technologically advanced country, according to the WEF Global Information Technology Report.

> And the 3rd richest country in the world, according to Forbes, with one of the lowest levels of poverty and one of the highest density of millionaires in the world.

Singapore has achieved all of this 50 years after a separation that was seen at the time as a major crisis from which it might never recover.

It was achieved by focusing at future potential over existing partnerships and by focusing at the advantage of speed over scale. They set their own rules based on where the world was going instead of where the world was.

Of course, there's huge differences between the UK and Singapore. But there's also huge difference in the times we now live in. With the growing

waves of technological and economic change, it's the most nimble nations that will win in the next 50 years.

And while it will be the ones that can move rapidly with the times that will win, it will be the ones tied down in regulation and bureaucracy that will be left behind.

Of course, this is just one possible outcome from the current situation. The UK could also get caught up in bitter in-fighting and holding on to the past. It could be left behind in a wave of anti-immigration and protectionism. It could trip up over a fatalistic focus on short term currency and market swings. Or get stuck in everyone spending more time complaining about the weather than preparing for a sunny future.

Which path the UK takes is up to its citizens. But to choose to be a world leading nation of the new tomorrow is as valid a path as any.

In the midst of the current chaos and divide, there now lies an incredible opportunity for the UK to unite, put the past behind it, and reinvent itself for the future ahead.

And just as countries can reinvent themselves, against all odds, so can you.

“The future belongs to those who prepare for it today.” ~ Malcolm X

How to make \$20 billion in one day.



This Friday, 11/11, is the biggest shopping day in the world. And it was created by one man, Jack Ma, just 7 years ago.

Last year, Alibaba's Single's Day set a Guinness World Record for the most sales made by a single company in 24 hours - \$14.3 billion. This wasn't just in China - but across 200 countries that bought Alibaba products for up to 50% off during 11/11.

How did it start? When Jack Ma looked at the largest tech companies in the west, he saw companies like Amazon and Apple profiting from shopping holidays like Thanksgiving's Cyber Monday and Christmas - Holidays that weren't celebrated in China.

Saying "You should learn from your competitor, but never copy. Copy and you die", in 2009, Jack decided to create his own shopping holiday around "Single's Day" on 11/11 (a day in China for singles to treat themselves). But instead of copying the retail model, he would make his holiday fully online and fully global, with 50% discounts for a full 24 hours.

That year, he convinced 27 merchants to sell their products on the day for up to 50% off, generating \$10 million in sales. Then, each year, he repeated the process while growing sales exponentially:

2009 - \$10 million

2010 - \$140 million

2011 - \$820 million

2012 - \$3.0 billion

2013 - \$5.8 billion

2014 - \$9.3 billion

2015 - \$14.3 billion

This year, China's "Singles' Day" is expected to reach \$20 billion in sales - more than all Thanksgiving's Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales from all US retailers put together - for one company: Jack's Alibaba.

For one company to generate \$20 billion in sales in one day is mind boggling. But it started by one man seeing a challenge and turning it into an opportunity.

If you're waiting for sales, what event could you create to bring the sales to you?

If you've got a challenge, how could you think differently to turn that challenge into an opportunity?

"If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door." ~ Milton Berle

What do you stand for?



Like Comment Share

Michelle Clarke, Penelope Wee and 3.2k others

Top comments

1,178 shares

119 comments

What do you stand for? This week Muhammad Ali passed away. His life was an example of how the legacy we leave isn't in the knocks we take, but in the stands we make. Here are Ali's Top 10 stands:

Stand #1: He made a stand in 1954 when, as a 12 year-old Cassius Clay, his bike got stolen. He told the nearest policeman, Joe Martin, he wanted to "whup" the thief. Joe said "You better learn how to box first." and then trained Cassius on how to box. Six weeks later, he won his first fight.

Stand #2: He made a stand in 1960, just six years later, by enduring his fear of flying to fly to Rome and win the light heavyweight Gold Medal at the Olympics.

Stand #3: He wore the medal everywhere he went but, several months after the Olympics, he made a stand when, after he was refused service from an

all-white soda fountain counter, he threw his prized Olympic Gold Medal into the Ohio River (It was finally found, 54 years later in 2014 on the river's banks during the "Annual Ohio River Sweep")

Stand #4: He made a stand in 1965 for racial and religious freedom when, after causing a major upset in beating Sonny Liston to win the World Championship title, he embraced Islam and switching from his "slave name" Cassius Clay to his new Muslim name, Muhammad Ali.

Stand #5: He made a stand in 1967 against being sent to fight in the Vietnam War, saying "My conscience won't let me go shoot my brother, or some darker people, some poor, hungry people in the mud, for big powerful America, and shoot them for what? They never called me nigger. They never lynched me. They didn't put no dogs on me."

Stand #6: He made a stand at an Army recruiting station a few months later, when he refused to step forward when his name was called. He said "You my opposer when I want freedom. You my opposer when I want justice. You my opposer when I want equality. You won't even stand up for me in America for my religious beliefs and you want me to go somewhere and fight but you won't even stand up for me here at home."

Stand #7: He was banned from boxing for 3 years and was stripped of his World Title. He made a stand throughout the 3 years of his ban by visiting colleges and speaking out against the war and for racial justice. Then, in 1970 at the end of the ban, despite still having a 5 year jail sentence pending, he re-entered the ring and beat Jerry Quarry. The next year, after 4 years of appeals, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed his prison sentence.

Stand #8: He made a stand in 1974 against the stripping of his title by beating George Foreman in "The Rumble in the Jungle" in Zaire, winning back the World title.

Stand #9: He made a stand in 1984, after discovering he had Parkinson Disease, by setting up the Muhammad Ali Parkinson Centre, saying "Many fans wanted to build a museum to acknowledge my achievements. I wanted more than a building to house my memorabilia. I wanted a place that would inspire people to be the best that they could be at whatever they chose to do, and to encourage them to be respectful of one another."

Stand #10: He made a stand for sport, despite his deterioration from Parkinson's, and appeared at every Olympics to carry the Olympic flame through to 2012, where he was helped to his feet in the Stadium by his wife Lonnie, after no longer being able to carry the flame.

Sports Illustrated name him "Sportsman of the Century". The BBC named him "Sports Personality of the Century." When asked how he wanted to be remembered, he said "As a man who never sold out his people. But if that's too much, then just a good boxer. I won't even mind if you don't mention how pretty I was."

For me, I will remember Muhammad Ali like the Olympic flame he carried at every Olympics. As a never-ending light that is passed on from one person to the next, always standing, always shining.

“We become heroes when we stand up for what we believe in.” ~ Muhammad Ali

#RIPAli

5 things that happened on 11/9



What happened yesterday? In all the media and posts on the US Elections, you might have missed one or more of these big things:

NEWS STORY #1: THE WORLD DECIDES REVERSING CLIMATE CHANGE DOESN'T DEPEND ON THE US

200 countries at the United Nation's COP22 Conference in Morocco pledged to keep to the timeline to stop global warming regardless of what Donald Trump does. This is the annual meet of climate delegates charged with fulfilling on the promises made at the Paris Climate Agreement.

Sensing Trump might win the election, and knowing he had threatened to "cancel" the agreement, countries had ratified the Paris agreement and made it binding under International Law just one week ago. This means once he becomes President he would still need four years before he could legally withdraw from the deal.

On the swift move, May Boeve from 350.org said “Trump will try and slam the brakes on climate action, which means we need to throw all of our weight on the accelerator.”

NEWS STORY #2: INDIA IS CUTTING OUT CASH AND CORRUPTION

India’s PM, Narendra Modi, took the radical step of banning all Rp500 and Rp1,000 notes (which make up 85% of India’s cash circulation) to cut down on corruption, moving India towards a cashless society.

India is now in the Top 5 governments most trusted by their citizens according to the 2015 Edelman Trust Barometer - along with China, UAE, Singapore and Indonesia. All five countries are working on long term plans for their nations, using technology to achieve economies of speed over economies of scale. These five countries include 3 of the 4 most populous nations, and make up around 40% of the world population.

By comparison, all Western Nations fall below the 50% mark in the Edelman Trust Rankings, which means they are largely distrusted by their own citizens.

NEWS STORY #3: SCIENTISTS REVERSE PARALYSIS FOR THE FIRST TIME

Scientists in Switzerland announced they had successfully reversed paralysis in a monkey who had had its spinal chord partially cut. They did it with a brain implant that connected to electrodes in the monkey’s legs via wifi, so the brain could control the legs again without needing the spinal chord.

The Swiss scientists are now starting a clinical trial with eight humans who have partial leg paralysis. Andrew Jackson of the Institute of Neuroscience at Newcastle University in the U.K. says “It is therefore not unreasonable to speculate that we could see the first clinical demonstrations of interfaces between the brain and spinal cord by the end of the decade.”

Imagine a world where every paralysed human and animal has the power to walk and move again.

NEWS STORY #4: THE FIRST HYPERLOOP PROJECT IS ANNOUNCED

When Elon Musk suggested that a levitating train on magnets in a vacuum would be a green alternative to air travel, his idea of the “Hyperloop” was seen as science fiction. Now, just a few years later, there are two companies looking to turn the dream to reality.

Yesterday, Hyperloop One, together with Dubai’s head of transport Mattar al-Tayer, announced plans for a Hyperloop between Dubai and Abu Dhabi, in a journey that would only take 12 minutes (compared to 30 minutes by plane and 2 hours by car)

Technological advances like this, linked to innovative government partnerships, will transform our energy use and carbon footprint in the coming years - faster than we think.

NEWS STORY \$5: ADIDAS IS MAKING SHOES OUT OF OCEAN PLASTIC

Adidas announced its new UltraBOOST Uncaged Parley running shoes, the first mass-produced footwear created using recycled plastic recovered from the ocean. Each shoe is made out of the equivalent of 11 plastic bottles - and you can buy them from adidas.com from next week.

Imagine if all companies were to close the loop and create recycled products to reduce waste and help save the oceans.

These are just five stories from yesterday that you might have missed.

Yes, 120 million people did vote for the US President yesterday. But that's just 2% of the World's 7 billion population voting in the next leader of 0.5% of the World's 196 countries.

Yes, many people had very strong views both for and against the results, and if your Facebook feed is like mine, that's making up over 50% of all the posts on it.

But the world keeps turning.

And good people keep on doing great things.



When James Blunt prevented World War III



The most important decisions you make are often not what to do, but what not to do. Like the time singer James Blunt “prevented World War III”.

Before he became a hit singer, James was a Captain in the British Army. At a 1999 stand-off during the Kosovo War known as the “Incident at Pristina Airport”, he risked a court marshal by refusing an order from US General Wesley Clark, who was the NATO Supreme Commander in Europe, to attack the Russians and potentially sparking a World War III.

James was at the head of a column of 30,000 NATO troops, and was on a mission to capture Pristina Airport, but he got there to find the Russians had beaten them to it.

As James recalls, “I was the lead officer with my troop of men behind us. The soldiers directly behind me were from the Parachute Regiment, so they’re obviously game for the fight.”

“We had 200 Russians lined up pointing their weapons at us aggressively ... and we’d been told to reach the airfield and take a hold of it.”

"The direct command that came in from General Wesley Clark was to overpower them. Words such as 'destroy' came down the radio."

James refused the order, and luckily soon after he was backed up by the Commander of the British Forces, who also went against their superior, General Clark: "Fortunately, up on the radio came General Sir Mike Jackson, whose words were, 'I'm not going to have my soldiers start World War Three.'

Asked in an interview with the BBC whether he agreed the attack could have triggered World War III, James said "Absolutely. And that's why we were querying our instruction from an American general."

James got his men to surround the airport instead, "And after a couple of days the Russians there said, 'Hang on, we have no food and no water. Can we share the airfield with you?'"

James said, even if he didn't have the support of his British General, he still would have refused the order: "There are things that you do along the way that you know are right, and those that you absolutely feel are wrong, that I think it's morally important to stand up against, and that sense of moral judgement is drilled into us as soldiers in the British army."

After the incident, General Jackson came close to resigning, and General Clark was dismissed by his boss, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, for "Integrity and character issues".

With no need to fight in a World War III, James left the army, released his first album 'Back to Bedlam', got his first No.1 hit 'You're Beautiful', and went on to sell 11 million albums...

How about you? What are the biggest things you could decide simply not to do right now?

Why not replace your to-do list with a not-to-do-list?

Why not replace doing ten half-hearted things with one full-spirited thing?

Your decisions of what not to do may not be as big as preventing World War III, but they could be decisions that clear the way for the life you're meant to live.

"We must be willing to get rid of the life we've planned, so as to have the life that is waiting for us." ~ Joseph Campbell



How to make a Mark

Want to tag Paul Dunn? Yes No

Like Comment Share

Michelle Clarke, Martiene Romijn-van Steyn and 1.3k others

296 shares 72 comments

How do you make a mark with a new company in a competitive market? How did Facebook reach its first \$100 million mark in revenue?

The answer may surprise you - and change the way you think about your own business strategy.

In 2006, Mark Zuckerberg and his team were more focused on coding Facebook than growing revenue. Mark hired Dan Rose from Jeff Bezo's amazon.com as "*VP of Business Development*" to help grow revenue.

Dan had learned from Jeff Bezos that one big partnership can make all the difference to revenues. He watched Myspace start doing big deals in the grand style of it's new Deal Maker owner, Rupert Murdoch. The problem was, Facebook was growing, but was not as big or as established as Myspace yet, so its marketing partnerships were still small.

Within a month of Dan joining Facebook, in August 2006, everything changed. Myspace announced a \$900 million deal with Google. Myspace had the traffic, and Google had the ad network. It was a perfect partnership where Google would manage Myspace's ads, and that deal single-handedly made Myspace profitable.

Dan Rose asked *"Who has the most to lose from this deal?"* The answer was Bill Gates' Microsoft MSN ad network, which had lost out to their arch rival Google. Dan jumped on the phone to Microsoft, and asked them if they wanted a similar deal with Facebook. Microsoft's answer? *"Okay, we'll be down there tomorrow to iron it out."*

That one deal, wrapped up 24 hours later, doubled Facebook's revenues in 2006 from a forecast \$22 million to over \$40 million. The year after, the Microsoft deal was worth over \$100 million in revenue to Facebook.

One phone call to solve Microsoft's problem - which was not wanting to lose to Google - led to Facebook's first \$100 million.

Sometimes to win the war, it's easier to help others fight their battles than to fight your own. Sometimes their battles are much bigger than yours.

*Who would you love to work with who would want to have you in their corner?
Who could you be helping to win big today?*

The fastest way to find out? Bring in someone with inside knowledge - Inside knowledge that's outside the box.

"If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door."

~ Milton Berle



Would you turn down an offer like that?




3 years ago Evan Spiegel turned down \$3 billion from Facebook to buy his company, Snapchat (even though the company was just 2 years old and he was still living with his Dad). At the time, people thought he was crazy for turning down the offer. But Evan kept building the company and now, Snap is planning an IPO at the beginning of 2017 at a \$25 billion valuation.

Would you turn down an offer like that? Do you have the same conviction in your dreams?

Here's what Evan says to those who sell out early: "Don't feel bad if you sell out. Just don't stop there. Find something you aren't willing to sell."

"When you believe in a thing, believe in it all the way." ~ Walt Disney



How a near-death experience became worth \$2 billion



How a near-death experience became worth \$2 billion:

What would you do if you survived a major plane crash in a 747? William Wang closed down his business, reassessed his life, and started anew. 16 years later, he's been rewarded for that decision with the \$2 billion sale of his company, Vizio, today to LeEco, the "Netflix of China".

On Halloween night in 2000, Singapore Airlines Flight 006 took a wrong turning at Taiwan's Chiang Kai-shek Airport during a typhoon. The plane took off on a runway full of construction equipment, killing 83 of the 179 occupants on board.

William remembers the crash - happening in the midst of his struggles with his tech start-up, "When everything was collapsing on me - all my businesses - I was in an airplane crash. I had finished meeting some of my creditors about my cashflow problems and was coming back to Los Angeles."

"The captain took the wrong runway. Instead of 5-L, he took 5-R. The runway was under construction. So we took off and half the plane was in the air, 180

miles per hour, and on its way to lifting off when it hit some of the construction equipment and the plane blew up.”

“The plane came back down on the unfinished runway and it kept on going... I was in the front... the back was gone already. It was like a silent movie. I don’t even remember any noise.”

“You know what I was thinking? My daughter was three or four and it was her first Halloween. My first thought was that I wouldn’t be there to take her trick or treating...”

“I guess several things went through my mind when the plane blew up. One thing was my family. The second thing was that all my headaches were suddenly gone...”

“I thought, “We’re all going to die someday; I might as well enjoy the process of living.””

William walked away from the crash, and walked away from his business. He decided to rethink his life and start again.

The result? A year later, he had closed down his old business and launched a new start-up: Visio, to sell flat-screen Plasma TVs at a third of the price other brand names were selling them at. William says, “I borrowed some money from my parents, mortgaged my house, and had a couple of friends who helped me.”

William decided to change his definition of success: “I’m so fortunate that I’ve been able to do this one more time. When I started, I worked 14 hours a day. I’ve cut down on that. I work eight hours a day. The company is not me, it’s many people’s efforts. And it’s not just all about work - it’s being able to appreciate one another.”

Instead of outsourcing the customer service as his competitors were, William outsourced everything except that: “I don’t want to outsource that. That is instant feedback. Great customer service is why we grew so fast; people loved us.”

And by putting his heart into his life and his business, Vizio has grown over the last decade into the largest LCD TV seller in the US.

By not focusing at the money - but at what was most important - the money followed.

Today, William has sold Vizio to LeEco, a leading Chinese electronics and video streaming company (known as the “Netflix of China”) for \$2 billion. As part of the deal, William is spinning off Vizio’s data business in a separate company, Inscape, which he’s keeping 51% of while LeEco owns the other 49%.

So he can take off in a start-up he loves all over again.

What if you had a similar near-death experience to William's...

What would you change about your life?

What would you change about your work?

William was lucky to survive the crash. Most of us are even luckier to never have had such a crash. But we become even luckier if we take away the same lesson that William did - minus the near-death experience - and chose to live each day like it's our last.

"You must give up the life you planned in order to have the life that is waiting for you." ~ Joseph Campbell



How much could you make with \$5 and 2 hours?



How much could you make with \$5 and 2 hours? This is a very cool story from Tina Sellig (executive director of the Stanford Technology Ventures Program) who gave her students this exact question.

The result was an average 4,000% return(!) Here's what she said happened:

Each of fourteen teams received an envelope with five dollars of “seed funding” and was told they could spend as much time as they wanted planning. However, once they cracked open the envelope, they had two hours to generate as much money as possible. I gave them from Wednesday afternoon until Sunday evening to complete the assignment.

Then, on Sunday evening, each team had to send me one slide describing what they had done, and on Monday afternoon each team had three minutes to present their project to the class.

How did they do this? Here's a clue: the teams that made the most money didn't use the five dollars at all. They realized that focusing on the money actually framed the problem way too tightly. They decided to reinterpret the problem more broadly: What can we do to make money if we start with absolutely nothing?

They ramped up their observation skills, tapped into their talents, and unlocked their creativity to identify problems in their midst - problems they might have seen before but had never thought to solve.

By unearthing these problems and then working to solve them, the winning teams brought in over \$600, and the average return on the five dollar investment was 4,000%!

So what did they do? One group identified a problem common in a lot of college towns—the frustratingly long lines at popular restaurants on Saturday night. The team decided to help those people who didn't want to wait in line. They paired off and booked reservations at several restaurants.

As the times for their reservations approached, they sold each reservation for up to twenty dollars to customers who were happy to avoid a long wait.

As the evening wore on, they made several interesting observations. First, they realized that the female students were better at selling the reservations than the male students, probably because customers were more comfortable being approached by the young women. They adjusted their plan so that the male students ran around town making reservations at different restaurants while the female students sold those places in line.

They also learned that the entire operation worked best at restaurants that use vibrating pagers to alert customers when their table is ready. Physically swapping pagers made customers feel as though they were receiving something tangible for their money. They were more comfortable handing over their money and pager in exchange for the new pager.

Another team took an even simpler approach. They set up a stand in front of the student union where they offered to measure bicycle tire pressure for free. If the tires needed filling, they added air for one dollar. At first they thought they were taking advantage of their fellow students, who could easily

go to a nearby gas station to have their tires filled. But after their first few customers, the students realized that the bicyclists were incredibly grateful. In fact, halfway through the two hour period, the team stopped asking for a specific payment and requested donations instead. Their income soared.

For this team, as well as for the team making restaurant reservations, experimenting along the way paid off. The iterative process, where small changes are made in response to customer feedback, allowed them to optimize their strategy on the fly.

Each of these projects brought in a few hundred dollars, and their fellow classmates were duly impressed. However, the team that generated the greatest profit looked at the resources at their disposal through completely different lenses, and made \$650. These students determined that the most valuable asset they had was neither the five dollars nor the two hours.

Instead, their insight was that their most precious resource was their three-minute presentation time on Monday. They decided to sell it to a company that wanted to recruit the students in the class.

The team created a three-minute "*commercial*" for that company and showed it to the students during the time they would have presented what they had done the prior week. This was brilliant. They recognized that they had a fabulously valuable asset—that others didn't even notice—just waiting to be mined."

That's Tina's story - and I love it - because it's all about the question "*What would I do to deliver value and make money tomorrow if I was starting with nothing?*" I ask this question every day, and it forces me to look for the opportunities and value I would otherwise miss. What would you do?

Wealth isn't how much money you have. It's what you're left with if you lose all your money.



A lesson from “The Great Horse Manure Crisis of 1894”



“In 50 years, every street in London will be buried under nine feet of manure.”
Times of London, 1894

A lesson from “The Great Horse Manure Crisis of 1894”

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441 shares 43 comments

If the crises we face in our environment, the state of our medical, education and economic systems, or the discord in our governments keep you up at night, I hope you find optimism in the following story:

It's the story of the first big global urban crisis that the world's largest cities faced in modern times: The Great Horse Manure Crisis of 1894 (Yes, this was a real thing and that was the name of it).

By the late 1800's London had over 50,000 horses moving cabs and buses every day. Each one produced 15 to 35 pounds of manure and 2 pints of urine daily. At the same time, New York had over 100,000 horses producing 2.5 million pounds of manure each day.

No one could figure out how to handle all this manure, and in 1894 the Times newspaper predicted based on the increase in population and horses at the time "In 50 years, every street in London will be buried under nine feet of manure."

The crisis led to the very first International Urban Planning Conference in New York. It was abandoned after three days - instead of the scheduled ten - because none of the delegates could see any solution.

Many of today's challenges look similarly insurmountable. Anyone looking at current trends and trying to battle the inertia, outdated policies or plain bad decisions of many bureaucracies, corporations and governments can easily lose hope

So what happened to end the Great Horse Manure Crisis of 1894?

Within a matter of years, the entire crisis simply disappeared.

While officials looked unsuccessfully for solutions, Karl Benz, Gottlieb Daimler and other inventors and entrepreneurs were creating the very first automobiles.

By 1912, there were more cars than horses in London and New York. 1917 saw the very last horse-drawn streetcar. The horses disappeared from our roads, and their poo disappeared with them.

"We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." ~ Albert Einstein

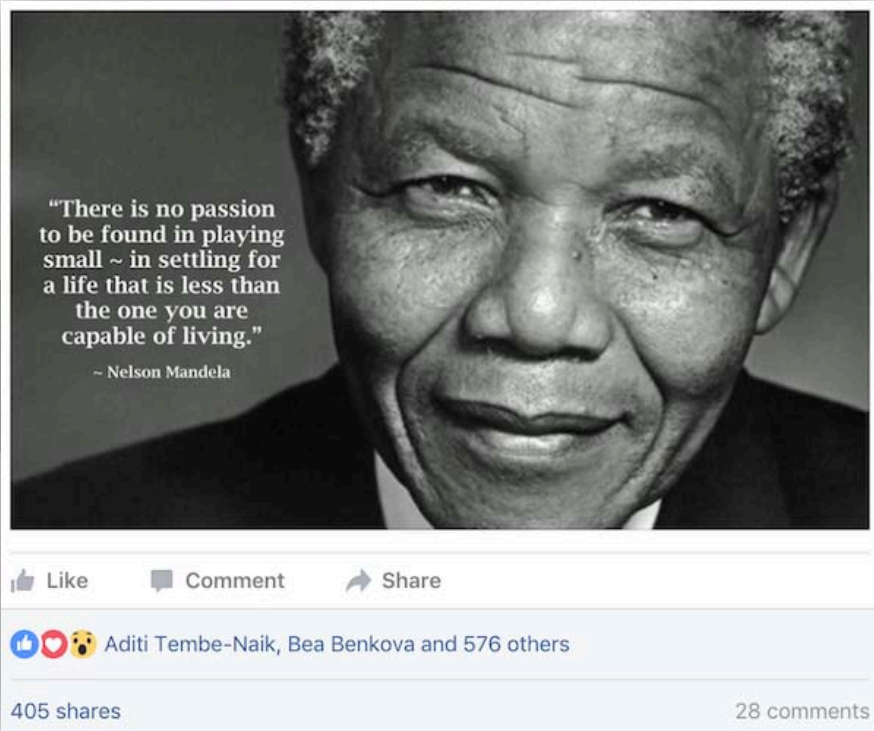
Of course - the age of fuel-driven vehicles has created a whole new set of problems. But today, new inventors and entrepreneurs in green energy, health, education and all areas of society are coming up with new solutions at an increasingly rapid rate.

While the old structures die, you can focus at joining the groups protesting them or you can join the groups who are already creating the new paradigms.

"We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars." ~ Oscar Wilde



The odd moment when I met Nelson Mandela



An earlier post with an updated story - The weird, slightly odd moment when I met Nelson Mandela...

This week Nelson Mandela died at 95 years old. It was twelve years ago when I met Mr Mandela by accident. It was weird, chance meeting up in the sky that had something to do with butterflies, and angels. Here's what happened...

I was in the line in to the Aer Lingus flight from London to Dublin. Why was it taking so long to get on board? When I entered the plane cabin it became obvious why. Nelson Mandela was sitting in seat 1C. He was on his way to the Special Olympics Everyone was stopping as they passed him to nod and stare.

I sat in seat 4A. *"How great is this?"* I thought, *"How many people get to be on the same plane as Nelson Mandela?"* Everyone boarded, the plane left the

terminal and as it rolled towards the runway another thought crossed my mind. *“How many people have the opportunity to have a conversation with Nelson Mandela, with no where for him to go for an hour?”*

I decided I was going to go and have a chat with him. We took off, and immediately I had butterflies in my stomach. What if I went to speak to him and he just laughed at me? What if his bodyguard threw me to the ground in front of everyone? What if I made a fool of myself in front of all the passengers?

The lunch service came and I waited for the trays to be cleared away. Mr Mandela was reading the newspaper. As they cleared the trays I took that moment to get up and walk up to his row - before he had time to put his table away so he couldn't escape even if he wanted to...

All eyes in the cabin behind me were on me. As I got closer, his bodyguard began to rise. Mr Mandela saw me and motioned to his body guard to sit down. I squatted down next to him in the aisle so I was the same height as him, and I introduced myself. *“Hello, Mr Mandela. I'm Roger Hamilton and I've flown in from Singapore”* I said.

“Singapore! Send my regards to Lee Kuan Yew” he said with a smile, as if the Founding Father of Singapore was my best friend. I told him the reason I had come to say hello is because he was an inspiration to me, and that I had committed my life to support entrepreneurs - that I had been to South Africa recently and spent time with the social entrepreneurs there.

We got into a conversation on how the spirit of entrepreneurship can give people hope to people and lift them out of poverty. He spoke about what he saw happening in South Africa. I spoke about what I was seeing around Asia. I began to stop worrying he was just being polite and became aware of how present he was being, so I became more present too. I think we spoke for maybe twenty or thirty minutes. I lost track of time.

At the end of our conversation I asked him if I could contact him when I was next in South Africa. He laughed and nudged his fellow passenger in Seat 1A, Zelda La Grange, his personal assistant, and said *“Speak to the boss.”* Then he added, *“But you're young and handsome, so it shouldn't be a problem. Just buy her a drink.”*

Zelda smiled and passed over her business card, and I walked back to my seat. Everyone was watching my return like I had somehow been sprinkled

with some magic fairy dust and had been given new superpowers by the man in 1C.

I had always been fearful of just approaching people who I looked up to. The butterflies in my stomach would always stop me from even going up and saying "*hello*". That meeting with Nelson Mandela, and how he responded, put the fear I had of meeting world leading change makers - or anyone new, for that matter - behind me. He had the effect on others as well - connecting you to your greater self.

It doesn't mean I don't still get butterflies when meeting new people. It just means when I feel the butterflies in my stomach now, I think of them not as butterflies but as fairies appearing, waiting to sprinkle fairy dust. Or maybe angels.

Rest in peace, Mr Mandela.



What were you doing during the US elections?

What were you doing during the US elections?

“ In debt and desperate one midnight, we had the idea if the ‘air beds’ in ‘air bed and breakfast’ wasn’t working, maybe we can sell ‘breakfast’ instead. ”

BRIAN CHESKY
Sold Obama O's cereal
Led to \$30 billion Airbnb

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If you're looking for the silver lining in the US elections, I wrote this post for you: In every doorway of distraction there's always a key to positive action. That's what Brian Chesky found out in the 2008 US elections with an election idea that led to a \$30 billion business.

In the midst of the US election campaign, Brian and his co-founders, Joe and Nathan, were working on their startup - renting out air beds and breakfast. But their company, [Airbnb](#), was seriously struggling. They had maxed out a wallet full of credit cards and were tens of thousands of dollars in debt.

Brian remembers: "We got 80 bookings during the Democratic National Congress. The downside was, after the DNC we had no bookings, we were a year into the business, we were in debt, every investor said no... We were at rock bottom."

That's when they came up with the idea of selling cereal instead: "In debt and desperate one midnight, we had the idea if the 'air beds' in 'air bed and breakfast' wasn't working, maybe we can sell 'breakfast' instead."

"We started thinking about president themed cereal and we convinced a producer to make cereal for us (called "Obama O's and Cap'n McCain's) and since we couldn't pay them he would get a portion of the sales."

"We hand folded 1,000 boxes of cereal... It was like origami in my apartment."

Brian hot glued and stacked the boxes, and says "I was thinking at the time, that Mark Zuckerberg was never hot gluing anything at Facebook - so maybe this is not a good idea."

They numbered each one, and then sold them at \$40 a box. The Obama O's sold so well, they ended up packaging in the Cap'n McCain's in a Buy 1 Get 1 free special. Brian says "We sold \$30,000 worth of cereal and this is how we funded the company and came up with the phrase "be a cereal entrepreneur".

Without that money, the company may not have survived, and it's unlikely Airbnb would have grown into the company it is today.

But it was more than the cash that came from the idea. Brian and Joe were trying to get into the Silicon Valley startup accelerator, [Y Combinator](#). They got a chance to pitch Y Combinator founder Paul Graham, but the interview wasn't going well. So Joe pulled out a box of Obama O's and offered some to Paul.

"What's this?" he asked. They then explained what they had to do to fund themselves. Paul's reaction: "Wait, you guys funded your company based on selling breakfast cereal?"

Paul sensed there was a market crash coming (which hit just a few months later) and said he was looking for founders who would survive the crash.

He said to the two of them "Wow. You guys are like cockroaches. You just won't die." He then added "If you can convince people to pay \$40 for a box of cereal, you can probably convince them to pay to sleep on each other's air mattresses. You guys are in."

Those cereal boxes - and that decision - led to AirBnB getting the mentoring they needed and Y Combinator getting its biggest success story.

Last month, Airbnb raised \$555 million from Google and other investors at a value of \$30 billion. The company has gone from making 1,000 cereal boxes to serving 60 million guests in almost every country in the world. All within two election cycles.

With this year's US elections dominating the media and social media, I wanted to share with you Brian's story. In all the distraction he found a key to action - a key worth \$30 billion.

Are you getting caught in the distraction, or seeing opportunities for action?

Are you getting stuck in the negative, or finding a path to the positive?

Are you caught in the conflict, or creating the connections?

In four years time the cycle will come around again. It will be 2020. Where we'll be then will have less to do with the politicians we elect and more to do with the opportunities we take - and the movements we create.

"Until you remove the noise, you're going to miss a lot of signal." ~ Seth Godin

Whatsapp x Facebook = \$19 Billion(!)



Have you ever been rejected for a job? Brian Acton has. After 11 years at Yahoo! and out of a job at 38 years old, Brian went job hunting... first to Twitter (rejected) then to Facebook (rejected).

What do you do when you're 38 years old, competing unsuccessfully against 20-somethings for a job as a systems engineer? If you're Brian, you go out and play frisbee...

Two years earlier, he had travelled South America playing ultimate frisbee with Jan Koum, who he had met while working at Ernst & Young as a security tester. Now, in the midst of his job rejections, he met up with Jan again for a game of frisbee.

It was while playing, Jan told Brian he was working on a start-up to create a new kind of mobile app, but he had run out of money. Jan had lived on

welfare with his parents when he first arrived to the US from Ukraine. Not wanting to go back on food stamps, he asked Brian for advice on whether he should quit and start looking for a job.

Admiring Jan for his courage in starting his own company, Brian replied *"You'd be an idiot to quit now. Give it a few more months."*

The topic turned to Brian's success in getting a new job (which was non-existent) and it was only a matter of time before Jan (who had previously been rejected from a job at Facebook) had turned Brian's advice on himself.

He persuaded Brian to quit the job hunt and join him on his start-up, creating a new messaging app, *"WhatsApp"*.

Brian and Jan had one thing in common - Ultimate Frisbee. Other than that, they turned out to be complimentary to each other in every other way. As Brian says, they are *"Yin and Yang, I'm the naive optimist, he's more paranoid. I pay attention to bills and taxes, he pays attention to our product. He's CEO. I just make sure stuff gets done."*

In a job hunt, all your weaknesses are exposed. In a start-up, your weakness can be supported by your team member's strength. So becoming an entrepreneur is easier than being an employee.

It took a few months of convincing but Brian finally decided to take the step, reject the rejecters, and join Jan.

Brian managed to raise some funds to keep the two going, while they worked out of the Red Rock Cafe in Mountain View. With no office and no overheads, they put 100% focus at growing WhatsApp as the messaging app with *"No Ads. No Games. No Gimmicks."*

In the first year, revenue grew to only \$5,000 a month, but user growth boomed. Brian and Jan would switch from *"free"* to *"paid"* for the app (charging \$1) when users began growing too much. When they saw people would even pay for the app, Brian said *"You know, I think we can actually stay paid."*

The company stayed on an exponential growth path and, four years later, Facebook - the company that had rejected both founders - bought WhatsApp for \$19 billion, making both Brian and Jan multi-billionaires.

As a symbolic gesture to their difficult beginnings, the two signed the purchase papers on the steps of the building where Jan's parents would pick up their food stamps.

And Brian remembers a second thing outside of Frisbee that the two have in common, and which led to their success: *"We're part of the Facebook reject club."*

It took 4 years from ultimate frisbee and ultimate rejection to Brian and Jan's \$19 billion success.

4 years from now will be the year 2020. Where will you be in 2020?

Where you are in 2020 will have everything to do with the decisions you make today.

> Are you focused at finding a job instead of adding value to those already around you?

> Are you chasing opportunities instead of seeing the ones that are right in front of you?

> Is your latest rejection hiding a doorway behind it? A doorway to an entirely new, more exciting adventure?

Sometimes, it just takes a change in focus.

"Sometimes the best gain is to lose." - George Herbert



Why Donald Trump is the new President



When you have a country in massive debt, in economic and political disarray, with loss of trust in the government, it's only a matter of time before a dictatorial leader steps in and gains the support of the people.

That's what happened in 1789 in France, and triggered the French Revolution.

Citizens turned against King Louis XVI in protest of the monarchy's excesses and the debt France had racked up during the American Revolution, catching the elite totally off-guard.

Napoleon took advantage of the situation and created a dictatorship, declaring himself "Emperor" and taking charge of the army.

Unwittingly, the French public had jumped from the frying pan into the fire.

What happened next? Napoleon adopted what's now famously known as the "Napoleon complex", proclaiming to make France great again by attacking all France's international neighbours.

The world pushed back, defeating Napoleon in the Battle of Waterloo and exiling him to the remote island of Saint Helena.

Realising there was more to revolution than just overthrowing out the old, France had its second revolution, with the principle of “droit au travail” (the “right to work”), establishing “National Workshops” to retrain the unemployed, and created a new government (the “Second Republic”).

A universal right to vote was put in place, democratic elections were held in April 1848 and a president was elected. They also adopted a “Declaration of the Rights of Man” that US Founding Father, Thomas Jefferson, helped to write.

France’s move triggered the “Spring of Nations” - the most widespread revolutionary wave in European history.

Revolutions took place in 50 countries within the same year. From Italy to Germany, from Ireland to the Austrian Empire, people rose up against the monarchies of the time. The end result - after years of painful transition - is the democratic systems we live with today - a system that’s only 250 years old.

All that may be about to change again.

When UK citizens voted for Brexit, many were in disbelief.

When US citizens voted Trump in today as the next US President, again many are in disbelief.

But this is disbelief in the backdrop of a government system that more than two thirds of all citizens have already lost trust in - Just as everyone had lost faith in the 18th century monarchies.

“Wise men don’t judge. They seek to understand.” - Wei Wu Wei

What if there’s a better system ready to emerge this century? One that does away entirely with four-year-term national governments? One that moves from Nation States to City States or self-sustaining communities? One that gives us the power to truly solve our global issues?

It won’t happen immediately, and - like the Spring of Nations - it might take a few false starts. But what if we need to journey through the unthinkable to reach a far better system that’s currently unimaginable?

Just as the Storming of the Bastille wasn’t about either King Louis XVI or Napoleon, what if the current groundswell is not about Brexit or Trump?

Instead, it could be the first votes against the old-system-we-know for the new-system-we-don’t know.

Instead, it could be the early signs of a coming global revolution.

“We are only as strong as we are united, as weak as we are divided.” - JK Rowling

STARTUP STRATEGIES

Stories and posts to inspire you on the startup journey

"Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can."
~ Arthur Ashe



User experience vs design



Best advice if you're just starting or growing a business:

Focus at your customer more than your product. Get fixed on your customer experience, and your product will keep changing to serve them best. But fix your product, and customers will find a path that fits them, with or without you.

If you're waiting on the street corner, wondering where all your customers are, this post is for you.

We've moved from the industrial age where it was all about the product and productization to the technological age where it's all about the customer and customization.

Instead of focusing at product development and production lines (which we learned about and were a part of at school), focus at customer experiences and customization lines.

Your business doesn't start when you have a product. It starts when you have a customer. So who is your perfect customer? Start from there and ask yourself (and them):

Problem - What's the problem they need solved?

Promise - What's the benefit you deliver to them by solving it?

Product - How will you solve it better than others?

Proof - Why should they trust you?


Keep upgrading your answers (and your products) regularly. Because what your customers need, their expectations and how they are being served will keep changing fast. And once you get into flow, you'll begin to know what they need before them, and they'll begin pre-buying your next product.

"Get closer than ever to your customer. So close that you tell them what they need well before they realize it themselves." ~ Steve Jobs

The easiest way to future proof your business is to have customers that love you. The easiest way to fail is to love your idea or product more than you love your customers. So find your soul-market and fall in love all over again.



Rethink your business model



UBER The world's largest taxi company owns no vehicles

airbnb The largest accommodation provider owns no real estate

facebook The most popular media provider creates no content

Instagram The most valuable photo company sells no cameras

NETFLIX The fastest growing television network lays no cables

Alibaba.com The most valuable retailer has no inventory

None of these six companies existed twenty years ago

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Uber, the world's largest taxi company owns no vehicles.

Airbnb, the world's largest accommodation provider owns no real estate.

Facebook, the world's most popular media provider creates no content.

Instagram, the most valuable photo company, sells no cameras.

Netflix, the fastest growing television network, lays no cables.

Alibaba, the world's most valuable retailer has no inventory.

All six are building customer networks and scalable software - not factory networks and clunky hardware. All six focus at personalized customer experiences not mass production. All six attract more new customers from word-of-mouth than expensive marketing. All six have disrupted their industry at a global scale.

None of these six companies existed 20 years ago.


How can you rethink your own business model - and industry - today?



Instagram - 3 steps to \$1 billion



Instagram



3 steps to \$1 billion

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👤 👤 👤 Preity Thomas, Tamami Ushiki and 7.7k others

3,825 shares

371 comments

18 months & 3 simple, not-so-simple steps to \$1 billion...

Today, Instagram sold to Facebook for \$1 billion. A week ago, when TIME asked Instagram founder, Kevin Systrom, if he would sell the company, he said "It's not really on the top of our minds right now."

Kevin is 27 years old and started Instagram 18 months ago with Mike Krieger, in October 2010. The company has grown with just 4 staff, and today has just 9 in the team. With the \$1 billion deal that was announced today, was Kevin just plain lucky, or was there some simple steps that he (and others who have had the same luck) have in common?

Here's three steps he followed. They may not guarantee you exactly the same success - but they will increase your own good fortune:

1. THINK BIG FROM DAY ONE - THEN LEARN FROM OTHERS:

It was while Kevin was studying at Stanford 7 years ago that he had the idea of a photo-sharing site, from his passion for photography. That was before iPhones, and before Facebook. Step one is to cultivate your idea by learning from others. He met Mark Zuckerberg in 2004 and talked about his idea. Mark then offered him a job at Facebook, which had just launched (in hindsight, a cheaper option than the \$1 billion he's just paid to work with Kevin). Kevin turned him down but they stayed in touch. He went to intern at Odeo with Evan Williams, who sold Blogger and Jack Dorsey, who launched Twitter. This is where Kevin got to understand the power of social sharing. Kevin later said "Comparing Instagram to photography is like comparing Twitter to Microsoft Word".

He then went on to work at Google. All in all, it was a full six years after having the idea of a photo sharing site that he worked with others leading the field: Getting paid for his own education before he launched his own start-up. As Kevin says, "I was given the opportunity to be in the middle of a ton of innovation, and meet some of the smartest people doing the coolest stuff in the world. When I finally did it [myself], it just felt so right."

Who could you (and should you) be working with today to lay your own foundation?

2. KEEP 100% FOCUSED ON WHAT PROBLEM YOU'RE SOLVING - AND FAIL FIRST:

When Kevin launched Instagram in October 2010, he explained in his first blog what problems Instagram intended to solve. He listed the top three problems users were having:

"My mobile photos look lame."

"It's a pain to share to all my friends."

“Photos take forever to upload.”

How would he know these were the problems? Just by talking to people? No, by getting it wrong the first time. In early 2010 he launched his first attempt “Burbn” as a location-based photo app, using Foursquare. It was a one-man-band, but after a year of hard work it had failed to catch on. It was, however, a failure that allowed him to learn from his users what would work, and to attract interest from like-minded people, including his future co-founder of Instagram, Mike Krieger.

By focusing on these three problems, Instagram launched in October 2010. Kevin relates the first moments of launch: “It was 12:15am, October 6th and we had been working on the app non-stop, day and night for 8 weeks. With a bit of hesitation, I clicked the button that launched “Instagram” live to the Apple app store. We figured we’d have at least 6 hours before anyone discovered the app so we could grab some shut-eye. No problem, we figured. Within a few minutes, they started pouring in... The night of sleep we were hoping for turned into a few meager hours before we rushed into the office to add capacity to the service. Now, only a couple months later, we’re happy to announce that our community consists of more than a million registered users.”

What problem are you solving, and what are you learning by failing, that is setting you up for your own overnight success?

3. CUT OUT ALL THE NOISE:

Kevin explains the difference between Instagram and Burbn: “We actually got an entire version of Burbn done as an iPhone app, but it felt cluttered, and overrun with features. It was really difficult to decide to start from scratch, but we went out on a limb, and basically cut everything in the Burbn app except for its photo, comment, and like capabilities. What remained was Instagram.”

Kevin cut out all the noise. He then launched Instagram just on the Apple App Store (It just came to Android last week) and focused on sharing on Twitter and Facebook (Three platforms that didn’t even exist when he first had the idea). That’s it: Photo, comment, like. No other platforms. No other noise.

Simpler means sharper means easier to cut through the noise. Instagram went from one million users by Dec 2010 to 30 million users today. In 2011, Apple named Instagram the “App of the Year”. Why would Facebook buy it now for \$1 billion? Because Mark already knows it will add more value than that to Facebook when it has its upcoming \$100 billion IPO.

If you are already thinking big, connecting smart and focused at the problems you are solving - How could you solve them in the fewest number of steps?

A BILLION DOLLAR STORY

It obviously takes more than three simple, not-so-simple steps to get the pieces lined up and timed right for the kind of 18 month run that Kevin has had. But these three show up again and again in today's stories of hyper-growth, and the ones I will continue to share here on Facebook and at my Fast Forward events.

As an end to this chapter of the Instagram story, here's how Kevin relates the beginning of his photo-sharing idea. It is at the heart of his journey, as your story should be at the heart of yours:

"When I studied abroad my teacher set what I do now in motion by saying, "Give me that camera of yours." He took my camera away and gave me a little, plastic camera. I was studying in Florence at the time and he told me that I wasn't allowed to use my camera for the rest of the class. I had to use this plastic camera with a terrible lens. He said I was too focused on sharpness and "I feel like you're more artsy than that."

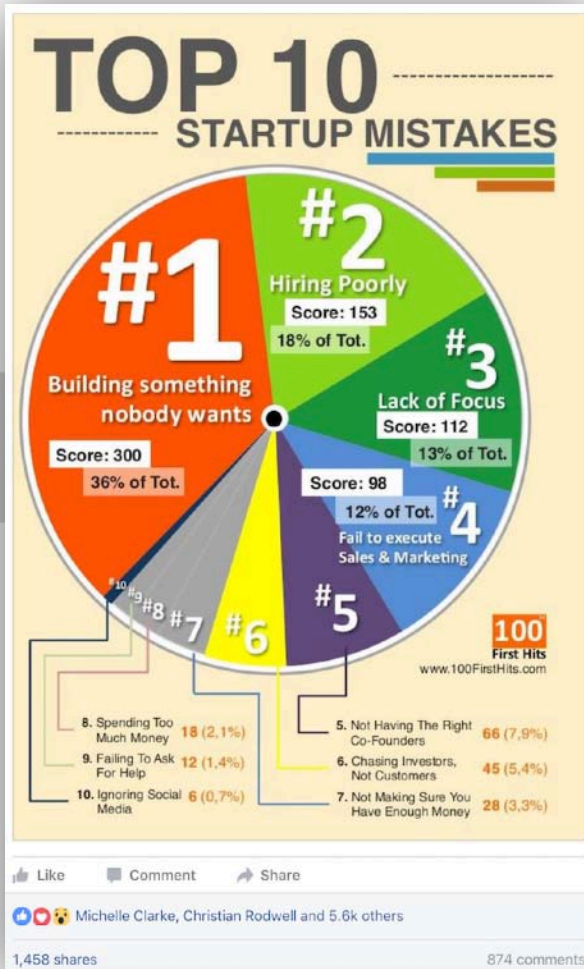
"He said, "I want you to use this Holga," this plastic camera with a plastic lens that had this cult following in the '80s and '90. I was blown away by what it could do to photos. My photography teacher was totally right. I was too focused on being meticulous with these really beautiful, complex architectural shots.

It helps to see the world through a different lens and that's what we wanted to do with Instagram. We wanted to give everyone the same feeling of discovering the world around you through a different lens."

It's ironic that as Instagram hits a \$1 billion value, mimicking the feel of these disposable cameras, the biggest producer of them, Kodak, has filed for bankruptcy.

Each wave that crashes is followed by another. The only question is who is already positioning themselves to surf it. Are you up for the ride?

4 things make up 79% of all failures



Four things make up 79% of all business failures:

- #1 - Building something nobody wants (36%)
- #2 - Hiring poorly (18%)
- #3 - Lack of focus (13%)
- #4 - Failing to market & sell (12%)

How to best avoid these failures:

#1 - Always start with the customer, not the product. Get your beta group / user group of customers and work with them to deliver what they love. People will pay you to do what they love, not to just do what you love.

#2 - Outsource to experts who manage themselves, not workers who need to be managed. Hire people who let you do more of what you do best, not people who take you away from your talents because they need to be managed.

#3 - Once opportunities begin to grow, don't get defocused. Anything that doesn't add to your customer's experience isn't worth doing.

#4 - Don't fail by having a great product that no one knows about. Don't rely on someone else to sell your product until you have more sales than you can handle. Don't make sales by closing customers. Create buyers by opening relationships.

#5 - More than all of the above, maximise failures that steer you (testing and measuring) and avoid failures that sink you (when you run out of money and time). Fail passionately and fail often, earning and learning with each failure, so it's you that keeps failing (and learning) and not your company!

"The biggest risk is not taking any risk.. In a world that is changing really quickly, the only strategy that is guaranteed to fail is not taking risks."

~ Mark Zuckerberg

And...

"Never, never, never give up."

~ Winston Churchill

3 steps to \$30 million



This week Yahoo bought 17 year old Nick D'Aloisio's iPhone app, Summly, for \$30 million. When Yahoo was founded in 1994, Nick wasn't even born yet.

What's he doing with \$30 million? As Nick says, *"I can't even buy a car because I don't have a licence yet." So he's going to buy a new bag. Why? "Mine is broken; it's old and the strap's not working."*

3 STEPS TO \$30 MILLION

Nick's app has delivered over 90 million news summaries in the four short months since he launched it on his 17th birthday in November. But Nick isn't even old enough to be a Director of his company, so his mum is the Director while he sits in as Company Secretary.

What has gotten Nick to success so quickly in 15 months when so many of us are still struggling after 15 years? Here's 3 steps his journey has in common with most super-success stories:

PROBLEM + PASSION = \$300K SOLUTION

Nick's Summly App was the solution to a real world problem that no one else was solving well. As Nick relates, *"I was 15 years old and I was revising for some kind of history exam. The problem was I was trying to find information that was useful to me."*

Searching Google on his phone didn't give him enough detail to know what was or wasn't a useful link. So he put his own iPhone app together.

The app quickly rose up the download ranks and Apple featured it in their store.

Then came a fateful email: *"About a month later, the private fund of the Hong Kong billionaire Li-Kashing cold emailed me and expressed an interest to invest, but they didn't realize I was 15...It turned out that they actually liked my age because it demonstrated I was net-native, so I'd only grown up with the Internet. They flew to London about a month later and invested \$300,000. That kick-started this whole journey."*

\$300K FUNDING + EXPERTISE = \$1.3M REPUTATION

Nick used the money to bring in world experts to help relaunch the app. At 16 years old, he teamed up with the leaders in Natural Language Processing, Stanford Research Institute (Who create Apple's SIRI - named after the company's initials, SRI).

In between high school classes in London, Nick worked with SRI in the US by phone and text messages to build the new app. SRI's solid reputation and Nick's focus on approaching well known celebrities to help him attracted high profile investors Stephen Fry, Ashton Kutcher and Yoko Ono who invested \$1.3 million. Nick made the most of his investors, with Stephen Fry starring in the launch video for Summly.

\$1.3M REPUTATION + SINGLE-MINDED FOCUS = \$30M STORY

With world class partners and world class investors, Nick gave up full-time school at the end of 2011, with his parent's blessing: *"I talked about it with them and my headmaster and we decided it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity*

and it would be silly not to run with it. Now, looking back, I can say it was a massive gamble. But it was a good gamble.”

From a standing start to \$30 million, Nick has taken the age old 1-2-3 formula of solving a problem in a smart way, then using the resources he attracts to bring in the best talent, and leveraging that to attract the most influential partners.

What made him think he could just go and knock on the door of the best companies and most well known people in the world? As he says "I was naive. I didn't know I couldn't."

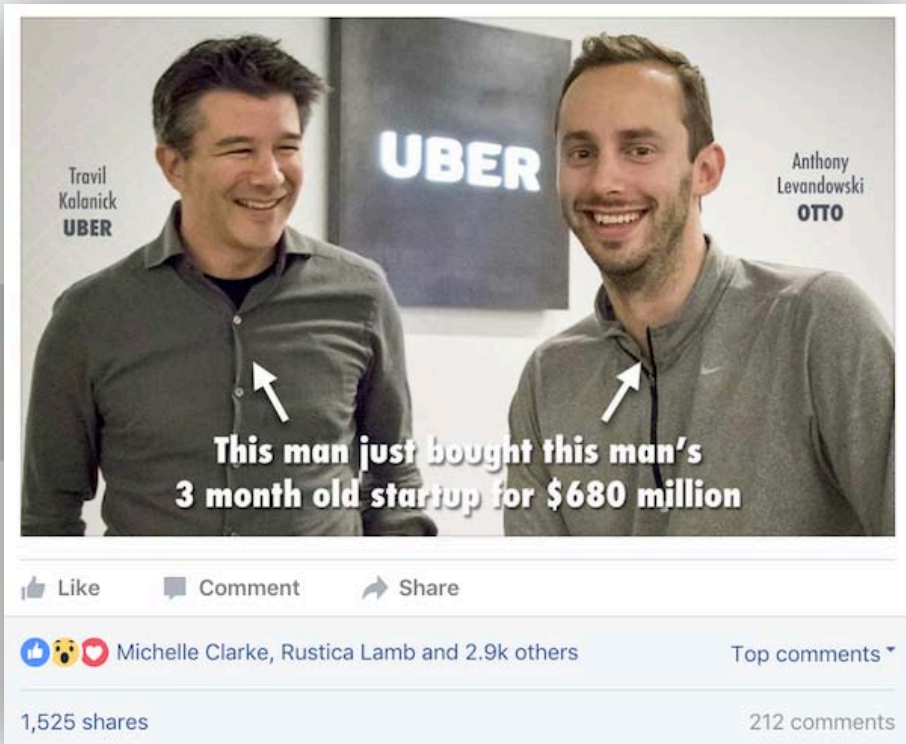
Nick is now reflecting on this week's news: *“Numbing is probably the best word to describe it. It's a shock to be honest. The only thing I can take from this is that I'm genuinely kind of proud that I've been getting a lot of tweets where young people are commenting and saying, “This is really inspirational, I want to go and start my own thing.”*

How many of these 3 steps in the 1-2-3 formula have you taken in your business? What can you do to upgrade your product, your talent or your partners?

Or maybe it's time to be a kid again, be naive again, when you didn't know you couldn't. And start something entirely new.



How do you sell a 3 month old company for \$680 million?



How do you sell a company you started 3 months earlier for \$680 million? That's what Anthony Levandowski just did. He started his company, Otto, in May, and sold it this week to Uber.

Here's 3 steps that Anthony took in one of the fastest startup-to-sale stories in history:

> RIDE A WAVE

At 16 years old, in 1997, Anthony started his first business building websites. But then thought "there was no barrier to entry there, so I'd better think of something more specialized."

So he decided to take his passion for lego and build robots instead. The journey paid off when he won the first Lego MindStorms Challenge in San

Francisco in 2001. His winning robot? He called it “BillSortBot” and its one function was sorting monopoly money.

Even at that early stage, Anthony saw the power of robots to connect with humans, saying “Adding the purple antennas and large eyes gave it a little bit of character.” The judges didn’t just love what the robot did. They loved the robot.

Anthony jumped on the robot revolution wave, and started his company, Anthony’s Robots.

His big break? It came from his mother. Anthony recalls: “My mom called me up and said, there’s this robot race it would be interesting for you to find out about.”

The race was the DARPA Grand Challenge for self-driving cars, and Anthony got to work on “Ghostrider”, a robot motorbike that entered, but failed to win, the race.

Even so, Anthony had caught the bug for self-driving cars: “It struck a chord deep in my DNA. It was almost like discovering electronics. I didn’t know where it was going to be used or how it would work out, but I knew that this was going to change things significantly.”

> GET A JOB

While many entrepreneurs believe going it alone with your own company is the key to success, the most successful entrepreneurs invested time working with mentors and companies who have already achieved greater success.

That’s what Anthony did. Along with DARPA Challenge winner, Sebastian Thrun, Anthony was offered a job with Google to work on their mapping technology. He took the job, and that led to the Google X self-driving car project, which Anthony became the project leader for.

For the next 10 years, Anthony worked quietly in the background as Google’s self-driving cars and the entire self-driving car wave grew - until he was ready to step out on his own 3 months ago.

> PICK A NICHE

With every major car manufacturer announcing their own self-driving car projects this year, Anthony wondered how he could choose a niche that most of them weren’t focused at. His solution? Trucks.

In May, Anthony left Google with some of his team and created a new startup, Otto, named after German engineer Nikolaus Otto, who developed the internal combustion engine.

Otto would focus at self-driving trucks, and Anthony gave his reason for picking this niche:

“While trucks drive just 5.6 percent of all U.S. miles, they’re at fault for nearly 9.5 percent of all driving fatalities: in recent years, on average, eight people die on the road due to truck accidents every day.”

With self-driving trucks, he would increase productivity and cut fatalities - or at least that was the plan...

This week - just 3 months after Otto launched and before they have sold a single product, Uber has bought the company for \$680 million in stock in a deal that gives Anthony and his co-founders 20% of all future trucking profits that Uber makes.

Anthony now also gets a new job. As Uber Founder, Travis Kalanick wrote in a blog this week, “Anthony Levandowski, Otto’s co-founder, will now lead our combined self-driving efforts reporting directly to me. If that sounds like a big deal - well, it is. ”

“Otto plus Uber is a dream team. Anthony is one of the world’s leading autonomous engineers: his first invention, a self-driving motorcycle called Ghost rider, is now in the Smithsonian. Just as important, Anthony is a prolific entrepreneur with a real sense of urgency.”

The price Travis paid for Otto was not the value of Otto. It was the value of Anthony.

How - in building your business - are you building your value?

On the same day Uber announced it was buying Otto, it also announced it will have 100 self-driving Volvos making free rides in Pittsburgh by the end of this month. With the pace of change continuing to accelerate, the future continues to arrive faster than we expect.

And with the next chapter of Anthony’s life now ahead of him, what does he say about the future? “Robots here we come!”

Turning a 200 year old invention into a billion dollar startup



Imagine you came up with an idea that could get people healthy and help the environment. Imagine you quit your dream job, launched a startup around the idea and 2 years later had turned the idea into a billion dollar company.

That's exactly what David Wang has just done.

Two years ago David quit his job as General Manager of Uber in Shanghai after thinking "Why don't I create an Uber for bikes?"

He launched his company, Mobike, a year ago. Each of his bikes has a pedal-powered GPS, smart lock and timer, so you can find a bike and unlock it with your Mobike App, get charged 15c per hour, and then leave it wherever you finish your ride.

David knew the key to his idea was making his own low cost, high tech bikes. So he started bike-building, and launched the service in Shanghai in April last year.

The bikes were so popular, in August he attracted \$10 million from Panda Capital. Then, a month later he raised another \$100 million from well known VCs.

By the end of 2016, Mobike's Shanghai GM, Michael Yao (in photo) said: "We just announced passing the 100,000th bike in Shanghai earlier this month. We are currently operating in nine cities: Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Chengdu, Ningbo, Xiamen, Foshan and Wuhan."

Shanghai has now become the No.1 bike-sharing city in the world, and China is now producing more ride-sharing bikes than all the rest of the world put together.

This month Mobike raised \$215 million from Tencent and a group of VCs, likely at a valuation of over \$1 billion, and this week Xiaofeng did a deal with Foxconn which will get 10 million Mobikes on the road by the end of this year.

Less than 2 years after starting his company, David has 1.5 million users taking 500,000 bike rides each day. That's 1.5 million users getting healthy and improving the air quality of China's cities each day. He now plans to be in 100 cities in China and around the world by the end of this year.

In his announcement of the Foxconn deal this week, David said "In 2017, we aim to enable residents in a hundred cities in China and internationally to enjoy our unique and convenient solution."

That solution is the bicycle, invented in 1817 (and celebrating its 200th birthday this year), with some high tech upgrades.

In other words, he took a 200 year old invention and turned it into a billion dollar startup.

Sometimes the best ideas are the simplest.

In fact, the technology that David is using for his bikes is freely accessible to anyone to start a similar company.

The difference is, he took massive action.

What simple idea are you delaying today?

Where will you be in 2 years from now by simply taking that next step?

Time to get on your bike!

"Do not wait to strike till the iron is hot, but make it hot by striking." ~ William Butler Yeats



The story of FedEx



How long does it take to create an overnight success? For Fred Smith, the first FedEx overnight package actually took eleven years to deliver...

In 1962, Fred wrote a paper for his economics class on the idea of an overnight delivery service. His professor gave him a 'C', saying *"The concept is interesting and well-formed, but in order to earn better than a 'C', the idea must be feasible."*

Not ready to give up on the idea, when Fred was sent to Vietnam as a Marine, he studied the Air Force's logistics systems. As soon as he returned, in 1970, he bought an aircraft maintenance company, Ark Aviation Sales, and started trading in used jets.

By 1973, he had copied the military's logistics operation with a small fleet of 14 Falcon 20 jets, and eleven years after his initial idea was rejected by his professor, he shipped his first parcel.

Despite raising venture capital funds to get the business off the ground, Fred lost all \$29 million of it within the first two years of business. Desperate to pay the bills, with his last \$5,000 in the bank, Fred flew to Las Vegas and bet his remaining money on Blackjack. He won \$27,000, which paid the fuel bill due and kept FedEx in business.

As his partner, Roger Frock remembers the Monday after: "I asked Fred where the funds had come from, and he responded, 'The meeting with the General Dynamics board was a bust and I knew we needed money for Monday, so I took a plane to Las Vegas and won \$27,000.' I said, 'You mean you took our last \$5,000– how could you do that?' He shrugged his shoulders and said, 'What difference does it make? Without the funds for the fuel companies, we couldn't have flown anyway.'

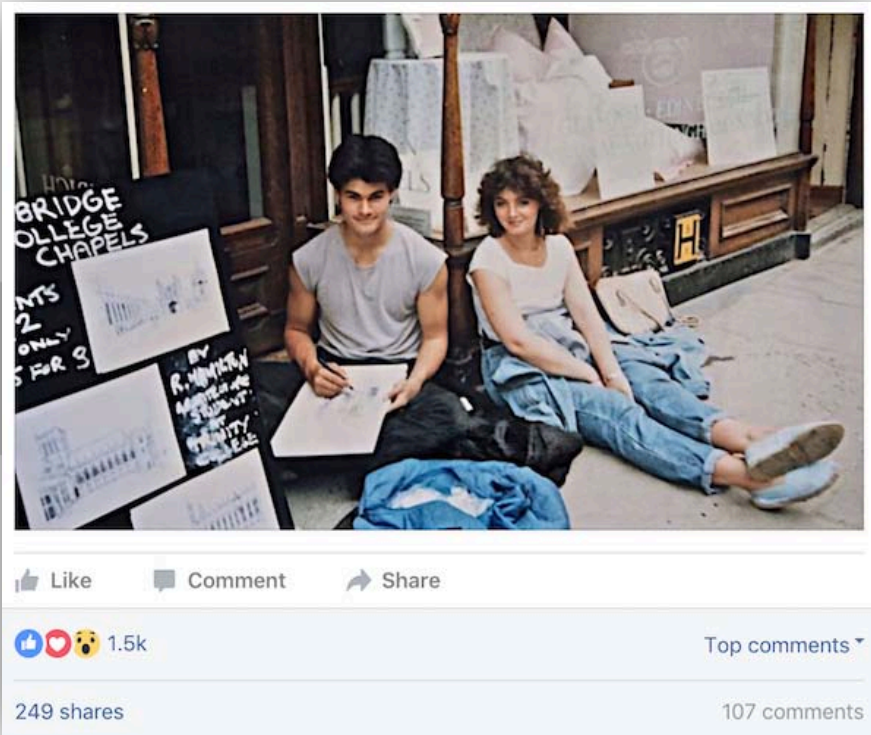
FedEx went from one cash crisis on to another, but Fred persevered - through two recessions, the Asian crisis, the Dotcom crash and the Global Financial Crisis. Today, 40 years later, Fred has built a \$2 billion fortune as CEO of a company that now ships over a billion packages a year.

From overnight successes to overnight deliveries, everything takes longer before anything happens faster. Remember every day is just another step closer to your own overnight success.

Just ask Fred.

"There are no quick wins in business. It takes years to become an overnight success." - Richard Branson

How do you start your first startup?



How do you start your first startup? My brother just sent me this photo from 1987 - exactly 30 years ago - of me and my very first business when I was 18 years old: Selling prints on the streets of Cambridge.

Over the last year I've posted many entrepreneur stories on Facebook, and I've been asked to share some stories on my own journey. So here's the story of starting my first startup:

How did the business start? It didn't start from opportunity, but from necessity.

At the end of my 1st year of Architecture studies, my Director of Studies told me that unless I spend the summer adding to my portfolio, I would likely fail to make it to my 2nd year. I had been so busy rowing and partying that I was a long way behind in the work I should have done.

But that wasn't my biggest dilemma. All my friends were planning a trip to Greece in August and had lined up jobs in July to pay for it - as they all had contacts in London. I was the foreigner, with my parents in Hong Kong, so I had no job lined up.

No job, no money. No money, no Greece.

And if that wasn't enough, I really wanted to make the rowing crew in the second year. But to do that, I'd need to spend two weeks in July on rowing camp in Cambridge, with early morning rows every day.

As everyone was celebrating in the college pub in the last week of term, I sat in the corner feeling sorry for myself, with no idea what I was going to do. A friend sat down next to me and said: "What's the problem?"

"I've got plenty of them. Which one do you want to hear about?"

He laughed and said "The one you want to solve"

"I want to solve all of them." I replied. Then I asked "How do I spend the summer filling up my portfolio with prints?"

Before he could reply, I then said "I can't. Not if I want to get a job in London and go to Greece."

And again before he could say anything I said "And I'm going to have to give up on the rowing if I want to do that."

It took a few more drinks and increasingly creative suggestions from him - matched by increasing resistance from me - before he said "Maybe you've got this all wrong. You've got too many small problems instead of one big problem. That's why you can't solve anything."

In an 'aha' moment, I tried turning all my different questions into one big question, and came up with:

"How can I go to rowing camp while creating artwork for my portfolio that makes me enough money to go to Greece?"

That was it!

Over the next three days I went to Cambridge's three most famous college chapels (King's, Trinity & St John's) and drew all three in black and white and on A3 paper (so I could easily photocopy them).

I then went to Ryman's and bought a box of A4 paper, then to Sainsbury's and bought freezer bags to put the prints in, then to Kall-Kwik and got the three prints photocopied. Total cost: £35.

On the fourth day, I went to rowing camp in the morning, then sat in Trinity Street (where most of the tourists passed by) and put up a board (the one in the photo) that said "Cambridge College Chapels by R. Hamilton, Architecture Student at Trinity College. Prints £2 only. £5 for 3." As I sold my prints, I drew a new picture and at the end of the day, I made prints of that too.

At the end of the first day, I had made £50. I worked out ways to test, measure and optimize my hourly takings (who would have thought asking people for the time would make them stop which made others stop and double hourly sales?) and on the second day I made £100, which then grew to £200 by the third day.

By the end of the first week I had made more than my friends were making in their 9 to 5 London jobs in a month. By changing location each day, by the end of the second week I had filled my portfolio with original drawings - and I've been an entrepreneur ever since.

I've had many ups and downs over the years, and the numbers have gone from hundreds to thousands to millions. But the thrill of earning that first £50 from my own initiative is what starting startups is all about.

So if you're just getting started, keep at it, because the journey is worth it.

And whenever it seems you're trying to solve too many problems at the same time, try combining them all into one big problem worth solving.

“Necessity is the mother of invention” ~ Plato

As well as getting the entrepreneurial bug, I did end up on the rowing camp, going to Greece and getting my Architecture degree. And those drawings led to my first business after college, Cityscapes: Pictorial maps (beginning with Cambridge) of the entire city from above, with shops paying to have their logos on their rooftops.

And the 18 year old girl sitting beside me? That's Renate, who became my girlfriend and then wife for the next 30 years...

Startup 101 - The AirBnB story



Startup 101: You just need 1) a great idea, 2) money, 3) marketing, right?

Just ask Brian Chesky, Billionaire CEO & Co-founder of AirBnB, who will tell you... err... the exact opposite.

Brian says of AirBnB: *"It wasn't supposed to be the big idea - it was supposed to be a way to pay the rent while we thought up the big idea."*

That was back in 2007, when Brian and AirBnB co-founder, Joe Gebbia, were broke and trying to figure out how to make rent. They decided to try and cash in on an upcoming design show in town, by renting space in their house. *"We didn't have any beds, so we pulled three airbeds out of the closet, inflated them, and called it the Air Bed & Breakfast."*

That's where the idea began. They got three takers, and made rent. But Brian still didn't think it was a business until he went home: *"When I went home for*

Christmas, my parents asked what I was doing . I didn't want to say I was unemployed so I said I was an entrepreneur."

"When they asked what I was working on I told them about the Air bed and breakfast idea. After thinking about the idea more and talking about it more I decided that we should go back to the drawing board and do this idea."

#1: To get started, you DON'T need a great idea. You just need customers who are happy to pay you to solve their problem.

In 2008, Brian and Joe tried to raise funding, but no one was interested. So they decided the best way to raise money was through their customers - and if their customers weren't buying what they were selling, they'd just change the product.

As Brian recalls: *"We got 80 bookings during the Democratic National Congress. The downside was, after the DNC we had no bookings, we were a year into the business, we were in debt, every investor said no... We were at rock bottom."*

2008 was the year of the U.S. presidential election. *"In debt and desperate one midnight, we had the idea if the "air beds" in air bed and breakfast wasn't working , maybe we can sell "breakfast" instead. We started thinking about president themed cereal and we convinced a producer to make cereal for us (called "Obama O's and Cap'n McCain's) and since we couldn't pay them he would get a portion of the sales."*

"We hand folded 1,000 boxes of cereal, numbered each one, and sold them at \$40 a box . We sold \$30,000 worth of cereal and this is how we funded the company and came up with the phrase "be a cereal entrepreneur".

#2: To get going, you DON'T need money from investors. You need cash generating products to keep you going.

Brian and Joe then joined the incubator, Y Combinator. There, they met their mentor, Paul Graham, who gave them the key to viral growth. Brian explains:

"Paul Graham gave us a series of advice that changed our trajectory. The most important of this advice was that it was better to have 100 people who loved us vs. 1M people who liked us. All movements grow this way."

“The problem with Silicon Valley is when you build an app you are expected to make the app go viral and reach millions of people. This is the worst way to think about it — it’s much better to get 100 people to love you.”

“During YC, we would commute from Mountain View to New York City and we would meet with every single host. We would live with each of the hosts and write the very first reviews.”

“We asked the host “what if we had a button you pushed and a photographer showed up to take pictures of your home?” The hosts loved this idea and I went out and borrowed a camera from a friend. The hosts were shocked that the founder was also the photographer — in fact we would also hand deliver the rent checks to our first hosts too.”

Once they had their first 100 raving fans, AirBnB grew rapidly through word-of-mouth, and from those first 100, they multiplied by x100 to 10,000, and again by x100 to 1,000,000.

Today, AirBnB has over 1,500,000 listings in 34,000 cities, and as of this month (when they just raised \$1.5 billion), AirBnB is worth \$25.5 billion, and Brian is worth over \$3 billion.

#3: To grow, you DON'T need clever marketing. You need customers who love you, and who happily recommend their friends, who then love you too.

What can you do to un-learn the lessons we've been taught to build an industrial age business where the factory is king, and re-learn the new lessons to grow an information age business where the customer is king and queen?

Focusing 100% on the customer also keeps you from getting distracted on the wrong thing. This year Airbnb changed their logo and came under heavy fire from the press for a logo that inadvertently looked anatomical in nature - Enough to create a PR crisis in many companies.

But when quizzed at a recent conference about his logo design choice, rather than get defensive, Chesky joked: *“This logo is not allowed within a hundred feet of a school.”* and added *“I’d like our brand to be so iconic that you look at somebody naked and say, ‘You look like the Airbnb logo.’”*

Following these three steps won't necessarily make you a serial (or cereal) billionaire, but they will definitely help you get started faster, get going smarter, with less stress and more fun.

I'll be sharing more tips for startups in the new year, so stay tuned in. And if you're just getting started with your business, stick with it! It took Brian years of perseverance before AirBnB became the success it is today.

(You can read more on Brian Chesky's story which he shared with LinkedIn's Reid Hoffman at a Stanford class last month, visit <http://bit.ly/brian-and-reid>)



The 1st drone billionaire



Could you turn your passion into a billion dollar business? That's what Frank Wang did.

As a child, Frank had a passion for flight: *“At elementary school I saw my first model helicopter in a shop. It cost the equivalent of several months' salary for average people. My family could not afford it. But finally, after I did a good job on my high-school finals, my parents rewarded me with a model helicopter. I assembled it but I wasn't able to fly it properly because to do that needed months of practice. So when I did try to fly it, the helicopter immediately crashed.”*

Despite this early set-back Frank persisted. 10 years ago at 25 years old, he enrolled at Hong Kong University of Science & Technology and began working on his project of designing a better remote controlled helicopter.

His passion project became more important than his studies: *“I spent three months intensively working on the project. At that time I was still enrolled at the university, but I skipped all the courses and just went to my home in Shenzhen. I would wake up at 2 p.m. and then work until like 5 or 6 a.m. for days at a time.”*

“One time, when I did go back to the university lab, I tried to use my ID card but it didn’t work. My heart sank a little bit, because I thought I was kicked out of college by my professor. But actually I had forgotten to pay my tuition.”

Recalling the highlight of his early days: *“The most memorable moment for me was when our helicopter automatically hovered in the air (for his senior class project) in January 2006. That was a good time. Nowadays so much of what I do is management... like catching spies.”*

Why the spies? Because in the last 10 years Frank has grown his company, DJI, to over \$1 billion in sales (more than 70% of the global consumer drone market) led by his signature Phantom drone. In April last year, DJI raised funds at a US\$8 billion valuation, making Frank worth \$3.4 billion.

The growth came after plenty of struggles. After university he set up his company from a 3 bed apartment in Shenzhen, and tried to sell his drones at exhibitions, saying *“We were mainly just going to exhibitions and putting ads on hobbyist websites. The first time we went to an exhibition at Nuremberg, Germany we were placed in the China section, with one of those cheap and small booths, right next to stuffed animals... We were not even in the model section, we were in the toys section.”*

Then, in 2013 the drone market took off at the same time he released his best-selling Phantom. Sales went from \$120 million in 2013, to \$500 million in 2014, to \$1 billion in 2015. The FAA projected about 15,000 drones in the U.S. by 2020. Frank now sells that many every month.

Today, he’s the world’s first drone billionaire, with the first Chinese company leading a global tech revolution. In the last 12 months, the company has attracted top hires like Former Apple antennae-design lead Rob Schlub and Tesla’s former director of autopilot engineering, Darren Liccardo.

Frank combined his passion and talents with a growing wave and the best product on the market, and has ended up with a billion dollar business doing what he loves.

To be frank, there’s nothing stopping you from doing the same. The waves of the future are growing bigger and faster. Your passion and talents are your surfboard. So pick your wave and instead of sinking or swimming, take the entrepreneurial 3rd option and surf.

The startup paradox

Do Things That Don't Scale
in startups

- recruit users manually**
Stripe tactic: collision installation - taking a user's laptop and installing
- remember: startups are fragile**
Airbnb tactic: going door to door taking photos (saved them from failing)
- make users very happy**
Wufoo tactic: sending users handwritten cards
- have "insanely great" service**
Apple tactic: make the packaging just as great as the computers
- pick a narrow market**
Facebook tactic: launching only at Harvard
- do things yourself**
Pebble tactic: assembling 1st hundred watches by hand (no money for factory)
- become their consultant**
Viewweb tactic: using their own software to build stores for clients
- "flintstone" under the hood**
Stripe tactic: delivering "instant" merchant accounts by manually signing up users for the traditional ones
- avoid big launches**
Can you remember the launch of any big startup? Exactly.

inspired by Paul Graham's eponymous essay
visualized and edited by Anna Vital

Like Comment Share
Penelope Wee, Matt Vincent and 894 others
404 shares 82 comments

The startup paradox: To create something that scales, you need to start by doing things that don't scale.

Well known Venture Capitalist & Y Combinator co-founder, Paul Graham, wrote a famous essay called "Do Things that Don't Scale". It's one of the best essays on how to start a business.

He wrote "One of the most common types of advice we give at Y Combinator is to do things that don't scale. Startups take off because the founders make them take off. There may be a handful that just grew by themselves, but usually it takes some sort of push to get them going."

“A good metaphor would be the cranks that car engines had before they got electric starters. Once the engine was going, it would keep going, but there was a separate and laborious process to get it going.”

Paul then gives 9 unscalable startup tactics with examples of well-known startups who have used them to get started:

#1 - Recruit users manually

Stripe’s tactic: They took user’s laptops one by one and installed their software by hand

#2 - Remember startups are fragile

Airbnb’s tactic: They went door to door taking photos (which saved them from failing)

#3 - Make users very happy

Wuloo’s tactic: They sent users handwritten cards

#4 - Have “insanely great” service

Apple’s tactic: They made the packaging as great as the computers

#5 - Pick a narrow market

Facebook’s tactic: They launched only at Harvard

#6 - Do things yourself

Pebble’s tactic: They assembled the 1st 100 watches by hand

#7 - Become their consultant

Viaweb’s tactic: They used their own software to build stores for clients

#8 - “Flintstone” under the hood

Stripe’s tactic: They delivered ‘instant’ merchant accounts by signing up users by hand behind the scenes.

#9 - Avoid big launches

Can you remember the launch of any big startup? Exactly

Which of these 9 tactics should you use? Before you focus at trying to get your first 100 customers, start by focusing at your first 10, and make them such raving fans the next 100 (and 1,000) come far more easily.

You can read Paul Graham’s full blog “Do Things that Don’t Scale” here:<http://paulgraham.com/ds.html>



How do you scale a startup to over \$300 million in value in 3 years?



Imagine a mixed reality that is so real, you can't tell if the animal in front of you or the person you are speaking to is real, or a hologram beamed in from somewhere else in the world.

Sound like a distant future? It already exists. Rony Abovitz created his company, Magic Leap, in 2010 to create 3D glasses that would project a digital light field over your eye, so your experience of real and virtual objects would merge into one.

After four years of development, Rony raised \$50m from investors who were amazed at what he had created. Six months later, he raised another \$542m. This year, he raised another \$793m.

In total, investors have given him \$1.4 billion and Magic Leap is now worth \$4.5 billion - before Rony has launched his first product. His investors include Google, Alibaba, Warner Brothers, and a who's who of Silicon Valley VCs.

Wired Magazine calls Magic Leap "The World's most Secretive Startup", but this week, David Ewalt got an inside look in Rony's secretive lab. This is what he had to say:

“Throw out your PC, your laptop and your mobile phone, because the computing power you need will be in your glasses, and they can make a display appear anywhere, at any size you like.”

“Magic Leap’s innovation isn’t just a high-tech display—it’s a disruption machine. This technology could affect every business that uses screens or computers and many that don’t. It could kill the \$120 billion market for flat-panel displays and shake the \$1 trillion global consumer-electronics business to its core.”

And the most amazing thing? Magic Leap is looking to publicly launch its system sometime in the next 18 months.

Do you remember the first iPhone? Within 3 years everyone had a smart phone and most push button phones disappeared. When Magic Leap launches, it will make all the current clunky VR headsets redundant - together with all PCs, TVs and mobile phones.

Within 3 years - before 2020, most of us will have lightfield glasses or contact lenses, and will be able to magic up any size display or virtual assistants or environment with voice activated commands at any time.

All this, from the mind of Rony Abovitz. He remembers the first days of the start up: “I was the only employee, and it was literally in my garage. My mom made a piece of canvas with some colored letters on it that said, ‘Magic Leap Studios.’”

How did he raise the money? He says “When we’d talk to people about what we were doing, they didn’t believe us. Then they’d fly in and go, ‘Oh ... you’ve actually made these things happen.’ That was the dynamic of everyone who invested - ‘This is impossible’ to ‘We want in.’”

James Joaquin, one of Rony’s investors, says “We invested in Magic Leap because we believe their lightfield technology is the next big inflection point in technology after the PC, the Web and the smartphone. It has the potential to transform multiple global economic categories, including entertainment, education and productivity.”

David Ewalt explains the power of Magic Leap’s mixed reality:

“When you’re wearing the device, it doesn’t block your view of the world... The hardware also constantly gathers information, scanning the room for obstacles, listening for voices, tracking eye movements and watching hands.”

“As a result, mixed-reality objects are aware of their environment and have the ability to interact with the real world. On Magic Leap’s hardware a Pokйmon might escape capture by ducking behind your couch or, assuming you live in a “smart” home, turning off your lights and hiding in the dark.”

“In one of its demos the Magic Leap team shows off a computer-generated “virtual interactive human,” life-size and surprisingly realistic. Abovitz and his

team imagine virtual people (or animals or anything else) as digital assistants—think Siri on steroids, except with a physical presence that makes her easier to work with and harder to ignore.”

“First we had mainframes, then PCs, then mobile devices. If Magic Leap has its way, the next generation will be virtual.”

I remember at one of our Fast Forward events, I said most of us would no longer need to be carrying laptops and phones around by 2020. Most of everyone laughed, as they could not imagine a technology that would make them obsolete.

Rony’s about to change all that.

The future continues to arrive sooner than expected.



How to get (and forget) \$3 Billion in a snap



Two years ago Evan Spiegel came up with the app Snapchat as a college project. This week he turned down a \$3 billion cash offer from Facebook to buy the company (!)

What makes a 23 year old reject a \$3 billion offer on a business which until today has had no revenues? How did one idea grow so quick so fast? What can you learn from a freak growth story like Snapchat's?

In September 2011 Evan and his partner, Bobby Murphy, came up with the idea of Snapchat as their class project at Stamford, and set up the company from Evan's father's sitting room (Evan still lives with his Dad).

Last year, Evan dropped out of college to work on Snapchat. Today, more than 350 million images are shared on Snapchat every day (already four times more than Instagram).

Here's 3 lesser known things about the Snapchat story:

1. DO THE OPPOSITE OF EVERYONE

While everyone was trying to copy success stories like Facebook and Instagram, that keep all your posts and photos forever, Snapchat came from the opposite direction. As Evan says *"A buddy of mine was bummed about a photo he sent. When Bobby and I built the prototype (where photos and videos are deleted soon after being received), we realised how much fun we were having sending the photos back and forth."*

2. TRY, TRY AND TRY AGAIN

At college, Evan and Bobby tried over 50 different ideas before getting to Snapchat. When they got to that, no one liked it. Evan took the idea to his design class for review and says *"All the VCs and people who came through were like 'This is the dumbest thing ever... So, obviously, I went back to Bobby and I was like, 'Oh, they really liked it!'"*

"People call it an overnight success," Evan says, *"But it was anything but."* If they had listened to the 'experts', Snapchat would never have gotten off the ground.

3. RELY ON YOUR EARLY CUSTOMERS

With no support, they both thought the idea would fail: *"We didn't think we were ever going to raise venture capital."* All they knew was they liked it and wanted to keep working on it. But while the grown adults thought it a silly idea, the app began going viral in high schools in California.

That's how they attracted funding. As Evan recalls, *"This guy named Jeremy Liew, who works at Lightspeed Ventures, one of his partners, Barry Eggers had a daughter who was using Snapchat. She said her 3 favorite apps that everyone was using at her high school were Angry Birds, Instagram and Snapchat. So Jeremy sent me a Facebook message."*

"I ended up meeting with him and showed him some of the early data we had. That was the month we were not going to be able to pay our server bills any more. Bobby had a job that was paying for the server bills at the time. And it just

got too expensive, so the timing was awesome. My dad didn't want to pay for disappearing photos any more."

What can we learn from Evan's story? If you're working on something you love, and the people using your product love it too, don't listen to the 'experts' telling you what can't be done.

The greatest barrier to progress is the 'illusion of knowledge'. Those who 'know best' rarely know 'what's next'.

As for Evan turning down \$3 billion from Mark Zuckerberg, what comes next? How long will Evan keep living with his Dad? Evan's reply: *"Until he kicks me out."*



The world's most secretive startup



“Throw out your PC, your laptop and your mobile phone.”

~ Forbes' David Ewalt after experiencing Magic Leap's mixed reality technology

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Are you thinking intricately enough?



“Enjoy the little things in life. Because one day you’ll look back and realize they were the big things.” - This is not just a great philosophy for life, but the code for 21st century entrepreneurs:

Are you thinking intricately enough?

I flew to California from Bali to hear tips from Ryan Deiss, an Internet marketer with a \$100 million+ business. He said *“To improve your open rate, test your email headers.”* I thought *“I flew all this way to hear that? We always test our email headers - sometimes as many as 10.”*

He then showed us how they test 1,000 headers to find which works best - in 100 times more detail than I had ever taken.

I flew to England to meet Mike Harris, who has built three billion dollar companies. I asked him what advice he had for my business. He said

“Segment your market”. I thought *“We already know who our different customers are.”*

He then showed me the detail and care they went to - to speak to and know their customers, define them, choose the right segments, and then give them exactly what they needed - in 100 times more detail than we had ever taken.

I flew to Necker Island and met with Richard Branson. I asked him how he chose what business to start. He said “I look for some people I can make a difference with.” Before I thought anything, I asked *“How many?”* and he answered, *“Well, where there’s at least a million people and a billion dollar market.”*

He thinks in 100 times more detail about markets 100 times bigger than I had ever been thinking of.

We’re now living in a world where if you want to get 100x bigger, you need to think 100x smaller.

In the past, Founders and CEO’s didn’t need to know all the detail. Today, it’s essential you do. Do you know your customers intimately? Do you know your metrics intricately?

This isn’t micro-management. It’s micro-mastery.

You need to focus at 100x greater quality to get to 100x greater quantity.

You need to focus at 100x more care & attention to get to 100x more scale & expansion

Like a diamond, the strength of the sparkle comes from the care in the cut.

“I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set him free.” ~ Michelangelo

During the renaissance, the great artists would delegate the broad brush strokes to their apprentices, but would always be the ones to add the final, fine detail.

This image is of Michelangelo’s David, who with one small, perfectly formed stone and fast, perfectly aimed shot brought down Goliath. Small things can lead to big results.

Accuracy comes from precision, and precision is in the detail. So enjoy the little things in life. Because one day you’ll look back and realize they were the big things.

GROWTH STRATEGIES

Stories and posts to guide you as you scale your business

"From a small seed a mighty trunk may grow."
- Aeschylus



Warren Buffett's story



This weekend Warren Buffett holds Berkshire Hathaway's 51st AGM. At a time when world stock markets have been at their most volatile, Warren's investments are showing another record year.

It's easy to forget that Warren's wealth is entirely self made (Even after giving away \$21.5 billion he is still the 3rd richest man in the world with \$66.7 billion). So how did he get started?

At 20 years old, Warren applied to Columbia Business School where Benjamin Graham (famous for his 'value investing' theories) was lecturing - Just so he could be around the best mentor he could find.

Warren worked for Benjamin for free, and his loyalty led Benjamin to send him out to visit possible investments on the weekends. In 1951, Benjamin sent Warren to research GEICO, a direct mail auto insurance company. He visited on a Saturday and the janitor sent him to the only person in on a Saturday, the head of the company.

The two chatted for five hours, and Warren pledged three quarters of his entire net worth - \$9,000 at the time - to buy shares in the company. Impressed, Benjamin bought 50% of GEICO for around \$720,000 - using a quarter of his fund's assets.

Little did he know it at the time, but eventually Warren would end up owning all of GEICO, and the company would turn into a \$9 billion business.

Warren kept learning from Benjamin for the next six years and by 1957, Warren had learnt enough to launch his own fund. With Benjamin's support, he asked one of Benjamin's investors, a doctor, to find ten other doctors who would invest \$10,000 each into his new partnership. Eleven doctors agreed to invest.

Over the next five years he kept asking investors to recommend friends and by 1962 the Buffett Partnership, which began with \$105,000, was worth \$7.2 million. Buffett invested \$1 million of his fund in Dempster Mill Manufacturing, bringing in management to turn it around, and making a net gain of \$2.3 million within two years.

Warren had another big break in 1962, when American Express shares fell from \$65 to \$35 following a scandal. As the rest of the market was selling far below true value, Warren invested \$13 million - 40% of his assets. Within two years, the shares had tripled in price and the partners made a \$20 million profit.

Then, four years later, Buffet made a fateful purchase of a textile company, Berkshire Hathaway. He recalls, *"We went into a terrible business because it was cheap. It's what I refer to as the "used cigar butt" approach to investing. You see this cigar butt down there, it's soggy and terrible, but there's one puff left, and it's free. That's what Berkshire was when we bought it – it was selling below working capital – but it was a terrible, terrible mistake."*

Buffett bought Berkshire Hathaway and then tried to turn it around, but couldn't. So he turned this 'terrible, terrible mistake' into a listed vehicle to manage all his other investments. As a listed company he could now raise funds through the stock market. Through his experience with GEICO, he also understood the value of owning insurance companies, giving him an instant cash base from policies to invest with.

In 1967, he bought two insurance companies for \$8.6 million which came with a combined investment portfolio of \$31.9 million. Over the next two years he grew the portfolio to \$42 million — more than paying for the entire purchase

price of the companies. Warren continued with this strategy and by 2004, Berkshire Hathaway owned 38 insurance companies.

With ready access to cash to feed his flow, Buffett had built the investment vehicle he needed to sustain ongoing growth. He set a target to grow the value of his investments by 15% per year, which he then exceeded. The 1972 market sell-off came at just the right time, leading Buffett to say that at the time he felt *“like an oversexed guy in a harem.”* He added, *“You’re dealing with a lot of silly people in the marketplace; it’s like a great big casino and everyone else is boozing. If you can stick to Pepsi, you should be OK.”*

By 1979, Buffett’s fortune had risen to \$140 million, but he continued to live on a \$50,000 salary. (He still lives in the same Omaha home that he bought in 1958 for \$31,500). Berkshire Hathaway shares continued to grow at a 22.2% compound growth rate - a feat he has maintained over 40 years, leading to his \$66.7 billion net worth today.

This week, he also announced plans to invest \$3.6 billion in the World’s largest wind energy facility in Iowa. Plus he set another record year of giving as a part of his Giving Pledge to give away 99% of his wealth (He’s already given \$21.5 billion to Bill Gates’ Foundation since joining the Giving Pledge in 2006).

Warren has always focused at the long term, saying, *“It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you’ll do things differently.”*

What lessons can you take from one of the wealthiest people in the world? What mentor can you learn from? How much are you willing to invest your time to learn before you earn?

Instead of trying to focus on an exit strategy, how can you focus at a success strategy - where there is no need to exit? As Warren said to a group of students: *“I may have more money than you, but money doesn’t make the difference. If there is any difference between you and me, it may simply be that I get up and have a chance to do what I love to do, every day. If you learn anything from me, this is the best advice I can give you.”*

What does this english teacher know about math?



What does an English teacher know about math? Plenty, if your name is Jack Ma.

Today, Jack raised \$4.5 billion (the largest private tech investment ever) for Ant Financial: A company he created in December 2014. The company has gone from zero to \$60 billion in value in just 16 months.

Jack Ma has never taken no for an answer. In September, 2014, when he was not able to list his company, Alibaba, in Hong Kong, and with China banning any foreign ownership of its companies, Jack got around the rules by setting up a Cayman Island shell corporation which would receive a percentage of the profits of Alibaba.

He then listed the Cayman Island company on the New York Stock Exchange, raising \$25 billion in the largest IPO in history - without giving any of the shares in his China company away.

Before the listing, he took the payment side of the business, Alipay, and moved it into a separate, private company that he controlled, called Ant Financial. As Alibaba has been making headlines over the last year, Ant Financial has been quietly growing as Jack's second billion dollar business.

Ant Financial now reaches 450 million users (More than the population of the US and UK combined), and has given out 20 million loans to entrepreneurs in China. Alibaba receives 37.5% of the profits from Ant Financial, but does not own any of it. Jack has managed to spin the business off entirely from Alibaba, and then grow it alongside Alibaba while entirely under his personal control, from zero to \$60 billion in value.

This has allowed him to pursue his vision of helping the small guys while raising the money he needs from the financial markets and without losing control or giving away any ownership.

Jack's next step? The former English Teacher plans to list Ant Financial on the China stock market later this year, which is likely to double his current net worth of \$22 billion.

While too many entrepreneurs get caught up in how much of their pie to give away, Jack understands that when you own the bakery, you can always make another pie.

How can you create partnerships and raise financing creatively, while keeping true to your vision? How can you organise your own resources smarter? Take a tip from Jack, and never take no for an answer.

"They called me 'Crazy Jack'. I think crazy is good. We're crazy, but we're not stupid." - Jack Ma



It doesn't take a genius

It doesn't take a genius.

IPHONE 5
4.0" screen
4G LTE

GALAXY S III
4.6" screen
4G LTE

**How Samsung reinvented itself
13 TIMES before outselling Apple**

Like Comment Share

Jan Polak, Nipun Khetan and 2k others

1,472 shares 167 comments

How many times did Samsung pivot their business before becoming the No.1 smart phone seller in the world, beating Apple at their own game? 13 TIMES! Here's how...

START HERE - Lee Byung-chull launched Samsung to sell groceries in South Korea in 1938

PIVOT No.1 - By the early 1940s, in a competitive grocery market, Lee changed tack, went vertical and Samsung began producing and selling their own noodles

PIVOT No.2 - By 1950, with the Korean War ruining his business, Lee left Seoul and turned Samsung into a sugar company with its own sugar refinery

PIVOT No.3 - After the war, in 1954, Lee switched Samsung's focus again, launching the largest woollen mill in Korea

PIVOT No.4 - As Korea developed, Lee switched to cater for the growing population, focusing Samsung on selling insurance and securities.

PIVOT No.5 - By 1960, Lee had switched Samsung again to focus on electronics, with its first electronic product being a black & white TV.

PIVOT No.6 - By 1980, Lee moved Samsung into telecoms, producing telephone switch boards and fax systems

PIVOT No.7 - When Lee died in 1987, Samsung separated into four companies - Department stores; Chemicals & logistics; Paper/Telecom; and electronics.

PIVOT No.8 - By 1980, Samsung Electronics decided to focus on international investing, investing in plants and semiconductor facilities around the world.

PIVOT No.9 - By 1990, Samsung began moving from investing to property, and became a world leader in construction, with building contracts on 3 of the world's tallest buildings: Petronas Towers in Malaysia, Taipei 101 in Taiwan and Burj Khalifa in UAE.

PIVOT No.10 - In an attempt to rationalise during the 1990s recession, in 1993 Lee's son, Lee Kun-Hee, began downsizing, selling many subsidiaries and merging the rest.

PIVOT No.11 - By the late 1990s, the merging of electronics, engineering and chemicals in Samsung led to the company becoming the largest producer of memory chips in the world

PIVOT No.12 - As memory chips became more competitive, in 1995 Samsung switched to liquid-crystal displays, and over the next 10 years became the world's largest manufacturer for flat screen TVs.

PIVOT No.13 - By 2010, with liquid-crystal displays becoming more competitive, Samsung launched a 10 year growth strategy, with smart phones

being a key focus. At this point, they were already providing Apple with many components for the new iPhone.

END HERE! (For now) - This year, in 2012, Samsung became the world's largest mobile phone and smart phone maker, outselling iPhones two to one.

With so much change, what remains the same? When Lee began his company all those years ago, he called it 'Samsung' which means 'Three Stars' in Korean. His three meant 'big, numerous, powerful' and the stars meant 'eternal'. From the beginning, his vision for Samsung was to leave a legacy as a leader in whichever market made sense at the time.

That strategy has led to Samsung having sales today of over \$250 billion and producing about a fifth of South Korea's total exports.

How many times have you pivoted your business onto a new wave of success when things aren't going your way? What is the bigger purpose you are pivoting your business around?

In fast changing times, take Samsung as an example: Set a bigger purpose, with long term vision and short term results, and have the courage to switch when you need to.

It takes courage, it takes commitment and, as Samsung says in their most recent ads, 'It doesn't take a genius'.

What is your mission?



What is your mission? All the most successful and fastest growing companies are not centred around a product, but a mission. Because missions create movements.

Here are 16 billion dollar mission statements that grew into 16 billion dollar companies:

FACEBOOK: “To give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected.”

GOOGLE: “To organize the world’s information and make it universally accessible and useful.”

UBER: “Transportation as reliable as running water, everywhere for everyone.”

VIRGIN ATLANTIC: “To embrace the human spirit and let it fly.”

NIKE: “To bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete. If you have a body, you are an athlete.”

WEWORK: “To create a world where people work to make a life, not just a living.”

AMAZON: “To be Earth’s most customer-centric company, where customers can find and discover anything they might want to buy online.”

EBAY: “Provide a global trading platform where practically anyone can trade practically anything.”

ALIBABA: “To make it easy to do business anywhere.”

STARBUCKS: “To inspire and nurture the human spirit - one person, one cup and one neighborhood at a time.”

LINKEDIN: “To connect the world’s professionals to make them more productive and successful.”

TWITTER: “To give everyone the power to create and share ideas and information instantly, without barriers.”

PINTEREST: “Help people discover the things they love and inspire them to go do those things in real life.”

TUMBLR: “To empower creators to make their best work and get it in front of the audience they deserve.”

KICKSTARTER: “To help bring creative projects to life.”

AIRBNB: “Belong anywhere.”

Why is your mission so important? Because when people get stuck in the ‘WHAT’, it’s your job to get them focused back on the ‘WHY’.

Over the last month, Elon Musk has been faced with criticism of his planned merger between his companies, Tesla and Solar City. He faced negative press following the first death in a Tesla on Auto-pilot. His response? To come out with the 2nd part of his Master Plan (Master Plan Part Deux), with an upgraded mission.

In the master plan, he began by upgrading the Tesla mission from the original mission of Tesla Motors, to a new mission for Tesla (dropping the ‘Motors’ in the name): From

TESLA MOTORS: “To accelerate the advent of sustainable transport by bringing compelling mass market electric cars to market as soon as possible.”

to:

TELSA: “To accelerate the advent of sustainable energy.”

He halved the words, and doubled the power. All the key steps in his upgraded master plan then fit in to how Tesla would achieve this upgraded vision. Since he wrote it, the media has stopped focusing at today's problems, and instead are focused at tomorrow's promise. (You can read it here):

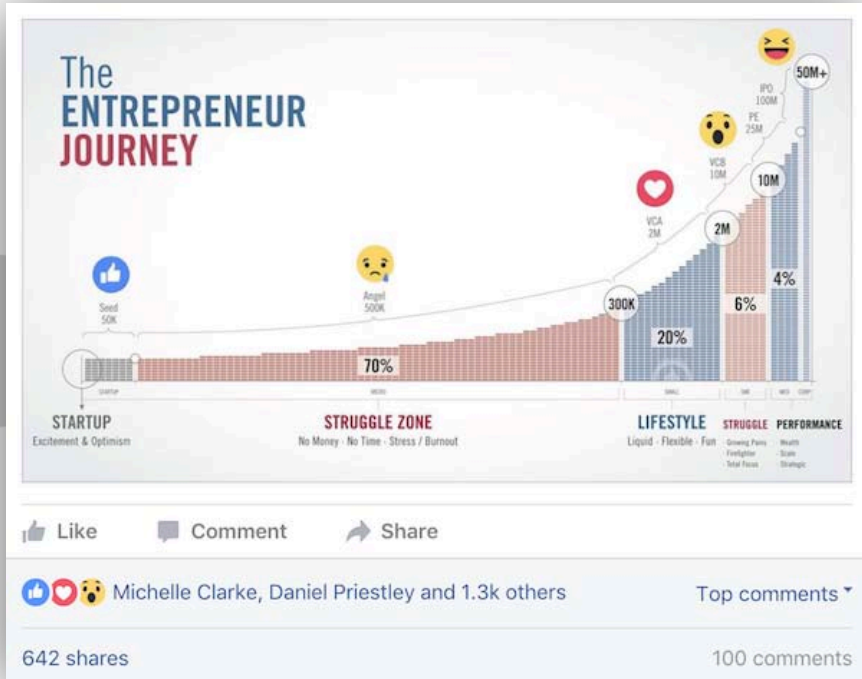
<https://www.tesla.com/blog/master-plan-part-deux>

How could you halve the words and double the power of your mission?

Not sure what your mission is? Take the Purpose Test and find out which of the UN Global Goals fits with your No.1 Purpose: <http://purpose.geniusu.com>

"When you're surrounded by people who share a passionate commitment around a common purpose, anything is possible." ~ Howard Schultz

The entrepreneur journey



The entrepreneur journey in Facebook emojis:

STAGE 1 - Startup! \$0 - \$50k: There's over 100 million startups in the World that start each year! Unfortunately 80% won't survive more than 18 months...

STAGE 2 - Micro-business \$50k - \$300k: If you get up and running, with your customers & products, now you're in the struggle zone. Some scale back and choose the life of the one-man-band. Other push through and build their team.

STAGE 3 - Lifestyle business \$300k - \$2M: Success! The battle was worth it and your business is now a time machine, where you can turn your time into a high performing team, giving you high performing time.

This is the reward of the journey. Do you now relax and travel, with the business working without you, or push through to the next level?

Less than 4% of the World's 150 million businesses grow beyond \$1 million in revenue, and less than 4% last more than 10 years...

STAGE 4 - SME \$2M - \$10M: You push through only to find even greater challenges as you scale. Now, suddenly strategy, systems, talent and training need more money up front and you're back in the struggle zone.

STAGE 5 - Medium to large corporation \$10M - \$50M+: You're now a company that can dramatically impact your market and the World.

Less than 1 in 1,000 businesses make it past \$50M. But today, if you deliver the right value and catch the right wave, you can reach that mark faster than ever. So be prepared for the zones, commit to your goal, and enjoy the journey!

"The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step." - Lao Tzu

And if your company fails? Start again...

"Nine out of ten businesses fail; so I came up with a foolproof plan: Create ten businesses." ~ Robert Kiyosaki

For more on the graphic have a look at this video from Key Person of Influence <https://youtu.be/5cVMJDq6vGY>



Could you solve things faster by thinking bigger?



Could you solve things faster by thinking bigger? Richard Branson is a master of this - even when he doesn't have the money.

That's how Virgin Airlines started. As Richard recalls: *“In '79, when Joan, my fiancée and I were on a holiday in the British Virgin Islands, we were trying to catch a flight to Puerto Rico; but the local Puerto Rican scheduled flight was cancelled. The airport terminal was full of stranded passengers.”*

Most people would complain or wait for another day to fly. Not Richard: “I made a few calls to charter companies and agreed to charter a plane for \$2000 to Puerto Rico.”

“Cheekily leaving out Joan's and my name, I divided the price by the remaining number of passengers, borrowed a blackboard and wrote: VIRGIN AIRWAYS:

\$39 one way to BVI. I went out round all the passengers who had been bumped and I filled up my first plane.”

After launching Virgin Atlantic, he continued to think bigger to solve his challenges. Eight years after launching, in 1992 Richard needed to raise \$10 million for seat-back video screen, so Virgin Atlantic could compete in the market.

The problem was, there was a global recession on, so all attempts to raise the money had been unsuccessful.

As a last resort, Richard called Phil Conduit, CEO of Boeing, and said he wanted to buy ten new Boeing 747-400s, but would like Boeing to throw in seat-back videos on all seats as a condition of purchase.

He then repeated the process with Airbus. Both companies - who were also suffering from the same global recession - welcomed the new orders and quickly agreed.

Afterwards, Richard said, *“We discovered that it was easier to get \$4 billion credit to buy eighteen new aircraft than it was to get \$10 million credit for the seat-back video sets.”*

Whether it's a \$39 seat or a \$10 million credit, Richard solves his problems from above, not below. To get to the top of the mountain, you don't need to climb if you can parachute in.

What's your biggest challenge?

How can you get others to solve it by solving their (bigger) problem first?

“Start small, think big.” ~ Steve Jobs



The man beating Steve Jobs at his own game



Have you heard of Andy Rubin? That's OK, most people haven't - Even though today he's Apple's greatest threat since Bill Gates in the 1980s.

Andy's little brain-child, Android, has gone from an idea 7 years ago to now accounting for 72% of the 181 million smart phone global smartphones sold in the last quarter, compared to just 14% for Apple. Android phones are now outselling Apple 5 to 1, with 1.3 million new Android activations EVERY DAY.

Who is Andy Rubin? He was an engineer at Apple in the early 1990s with Apple's 'General Magic' team, designing the first mobile software platform. He left to create his own operating system and PDA called 'Sidekick' - before the ipod was launched. It failed, and by 2003 Andy was back at the drawing board.

Fast forward to 2005, and a meeting between Andy and Google's Larry Page. Did Larry want to endorse Andy's new mobile operating system Android? (Named after a robot sidekick). Larry did one better, buying over the entire team, including Andy for somewhere around \$50 million, as a way to compete in the new smartphone market.

At that point, there was still not a single smartphone using Android. It was simply \$50m to buy the invention and the inventor.

Andy got to work at Google. This week, 7 years on, Google's Eric Schmidt declared victory on the smartphone war with Android, saying to Bloomberg: *"This is a huge platform change; this is of the scale of 20 years ago - Microsoft versus Apple. We're winning that pretty clearly now."*

Today, phones using Android are growing at 92% per year compared to the market at 46%. The growth in China Android is even greater (where Android is on 90% of the smartphones sold) at 2.6x that - and China will have 500 million smartphones by the end of 2013: Double the US market (That's compared to 200m China smartphones today and only 50m one year ago).

In the 1980s, Apple fell from total dominance of the PC market to just 4% of the market as Microsoft Windows took over from the Mac operating system. The same is happening now with Google against Apple on a whole number of fronts:

The Android store, Google Play, has grown 300% this year compared to the Apple App store's 13% growth. Google Play downloads will overtake Apple App store in the first half of 2013. This week Google's map app went straight to the top of Apple's most downloaded apps, undermining Apple's reputation of delivering better software. Google is also innovating much faster than Apple on everything from mobile payments to voice recognition.

What am I personally doing in this sea change? Much as I love Apple, we are redirecting more of our efforts on Android apps and Android phones and tablets than on Apple. We've translated all our main sites and products to Chinese. And I'll also be expecting to write about and interview many more Android app millionaires in 2013.

What is Andy's view on all of this? He prides the openness on Android but, being more of a techie he prefers to let his coding speak for itself.

In 2010 Steve Jobs criticized Android in an open letter, writing *"Google loves to characterize Android as open and iPhone as closed. We see this as disingenuous and clouding the difference."*

Andy replied by setting up a Twitter account with his first post being his definition of open - The commands to download all Android's source code:

@Arubin: the definition of open: "mkdir android ; cd android ; repo init -u git://android.git.kernel.org/platform/manifest.git ; repo sync ; make"

Win for the robot.

Alphabet - The most valuable company in the world



**A COMPANY THAT
LAUNCHED JUST FOUR
MONTHS AGO HAS JUST
BECOME THE MOST
VALUABLE COMPANY
IN THE WORLD.**

Like Comment Share

Michelle Clarke, Simone Holt and 806 others Top comments ▾

280 shares 25 comments

A company that launched just four months ago has just become the most valuable company in the world. The last time this happened was 120 years ago. Few people noticed then, either.

That first time, in 1889, 42-year-old Thomas Edison found himself with multiple electricity-related companies. He had companies to grow the light bulb, electric sockets, the electric motor, and all sorts of electric appliances. So he created a new holding company, General Electric.

Over the next 100 years, General Electric sparked the entire industrial revolution. It pioneered radio, TV, power generation and powered the industrial and early technological revolution. A world that no one could imagine 100 years earlier.

In October 2015, 42-year-old Larry Page and Sergey Brin followed in the footsteps of Thomas Edison. Finding themselves with multiple technology-related companies, they created a new holding company, “*Alphabet*”.

Four months later, today on Feb 2nd, Alphabet has overtaken Apple, Exxon and Microsoft to become the most valuable company in the world, with a value of \$554 billion.

If your ancestors in 1889 had looked at the main companies that General Electric owned when it was created, they could have predicted the most disruptive technologies for the next 100 years.

What do we find when we look at Alphabet in the same way? You would find seven companies pioneering seven different areas:

Google - Larry and Sergey’s original company (which owns Android and Youtube as well as their search site), continuing to grow 15% year on year.

Calico - Focusing at prolonging human life, and the potential of immortality.

Nest Labs - A multi-billion dollar company creating the smart home

GV - Pioneering robotics and self-driving cars

Google Fiber - Investing in wired internet at up one terrabyte per second (and soon beyond)

X - Investing in Project Loon and Project Wing, delivering internet everywhere

Google Capital - Google’s VC fund investing in China and India companies

Larry and Sergey are the modern day Edisons. They’re looking 100 years into the future.

Pick any of the areas that Google is betting on, and you’re looking into entirely new worlds that will shape our future in the years ahead.

What would you do differently if you could anticipate the future?

“It’s not about how the future will impact you. It’s about how you will impact the future.”



7 billion dollar questions



1. The Engineering Question
Can you create breakthrough technology instead of incremental improvements?

2. The Timing Question
Is now the right time to start your particular business?

3. The Monopoly Question
Are you starting with a big share of a small market?

4. The People Question
Do you have the right people in the right place?

5. The Durability Question
Will your market position be defensible 10 and 20 years into the future?

6. The Distribution Question
Do you have a way to not just create but deliver your product?

7. The Secret Question
Have you identified a unique opportunity that others don't see?

Peter Thiel's 7 Billion Dollar Questions

How many does your business answer "yes" to?

Peter Thiel
Billionaire Co-founder, Paypal & Palantir. 1st outside investor in Facebook

Like Comment Share

Michelle Clarke, George Eadie and 763 others

280 shares 71 comments

How many of Peter Thiel's 7 questions does your business answer "yes" to?

Peter was co-founder of Paypal and Palantir (which is now worth \$20 billion), he was first to invest in Facebook and his VC company, Founders Fund, has used these 7 questions to invest early on in companies like AirBnB and Stripe.

It's also the same 7 questions that his fellow entrepreneurs who made their first fortunes with him from PayPal's \$1.5 billion sale used when starting their next companies.

As Peter says about the 'PayPal Mafia' : *"Elon Musk has founded SpaceX and co-founded Tesla Motors; Reid Hoffman co-founded LinkedIn; Steve Chen, Chad Hurley , and Jawed Karim together founded YouTube; Jeremy Stoppelman and Russel Simmons founded Yelp; David Sacks co-founded Yammer; and I co-*

founded Palantir. Today all seven of those companies are worth more than \$1 billion each.”

Answering “yes” to a few of these is the difference of growing a small business and a million dollar business. Answering “yes” to all of them is the difference of a million dollar business and a billion dollar business - and impacting millions of lives.

Take a moment with your team and ask yourself what you can do to improve your own answers to these 7 questions - to maximise your potential for growth, and minimise your risk of failure.

And if you only have time to look at one, look at the last one. The “*Secret Question*”.

As Peter says in his book, Zero to One, “*The best entrepreneurs know this: every great business is built around a secret that’s hidden from the outside. A great company is a conspiracy to change the world; when you share your secret, the recipient becomes a fellow conspirator.*”

Make your company a conspiracy to change the world for good!



The biggest tech IPO ever seen



This week, Jack Ma, the son of Chinese performers, is making history with the biggest tech IPO ever seen. Google's worth at IPO was just over \$50 billion. Facebook's was just over \$100 billion. Jack's Alibaba will be over \$200 billion. What can we learn from Jack?

Jack's whole philosophy has been to get big by dreaming big and focusing small. He failed his entrance exam twice into college. So he decided he had to do more with his hard-won education than to be an English Teacher, and launched Alibaba in 1999 as one of China's first internet businesses.

As Jack recalls, *"The day we got connected to the Web, I invited friends and TV people over to my house." Using a very slow dial-up connection, he said "we waited three and a half hours and got half a page.... We drank, watched TV and*

played cards, waiting... But I was so proud. I proved (to my house guests that) the Internet existed."

Determined to compete with eBay in China, Jack's strategy was to focus at niche markets, saying *"Ebay is a shark in the ocean. We are a crocodile in the Yangtze river. If we fight in the ocean, we will lose. But if we fight in the river, we will win."*

He also focused at small businesses owners as his main customers, saying *"I've seen people make a fortune by catching shrimps, but I've never seen anyone make a fortune by catching sharks and whales. It's like Forrest Gump."*

How can you focus like Jack, at the right niche or at the right customers, to be able to compete effectively with even the biggest competitors?

Jack' announcement this week of an Alibaba IPO puts him in the limelight, as a tech entrepreneur - yet, with Forrest-Gumpish humility says *"I know nothing about technology". So how did he get to this level of success? As he says, "I'm not a tech guy. I'm looking at the technology with the eyes of my customers, normal people's eyes."*

And a final tip from Jack *"The very important thing you should have is patience."* Today, 15 years after that first Internet dial-up from his apartment, Alibaba has more sales than eBay and Amazon combined.



What do you do when you can't afford the original?



What do you do when you can't afford the original? You could take a tip from Art-lover, Chen Dongshen who - 24 years after copying Auction House, Sotheby's - has this week become its biggest shareholder.

Almost 30 years ago, in 1987, Dongsheng saw news of the Vincent Van Gogh's "Sunflowers" painting auctioned for \$39.9 million in London. It made history at the time by tripling the world record price tag for a painting.

As he remembers, "The images of the auction on television seemed inconceivably distant from my own life. So aristocratic, so refined. For China, an economically backward country that had never shaken off its revolution, the disparity with those scenes on television was too much."

The image stuck with him, and it was six years later, while working at a magazine with dreams of being an art collector, Dongshen came up with the idea of a Chinese Art Auction House just like Sotheby's.

So he packed his bags and headed to Hong Kong with the goal of "learning and copying all the details of Sotheby's".

He videotaped the auctions he attended, took notes on every step of the auction, and recorded every detail of the presentations, down to the "thickness of the showcases" down to the centimeter.

Then, he returned to China and launched "China Guardian" for China's art market. As the local art auction market grew (to \$5 billion last year), Dongshen realized it would take a long time to build the cash flow he wanted, so he built a second, money-making business alongside it - an insurance company called "Taikang".

The result? Dongshen grew Taikang into the largest non-government-owned insurance company in China (with \$20 billion in annual sales), which gave him the time and money to grow China Guardian into the largest fine art auction house in China, and the 3rd largest in the world (after Sotheby's and Christie's).

Then, this week Taikang bought a 13.5% stake in Sotheby's for \$233 million, making Dongshen the biggest shareholder in the 270 year old British institution.

It's taken 30 years since Van Gogh's inspiration and 24 years since Dongshen first took action for him to rise to the top of the Art Collecting world.

Dongshen had a big dream. But instead of saying "I can't afford it", he asked "How can I afford it?"

He began with an investor mindset and - like all the best investors - he began by investing in himself.

It's the best approach to take. And it's yours to copy.

"Invest in originals. Beginning with yourself."

3 steps Blockbuster took to make Netflix a \$60 billion company



This week Reed Hastings' Netflix announced they were 36% ahead of forecast, following a 12 month expansion into 130 countries. Netflix shares hit an all-time high.

Today, Netflix is globally recognized for being the leader in streaming TV. What is less know is the part Blockbuster (which was America's leading video rental company) played in creating Netflix.

Here are the 3 Steps Blockbuster took to make Netflix a \$60 billion company:

STEP 1 - Get your customers upset:

Blockbuster's first step was to get customers upset by charging huge late fees for not returning their videos. As Reed remembers, "The genesis of Netflix came in 1997 when I got this late fee, about \$40, for 'Apollo 13'. I remember the fee because I was embarrassed about it. That was back in the VHS days, and it got me thinking that there's a big market out there."

“So I started to investigate the idea of how to create a movie-rental business by mail. I didn’t know about DVDs, and then a friend of mine told me they were coming. I ran out to Tower Records in Santa Cruz, Calif., and mailed CDs to myself, just a disc in an envelope.”

“It was a long 24 hours until the mail arrived back at my house, and I ripped them open and they were all in great shape. That was the big excitement point.”

STEP 2 - Ignore opportunities:

Reed grew Netflix from a DVD mail rental company to a subscription service. He then went to Blockbuster in 2000 and offered to sell Netflix to them for \$50 million.

A Blockbuster exec recalls “We had the option to buy Netflix for \$50 million and we didn’t do it. They were losing money. They came around a few times.”

If they had simply said “yes” instead of “no”, Blockbuster would own Netflix. But instead, rejected by Blockbuster, Reed decided to keep growing Netflix himself, and it has now grown x1,000 in value from that \$50 million price to its \$60 billion valuation today.

STEP 3 - Give up:

A decade after, in 2010, Blockbuster filed for bankruptcy protection. It went from the leading video rental company with 60,000 employees and 8,000 stores at its peak to zero, with its assets being bought by Dish Network. They failed to get on the online streaming wave, and so were wiped out by it.

Famed investor, Carl Icahn, called Blockbuster “the worst investment I ever made”.

Reed Hastings, on the other hand, continues to see Netflix grow because the three steps he follows are the exact opposite of Blockbuster’s: He focuses at the customer experience instead of upsetting them. He takes opportunities instead of ignoring them. And he perseveres while others give up.

Which path are you taking?

Each has consequences. And neither is wrong. After all, if Blockbuster hadn’t upset and then rejected Reed in the first place, we wouldn’t have Netflix today.

“Even if you’re on the right track, you’ll get run over if you just sit there.” ~ Will Rogers



Pirate metrics for entrepreneurs



If you're trying to figure out what to measure in your business, use the Pirate Metrics: "AARRR!"

Whether you have a website, an app, a retail store or a service business, make sure you're not focusing on "vanity metrics" (like 'visits' or 'likes'). Instead, focus on these five "actionable metrics" (which allow you to take immediate action to improve traffic, engagement and revenue).

Founder of 500 Startups, Dave McClure, is the creator of the Pirate Metrics: AARRR:

Acquisition - How do users find you?

Activation - Do they have a great first experience?

Retention - Do they come back?

Referral - Do they tell others?

Revenue - Do they buy from you?

By focusing on these 5 key metrics, you can keep improving your customer experience, increasing your routes to market, your customer engagement, loyalty, spend and actions.

Acquisition - Measure your cost of new lead by dividing your marketing spend by the number of new leads who visit your service or app - keep increasing visits while reducing your cost per lead.

Activation - Measure the number of leads who become subscribers, and measure your cost of new subscribers - keep increasing your activation conversion rate and reducing your cost per subscriber.

Retention - Measure how many of your subscribers check in with you (by visiting your app or opening your messages) at least 2 to 3 times each month - keep increasing your active subscriber base and know who your raving fans are.

Referral - Measure how many of your subscribers are referring and how many of your new subscribers are from referral - by maximising referrals, you maximise your viral growth.

Revenue - Measure your revenue per subscriber - how many of your community (paying with their time) become customers (paying with their money) - and based on their average spend and frequency of spend, what is the lifetime value of each customer?

We treasure what we measure. By simply tracking these five metrics every week, you can zoom in on the best actions each week to improve your business for both you and your customers.

“What gets measured, gets managed” - Peter Drucker

See Dave’s original slides on the Pirate Metrics at:

<http://www.slideshare.net/dmc500hats/startup-metrics-for-pirates-long-version>



Happy Martin Luther King Day



As Americans celebrate Martin Luther King Day with a three-day weekend, the movement to make every weekend a three-day weekend continues to grow.

Japan is leading the way. After Dentsu's chairman resigned on Dec 29th following the suicide of a staff member after overworking, the Japan government and business are launching a "Premium Friday" campaign in February to get companies to give their workers Friday afternoons off.

The campaign will start with the last Friday of every month, but it's the first baby-steps towards the first nationally recognised three-day weekend: A movement that is already being pushed by an increasing number of companies.

Japan's largest retail chain, Fast Retailing, is already running a three-day weekend program with 10,000 of their staff. Amazon has piloted a 30 hour work-week program, and Carlos Slim gave staff at his telecoms company, Telemex, the option of a four day work-week, which 40% have taken.

But wait - don't we have a two-day weekend for good reason?

Actually, the two-day weekend is a modern invention. Until 90 years ago, most people worked six or seven days a week. Then, in 1926 Henry Ford began closing his factories on both Saturday and Sunday. He reasoned if he was going to have more customers to drive his cars, they needed more time off to drive them.

Others soon followed, as Henry Ford showed that with automation his company could still make a profit with everyone working less. And in fact they became more productive as well as happier in the time they did work.

Three years later, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America Union became the first union to demand all workers have a two-day weekend. And it wasn't until 1940 that the US Fair Labor Standards Act mandated the 40 hour work week.

That means the two-day weekend was only adopted nationwide in the US 60 years ago, and the rest of the world soon followed.

The two-day weekend, then, is the result of the Industrial revolution. Will the three-day weekend be the result of the technological revolution?

Tech entrepreneurs think that's the direction we're going in.

As Google's Larry Page says "If you really think about the things that you need to make yourself happy - housing, security, opportunities for your kids - anthropologists have been identifying these things. It's not that hard for us to provide those things."

"The amount of resources we need to do that, the amount of work that actually needs to go into that is pretty small. I'm guessing less than 1% at the moment. So the idea that everyone needs to work frantically to meet people's needs is just not true."

"Most people like working, but they'd also like to have more time with their family or to pursue their own interests. So that would be one way to deal with the problem, is if you had a coordinated way to just reduce the workweek. And then, if you add slightly less employment, you can adjust and people will still have jobs."

How realistic is it that countries follow Japan's lead? It takes time, but countries are always shifting minimum wages and maximum work hours. Martin Luther King day is America's most recent new holiday, promoted by labor unions to give staff a day off in January. It only came into effect in 1986.

Other countries have made changes far more recently. The United Arab Emirates officially switched their weekend from Thursday and Friday to Friday and Saturday in 2006 to try and get more in sync with the rest of the world. Saudi Arabia was even more recent, making the change in 2013.

Why the change in days? Because while the Christian day of rest and worship is Sunday, the Jewish day is Saturday, and the Muslim day is Friday.

A large part of the reason the two-day weekend became Saturday and Sunday was because it made most sense for the Christian and Jewish communities in Western countries. That left the Muslim countries out of sync.

A three day weekend, including Friday, would not just give everyone more time to enjoy life, it would embrace the three major faiths that inspired the concept of a day of rest in the first place.

Outside of increasing the weekend, a number of European countries have already taken the lead in reducing working hours. The average Denmark and Norway work week is now 33 hours. In Netherlands, it's down to 29 hours. According to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Solutions Network, these countries are in the top five happiest nations in the world.

Isn't it time quality of work was valued over quantity of work? More productivity in less time leads to not just higher quality work, but a higher quality life.

The three-day weekend isn't just possible. It's probable. At a time when most people were still working six days a week, in 1930, economist John Maynard Keynes wrote a prophetic essay called "Economic Possibilities for our Grandchildren" where he predicted that with technology and economic growth we would need to work far less and have far more time off, and he said:

"For the first time since his creation, man will be faced with this problem: how to use his freedom from pressing economic cares, how to occupy the leisure, which science and compound interest will have won for him, to live wisely and agreeably and well."

"The strenuous purposeful money-makers may carry all of us along with them into the lap of economic abundance. But it will be those peoples, who can keep alive, and cultivate into a fuller perfection, the art of life itself and do not sell themselves for the means of life, who will be able to enjoy the abundance when it comes."

The future Keynes envisioned is now here. We just need to change our week to fit it.

"If you love life, don't waste time. For time is what life is made of." ~ Bruce Lee

And if you are in America, enjoy your day off tomorrow!

Are we about to disrupt governments?



“ A revolution is coming:
A revolution which will be
peaceful if we are wise enough;
compassionate if we care enough;
successful if we are fortunate
enough. But a revolution which is
coming whether we will it or not.
We cannot affect its character.
We cannot alter its inevitability.”

~ John F Kennedy

Like Comment Share

Michelle Clarke, Daniel Acutt and 215 others

94 shares 22 comments

Are we about to disrupt governments with a new age of digital democracy? This week, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) joined Silicon Valley’s top incubator, Y Combinator, and Techcrunch put out a call for ‘democracy tech’ saying:

“It’s time to actually make the world a better place.”

Did you know Silicon Valley began in the 1950’s to fight the threat to democracy? Techcrunch’s Josh Constine writes: “Silicon Valley was birthed from an existential threat to the world. Nazi radar defense technology was decimating the Allied air forces. But American engineers heeded the call, and in a Harvard lab led by Stanford professor Frederick Terman, invented radar jammers that helped win the war.”

“Terman brought the engineering talent back to Stanford, turned it into the MIT of the West, won military contracts, pushed researchers to start companies and made Silicon Valley the center of innovation.”

Josh continues: "It's time for engineers to heed the call once again. President Trump poses an existential threat to world peace, social equality, the environment and the future of American values. Now the resistance needs tech tools to fight back."

I've been at Peter Diamandis' Abundance 360 conference in LA this week, where the top tech experts have been talking about the power of tech to both destroy and to democratize.

Peter sums it up with his 6 'D's of exponential growth, saying "The Six Ds are a chain reaction of technological progression, a road map of rapid development that always leads to enormous upheaval and opportunity."

Here's Peter's 6 'D's -

1) Digiized - Once a message or idea is digitalized, it can be spread globally in no time and minimal cost, which means you get reach everywhere, anytime.

2) Deceptive - To begin with, no one notices the impact of the shift, but as the impact keeps doubling exponentially, before you know it the impact is global.

3) Disruptive - The new product or platform disrupts and destroys the old paradigms and creates an entirely new way of working and living.

4) Demonitized - The low cost of the new technology means the service that used to cost a lot now costs little or even nothing.

5) Dematerialized - The old institutions suddenly shrinks or collapse as the things and people needs to achieve the same result goes down rapidly

6) Democratized - Always, the control goes from the few to the many, and everyone becomes the masters of their own destiny instead of the victims of the old heirarchies

Is government itself now about to follow knowledge, content, media and every other institution that has fallen to the six 'D's in the last two decades?

After ACLU and Exec Director, Anthony Romero, tweeted their legal win against Trump's executive order on immigration in court on Saturday, they attracted \$24 million in donations this last weekend - more than they raise in a year.

They then joined Y Combinator so they can learn the same skills that tech startups learn to scale rapidly with tech, and to use the donations they've raised effectively.

Following that news, Y Combinator sent out a "Request to Startups" yesterday saying:

“There are thousands of ways technology can be applied to improve democracy. We’d like to see startups and non-profits who are using technology to make it easier and more appealing to get involved in the political process, and for that involvement to make an impact.”

Is this the beginning of a new phase of digital disruption? The women’s march was driven by the combination of humans and technology to organize marches globally and to broadcast the size of them around the world, making it the largest march in history.

After my last week in the US, I think some of the biggest tech news in the coming year won’t be about disruptions in markets and companies, but disruptions in government and our social institutions.

It won’t be just in the US. It will be global.

It won’t be remembered as a disruption.

It will be remembered as a revolution.

“Without a global revolution in the sphere of human consciousness a more humane society will not emerge.” ~ Vaclav Havel



To do right, do the right thing



To do right, do the right thing: *“Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.”* ~ Peter Drucker

That means step-by-step improvement, as the ‘right thing’ is only clear at each step based on the results of the step before. This is the language of entrepreneurs: ‘learning by doing’:

How do you turn ‘constant improvement’ into a company culture? Toyota turned this into a process and culture called *“The Toyota Way”*, which then inspired the ‘lean’ movement. It’s called ‘lean’ because it’s about ‘deleting’ the three “MU’s” in your company - everything that is not of direct value to your customer’s experience.

DELETE THE THREE MU’S!

Delete MUDA

“*Muda*” is all the ‘waste’ in your business (Toyota saved time by naming the biggest 7 wastes’: Transport, inventory, motion, waiting, over-processing, over-production and defects).

In your business, this could be the ‘waste’ in answering emails, redesigning websites, having meetings - all the things that don’t give the customer a measurable improvement in their experience. Cut them all out!

Delete MURA

“*Mura*” is ‘lumps in flow’ in your business, when you are under-capacity or over-capacity.

“*Mura*” means “*unevenness*” - Like dinner guests waiting too long for the main course.

Turn all your products into ‘just-in-time’ delivery where you have smart ways to scale up and scale back based on the ‘pull’ of your customer demand instead of the ‘push’ of your own to-do-list. Get rid of your to-do-list and replace it with a not-to-do-list!

Delete MURI

“*Muri*” is “*overburden*” which happens when you and your team are doing things in complicated or manual ways when those same things can be automated or outsourced faster, better and cheaper.

What’s the fewest number of repeatable steps to create the highest quality in your customer experience? What can you automate or outsource to be world class overnight?

Add KAIZEN

Cut out Muda, Mura and Muri, and there’s just one thing left for you and your turn to focus at. Kaizen - Ongoing, never-ending improvement.

And that’s the point of your enterprise - to enable you and your team to become better versions of yourselves. Cut out all the noise so you can hear the music.

Entrepreneurship isn’t about proving yourself. It’s about improving yourself.

Amazon's secret sauce



First step for start-ups: What's the secret sauce of your business?

It's not your idea. It's not your product. It's your magic sauce where the more you stir it, the more it grows.

Jeff Bezos came across Amazon's secret sauce 15 years ago over a coffee with Jim Sinegal, the founder of one of Amazon's biggest competitors, CostCo. Jim shared with Jeff the 'virtuous circle' that made CostCo the leading discount retailer:

"You can fill Safeco Field with the people that don't want to sell to us, but over a period of time, we generate enough business and prove we are a good customer and pay our bills and keep our promises. Then they say, 'Why the hell am I not doing business with these guys. I gotta be stupid..'"

The next Monday, Jeff got his team together and they cut the price of all their products by 20 to 30 percent to be the very lowest in the market. Jeff went out and announced:

“There are two kinds of retailers: There are those folks who work to figure out how to charge more, and there are companies that work to figure how to charge less, and we are going to be the second, full-stop.”

Jeff then ran a two-day off-site management meeting with the bestselling author of “*Good to Great*”, Jim Collins. That’s where the team came up with the “*Amazon Flywheel*” -

1. Lower prices led to more customer visits,
2. More customers increased volume of sales,
3. Volume of sales attracted more 3rd party sellers,
4. More 3rd party sellers led to better economies of scale
5. Better economies of scale led to lower prices...

While others were waiting to get to economies of scale to lower prices, Amazon decided to lower prices to get to economies of scale.

For many at the meeting, it was the first time they finally had a clearly defined strategy that explained their business. Every division within Amazon had a focus on a different part of the flywheel, and each small improvement in any part made the wheel spin faster.

Jeff re-focused Amazon on the flywheel, but kept it out of public presentations as this was their secret sauce. Amazon got criticized for bringing prices down so low they were losing money on each sale, partners complained the pricing strategies were unviable, and many stock market analysts predicted the company would fail.

Jeff’s response? *“Entrepreneurs must be willing to be misunderstood for long periods of time.”*

While Jeff attracted critics from all directions, there was something he attracted a lot more of - customers. They came in their thousands. They kept on coming. And they kept coming back.

Now, fifteen years after that meeting (and through many years of being misunderstood), Amazon has grown from a start-up struggling through the dotcom crash to an expected \$100 billion+ in sales this year, and is now worth over \$300 billion.

What's your secret sauce? What is that one thing that makes you stand out in the market? It may not be lowest prices. It may be the highest quality product, or the best service in the industry. Once you know your secret sauce, set up your flywheel, and start with the end in mind.

Don't start with the part that you think you can afford to do. Start with the part that you know you can't afford not to do. And start today!

"Do not wait to strike till the iron is hot; but make it hot by striking"

- William Butler Yeats

LEADERSHIP

Posts to inspire the leader in you

"Earn your leadership every day."
~ Michael Jordan



When Mark Zuckerberg asked Steve Jobs for advice



Mark Zuckerberg tells the story of when he asked Steve Jobs for advice:

"Early on in our history when things weren't really going well. We had hit a tough patch and a lot of people wanted to buy Facebook."

"I went and I met with Steve Jobs, and he said that to reconnect with what I believed was the mission of the company, I should go visit this temple in India that he had gone to early in the evolution of Apple, when he was thinking about what he wanted his vision of the future to be."

"So I went and I travelled for almost a month."

Mark travelled to Kainchi Dham Ashram, in Nanital, Uttarakhand. The same place Steve had visited, and where he got clarity on his life purpose. For a month, Mark meditated in the temple and travelled through India.

"Seeing how people connected, and having the opportunity to feel how much better the world could be if everyone has a strong ability to connect reinforced for me the importance of what we were doing and that is

something I've always remembered over the last 10 years as we've built Facebook."

Mark returned from the trip, rejected all the offers for the company and committed to push on with his mission to "connect the world".

That one piece of advice from Steve Jobs, that one decision to take action on it by Mark Zuckerberg - and leave his company and country for a month to follow it - has proven to be worth over \$35 Billion as Facebook has grown to connect over one billion people today.

Today, who can you learn from?

Today, what action are you willing to take?

Earning always follows learning.

"I realized my mission in life was to learn more, not earn more." ~ Surya Das



Our year in 4 buckets



When we look back each year at our actions, they fall into four buckets:

1. The old things we repeated and didn't enjoy
2. The new things we knew we could do
3. The old things we repeated that we loved to do
4. The new things we did that amazed us

Remember to remember 2015 for the last two.

Plan to plan 2016 for less of the first and more of the last.

Wishing you an amazing 2016 with moments to savour and mountains to conquer!

"It is not the mountain we conquer, but ourselves" ~ Edmund Hillary



Quantity vs quality



Have you noticed that as you become more conscious, you shift from quantity to quality?

As you become more conscious of your food, you move from eating more to eating better

As you become more conscious of your thoughts, you move from more thinking to better ideas

As you become more conscious of your wealth, you move from more 'stuff' to higher quality experiences

As you become more conscious of your communication, you move from more words to a stronger message

As you become more conscious of your relationships, you move from more friends to deeper relationships

If you're looking for the smartest way to become more conscious in any area of your life, from your health to your wealth, focus at cutting down the quantity and raising up the quality, and watch the magic happen.

"Quality is more important than quantity. One home run is much better than two doubles." ~ Steve Jobs

The sweet spot



Are you in your sweet spot? Most of us fall in the gap living in or heading towards 1 of the 3 gaps in between:

1. Doing what we love and what we're good at (Happy but poor)
2. Doing what we're good at and pays well (Rich but bored)
3. Trying to do what we love & pays well, but we're not good at (Just a dream)

Most of us try and fix things by doing more of what we are doing (doing more of what pays well if it pays well, doing more of what we love if we love it) instead of focusing at the third thing.

"Establish the triangle and the problem is two thirds solved" ~ Pythagoras

Focus at the third point and (like GPS) you triangulate and find your #win

I think this realization is how we've attracted over 400,000+ entrepreneurs to www.geniusu.com in the last 12 months. Head over (and send your team over) to take the free entrepreneur assessments so you can locate all three and find your sweet spot:

What do you love? Take the Passion Test: <http://bit.ly/the-passion-test>

What are you good at? Take the Genius Test: <http://bit.ly/the-genius-test>

What's your business model? Watch Entrepreneur TV on Youtube (just passed 1,000,000 views!) <http://bit.ly/entrepreneurtv>

If you know of anyone who deserves more success and seeking their sweet spot, please do them a favour and share!

"Don't worry about what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive and do that, because what the world needs is people who have come alive." ~ Howard Thurman



New knowledge always beats most knowledge



Have you noticed it's never the ones with the most knowledge that succeed? That 'new' knowledge always beats 'most' knowledge? That those who don't know what can't be done often beat the ones who do?

What if the greatest thing holding you back is that you already know too much?

All the best entrepreneurs are as good at unlearning as they are at learning. The Japanese have a word for this: 'Shoshin' - To have 'a beginner's mind'. The concept is captured in this Buddhist story:

“Once, a professor went to a Zen Master, and began to explain what he knew about Zen. As he spoke, the Master began to pour a cup of tea until it was full. And then kept pouring.

The professor, noticing the tea spilling everywhere, got irritated. He then questioned the Master, "Why do you keep pouring when the cup is full"?

The Master replied, "You are like this cup. You are trying to understand Zen when your mind is already full. Empty your mind before attempting to understand."

"In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, in the expert's mind there are few."

Is your cup full? You know it is if you rely more on your opinions than your curiosity. You know it is if you give answers more than you ask questions. You know it is if you already know the reason times are tough and your dreams are distant.

> Knowledge: The more you know, the more you think you know.

> Wisdom: The more you know, the more you know how much you don't know.

How do you empty the cup? Begin by knowing you don't know. As Socrates said, "I know one thing: That I know nothing." Question all your judgements and assumptions. Then, surprise yourself with awe and wonder as you learn anew.

That doesn't mean approaching everything empty. As you empty your mind, fill your heart: Approach everything not with a full mind and empty heart, but with an empty mind and full heart:

"In a full heart there is room for everything, and in an empty heart there is room for nothing." ~ Antonio Porchia



How do I find my life purpose?



One of the greatest unanswered questions is *“How do I find my life purpose?”*

I think the question goes unanswered because it’s an infinite loop. Like *“Why can’t I find the right answer?”*. It’s a question that in it contains another question. So no matter how many times you ask it, it can never be fully answered. It’s the wrong question.

In my experience, entrepreneurs and leaders find their ‘why’ when they change the question from “How do I find my life purpose” to 3 simpler questions:

1. “What was my purpose today?”

Your purpose is your contribution, and you already contributed today. You contributed time and effort to something, and that’s your purpose today. If you contributed to helping a team mate, to serving a customer, to driving your kids to school. That was today’s purpose.

So you already have a purpose. It’s just that it’s often an unintended purpose. As David Letterman says, *“Everyone has a purpose in life. Perhaps yours is watching television.”*

2. “How will I make my purpose more meaningful tomorrow?”

You can change how and who you contribute to tomorrow. As you raise your level of giving, in simple, daily steps, you raise the meaningfulness of your purpose each day. You see the daily impact your giving gets. Purpose becomes a daily journey instead of a life destination.

“A life without cause is a life without effect.” - Paulo Coelho

3. “What am I willing to sacrifice?”

At some point of your giving, you get to the end of your comfort zone, where giving more of yourself becomes inconvenient. Without sacrifice, you cannot give more. Many stop at this point, and so reach the limit of their “why” and their “how” and so fail to reach their superpowers.

Victor E. Frankl wrote in his classic ‘Man’s Search for Meaning’, *“Those who have a ‘why’ to live, can bear with almost any ‘how’.”*

That greater “why” is linked to what you’re willing to give up for your cause. It’s on the other side of this pain threshold of sacrifice and suffering that we finally meet our true purpose.

If you’re on this journey at this third step, you’re probably finding yourself misunderstood.

You hear people say “workaholic” when you say “committed”.

You hear them say “risk taker” when you say “persevering”.

You hear them say “suffering” when you say “loving.”

And when they ask you, "*why are you doing this anyway?*" and you can't easily answer because you can't yet articulate your "life purpose", it can lead to seeds of doubt.

Don't give up! You're already deep into the journey. And the pay-off of purpose is not just the end of all uncertainty, but also the end of all suffering.

"I have found the paradox, that if you love until it hurts, there can be no more hurt, only more love." ~ Mother Teresa



Fake it until you make it



“Fake it until you make it.” - Why is this the worst advice EVER?

In the *“Material World”* of the 1980’s and 1990’s, appearances trumped authenticity. So if you could pretend to be successful, you could hoodwink people into believing you were. So there was a time when *“Fake it until you make it”* was advice that actually worked for people (until they burnt through all their money and had to return the house and car).

Today, there’s 4 big reasons that this is the worst advice ever:

Reason One: No one judges you anymore on *“what you do”*. Everyone is more interested in *“who you are”*. So being your true self is the No.1 most important asset you have.

Reason Two: There was a time where *“what you knew”* as a teaching teacher - whether a lecturer, doctor or lawyer with a *“body of knowledge”* - was what people valued. It took time to acquire. Today, when things are moving so fast

(and all knowledge is easily accessible online), *“what you’re learning”* as a leading learner is far more important than *“what you know or knew”*. You can be a leading learner in whatever niche you’re most passionate about from the moment you choose to commit to it - without faking anything.

Reason Three: *“Faking it”* was all about what you *“pretended you owned”* - the big houses and the fast cars. Today, AirBnB, Uber, and all the crowdsourcing sites erase the need for *“ownership”*. We now live in a culture where what we experience and what we express is far more valued than what we own.

Reason Four: No one wants to work for or with someone trying to be what they’re not..

Don’t fake it until you make it. In fact, don’t even make it. Just be it.

“Be yourself. Everyone else is already taken.” ~ Oscar Wilde

Theodore Roosevelt's speech at the Sorbonne



Classic words: If you fail, at least fail daring greatly.

*“It is not the critic who counts;
not the man who points out
how the strong man stumbles,
or where the doer of deeds
could have done them better.*

*The credit belongs to the man
who is actually in the arena,
whose face is marred by
dust and sweat and blood;
who strives valiantly;*

*who errs, who comes short
again and again,*

*because there is no effort
without error and shortcoming;
but who does actually strive
to do the deeds;*

*who knows great enthusiasms,
the great devotions;
who spends himself
in a worthy cause;*

*who at the best knows
in the end the triumph
of high achievement,
and who at the worst,
if he fails, at least fails
while daring greatly,*

*so that his place shall never be
with those cold and timid souls
who neither know victory
nor defeat.*

Theodore Roosevelt
Speech at the Sorbonne, Paris
April 23, 1910

If your brain was a garden



If your brain was a garden, would you take the time to pull out the weeds? Because scientists are now finding that's exactly what your brain is. Knowing this can transform your potential right now.

Neuroscientist, Andrew Koob, studied why 90% of your brain cells aren't neurons, but strange cells called 'glial cells'. Andrew says "*Originally, scientists didn't think they did anything.*"

"In the mid-19th century, glia were just being discovered, and researchers figured the glial cells simply held the neurons together (glia is Greek for glue). They were so focused on neurons that they concluded the new cell was worthless."

Scientists figured that neurons were the basis of our thought, and because they only made up 10% of our brain cells, we were only *“thinking with 10% of our brains.”*

But Andrew wondered why it was that the most intelligent and creative animals had the most glial cells. He asked himself *“Without input from our senses through neurons, how is it that we have such vivid thoughts? How is it that when we are deep in thought we seemingly shut off everything in the environment around us?”*

He ended up writing an entire book on glial cells, called *“The Root of Thought”*, on how these cells were the triggers to our imagination, dreams, wisdom and self-healing.

This month, Judith Pollack and Olivia Fox Cabane wrote an article on these strange cells, saying *“Imagine your brain is a garden, except instead of growing flowers, fruits, and vegetables, you grow synaptic connections between neurons.”*

“Glial cells’ are the gardeners of your brain - they act to speed up signals between certain neurons. But other glial cells are the waste removers, pulling up weeds, killing pests, raking up dead leaves.”

“Researchers are just starting to unravel this mystery, but what they do know is the synaptic connections that get used less get marked by a protein, C1q (as well as others). When the microglial cells detect that mark, they bond to the protein and destroy—or prune—the synapse.”

That means while your neurons fill your brain with thoughts and memories, your glial cells clear your brain, making space for potential. How?

“Your brain cleans itself out when you sleep—your brain cells shrinking by up to 60% to create space for your glial gardeners to come in take away the waste and prune the synapses.”

Have you ever woken up thinking sharper than when you went to bed? Have you ever ‘slept on it’ and woken with the answer? This is your glial cells at work. It’s your glial cells that make you dream.

10% of your brain works when you’re awake, and 90% is working when you’re not. Meditation, day-dreaming, automatic tasks like driving or taking a shower and even short power-naps are the same as sleep. That’s when your brain is

clearing the way for new potential and possibility. That's why we have so many 'aha' moments during these times. Make more moments, get more 'aha's'.

What thoughts grow? Whatever you're focused at. What thoughts get cleared? What you're not: *"If you spend too much time reading theories about the end of Game of Thrones and very little on your job, guess which synapses are going to get marked for recycling?"*

All the greatest leaders, entrepreneurs and innovators swapped full minds with mindfulness. They focused at what NOT to think about, to give space for what to think about.

So - ready to harness the other 90% of your brain?

What thoughts are you going to mark as weeds, ready to be pruned? What potential are you going to achieve by opening up the space and sunshine to grow?

You can decide, right now.

Then sleep on it.

"I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set her free." ~ Michelangelo



Be your own hero



What's the worst advice you've ever received as an entrepreneur? Mine was to "*Be your own boss*". I heard this in my 20s and spent years trying to be my own boss. It was horrible. I had many boss-worker conversations with myself about how I wasn't managing myself well, I wasn't paying myself enough, I wasn't mentoring myself well and so on. These were lonely conversations...

Only after meeting enough successful people out there did I realise none of them were trying to be their own boss. They all knew success comes by serving others, and so they had gone out of their way to choose their bosses. Some chose to be accountable to their team. Others to their customers. Others to their investors or partners. But they woke up each morning making someone else the boss, so they could stay motivated, accountable - and recognised for a job well done.

The more successful they became, the more accountable they became - to entire communities, industries and even global movements.

So if you're still out there trying to be the boss, quit that job. Instead of being the boss, focus at choosing the right boss, and make it someone worth working for.

That's when we realise freedom doesn't come from being our own boss where we end up being our own problem, but serving others where we end up being our own hero.

You've already arrived



Thought for the day ~ You've already arrived.

We're all so busy going somewhere, like ships in the night. Wherever you think you're going, stop today and imagine that you have already arrived. This is it. You're here. You're you. That's your destination. You have arrived, and there is nowhere else to go. You are no longer a ship. You are a house. A house with a little light inside: A lighthouse.

The mission of a lighthouse is not to go somewhere, because it has already arrived. You are already exactly where you are meant to be. The mission of a lighthouse is to shine. So shine!

"As we let our light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence actually liberates others." ~ Marianne Williamson

If there's nowhere to go, what's the point? The point of being a lighthouse is to be a beacon of safety for those arriving home. It is to be a beacon of adventure for those setting sail. The point is to shine brightly every day ~ in service to others, in gratitude to the ground you stand on, in respect to the flow of the wind and waves ~ shining brightly, shining quietly...

"Lighthouses don't fire cannons to call attention to their shining- they just shine."
~ Dwight L. Moody

In 100 years from now, today's ships will be gone. The greatest lighthouses will remain. Legacies are made by the shining men and women making a stand. Lighthouses last. Making a stand keeps you standing.

Anyway, it's just a thought for the day. Tomorrow you can go back to sailing the ship and striving to get somewhere. But today, imagine what it feels like to have already arrived. Be the lighthouse.

If you can feel yourself shine, you can always imagine it again tomorrow, and the day after. And maybe you'll find yourself, every day, shining a little brighter.

If, in time, you choose to turn the thought to reality, you can do that too... Permanently: Never needing to chase ever again; Never to be left at sea; Standing so still and shining so brightly that you discover the truth ~ the true you. You never were the ship. You weren't even the lighthouse. You were always the light.

Roger X



The difference between ordinary and extraordinary



A story from Vic Gundotra about Steve Jobs' legendary attention to detail:

“One Sunday morning, January 6th, 2008 I was attending religious services when my cell phone vibrated. As discreetly as possible, I checked the phone and noticed that my phone said “Caller ID unknown”. I choose to ignore.

After services, as I was walking to my car with my family, I checked my cell phone messages. The message left was from Steve Jobs. *“Vic, can you call me at home? I have something urgent to discuss”* it said.

Before I even reached my car, I called Steve Jobs back. I was responsible for all mobile applications at Google, and in that role, had regular dealings with Steve. It was one of the perks of the job.

"Hey Steve - this is Vic", I said. "I'm sorry I didn't answer your call earlier. I was in religious services, and the caller ID said unknown, so I didn't pick up".

Steve laughed. He said, *"Vic, unless the Caller ID said 'GOD', you should never pick up during services".*

I laughed nervously. After all, while it was customary for Steve to call during the week upset about something, it was unusual for him to call me on Sunday and ask me to call his home. I wondered what was so important?

"So Vic, we have an urgent issue, one that I need addressed right away. I've already assigned someone from my team to help you, and I hope you can fix this tomorrow" said Steve.

"I've been looking at the Google logo on the iPhone and I'm not happy with the icon. The second O in Google doesn't have the right yellow gradient. It's just wrong and I'm going to have Greg fix it tomorrow. Is that okay with you?"

Of course this was okay with me. A few minutes later on that Sunday I received an email from Steve with the subject "Icon Ambulance". The email directed me to work with Greg Christie to fix the icon.

Since I was 11 years old and fell in love with an Apple II, I have dozens of stories to tell about Apple products. They have been a part of my life for decades. Even when I worked for 15 years for Bill Gates at Microsoft, I had a huge admiration for Steve and what Apple had produced.

But in the end, when I think about leadership, passion and attention to detail, I think back to the call I received from Steve Jobs on a Sunday morning in January. It was a lesson I'll never forget. CEOs should care about details. Even shades of yellow. On a Sunday.

To one of the greatest leaders I've ever met, my prayers and hopes are with you Steve."

-Vic"

Vic posted that story in Aug 2011, when Steve Jobs was in hospital. Steve died six weeks later.

How will you remembered? For a few big things? Or for the many small things?

"God is in the details." ~ Ludwig Mies van der Rohe

PEOPLE & PARTNERSHIPS

Posts on how to grow your team

"None of us is as smart as all of us."
- Ken Blanchard

Who's your hero?



Joseph meets Michael Phelps
2008 Olympics



Joseph beats Michael Phelps
2016 Olympics

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Michelle Clarke, Sandra Morrell and 115k others

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36,552 shares

2.3k comments

Who's your hero? In 2008, 13 year old Joseph Schooling got to meet his hero, Michael Phelps, when the Olympian visited Singapore prior to the Beijing Olympics. Today, 8 years later, Joseph just made history by beating Michael to Gold in the 100m Butterfly finals - the first Singaporean to ever make (let alone win) an Olympic swimming final.

After meeting his hero as a young teenager, Joseph said "Michael Phelps may be my idol, but I just want to make my own career."

He then became fully committed to his swimming and, 3 years later in 2011 Joseph beat Michael's age-group (15-16 years) time over the 100 yards butterfly. At the time, Joseph said, "It's been a target of mine and I'm really happy to do that. It is a huge boost... Hopefully, I can get more of his records."

In 2012, at 17, he finally got his dream of swimming in the same race as Michael, saying it was "a tick off on my bucket list."

That was the year Joseph first qualified for the Olympics in London, but then disaster struck when he was told his goggles weren't olympic standard just before the race. He rushed to get replacements, but ended up getting a poor time in his heats and didn't get through to the semi-finals. It was Michael who was there to comfort him:

"I was walking behind Phelps after my race when he looked at me and asked, 'what's wrong?'

"I told him what happened and he hugged me and said, 'you're only so young, you still have a long way to go. It's a learning experience so keep your head high and just keep moving on'."

Again, it was his hero who motivated Joseph on, and he thought: "I know that as I get older, I'll become stronger, and I'll fare better beside him."

Today, Joseph not only became stronger, but strong enough to win gold in Rio, clocking a new Olympic record time in the 100m Butterfly in 50.39 seconds.

Michael, who has already won 4 Gold Medals in Rio, ended up in a 3-way dead heat for Silver with South Africa's Chad le Clos and Laszlo Cseh of Hungary, three quarters of a second behind Joseph. After Joseph's win, Michael was the first to swim over and congratulate him.

Who is your hero? Who inspires you so much that you're committed to do them the honor of committing to be even better than they are? And then achieve it?

"If I have seen further than others, it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants." ~ Isaac Newton

A big congratulations to Joseph Schooling on the Gold. And to Michael Phelps for the inspiration.

(More on Michael Phelp's extraordinary climb to the Rio Games here <http://bit.ly/from-rock-bottom>)

#olympics #josephschooling #michaelphelps



3 steps to \$20 billion



This week Apple just invested a billion dollars in the youngest billion-dollar CEO in China, 33 year old Cheng Wei.

Cheng Wei started his car-riding company (now known as “*Didi Chuxing*”) in June 2012 when he was 29 years old. Today, at only 33 years old, his four-year-old company is worth \$20 billion after Apple’s investment, eclipsing the size of Uber in China.

How does a young 30-something grow a business that fast in four years? Here’s 3 steps out of the many Cheng Wei took that you can follow today:

STEP ONE - START BY EARNING WHILE YOU’RE LEARNING

Before his new start-up, Cheng Wei worked for 7 years through his 20s at Alibaba. First in sales, and then with Alipay, the 'Paypal' of Alibaba. Without that experience, he wouldn't have had the expertise and insight to create a Chinese car-sharing site at the same time Uber was starting in the US.

Unbelievably, despite starting a company that today enables over one billion car rides each year, Cheng Wei still hasn't learned how to drive. But instead of seeing this being a handicap, he says it makes him his company's ideal customer, as he needs to get rides everywhere he goes. So every day, he's learning as he takes rides with his company's customers.

STEP TWO - BE THE CONNECTOR OF GIANTS

After struggling in the early years against many competitors and government regulations, Cheng Wei made a genius move a year ago, merging his company (then called Didi Dache) with his biggest competitor, Kuaidi Dache, in a \$6 billion merger. This brought together the two company's backers - the two biggest tech giants in China, Baidu and Alibaba, in one massive joint venture. By turning all his potential competition into allies, he eliminated his competition.

"Keep your friends close and your enemies closer."

STEP THREE - STAY FOCUSED!

Today, Cheng Wei's company has 99% share of China's taxi-hailing market and 87% of the private-car hailing market. Didi Chuxing operates in 400 cities compared to Uber which is only in 45 cities.

How has Cheng Wei achieved this incredible domination? By staying focused (He only operates in China) and being mission focused: To help China to be more mobile. That's what has attracted Apple to invest \$1 billion this week, their biggest investment this year.

As Cheng Wei says *"The endorsement from Apple is an enormous encouragement and inspiration for our four-year-old company. Didi will work hard with our drivers, riders and global partners, to make available to every citizen flexible and reliable mobility choices, and help cities solve transportation, environmental and employment challenges."*

That single focus gives Didi a big mission riding on the big technological disruptions coming in the next decade: to help solve the pollution in Chinese cities.

As Cheng Wei said at the Global Mobile Internet Conference in Beijing last month: *“Didi intends to build out an open platform with leading machine learning capabilities where ride share solutions, electric vehicles and self-driving technologies link up riders and drivers with different needs in a sustainable and inclusive urban ecology.”*

(As Didi’s official registered name is “Xiaojo” which means “Little Orange”, Didi later joked on Weibo that the real reason Apple invested was both companies were the names of fruit).

What lesson can you take from Cheng Wei? How can you earn while you learn? Who should you collaborate with today? And how can you have one, purposeful, focus so you can delete the rest?

Whether you are just getting started, in the early days of your business, or facing both external and internal growing pains, Cheng Wei’s 4-year, \$20-billion, turbo-charged story has one underlying message:

Stay in the right gear at the right speed at the right time, and you can always accelerate out of trouble.

“There are no speed limits on the road to success.” ~ David W. Johnson



Are you “networking while not working”?



Today Reid Hoffman sold his company, LinkedIn, to Microsoft for \$26 billion in cash. It's a major milestone in his 23 year journey of “networking while not working” that began in 1993:

As Reid says, when he tried to start his first business after graduating “It was the beginning of the online revolution, in 1993. This was when America Online was starting to drop floppy disks to everybody to try to get people online.”

“I networked my way to a couple of different venture capitalists. They said, “Have you shipped software before? You’re asking us to invest millions of dollars in your company. You’ve done this before, yes?” I said, “No, not really.” And they said, “Go get a job first.”

So Reid joined Apple to build ‘eWorld’ - an early social network. eWorld didn’t work, but Reid’s network grew, and he launched his own social network, SocialNet, in 1997.

As he remembers, “SocialNet focused on online dating. It also had some activities like finding golf partners and roommates and that kind of stuff.”

But SocialNet didn't work either. "We had a bad model at Socialnet. We thought we were going to partner with newspapers, and that didn't work."

Again, Reid's product didn't work and, again, Reid's network grew.

A friend of his, Peter Thiel, was quick to act: "When I decided to leave Socialnet to start another business, I went to Peter and he said, "No, don't do that yet. Come join us now. We're sitting on a powder keg. The rocket is about to start taking off."

The rocket was PayPal. Reid joined in 2000 to look after all PayPal's external relationships. Peter said Reid "was the firefighter-in-chief at PayPal. Though that diminishes his role because there were many, many fires."

After a decade of Reid networking while finding out what was not working, and after two years at PayPal, eBay bought the company for \$1.5 billion. Reid took his share and launched LinkedIn, aiming to grow it into the World's No.1 Professional Networking site.

13 years later, and Reid is now selling LinkedIn - with its 433 million members - to Microsoft for \$26 billion. It's the biggest acquisition that Microsoft has ever made.

Are you "networking while not working"?

It's not about what you know. It's about who you know - and who knows you.

Your network is your net worth and, as Reid says, "The fastest way to change yourself is to hang out with people who are already the way you want to be."

Your network is your net worth

THE PayPal MAFIA

Elon Musk
SPACEX

Peter Thiel
Palantir

Reid Hoffman
LinkedIn

Steve Chen
YouTube

Chad Hurley
YouTube

Premal Shah
KIVA

David Sacks
Yammer

Russel Simmons
yelp

Max Levchin
yelp

Dave McClure
500startups

Your network is your net worth

1 / Jawed Karim, co-founder, YouTube
2 / Jeremy Stoppelman, co-founder, Yelp
3 / Andrew McCormack, co-founder, Volar Ventures
4 / Premal Shah, president, Kiva
5 / Luke Nosek, co-founder, the Founders Fund
6 / Kenery Howery, co-founder, the Founders Fund
7 / David Sacks, CEO and co-founder, Yammer
8 / Thiel
9 / Keith Rabois, investor, YouTube and LinkedIn, and former COO, Square
10 / Reid Hoffman, founder, LinkedIn
11 / Max Levchin, co-founder, Slide, and chairman, Yelp
12 / Floedl Botha, partner, Sequoia Capital
13 / Russel Simmons, co-founder, Yelp

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How valuable is your network? The Paypal Mafia is an extreme example of the phrase *“your network is your net worth”*.

When eBay bought Paypal in 2002, the founders of Paypal had an average age of 30. With the opportunity to go out and start again, they decided to stay in touch and share their strategies, experiences and connections as they launched their next businesses.

The result?

Elon Musk launched Space X and Tesla (Now worth \$30 billion+)

Reid Hoffman founded LinkedIn (Now worth \$25 billion+)

Peter Thiel launched Palantir (Now worth \$20 billion+)

Steve Chen and Chad Hurley founded Youtube (Sold to Google for \$1.65 billion)

David Sacks launched Yammer (Sold to Microsoft for \$1.2 billion)

Russel Simmons and Max Levchin launched Yelp (Now worth \$1.6 billion+)

Dave McClure founded 500 Startups (Invested in 1,300+ companies)

Premal Shah became president of Kiva (Crowdfunded 1 million+ microloans)

The founders sold Paypal for \$1.5 billion 13 years ago, but as a result of sharing their journeys after that, they now have a combined net worth of over \$20 billion.

Between them, they have created 7 billion dollar companies and invested in many more, generating over \$100 billion in market value.

Supporting each other was the intention from the beginning. As Peter Thiel recalls, *“When we started PayPal, I remember one of the early conversations I had with Max was that I wanted to build a company where everybody would be really great friends and, no matter what happened with the company, the friendships would survive.”*

Your success will be determined not by how much you want to be successful, but by how many of the right people you connect around you who want you to be successful.

Your network is your net worth.

What can you do today to improve your network?

What can you do to add more value to the one you're in?

How can you grow network value everywhere you go?

Today we live in a networked world. So thinking about growing network value is more important than ever. As Reid Hoffman says, *“In the Networked Age, we're all like the little kid from The Sixth Sense. If you're not seeing networks when you enter a room, you might want to check your pulse.”*

Lesson from Branson ~ Income = Incoming



My lesson from Richard Branson - Income = Incoming

I was on Richard's private island, Necker Island, last week, and was lucky enough to have a week with the Billionaire. Here's one conversation we had that stuck with me...

We were talking about problems with money. Richard is a self-professed dyslexic, and it turns out his mix up extends to numbers. He said *"Today I was speaking to some of my finance team. They were talking about some idea which would mean \$25,000 from some 1,000,000 people. So I got out my note book and began multiplying the two together. It ended up with a lot of zeros. It was a*

little embarrassing because I had to ask them ‘Does that make billions or trillions?’”

Of course I laughed while wondering if he was being serious or just joking (it turned out it was a bit of both). I asked *“So if you don’t like numbers, how do you make your businesses so financially successful?”*

He replied *“It’s really all about people, not numbers. I just look for great people. As for the money, I just make sure the numbers coming in are generally bigger than the numbers going out, and then everything tends to take care of itself.”*

So what’s the lesson from a billionaire?

To me, it was that he doesn’t see income. He sees incoming.

Many of us are so busy at the outcome, we miss the income. Many of us are so busy with our output, we miss the input. Richard Branson is a master of flow, and as long as the flow feels positive, he can focus on the important things in life.

What could you do today to grow your incoming? Incoming connections, incoming relations, incoming talent. Attract the best people, with the best input, and the rest will take care of itself.

When we focus on the inside instead of outside, input instead of output, income instead of outcome, we’re more likely to inspire instead of expire...

Roger X



Stop doing everything



The hardest thing to do in a startup = stop doing everything.

When Sara Blakely was 29, she quit her door-to-door fax salesperson job and invested her \$5,000 life savings in her new company, Spanx.

Her first decision was to focus on what she was best at: Promoting her product. She says *“The best thing I ever did was to hire my weakness”* so she could focus all her time on her strength.

While other startup founders might have been busy trying to run their company or fix their systems, Sara was out promoting. That led to her personally getting her pants and leggings into Bloomingdales and Saks, onto the Oprah Winfrey show and onto Richard Branson’s Reality TV show, *“The Rebel Billionaire.”* (Richard regularly quotes this tip from Sara)

The result? Spanx became a nationwide brand and, three years ago, Sara became the youngest self-made female billionaire in the world.

She's also the youngest female billionaire to join Bill Gates' and Warren Buffett's "*Giving Pledge*". Now that she's made a billion, she's pledged to give it all away.

What should you stop doing today?

Who could you hire or partner with to bring strength to where you're weakest?

What could you do with the time you free up if it were focused on your strength?

Often the best thing to do is to decide what not to do.

Success is more about what you say "*no*" to than what you say "*yes*" to.

Throw away your "*To do*" list and start your "*Not to do*" list today.

For those of you familiar with my Wealth Dynamics entrepreneur profiling system, you will recognize Sara as a "*Star*" profile, always best when out promoting instead of in the office.

Which of the eight profiles are you? www.wdprofiletest.com

And big news for all entrepreneurs. From this week, you can go to our entrepreneur education platform, www.geniusu.com, join for free, and use the search button on the top menu to find any of the eight wealth profiles in over 50 countries from over 500,000 entrepreneurs around the world.

Need a Creator in China? A Deal Maker in Denmark? A Mechanic in Mexico? It's never been easier to connect to the people you need, when you need them!



Here's how Masayoshi Son made his first \$2 million



This week the richest man in Japan, Masayoshi Son, hit the headlines for meeting Donald Trump and telling the world he would be investing \$50 billion in America and creating 50,000 jobs. That one announcement has made him \$2 billion richer in 3 days as Softbank's stock shot up 6%.

It's difficult for any startup entrepreneur to relate to an investor talking in billions. But Masa also began Softbank as a startup, and his amazing story of how he got started gives a good clue to how he became a billionaire.

Here is his story in his own words:

"I started Softbank in 1981. When Softbank was only two or three months old, I decided that I needed to show the end users and dealers what software was available in Japan. There was a consumer electronics show in Tokyo, and I

made a reservation for the largest size booth, the same size as Sony, Matsushita, and Toshiba.”

“I purchased the space, and I called all the software vendors I could find, maybe just a dozen at that time. I told them that I had bought the space, I was going to prepare the flyers, I was going to have decorations, displays, a model PC, and I was going to pay for everything. I told them, you guys can be in my booth for free.”

“At the consumer electronics show, I had a booth the size of eight small booths. I had a huge sign that said, “Now the revolution has come for software distribution for PCs.” I had more people come to my booth than Sony did. My booth was always packed, jammed with people. And they all said how good it was.”

“My plan was that a bunch of people would sign up to establish outlets and another bunch of people would order software through Softbank. In fact, I got almost nothing.”

“Nobody signed up for a dealership. Zero.”

“Actually, most of the software vendors who attended the booth would tell people, if you can’t make up your mind today, here’s my card. You can call me directly if you decide to buy my software. So I was cut out of the deal completely. I probably made back one-twentieth of the cost of the booth.”

“After that, many people were laughing at me. They said, that guy’s really dumb. He’s a nice guy but dumb.”

“I said, OK, I’m dumb. But I’m going to keep at it, and someday, somebody will find out what I can do and what real software distribution means.”

“Actually, one person did call me from Osaka a few weeks after the show. He said, we’re starting a big PC shop, and we need software. Please come and talk to me. I said, sorry but I’m too busy to make the trip right now. Actually, I wasn’t busy. There were no customers. But I didn’t have the money to go to Osaka.”

“He said, my company’s name is Joshin Denki. Have you heard of us? I said, no. It turns out it’s the third largest home electronics dealer in Japan.”

“That afternoon, the person from Joshin Denki called me again. He said, you were too busy to come to Osaka. It’s completely by chance but tomorrow our president is going to Tokyo. It’s really by chance because he has some other business to do there.”

“The next day the president arrived. He told me that he had come all the way to Tokyo just to see me. The company had started a big computer shop two weeks before, and it needed software.”

“He asked me many questions: How much capital do you have? How old are you? What kind of business experience do you have?”

“I told him, I have very little money, very little business experience. I have no product, nothing. What I do have is the greatest enthusiasm, the greatest desire to succeed. If you want to be the number one PC dealer in Japan, you have to find the number one guy in software distribution. That’s me. I have no evidence, but I strongly believe in myself.”

“He said, wow, you’re an interesting guy! And he gave me exclusive purchasing rights for all the PC software for Joshin Denki.”

“After I got Joshin Denki, I went to many other department stores and electronic shops. Have you seen Joshin Denki? They’re the largest PC dealer in Japan now. And do you know why they’re so successful? Because they have the software! And I have the exclusive on that software. So if you want to succeed, please talk to me. And they all opened accounts with me very quickly. In one month, I got most of the biggest dealers in Japan as my customers.”

“Before I got Joshin Denki, I had almost no sales. Then right after I got Joshin Denki, I got about \$150,000 in sales to them. The next month, I started to do business with many other stores and that amount doubled. The next month, a 50% increase. And the next month. In one year, my monthly revenues went from about \$10,000 to \$2.3 million.”

Imagine that. He took one risk. Everyone said he was dumb. He stood firm. He got one call from that risk. He stood firm. He went from zero to \$2.3 million in one year.

That’s the secret to Masa’s success. He makes a stand, and the rest follows. He went from that first failure and success and has since gone on to make one stand after another, going from zero to a net worth of \$20 billion. His meeting this week was simply another stand. One worth another \$2 billion.

What are you making a stand for?

“If you don’t stand for something, you will fall for anything.”

Masa’s interview in his early life was first published by the Harvard Business Review in 1992. You can read his full story here: <http://bit.ly/masa-son>

How fast do things change?



How fast do things change? 25 years ago, if Odessa Swarts had turned on the news in 1991 she would have watched the US troops in Kuwait at the start of the Gulf War. Gorbachev was in power in the USSR, and F.W. de Klerk was President of South Africa under the rule of Apartheid.

Odessa was a sprinter but could not compete Internationally, as the World's anti-Apartheid measures included banning South African Athletes from competition, including the Olympics.

That was despite her having the 100m and 200m sprint records in South Africa at provincial and national level. As she remembers, “I was known to be a very fast runner. They used to call me ‘the girl that runs like a horse’.”

From her reality in 1991, how much could change within 25 years? Within the year, Odessa gave birth to her son, Wayde. He was born premature and doctors said he could end up being disabled.

Odessa had different ideas, joking he was “fast from the start”. Wayde van Niekerk grew up in his mom's fast footsteps, and also became a sprinter. And

as he picked up speed, everything around the two of them that had held Odessa back fell away:

Nelson Mandela became President of South Africa. Apartheid ended. The USSR dissolved. A small piece of news that most missed in 1991 - Tim Berners-Lee announcing on Aug 6 1991 the first 'website' on something he created called 'the World Wide Web' - started a chain reaction that 25 years later has directly connected over half the world's population on the Internet.

Odessa's son could compete in the way she never could and this week, 24 year old Wayde van Niekerk smashed Michael Johnson's 17 year world record in the 400m in 43.03 - and became the 1st South African to win an Olympic track Gold medal since 1928.

Odessa said "It's just an emotion you really can't explain to anyone... It was just crazy. For a few seconds there my voice was gone. I was cheering since the moment I heard the gun go, and when I saw him in the last 100m again I think that's when everything came back.. because I was screaming and nothing was coming out".

On the win and his life leading up to it, Wayde said "I believed I could get the world record. I've dreamed of this medal forever."

In just 24 years it will be Olympics 2050. The politics and media of today will be a distant memory. Everything will again have changed. Athletes yet to be born will be winning Olympic medals and breaking records. What today might look impossible could easily become possible.

So in the midst of this change, are you focusing at today's news - which isn't what's new, it's what's past - or are you focusing on the future you want to create?

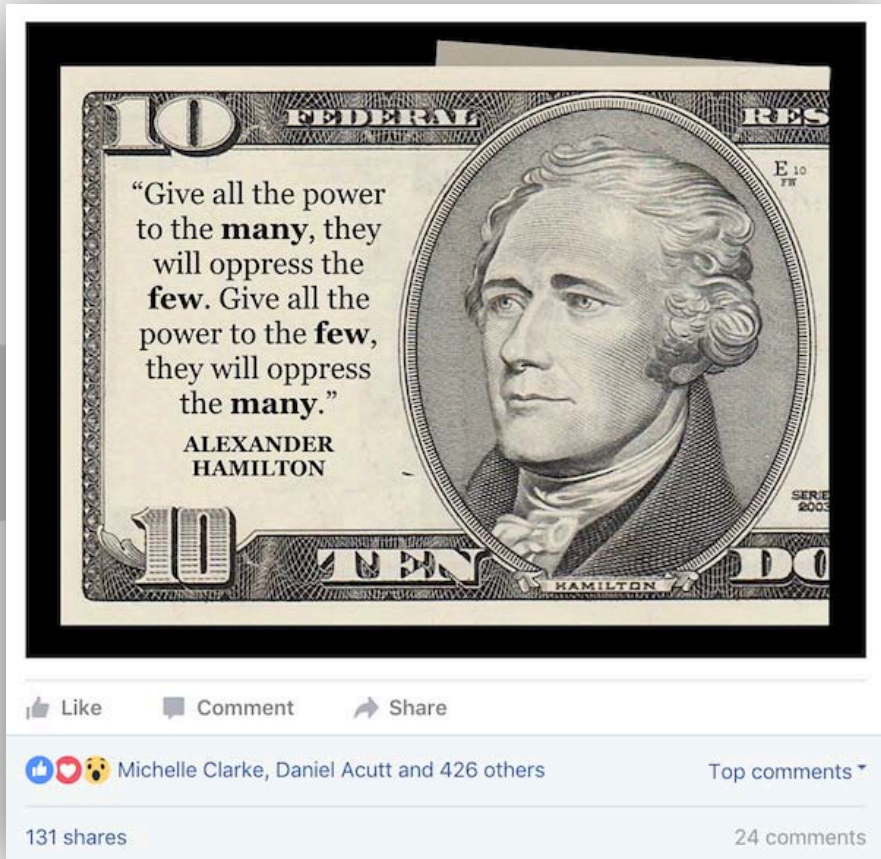
Sprinters have no need for rear view mirrors as they are far more focused at where they're going than where they've been.

And in today's fast changing world, we're all now sprinters.

So with Odessa and Wayde as inspiration, now's a good time to ignore all the distractions and ask what future you want to create for both you and your family. Then get on the track, and enjoy the run.

A big congrats to Wayde van Niekerk and Odessa Swarts

What would Alexander Hamilton do today?



Despite dying in a duel 212 years ago, Alexander Hamilton is in the news today...

Unless you've seen the sold-out Broadway musical, read the news articles of the cast's message to Mike Pence (or Donald Trump's tweets in response), you probably won't know much about Hamilton. Even if you have been following, it's still easy to miss the huge lesson he left us.

As a Hamilton myself, I've spent years tracking back my family tree to the beginning of the Scottish Hamilton Clan, and then forward to distant relatives like Alexander Hamilton.

He was one of my inspirations for becoming a social entrepreneur - and his amazing story is an example of how to think bigger:

Imagine travelling to a new country and starting a business.

Now imagine travelling to a new country, helping to form a brand new government, creating a financial system from scratch and coming up with brand new money that becomes the world's reserve currency a hundred and fifty years later.

That's what Alexander Hamilton did.

Born into a Scottish family in the British West Indies, Alexander was orphaned at birth by his mother's death, and abandoned by his father.

Travelling to America for a new beginning, he joined the war, became George Washington's aide and then the American forces' commander-in-chief by the time he was 21 years old.

When George Washington became President, Alexander became the first US Secretary of the Treasury and built the entire financial system that the US still runs today (despite all his financial knowledge coming from being an accounting clerk in the West Indies when he was a teenager).

He took on all the states' debts after the war, created one national debt and created the first National Bank of the United States. He then proposed the US have its own currency, set up the US Mint and minted the first US dollars.

Imagine immigrating to a new country and working within their system.

Now imagine immigrating to a new country and reimagining the entire system - then creating it.

Don't like the government? Create a new one. Don't like the financial system, replace it. Don't trust the money? Print your own.

While it's easy to think that times of such radical change are a thing of the past, the reality is that we are living in times which are as uncertain and fast-changing today as the US was 200 years ago. Except now it's the entire world that is in a state of change.

So when we're looking for inspiration for global transformation, we don't need to look at today's politicians, but we can look back to the founding fathers of the past.

What would Alexander Hamilton do today?

What new system would he create?

What new currency would he mint?

What new movement would he begin?

The reality is, today new systems are already being created. New digital currencies are already being minted. New movements have already begun. It's just that this time, governments are not the main agent for change.

We are.

So when I see Alexander's face on a US ten dollar bill, or see him in the news, I get reminded to think bigger, as the size of our tomorrow will equal the size of our thinking today.

Star Wars for entrepreneurs

The Eight Hero Archetypes

- Luke Skywalker**
Creator: The adventurer
- Hans Solo**
Star: The swashbuckler
- Chewbacca**
Supporter: The team player
- Jabba the Hutt**
Deal Maker: The negotiator
- Princess Leia**
Trader: The peacemaker
- C3PO**
Accumulator: The organizer
- Yoda**
Lord: The wise sage
- R2D2**
Mechanic: The engineer

STAR WARS for entrepreneurs and superheroes

MECHANIC
CREATOR
STAR
SUPPORTER
DEAL MAKER
TRADER
ACCUMULATOR
LORD

INNOVATION Intuitive
SENSORY TIMING
MULTIPLE introvert
MACHINERY extrovert

VXL

WEALTH DYNAMICS

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Michelle Clarke, Sandra Morrell and 390 others

100 shares 46 comments

Star Wars for entrepreneurs and superheroes. Which one are you?

If you would like your entrepreneurial journey to resemble more of a Star Wars movie, step behind the scenes for the inspiration behind the latest movie:

J.J. Abrams, who directed and co-wrote “*The Force Awakens*” went to college at Sarah Lawrence where famous mythologist, Joseph Campbell taught for 40 years. It was Joseph Campbell’s “Hero’s Journey” that was George Lucas’ original inspiration for Star Wars.

J.J. used Joseph Campbell’s theories on story telling, archetypes and epic journeys in “*Star Trek*” and “*Lost*” before directing “*The Force Awakens*.”

As he says “I don’t know how many times in developing stories I have referenced the archetypes of Star Wars. As a fan of Joseph Campbell and the use of myth in storytelling, you could argue that it is a classic paradigm but it is the common language among all of us because we are all so familiar with the Star Wars canon.”

In *“The Force Awakens”*, J.J. has used all the eight main archetypes from the original *“Star Wars”* movies to tell eight different stories all rolled into one.

As well as featuring all the original characters, J.J. introduces new ones to play the same archetypes (Rey is the new Luke, Kylo Ren is the new Vader, BB-8 is the new R2D2). Rey goes through the same Hero’s Journey that Luke went through, from the *“Call to Adventure”* and *“Refusal of the Call”* to the *“Road of Trials”* and *“The Return”*.

These are the same stages found in every superhero’s journey - and the journey of every great entrepreneur. These are also the same eight archetypes found through history (the same ones that we use in our Talent Dynamics and Wealth Dynamics profiling systems for entrepreneurs).

Here’s all eight, with the original and new Star Wars characters, along with entrepreneurs and leaders who have followed the same journeys (or are following them today).

Which character are you? And what clues does this give you for your epic journey ahead?

#1 Creator: The adventurer - Always getting in to deep water, then intuiting their way out - Luke Skywalker, Rey, Steve Jobs, Richard Branson, J.K. Rowling, Elon Musk

#2 Star: The swashbuckler - Willing to break the rules, in the limelight, to get to the objective - Hans Solo, Finn, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Oprah Winfrey, Hilary Clinton, Harrison Ford

#3 Supporter: The team player - Knows success comes from team work - Chewbacca, Jack Welch, Sheryl Sandberg, Steve Ballmer, Meg Whitman

#4 Deal Maker: The negotiator - All success comes from the art of the deal - Jabba the Hutt, Unkar Plutt, Rupert Murdoch, Donald Trump, Masayoshi Son, Susan Wojcicki

#5 Trader: The peace maker - Always seeking balance through exchange and equity - Princess Leia, Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela, George Soros, Carl Icahn

#6 Accumulator: The organizer - Keeping things in order, and worrying when they're not - C3PO, Warren Buffett, Li Ka Shing, Gina Rinehart, Carlos Slim

#7 Lord: The wise sage - Getting perspective by standing apart, analyzing and advising - Yoda, Maz Kanata, Angela Merkel, Janet Yellen, John D Rockefeller, Larry Page

#8 Mechanic: The engineer - Happy to stay in the background and fix the details - R2D2, BB-8, Mark Zuckerberg, Jeff Bezos, Ray Kroc, Christine Lagarde

Joseph Campbell's "*Hero's Journey*" is the thread that links the epic stories that George Lucas and J.J. Abrams have used to create Star Wars, to the epic stories being played out today by entrepreneurs and modern day superheroes.

Being aware of the archetypes helps us each to follow our own natural path - without following the wrong one. When we each follow our own 'calling', we make our own lives an epic adventure.

And it's when our stories intertwine, the adventure truly begins.

"We must be willing to get rid of the life we've planned, so as to have the life that is waiting for us." - Joseph Campbell

More on the eight profiles: <http://www.wdprofiletest.com>



Woman Power: This is Tory Burch



Woman Power: This is Tory Burch. She became a billionaire this month. In a world where self-made billionaires are rare and self-made female billionaires are ever rarer, what did she do and how did she do it?

The Tory Story...

Tory was brought up with her three brothers and says, *'I see myself as a tomboy who grew up on a Pennsylvania farm.'* How did she go from Tomboy to Fashion Queen? Tory's father, who had a paper cup factory, made his own clothes, and this inspired Tory to go into fashion.

Step 1 - GET CONNECTED

"I had never been to business school, I had never been to design school" - With no qualification to run a business, design, or a design business, Tory started with just her passion for fashion, connecting to the world through a job

working at Harper's Bazaar. While getting connected, she started her fashion line on the kitchen table. By 2004, she had enough momentum to launch her first store.

Step 2 - KEEP YOUR HANDS FULL

Tory has six children. She decided being a mother was the best training for business *"If I wasn't a good mother, then I wouldn't be good at this. There's a lot of planning, time management and work."* The work paid off, and within a year she got a lucky break when Oprah featured her on her show.

Step 3 - STEP INTO DANCING SHOES

Everything changed in 2006, when Tory designed the 'Reva' ballet shoes for women to wear casually. Named after her mum, the shoes became a hit, and over the next 6 years her fashion business has grown to 69 stores and her lines are stocked in over 1,000 stores. Even with this growth, Tory saw her business as an extension of herself, saying *"My company is an extension of me, so when I designed my stores I wanted people to feel that they were in my home."*

Step 4 - WEAR THE PANTS

Many think women have a challenging time moving up in business. Tory's staff is 95% women, but she knows how to get tough when she needs to. When she divorced her husband, Chris Burch in 2006, he first claimed to be the brains behind her business, then set up a competing company, then sued her for making things difficult with suppliers and partners.

Tory counter-sued him for copying her designs and last month he finally backed down, selling his shares in her business and burying the hatchet.

The end result? Tory has danced her way to a billion dollar business, has personally reached billionaire status this month at 46 years old, and is getting ready for an IPO of her business this year.

Tory's story is so beautiful because it's so elegantly simple - Bring it all together. As she says, "I think you can have it all. You just have to know it's going to work."

That's Tory's Story: Know it. Bring it.

If she can do it, you can do it. Just don't forget the dancing shoes... and the pants.

ENTREPRENEURS vs EMPLOYEES

Posts on the 21st shift to the Entrepreneur Movement

*"If Plan A doesn't work, the alphabet has 25 more letters."
~ Claire Cook*

Brian Acton and the Whatsapp story

Couldn't get a job with Facebook...

Brian Acton @brianacton
Facebook turned me down. It was a great opportunity to connect with some fantastic people. Looking forward to life's next adventure.
3:14 AM - 4 Aug 2009
10,083 likes · 8,474 comments

So started his own company instead, then sold it to Facebook for \$19 billion

Brian Acton Whatsapp

Like Comment Share

2.7k Top comments

1,173 shares 209 comments

Have you ever been rejected for a job? Brian Acton has. After 11 years at Yahoo! and out of a job at 38 years old, Brian went job hunting... first to Twitter (rejected) then to Facebook (rejected).

What do you do when you're 38 years old, competing unsuccessfully against 20-somethings for a job as a systems engineer? If you're Brian, you go out and play frisbee...

Two years earlier, he had travelled South America playing ultimate frisbee with Jan Koum, who he had met while working at Ernst & Young as a security tester. Now, in the midst of his job rejections, he met up with Jan again for a game of frisbee.

It was while playing, Jan told Brian he was working on a start-up to create a new kind of mobile app, but he had run out of money. Jan had lived on welfare with his parents when he first arrived to the US from Ukraine. Not

wanting to go back on food stamps, he asked Brian for advice on whether he should quit and start looking for a job.

Admiring Jan for his courage in starting his own company, Brian replied *"You'd be an idiot to quit now. Give it a few more months."*

The topic turned to Brian's success in getting a new job (which was non-existent) and it was only a matter of time before Jan (who had previously been rejected from a job at Facebook) had turned Brian's advice on himself.

He persuaded Brian to quit the job hunt and join him on his start-up, creating a new messaging app, *"WhatsApp"*.

Brian and Jan had one thing in common - Ultimate Frisbee. Other than that, they turned out to be complimentary to each other in every other way. As Brian says, they are *"Yin and Yang, I'm the naive optimist, he's more paranoid. I pay attention to bills and taxes, he pays attention to our product. He's CEO. I just make sure stuff gets done."*

In a job hunt, all your weaknesses are exposed. In a start-up, your weakness can be supported by your team member's strength. So becoming an entrepreneur is easier than being an employee.

It took a few months of convincing but Brian finally decided to take the step, reject the rejecters, and join Jan.

Brian managed to raise some funds to keep the two going, while they worked out of the Red Rock Cafe in Mountain View. With no office and no overheads, they put 100% focus at growing WhatsApp as the messaging app with *"No Ads. No Games. No Gimmicks."*

In the first year, revenue grew to only \$5,000 a month, but user growth boomed. Brian and Jan would switch from *"free"* to *"paid"* for the app (charging \$1) when users began growing too much. When they saw people would even pay for the app, Brian said *"You know, I think we can actually stay paid."*

The company stayed on an exponential growth path and, four years later, Facebook - the company that had rejected both founders - bought WhatsApp for \$19 billion, making both Brian and Jan multi-billionaires.

As a symbolic gesture to their difficult beginnings, the two signed the purchase papers on the steps of the building where Jan's parents would pick up their food stamps.

And Brian remembers a second thing outside of Frisbee that the two have in common, and which led to their success: *"We're part of the Facebook reject club."*

It took 4 years from ultimate frisbee and ultimate rejection to Brian and Jan's \$19 billion success.

4 years from now will be the year 2020. Where will you be in 2020?

Where you are in 2020 will have everything to do with the decisions you make today.

> Are you focused at finding a job instead of adding value to those already around you?

> Are you chasing opportunities instead of seeing the ones that are right in front of you?

> Is your latest rejection hiding a doorway behind it? A doorway to an entirely new, more exciting adventure?

Sometimes, it just takes a change in focus.

"Sometimes the best gain is to lose." ~ George Herbert



What work would you do if you didn't need to?



What work would you do if you didn't need to work?

This week, Finland announced it's plan to pay all it's 5.4 million citizens 800 euros every month - just enough money to be able to eat, drink, sleep, learn and live a life without fear of not having enough.

<http://bit.ly/finland-basic-income-plan>

Can you imagine a world where everyone worked on what they loved?

If you got paid enough to not have to work for the money, what would you do? Would you create art? Do something to change the world? Do something to help a fellow human?

Finland's plan is the furthest any country has gone so far to introduce the concept of a "basic income". This year, two Dutch cities, Utrecht and Tilberg, have also began their own "basic income" experiments.

Why the growing movement towards basic incomes now?

In this technological age, we're getting greater productivity and also greater unemployment. It isn't as easy to get jobs, but there's more money than ever.

The solution? Give everyone enough money to not need to work, and then people will do the work that they would actually want to do, and to do the work that's actually needed.

Andre Daniel, the Editor of Basic Income News says, *"If technology replaces human labor in an ever growing number of tasks, then only some kind of social contract which says we all get a fair share of those machines work will actually reap the benefits of it."*

"People will work on task of their choosing, not on paid jobs with which they only barely identify with, if at all. Now that cannot happen if people don't have the means to get the basic resources they need to live with dignity."

The problem? Many are against the idea. In Switzerland last month, the Swiss Parliament voted down a plan for Basic Income proposed by the citizens, with politicians saying it was *"The most dangerous and harmful initiative ever."* Why? Because they believe it would make people lazy and disruptive if they didn't need to work...

<http://bit.ly/Swiss-rejects-basic-income>

What do you think? If you were paid each month with enough to live on, would you get lazy and disruptive? Or would you find ways with your time to add value and be productive?

Personally, I look at those who are already not working for money - Children, retirees, stay-at-home-mums-and-dad, wealthy entrepreneurs - and see what they are doing with their time.

Most aren't being lazy and disruptive. Most are following their passions and purpose. Most do more meaningful work than those going to jobs for the money.

I would love to see a future in which we give all of humanity for free the same privilege we give our pets - a home, food, drink, a healthy and vibrant life. Combine that with Bill Gates' proposal of zero income tax, replaced with a consumption tax. So we reward those who create more, and those who consume more pay back into the pot.

I believe if we all have enough to not have to worry about survival, and were given the same opportunities for growth, we would all discover and pursue the real reason we're here.

We would have less suffering, less violence, less fear, less sickness, less separation, less poverty.

We would have a world with more art, more music, more world changing creations, more people caring for each other, more love.

"If you do what you love, you'll never work a day in your life." ~ Marc Anthony

10 shocking stats about the millennial generation

Millennial Entrepreneurs
Age 18-35, starting the businesses of the future! PRESTO MARKETING GROUP

ITEM NO. 001

- 70.9% of teens say they are interested in becoming entrepreneurs
- 54% of the Millennials plan to start their own business this year

ITEM NO. 002

- Entrepreneurs create 75% of all new jobs in our economy every year

ITEM NO. 003

Statistics of Entrepreneurs Starting Their Own Businesses

More Free Time	20%
0-5 Yrs Experience	25%
6-10 Yrs of Experience	28%
Age 18-35	67%

ITEM NO. 004

- Total Debt of College Students = 1 Trillion Dollars
- 88% of college students say entrepreneurship education is vital
- 74% of college students have no access to entrepreneurship resources on campus

ITEM NO. 005

- Less than 1% of entrepreneurs come from extremely rich or extremely poor families

ITEM NO. 006

- 23% of Millennial Entrepreneurs people started a business as a result of unemployment

Copyrighted 2014 - Presto Marketing Group
Sources: entrepreneur.com & business.time.com & ezpetitions.com

Like Comment Share

Daniel Acutt, Daniel Priestley and 698 others Top comments

505 shares 42 comments

10 shocking stats about the millennial generation:

#1 - US Student debt is now over \$1.3 trillion and is growing by over \$2,700 every second.

#2 - Over 42 million millennials carry student debt and 70% of students graduate college in debt.

#3 - 1 in 3 millennials graduating today have no job (or higher depending on race)

"For young people who have graduated high school or dropped out of high school, who are between the ages of 17 and 20, if they happen to be white, the unemployment rate is 33%. If they are Hispanic, the unemployment rate is 36%. If they are African-American, the real unemployment rate for young people is 51%." ~ Bernie Sanders

#4 - Robots and automation are projected to replace another 5.1 million current jobs by 2020

#5 - Over the last 10 years, the debt of college grads has tripled while wages (if you get a job) have stayed the same.

#6 - 88% of college students say entrepreneurship education is vital, but 74% have no access to entrepreneurship resources on campus

#7 - 54% of millennials plan to start their own business this year

#8 - 23% of millennial entrepreneurs start a business as a result of unemployment

#9 - The number of entrepreneurs is growing from 300 million in 2010 to over 1 billion by 2020

#10 - Student debt at graduation for the typical bachelor's degree holder will exceed annual graduate starting wages (if you can find a job) by 2023

Millennials are finding the *"pay and play"* model of life is simply no match for the *"earn and learn"* model of life.

Millennials (and increasingly the rest of us) are finding the employment path is increasingly unviable, unsustainable, and no match for the entrepreneur path.

The world has turned upside down. Today, starting a business is becoming less risky than trying to get a job.

"My son is now an 'entrepreneur.' That's what you're called when you don't have a job." ~ Ted Turner



Women hold up half the sky

“Women hold up half the sky.”
~ Chinese Proverb

 DIANE HENDRICKS USA, \$2.7B	 MA DONGMIN China, \$2.73B	 LU QIANFANG China, \$2.73B	 HE QIAONY China, \$3B	 ZHANG XIN China, \$3.05B
 ELIZABETH HOLMES USA, \$3.4B	 ZHANGYIN China, \$4.1B	 WUYAJUN China, \$4.2B	 CHEN LIHUA China, \$7.7B	 ZHOU QUNFEI China, \$7.8B

8 of the top 10 self-made women billionaires are now from China

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Michelle Clarke, Alison Rentoul and 678 others Top comments ▾

337 shares 44 comments

There's a revolution taking place in China. Did you know that 8 out of the top 10 self-made women billionaires now come from China? In fact, China now has 93 self-made women billionaires compared to 31 in the rest of the World.

The growth in entrepreneurial wealth in China is mind boggling in scale. This year the country overtook the United States for the first time with the most number of billionaires in total - and continues to grow by another 90 to 100 each year.

China now has 568 billionaires compared to 535 in the US, and Beijing has overtaken New York as the billionaire capital of the world (with 100 compared to 95 in NYC).

The growth in China's economy, and the trend of China's entrepreneurs going global, has led to two big phenomena. The first is greater equality, as women see they have equal opportunity to men when they launch their own business.

The second is in the dramatic drop in poverty levels. From 1990 to 2000, China's per-capita income rose from \$200 to \$1,000. Then from 2000 to 2010 it rose from \$1,000 to \$5,000. That's a x25 increase in 20 years - and as a result, three quarters of the entire world's poverty reduction from 1990 to 2005 happened in China.

China has now eliminated almost all urban poverty by giving cash subsidies to all city residents across China below the poverty line, and it now has a plan to eliminate all poverty in the country by 2020 (10 years ahead of the UN's 2030 Global Goals target).

What's driving this transformation? Entrepreneurship and equality.

Recognising this, the Chinese government has made entrepreneurship the leading agenda of its economic strategy, with Premier Li Keqiang calling for *"mass entrepreneurship and innovation"*.

At his speech at this year's National People's Congress, he mentioned the word *"Innovation"* 59 times and *"entrepreneurship"* 22 times.

This wealth effect is tipping the balance of entrepreneurial activity from the West to the East. From China, to India, to across Asia Pacific, there is a new dawn of entrepreneurship, and women are leading by example.

"Women hold up half the sky." - Chinese Proverb

One billion entrepreneurs



Are you an entrepreneur? If so, you are one of the rising billion - the fastest growing economic sector in history.

In the 1950's, the rise of corporations and the middle class grew to several 100 million, when the world had a population of 2.5 billion.

Today, there's 7 billion of us, and in the 1st 20 years of the new 21st Century entrepreneurs are growing from 4% to 12% of the population.

We've grown from less than 200 million in 2000, to over 400 million today, to 1 billion by 2020 - this sector is 10x the size of the 9-to-5 workforce created in the first 20 years of the industrial revolution.

This movement is already transforming the world in the most incredible ways, from how we share resources, advance technology and find solutions to impact the world.

So if you're an entrepreneur, you're not alone. You're in good company.

And you're part of a historic sea change that is already shaping the future in the most amazing ways.

* Data from OECD, GEM & GEI. Infographic by Funders & Founders

*

GLOBAL BUSINESS

Posts on thinking globally, and making a world of difference

“Change your thoughts and you change your world.”
- Norman Vincent Peale



World population as a village of 100 people



Our world population of 7 billion as a village of 100 people:

Here are our mother tongues:

12 speak Chinese

5 speak Spanish

5 speak Hindi or Bengali

5 speak English

73 speak the other 6,000 languages

Here is our wealth:

1 owns 40% of the wealth
6 own half the wealth
51 live on less than \$2 a day

Here are our religious beliefs:

33 are Christian
22 are Muslim
14 are Hindu
7 are Buddhists
2 are Atheists
(And 33 believe in witchcraft, ghosts and aliens)

Here are our homes:

51 live in cities and can't see the Milky Way
25 live in substandard housing or no home at all

And:

7 can't read or write
10 have no job
11 have a vehicle
13 don't have safe drinking water
14 are on Facebook
64 don't have Internet access

If you woke up each day in this village, and knew each of the other 99 villagers personally, what would you do differently?

"I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot. Together we can do great things." ~ Mother Teresa

Data source: <http://www.nationsonline.org>



Start your own country



**Not happy with your country?
No problem! You can start your own...**

Like Comment Share

Jan Polak, Rachele Starr-Tolman and 2.1k others

1,868 shares 266 comments

What do you do if you're not happy with your country? Start your own! These guys are - 12 miles off the coast of San Francisco...

Peter Thiel, one of the billionaire founders of PayPal, has just helped to fund Blueseed, a floating city in international waters, 12 miles off San Francisco. The community will be home to high tech start-ups where every citizen need not pay tax, needs no work visa, and can run a global business from the high seas - while connecting to the brains and connections of Silicon Valley. The

ship, effectively, is under the rules of no nation, and can set its own rules of how everyone lives, works, plays and pays.

This has been 4 years in the making. In 2008, Peter invested \$500,000 in the Seasteading Institute, to begin paving the way for floating sovereign nations in international waters. The Institute, set up by Patrick Friedman (the son of famous economist Milton Friedman) has set the mission of enabling *“the next generation of pioneers to peacefully test new ideas for government. The most successful can then inspire change in governments around the world.”*

WHY SET UP A NEW COUNTRY?

What's Peter's motivation for helping to fund a new nation? As he says, *“The reason the seasteading question's been so interesting is that a lot of people do think that we can do much better as a society. And if you run the thought experiment, could we be doing things better in our society, people may disagree on the particulars, but an awful lot of people think things can be done dramatically better.”*

He also compares rethinking nations to rethinking business: *“The reason people start new companies is because there's a need to have a certain amount of freedom to explore doing new things. That's why you'd start a new business. There's a question: If you can start a new business, why can you not start a new country?”*

WHEN DOES THE FIRST ONE START?

The Seasteading Institute has gone as far as setting up the *“Poseidon Award”* for the first *“independent seasteading community—the seed for the world's first ocean city-state”* with the goal of awarding it by 2015. It looks like they will reach their goal...

Today Blueseed announced its funding from Peter and a list of 133 entrepreneurs who have already registered their interest to be the first residents of the Blueseed floating community. Blueseed was started by Max Marty, the previous Director of Strategy at the Seasteading Institute, who knew a good idea when he saw one. He left the institute to get the first floating community started. Target date for launch? The end of next year - 2013.

The attraction? For startups with a global online business, the work visas and hoops to jump through to live and work in the US simply don't make sense

anymore. Being in International waters, they can set their own rules, have companies registered in any country, including tax-free countries, and run their businesses from day one as truly international businesses (while still having physical access to the networks of Silicon Valley with boats and helicopters connecting with the US mainland daily).

WHAT WOULD YOU CREATE, IF YOU COULD START YOUR OWN NATION?

What would you create if you could create the ideal community with its own rules? If, like Max, you went out to gather registrations, how many would be attracted into your world?

With seasteading, the question is no longer a theoretical one. The intent of the advocates of these new nations is to 'give people the freedom to choose the government they want instead of being stuck with the government they get'.

Interested in being a pioneer citizen on Blueseed? Go ahead! Just go to the Blueseed site and register your interest. If you think you can do better, well its a big sea out there.

WHAT'S STOPPING YOU TODAY?

If starting your own kingdom or living in a new utopia are not exactly top of your to-do list right now, here's a final thought:

If, while many people are blaming their governments or local economies for their woes, a small group of entrepreneurs can come up with a plan as bold and audacious as this, where the problems of government simply go away... What apparent obstacle are you currently facing in your business which, with a simple shift in solution, will make your obstacles simply disappear?

It brings a whole new meaning to blue ocean strategy...

The history of opportunity



A message to entrepreneurs: Keep at it, because you're leading the world's 5th wave of exponential economic growth:

Up until 1780, world economic activity was relatively flat, with the Gross World Product (all economic value creation worldwide) under US\$200 billion for over 5,000 years.

The world then went through exponential growth over 200 years from 1800 to 2000, doubling every 20 years, with Gross World Product growing from US\$200 billion to \$40 trillion.

The four waves of exponential growth have been:

1. The Industrial revolution
2. The race for oil
3. Corporate capitalism

4. Financial markets

Each wave grew and fell in power over around 50 years each.

Each wave led to a global transfer of wealth.

Each age changed all the rules.

In the 15 years from 2000 to 2015, despite a dotcom crash and global crisis, Gross World Product has doubled again, from \$40 trillion to over \$80 trillion - We continue to add value to each other at an accelerating rate.

What is this fifth wave we're in now? Entrepreneurial start-ups.

The rules have changed again:

It's no longer about economies of scale, but economies of speed.

It's no longer about getting money but giving value.

Today collaboration beats competition.

Today David beats Goliath.

This wave has only just begun, and as with any wave, you can sink or swim.

Or you can take the entrepreneurial 3rd option, and surf.

"The person who says it cannot be done should not interrupt the person who is doing it." - Chinese Proverb



Not made in America

NOT MADE IN AMERICA?

7 of the 8 largest listed US tech companies were founded / co-founded by 1st or 2nd gen immigrants

1  Steve Jobs Apple 2nd Gen, Syria	2  Sergey Brin Google 1st Gen, Russia	3  Bill Gates Microsoft American	4  Eduardo Severin Facebook 1st Gen, Brazil
5  Jeff Bezos Amazon 2nd Gen, Cuba	6  Larry Ellison Oracle 2nd Gen, Russia	7  Herman Hollerith IBM 2nd Gen, Germany	8  Andrew Viterbi Qualcomm 2nd Gen, Italy

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Michelle Clarke, Daniel Priestley and 970 others Top comments

464 shares 53 comments

7 of the 8 largest listed US tech companies have founders or co-founders who are either 1st or 2nd generation immigrants.

Many of the most well-known tech startups are also founded / co-founded by immigrants, or launched by founders / co-founders after moving from one country to another:

Uber was co-founded by Travis Kalanick, a 2nd generation Czech immigrant.

SpaceX & Tesla were founded by Elon Musk, a 1st generation South African immigrant.

Evan Spiegel moved from South Africa to the US and launched Snapchat.

China's top tech entrepreneurs, Jack Ma (Alibaba) and Robin Li (Baidu) returned after spending time in the US to launch the biggest tech companies in China.

India's richest tech entrepreneur, Azim Premji, returned from the US to India and turned his father's vegetable oil company, Wipro, into a \$35 billion tech company.

Japan's richest tech entrepreneur, Masayoshi Son, is a 1st generation Korean who started his first companies in the US before moving to Japan and launching Softbank and Yahoo! Japan.

With travel comes perspective. Where could you go for your next breakthrough?

Sometimes it's not about when success happens, but where success happens.

"Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore." ~ Andre Gide



Which version of Facebook are you using?



Which version of Facebook are you using? Did you know there are tens of thousands of versions of Facebook running at any one time - and you're using just one of them?

In an interview this week with Y Combinator, Mark Zuckerberg explains that in today's fast-changing world, "The key is building a company that is focused at learning as fast as possible."

"Companies are learning organisms. You can make decisions so you can either make it learn faster or you learn slower."

This is how Facebook makes that happen:

"We invest in this huge testing framework and at any given point of time there isn't just one version of Facebook running in the World. There's probably tens of thousands of versions running."

“Because engineers here have the power to try out an idea, and ship it to maybe 10,000 people or 100,000 people. And then they get a read-out on that version of what they did - whether it was a change to show better content on Newsfeed or a UI change or new feature.”

“They get a read-out on how that version performed compared to the baseline version of Facebook that we have - on everything that we care about: How connected people are, how much people are sharing, how much they say they’re finding meaningful content; Business metrics like how much revenue we make, and engagement of the overall community...”

“By running tens of thousands of different experiments and putting the power in people’s hands to try out all these different things you can imagine we make so much more progress than we could if every change had to be approved by me, or if every idea had to come from management.”

Have you designed your company as a learning organism? If so, these five things will be true:

- 1) You don’t have one perfect product version, but multiple versions that improve daily.
- 2) You have a measurable baseline of customer experience that rises weekly.
- 3) Your research & development isn’t a separate department, but everyone’s daily focus.
- 4) Your customer is the most important member of your product development team.
- 5) The role of your leadership isn’t to tell but to listen.

We’re living in a world where learning comes before earning. That’s why a small startup can rapidly overtake a large company.

What if this approach of openly testing new things in the market feels too risky to you? The best advice Mark ever got from his first investor, Peter Thiel? Mark says Peter told him: “In a world that’s changing so quickly, the biggest risk you can take is not taking any risk.”

You can watch the full video interview here: <https://youtu.be/Lb4lcGF5iTQ>



What if governments were more entrepreneurial?



What would the world look like if governments were more entrepreneurial? I'm in Johannesburg today, where self-made millionaire, Herman Mashaba was elected Major last month. In his first month, he's already shaken up the system...

Herman grew up poor in a village 30km from Pretoria. He worked his way up to get into university and study politics in the 1970s but during Apartheid was thrown out in his second year. Herman remembers "We were given six hours to leave the institution and that was the end of my political dream. I had to go back now to the townships with no work experience, and no education."

So he applied for a job at Spar Pretoria: "I worked for them for seven months as a dispatch clerk and at the time I was one of the few lucky blacks who can read and write. I got paid about R220 or so a month". (US\$16 a month)

Realising that having a job would never get him the freedom he wanted, he quit work and began his own hair company called "Black Like Me" with a

R30K loan from a friend. But even his own business came with risks most Western entrepreneurs don't face:

"We built a factory right in the township in Mabopane using my own capital without any borrowed funding. 17 November 1993 however, someone decided torch it. I nearly lost everything."

Herman persevered, and became famous in South Africa for his entrepreneurial story - including buying a car without a license and driving it out of the dealership before he had learned how to drive.

His determination led him to turn his business into a success and he's now turned his focus to government, being elected Major of Johannesburg a month ago in August 2016.

When elected (against the ruling ANC's opposition party, representing the Democratic Alliance) he said "Everyone said to me it's impossible. That's the story of my life. The critics wrote me off from day one. Nobody gave me a chance. Where am I sitting right now? Here I am."

30 days into his post, and he is already dismantling the old power structures.

1) He is putting entrepreneurship and small business as his biggest driver of new growth:

"Almost one in three of our residents are without work. The youths of our city being the biggest casualties of this epidemic. Small businesses create jobs. They have an abundance of potential waiting to be unlocked and they have the ability to expand into employers of our people. That is why small business development will be the focus of my term in office."

2) He is dismantling the money-making monopolies controlled by the previous ANC government, starting with the waste management system (He fired the MD as soon as he took office):

"My number one priority is to break it up into seven pieces and give it to small businesses. Not one of the 4500 employees will lose their jobs. All the money paid to ANC cadres who are executives and board members, we will arrange with the entrepreneurs to use that money to hire more people and get our city clean."

3) He has given property title deeds to residents who have been waiting 20 years for them, personally visiting homes in Soweto and handing out deeds in his first 20 days:

"The constitution empowered our government to give the people these houses - including all the RDP houses built by the ANC since 1994. Because when you own property, you look after it, and you can use it as collateral. And the law wants us to do it. We're violating the law by not empowering the people."

Herman is cleaning up the city by, literally, cleaning up the city. He's working on all the most visible signs of improvement, from clearing corruption, to clearing waste, adding medical services, and delivering reliable electricity and traffic lights that work.

In Herman's first speech as Major two weeks ago he said: "2016 marks 40 years since the youth of Soweto took their destiny into their own hands and refused to have the brutal and oppressive Apartheid government determine their future. Johannesburg was also the home of great South Africans such as Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu and Helen Suzman."

"Residents of 'Jozi', 'Egoli', 'Joburg' have every reason to be proud of their city. It is time to make them proud of their government too."

"Together we will bring change that creates jobs, delivers better services and fights corruption."

"Together we will make this a city of golden opportunities."

Today I am speaking to several hundred South African entrepreneurs in Johannesburg, in a city that has a new optimism and entrepreneurial spirit.

It's early days, but Herman's plans and actions have already been striking and swift. Could his example lead to similar entrepreneurial leadership in other cities?

Herman Mashaba's Inaugural address as Mayor: <http://www.politicsweb.co.za/documents/my-plans-for-joburg--herman-mashaba>



Why I applied for citizenship to the world's first space nation



I just applied for citizenship of Asgardia - The world's first space nation.

Igor Ashurbeyli, Chairman of UNESCO's Science of Space Committee is leading a group of scientists and entrepreneurs in creating the first nation in space. This week they applied for approval from the United Nations to be recognized by the UN as a nation.

With the growth in space technologies and exploration, Igor explains the rationale for a nation in space:

“The existing state agencies represent interests of their own countries... The ultimate aim (of Asgardia) is to create a legal platform to ensure protection of Planet Earth.”

When announcing the UN application this week, Igor said to the press: “I wouldn’t be surprised if today or tomorrow, some or all of you write that some crazy Russian rocket scientist talked utter nonsense here today.” and then added “It would be worse if you write nothing at all!”

The media did report on it, with varying degrees of excitement and skepticism. Then in 2 days 250,000 people applied for citizenship. Including me.

So why did I apply for citizenship?

Because I believe it’s going to be new self-governing communities - whether city-states or space nations - that will tackle and solve our current global challenges.

The trust we have in our governments and politicians today is low and falling. It will eventually fall to zero.

Just as past empires and monarchies fell to new forms of government when we lost all trust, it’s just a matter of time before the same happens again.

Our current systems simply aren’t designed to cope with the speed of change, the level of global connection and the number of informed, free-thinking global citizens we have today. Few people today believe the current government systems is working or should not be radically improved.

Is Asgardia the answer? Probably not. But it’s a step in the right direction. The more we realize we already have the power to collectively redesign our communities, without waiting for governments, the more energy we will put in creating new solutions instead of waiting for them to magically appear.

If you feel the same, you can join me and 250,000 others here: <http://asgardia.space/>

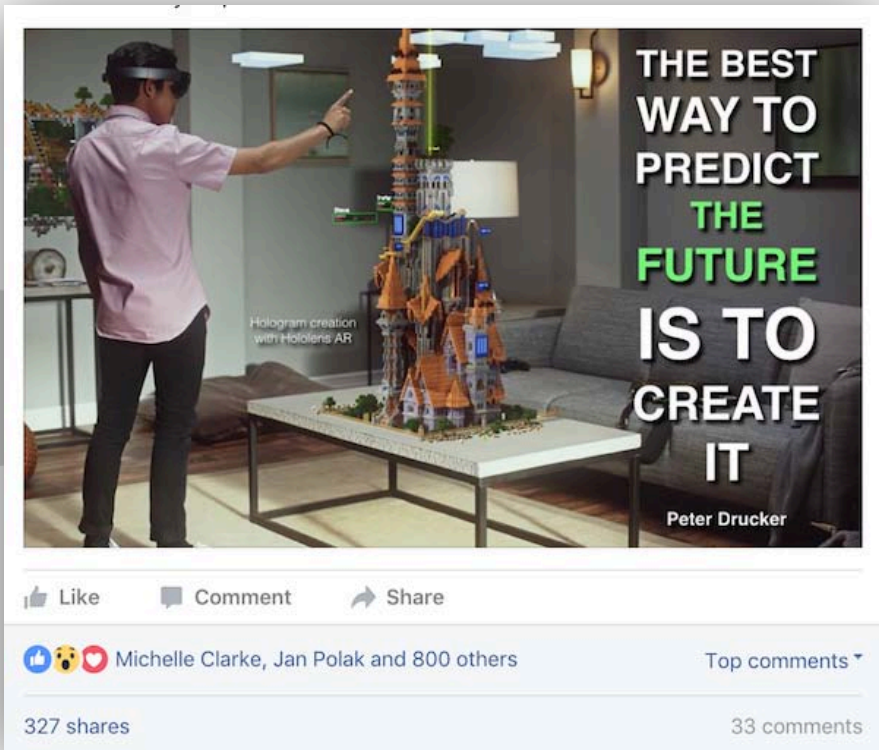
“Every revolution begins with a spark.” ~ Katniss Everdeen

THE FUTURE

Posts about the future and thinking forward

"Control your own destiny or someone else will."
~ Jack Welch

Top 12 predictions of all time



Top 12 worst predictions of all time:

"The Americans have need of the telephone, but we do not. We have plenty of messenger boys." ~ William Preece, British Post Office (1876)

"Fooling around with alternating current (AC) is just a waste of time. Nobody will use it, ever." ~ Thomas Edison (1889)

"The horse is here to stay but the automobile is only a novelty – a fad." ~ President of the Michigan Savings Bank advising Henry Ford's lawyer, Horace Rackham, not to invest in the Ford Motor Company (1903)

"Talking films are a very interesting invention, but I do not believe they will remain long in fashion." ~ Louis-Jean Lumiere, inventor of the cinematograph (1929)

"I think there is a world market for maybe five computers." ~ IBM president Thomas Watson (1943)

“Television won’t be able to hold on to any market it captures after the first six months. People will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night.” ~ Darryl Zanuck, 20th Century Fox (1946)

“There is practically no chance communications space satellites will be used to provide better telephone, telegraph, television or radio service inside the United States.” ~ T.A.M. Craven, Federal Communications Commission (1961)

“Remote shopping, while entirely feasible, will flop.” ~ Time Magazine (1966)

“Cellular phones will absolutely not replace local wire systems.” ~ Marty Cooper, pioneer of wireless communications (1981)

“I predict the Internet will soon go spectacularly supernova and in 1996 catastrophically collapse.” ~ Robert Metcalfe, founder of 3Com in 1995 (Robert said he would eat his words if he was wrong. At a conference in 1997, he put his article in a food processor and ate/drank it).

“There’s just not that many videos I want to watch.” ~ Steve Chen, Co-founder of YouTube expressing concerns about Youtube’s future when he started it in 2005. (It then went into hyper-drive and he sold it to Google in 2006 for \$1.65 billion)

“Everyone’s always asking me when Apple will come out with a cell phone. My answer is, ‘Probably never.’” ~ David Pogue, The New York Times in 2006. (The iPhone came out in 2007)

The worst way to predict the future is to bet on the lack of change.

The best way is to be the change.

“The best way to predict the future is to create it.” ~ Peter Drucker

3 steps to future presence



“Future presence” is a vital state that visionary entrepreneurs use to see their future lives and be their future selves.

Richard Branson, Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos and other great entrepreneurs can each articulate clearly what the future looks like before it becomes reality, and they spend more time thinking about and moving towards the future than returning to the past.

Do you have future presence? It's a learned skill.

That's how visionary leaders are able to create visionary movements where everyone shares the same future presence. That's what Nelson Mandela, Gandhi and Martin Luther King achieved. Their dreams became reality.

When you shift your focus, you can shift the world.

The 3 STEPS to future presence:

STEP 1 - Think back 5 years to your past self. Picture yourself and write down who you were, what you did, how you thought, and who you surrounded yourself with. Look at your habits, your beliefs, your confidence and the results of your actions. Compare your past self to your present self, and see what's changed. Realise your past self still exists in you today - and is called your memory.

STEP 2 - Think forward 5 years to your future self. Picture yourself and write down who you have become, what you are doing, how you think differently, and who you are now surrounding yourself with.

Look at your new habits, beliefs, confidence and the results of your actions. Think big. Be uncompromising. Compare your future self to your present (and past) self, and see what's changed. Realise your future self already exists in you today - and is called your vision.

STEP 3 - Every day, get your present self to consult your future self - Instead of going to your past self for future advice and direction, go to your future self.

Every day, take another step towards your future vision. Every time you get drawn back to your memory of how things were, and of what's not possible, refocus at your vision and how things will be, and of what's inevitable. Never lose sight of the invisible.

"Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes." - Carl Jung

In time, your vision becomes stronger than your memory. When your vision becomes stronger than your memory, your future self will become more true than your past self.

When you are more true to your future self than your past self, your future becomes more present than your past. Then, through the many thousands of shift in focus and action you take, it's only a matter of time before your future becomes your present.

If it's so simply, why doesn't everyone do it? Because it takes ongoing commitment and perseverance to daily practice.

It's already happening to each of us - the present you're living today is the direct result of all your actions that led to today. We're all the designers of

our lives. It's just that most of us have designed our futures accidentally, not deliberately. You can change that today.

"The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago. The second best time is now."

The rice and chessboard problem

If you started with one grain of rice on the 1st square of a chess board, doubled it on the 2nd, and kept doubling on each square, how much rice would you have by the 64th square?



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Michelle Clarke, Daniel Priestley and 566 others Top comments ▾

253 shares 42 comments

What's the "*rice and chessboard*" problem, and how does it relate to the exponential growth we are seeing in the world today?

The "*rice and chessboard*" is an ancient story about how our linear brains are caught off-guard by exponential growth. It comes from an Indian parable about the inventor of the game of Chess.

So the story goes, the inventor of Chess presented the game to the Emperor of India, who is so impressed he offers the inventor any reward he wants. The inventor asks for a single grain of rice on the 1st square of his chess board, two on the 2nd, four on the 3rd and so on.

The Emperor is amazed at the modesty of the inventor's request, and thinking it can't be that much rice, he grants the gift.

But he soon becomes enraged when the court treasurers report that by the 64th square, he would need to deliver 18,446,744,073,709,551,615 grains of rice - or a heap larger than Mount Everest (and more than 1,000 times the world's annual production of rice).

Unfortunately, the inventor loses his life as a result. But not before making the point that exponential growth rapidly leads to results we can hardly comprehend.

Futurist, Ray Kurzweil, refers to the period we are in now as the *"second half of the chessboard"*, when the doubling in computing power and artificial intelligence suddenly become startlingly visible at an accelerated rate.

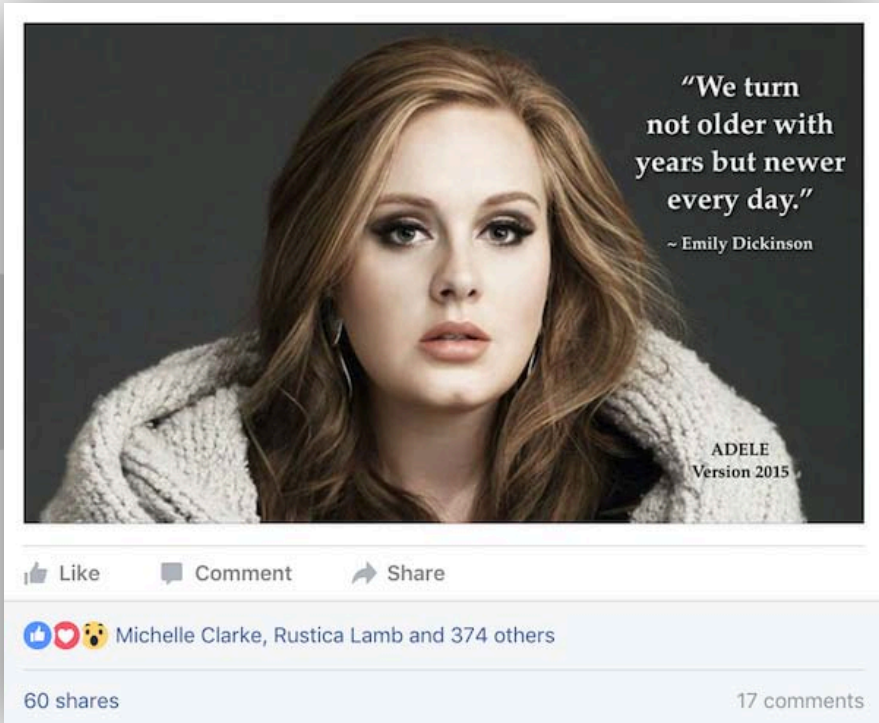
In a recent interview, Andrew McAfee, who wrote 'The Second Machine Age' said *"Things only get crazy in the second half of the chessboard."* In his book, he calculated that Moore's Law predicted a doubling computer power every 18 months from 1958 onwards and, *"by that calculation, we entered the second half of the chessboard with digital progress in about 2006."*

He continues, *"For me that really helps me to understand why we are seeing smartphones and self-driving cars, and automatic translation and powerful artificial intelligence and this amazing parade of technologies. I think of them as second half of the chessboard technologies."*

The second half has only just begun. What challenges and opportunities lie ahead in these exponential times? Do you have a second half of the chessboard business? What part will you play as the future unfolds?

"The future isn't what it used to be." ~ Yogi Berra

Are you getting older or newer



Are you getting older or newer?

The answer lies in the Upgrade Paradox: Version 2 is always both older and newer than Version 1.

In past times, before regular upgrades, a product or a person would simply get older. Each year, whether you liked it or not, you'd age by another year.

Today, with regular upgrades, the latest version of Adidas or Apple or Adele is newer than last year's, even though the brand is older.

This upgrade paradox first struck me when I heard my friend, Lynne Twist, tell the story of having dinner with futurist, Buckminster Fuller. Lynne and Bill had their two young kids at dinner as well, and one of them said something profound and seemingly beyond her years.

Seeing the surprise in Lynne and Bill's eyes, Bucky said:

“Our children are our elders in universe time.”

When we think in earth time, we think of things getting older. When we think in universe time, we think of things getting more advanced. Bucky meant that as our children are born into a universe more advanced than the one we were born into, they are already advanced versions of ourselves.

In today's fast changing times, the beauty is that you can continue to upgrade yourself to become newer each year.

We live with a body that we can maintain, and a mind that we can upgrade. For your 2016 upgrade:

What are the best parts you choose to keep?

Which are the parts you choose to take out?

Which are the parts you choose to add?

Upgrading yourself is a conscious choice - which automatically leads to a newer you. By upgrading yourself, the 2016 version of you is newer and more advanced than the 2015 version of you.

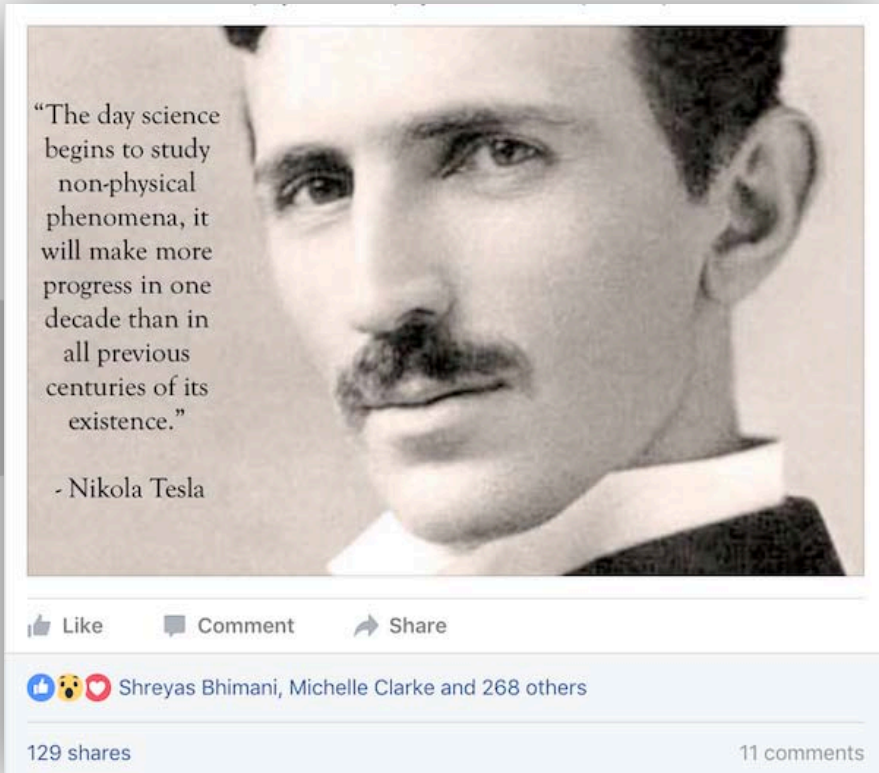
And the opposite is also true. By failing to upgrade yourself, you're simply choosing to step in to a new year and a new universe equipped with the old version of you, built for another time.

So if you haven't already undergone a full system upgrade for the year ahead, do it now! Become the wise child of your past self.

“We turn not older with years but newer every day.” ~ Emily Dickinson



Nikola Tesla



Today, we have Nikola Tesla to thank for our electricity system. Yet he believed there was an underlying system far more powerful that connected us, saying: *"The day science begins to study non-physical phenomena, it will make more progress in one decade than in all previous centuries of its existence."*

Do you agree?

Tesla believed science would eventually prove psychic phenomena and that humanity is one. He said: *"Can anyone doubt today that all the millions of individuals and all the innumerable types and characters constitute an entity, a unit? Though free to think and act, we are held together, like the stars in the firmament, with ties inseparable. These ties cannot be seen, but we can feel them."*

He explained: *"The Buddhist expresses it in one way, the Christian in another, but both say the same: We are all one. Metaphysical proofs are, however, not the only ones which we are able to bring forth in support of this idea."*

"Science, too, recognizes this connectedness of separate individuals, though not quite in the same sense as it admits that the suns, planets, and moons of a constellation are one body, and there can be no doubt that it will be experimentally confirmed in times to come, when our means and methods for investigating psychical and other states and phenomena shall have been brought to great perfection."

"Still more: this one human being lives on and on. The individual is ephemeral, races and nations come and pass away, but man remains. Therein lies the profound difference between the individual and the whole."

From his research 100 years ago he believed scientific proof of the psychic world would be found at a frequency level:

"Alpha waves in the human brain are between 6 and 8 hertz. The wave frequency cavity resonates between 6 and 8 hertz. All biological systems operate in the same frequency range. The human brain's alpha waves function in this range and the electrical resonance of the Earth is between 6 and 8 hertz."

"Thus, our entire biological system in the brain and the Earth itself - work on the same frequencies. If we can control that resonate system electronically, we can directly control the entire mental system of humankind."

What do you think? Will scientists eventually prove this connection between us? Or will physics and psychics remain poles apart?



How fast are you disrupting your own company



"You either disrupt your own company or someone else will." ~ Peter Diamandis
First photo of Uber's self-driving car

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Michelle Clarke, Karl Commissariat and 825 others

Top comments

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62 comments

How fast are you disrupting your own company? This is the first picture of Uber's self-driving car, taken today in Pittsburgh.

It's taken just six years since Travis Kalanick and Garrett Camp launched the first Uber App in June 2010, and today Uber is in over 60 countries and 400 cities around the world, with an estimated 500,000 drivers worldwide. That number is doubling every six months. Until Uber doesn't need drivers anymore.

Uber has already disrupted the entire taxi cab and car sharing market with their model. But, knowing that it was just a matter of time before their own model would be disrupted, they are now disrupting themselves.

"You either disrupt your own company or someone else will." ~ Peter Diamandis

In a post from Uber today, they said “Self-driving cars have the potential to save millions of lives and improve quality of life for people around the world. 1.3 million people die every year in car accidents - 94% of those accidents involve human error.”

"In the future we believe this technology will mean less congestion, more affordable and accessible transportation, and far fewer lives lost in car accidents.

These goals are at the heart of Uber's mission to make transportation as reliable as running water - everywhere and for everyone."

In the same way taxi drivers have protested against losing their jobs to Uber, in the future Uber drivers will be protesting against losing their jobs to Uber.

But they aren't losing their jobs to Uber. They're losing it to inevitable disruption. And just like Uber, you either disrupt your own life or someone else will.

What are you doing to prepare in these times of accelerating change?

If you already knew your business would be out of business or your job would be out of a job three years from now, what would you do differently today?

Whatever you would do tomorrow, go do it today.

Post from Uber: <https://newsroom.uber.com/us-pennsylvania/new-wheels/>

Where will your company be 130 years from now?



Where will your company be 130 years from now?

If Alexander Bell was alive today, he would be hearing that the company he started 130 years ago, AT&T, had become the largest telecom company in the world. He would also be hearing that this week it agreed to buy one of the world's largest media companies, Time Warner, for \$85.4 billion.

The irony? Alexander invented the telephone as an accident and started AT&T as an afterthought...

Born and brought up in Scotland, Alexander watched as his mother lost her hearing when he was 12. As a young teenager who wanted to keep communicating with his mum, he worked out a technique to speak directly on her forehead, in such a way that she could 'hear' through the vibrations of his voice.

He kept working on helping the deaf, taking on private students including Helen Keller, and by the time he was in his early 20's he was teaching classes of 30 deaf students at a time.

He then married Mabel Hubbard - who was also deaf - and with both a mother and wife who were deaf he dedicated himself to a life mission to research hearing and speech - accidentally inventing the telephone in the process.

As a side project to his tutoring, he began working on an "acoustic telegraph" to try and transmit sounds electrically and in 1876 - 140 years ago - Alexander made the first telephone call to his assistant, Thomas Watson across 2 miles from Boston to Cambridge.

Having no idea about business, Alexander tried to sell the patent he had on his new invention to Western Union for \$100,000.

But the president of Western Union said the telephone was "nothing but a toy."

So Alexander tried to promote his invention himself, holding talks and road shows to demo his product. 10 years later, he launched AT&T and 30 years after that a 68-year-old Alexander made the first long distance phone call from the AT&T head office in New York to Thomas Watson in San Francisco.

Slowly, people took to the idea of using a phone. One thing led to another, and today there are more phones (over 9 billion) than there are people in the world.

Today, AT&T is the largest telecoms company in the world with over \$150 billion in annual sales. By agreeing to buy Time Warner, it also becomes one of the leading media companies, owning HBO, CNN, Warner Bros film, a stake in Hulu and a rack of well-known titles including Game of Thrones.

Imagine if Alexander had not pursued his life mission? Imagine if he had sold out early?

When asked why he persevered, Alexander said "God has strewn our paths with wonders, and we shall certainly not go through life with our eyes shut."

"Self-education is a lifelong affair. There cannot be mental atrophy in any person who continues to observe, to remember what he observes, and to seek answers for his unceasing hows and whys about things."

Alexander followed his calling.

Make sure you follow yours too.

Where will you be in 2027?



Where will you be in 2027? We often overestimate what we can achieve in a year and seriously underestimate what we can achieve in a decade.

This mind-boggling “Chart of the Week” from Visual Capitalist is a great example of this. It shows how much Jeff Bezos’ Amazon has grown in the last 10 years.

At the end of 2006, all the publicly listed US department stores were worth more than \$400 billion together. At the time, Amazon was worth \$17.5 billion - less than 5% of that total.

Ten years later Amazon is now worth \$356 billion, while everyone else is worth less than \$300 billion. That list includes Walmart (\$212.4b), Target (\$40.6b), Best Buy (\$13.2b), Macy’s (\$11.0b), Kohl’s (\$8.8b), Nordstrom (\$8.3b), JC Penney (\$2.6b) & Sears (\$1.1b).

While Amazon grew 1,934% in value, Sears has fallen 96% in value and JC Penny has fallen 86% in value. That's because, while Jeff Bezos had a 10 year plan in 2006 to ride the wave of online sales, the offline retailers not only had no plan, they dismissed him as serious competition.

But as Jeff said at the time, "Often times invention requires a long term willingness to be misunderstood."

As we start 2017, what's your 10 year plan?

What wave will you be riding?

And how long are you prepared to be misunderstood?

If you haven't got yourself a 10 year plan yet, why not start now? Create a story with 10 chapters, and make 2017 chapter one.

Today, there are more big waves than ever to ride. So choose yours and surf!

"In the realm of ideas everything depends on enthusiasm... in the real world all rests on perseverance." ~ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe



What crazy ideas are you putting off?

IDEA:
Come up with a design for flying cars

RESULT:
Get hired by Uber to build them

Like Comment Share

Jan Polak, Kyron Gosse and 485 others

162 shares 17 comments

Imagine coming up with a crazy invention that has the power to transform an industry. That's what Mark Moore did with "The Puffin". In 2010, Marck came up with his 'flying car' idea for his doctorate at university.

Flying cars have been in science fiction for a century. So what was so special about the Puffin?

Mark designed an electric one-man vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) vehicle which could actually work. He posted an animation of it on Youtube which went viral, hitting over 648,000 views in its first week.

Why did Mark call it the Puffin? He says "If you've ever seen a puffin on the ground, it looks very awkward, with wings too small to fly, and that's exactly what our vehicle looks like."

"But it's also apparently called the most environmentally friendly bird, because it hides its poop. So the vehicle is environmentally friendly because it essentially has no emissions. Also, puffins tend to live in solitude, only ever coming together on land to mate, and ours is a one-person vehicle."

Mark's invention inspired Google's Larry Page to look seriously at flying cars. Since then, Larry has invested over \$100 million of his own money in flying car companies.

This month - in the year of the Rooster - flying cars have gone from science fiction to science fact. Early this week, Dubai announced it would have flying cars by this summer, partnering with Chinese flying car pioneer, Ehang.

Yesterday, the world's first commercial flying car, the Liberty (from Dutch company PAL-V) went on sale for \$400,000, with deliveries beginning next year.

Airbus is also getting in on the action, saying they will test flying cars by the end of 2017. Their VTOL vehicle is modelled on Mark's paper.

Is Mark's vision of flying cars taking over from cars a near reality? I met someone when I was in LA two weeks ago who thinks so. His name is Jeff Holden, Head of Product Development at Uber.

Jeff believes flying cars will take over from cars sooner than we think, and Uber has recently launched "Uber Elevate" as their flying car division.

What about Mark? Where is he now?

Mark just got a new job last Friday, as Uber's "Director of Aviation".

Who would have thought that an invention written for a thesis, and a viral video, would lead to spearheading the opportunity to spearhead a revolution in how we travel?

What crazy idea are you putting off?

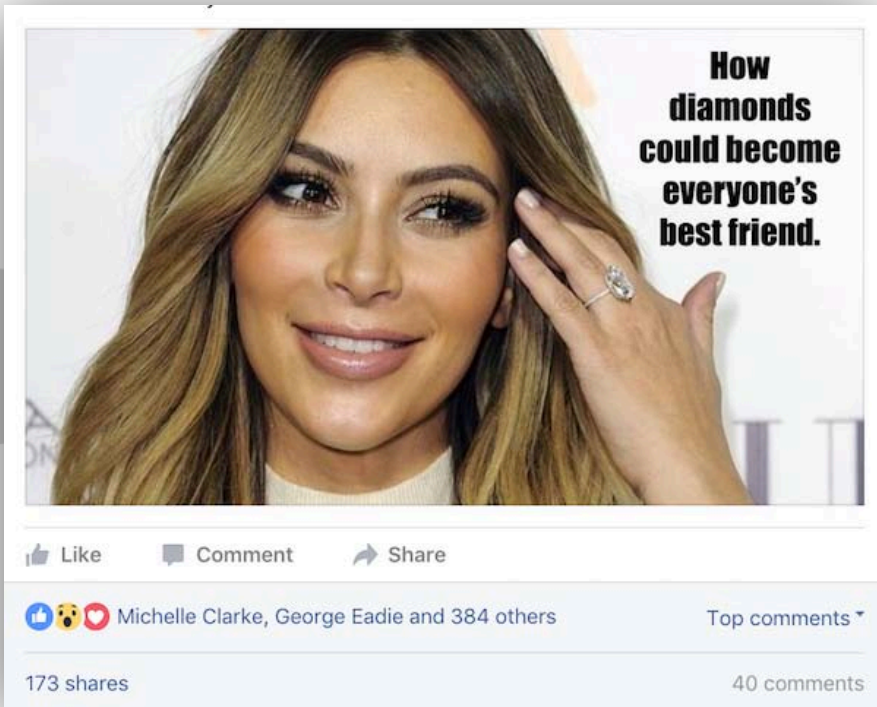
Maybe it's time to get it back on the drawing board. Because in a world of flying cars, anything is possible.

"It always seems impossible until it's done." ~ Nelson Mandela

Interest to find out how real the future of flying cars is? Have a read of Uber's white paper: "Fast-forwarding to a Future of On-Demand Urban Air Transportation" - <https://www.uber.com/elevate.pdf>



Artificial diamonds that can generate electric power for over 5,000 years



This is amazing. Yesterday researchers at the University of Bristol reported success in converting nuclear waste into artificial diamonds that can then generate electric power for over 5,000 years.

The researchers worked out how to heat radioactive waste from nuclear reactors, turn the radioactive carbon into gas, and then how to collect and compress the gas into a safe diamond battery.

As University of Bristol Professor, Tom Scott, explains: “There are no moving parts involved, no emissions generated and no maintenance required, just direct electricity generation. By encapsulating radioactive material inside diamonds, we turn a long-term problem of nuclear waste into a nuclear-powered battery and a long-term supply of clean energy.”

While standard AA batteries run out within 24 hours of constant use, the team's Carbon-14 diamond battery would still be at 50% power after 5,730 years - about as long as the entire recorded history of human civilisation.

For years, nuclear scientists have looked for a solution to radioactive waste, while environmental scientists have looked for a way to produce small, long-life batteries.

By combining the two problems and solving them together, Bristol's physicists and chemists have made a major breakthrough which, in hindsight, makes everyone ask "Why didn't we think of this earlier?"

Now, Professor Scott says : "Obvious applications would be in low-power electrical devices where long life of the energy source is needed, such as pacemakers, satellites, high-altitude drones or even spacecraft."

"There are so many possible uses that we're asking the public to come up with suggestions of how they would utilise this technology by using #diamondbattery."

What big solutions can you come up with today by thinking outside the box (and ending up with diamonds)?

#diamondbattery

The quadrillion dollar asteroid

NASA to explore asteroid made of \$10,000 quadrillion worth of metal



“We learn about inner space by visiting outer space.”
~ Lindy Elkins-Tanton

Like Comment Share

Rok Sivante, Shaf Cangil and 285 others Top comments

66 shares 25 comments

Is NASA planning a journey to match Paolo Coelho's "The Alchemist"?

NASA just announced it will be visiting "16 Psyche" - an asteroid calculated to be worth \$10,000 quadrillion.

That's ten billion trillion dollars (or one hundred million times the world's entire money supply).

Are they going to mine the asteroid?!

No. They're just going to go have a look...

"The Alchemist" is one of my favourite books which I first read before deciding to start my own business. It's the story of a shepherd boy, Santiago,

who had a dream where he's told to travel to the Egyptian Pyramids where he would find buried treasure.

The book charts his entire journey, his challenges and discoveries, his disappointment to find no treasure under the Pyramids, and his return home. Where he finally finds the treasure buried under the sycamore tree where he first had his dream.

The story is inspired by George Moore's quote: "A man travels the world over in search of what he needs and returns home to find it."

It's the same journey that each of us must go through in life, and how those who discover the truth of their own hidden treasure use that power to transform their world.

When I read the story of NASA's big journey, it reads as the same journey on an epic scale.

NASA thinks the asteroid, called "16 Psyche" could be the core of an old planet. By visiting 16 Psyche, we learn about the centre of our own Earth.

Three times further from Earth than the sun, the asteroid is made mainly of nickel and iron (which is what gives it such an enormous dollar value), and the theory is that it used to be a planet the size of Mars, which has been destroyed through collisions, just leaving the metal core.

Lindy Elkins-Tanton of Arizona State University is the Principal Investigator on the trip and says "This is an opportunity to explore a new type of world - not one of rock or ice, but of metal. 16 Psyche is the only known object of its kind in the solar system, and this is the only way humans will ever visit a core."

She proposed the mission to NASA, who approved it this month - with the mission take-off in 2023, and date of arrival in 2030.

Imagine that:

2030 is the target the United Nations has set for us to solve all of the world's biggest challenges through the 17 UN Global Goals. That year now coincides with our date of arrival to a 200 kilometre wide, \$10,000 quadrillion piece of metal 450 million kilometres away - to learn about the heart of our own planet.

"We learn about inner space by visiting outer space." ~ Lindy Elkins-Tanton

And why is it called "16 Psyche?" It was named by Italian astronomer Annibale de Gasparis, who named it Psyche from Greek Mythology, who represented our soul and married Cupid, who represents our love. It's symbol, a semicircle topped by a star, represents a butterfly's wings, the symbol of the soul.

Such a story - and the metaphor of going on an existential “Alchemist’s Journey” to face our collective soul - is the kind of thing you would find in a corny sci-fi novel. Yet here it is, being announced by NASA as a real-life mission.

Personally, I’m looking forward to being a witness to the story in 2030. Especially the ending, when we return home to find the treasure was here all along.

“Remember that wherever your heart is, there you will find your treasure.” ~ Paolo Coelho

The NASA Press Release: <http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/news/news.php?feature=6713>



2017 : Chinese Year of the Rooster



What does 2017 have in store for us? We're about to move from the 2016 Chinese Year of the Monkey (a year of mischief and surprise endings) to the 2017 Chinese Year of the Rooster (a year of early starts and new beginnings).

Here's what the Astrology Club says about the coming year:

“Consider a Rooster in a barnyard, protecting his hens and strutting his stuff. Well, that's about it. The Year of the Rooster will be a year that the most vital promise made will result in a flawless job no matter what it takes to achieve it.

It will be a year when it is truly better to do less, but do it perfectly.

The year of the Rooster teaches the lessons of order, scrutiny and strategic planning. The sage advice of Sun-Zi which is still taught in modern military

circles, advises one to “achieve psychological advantage over the adversary and use force only as a last resort.”

Roosters are also communal birds. That is why year of the Rooster 2017 predictions promises to be a lucky one for joint ventures. The Chinese astrology suggests signing as many business contracts as possible and form new partnerships in the upcoming year.

But a word of warning: General confidence may lead to new and daring ventures. The year of the Rooster 2017 heralds happiness, color and drama, but this has to be balanced with good old fashioned common sense and tried and tested values. Otherwise it could end up becoming a wild goose chase.

The motto for the year of the Rooster 2017 should be ‘Kiss: Keep It Simple’ and don’t take offense at the slightest provocation.

There’s a Chinese saying, ‘If you take a step back, you will find the sea and the sky is boundless.’ Remember, good values never go out of style, no matter how hard it may seem to apply them. He who dares will have plenty to crow about in the end, with the pockets none too light at that - a perfect challenge for the rooster in all of us.”

So there you have it - Time to switch monkeying around with a daily rhythm to rule the roost.

The rooster is the first creature to awake in the morning and wakes up the others with crowing.

Time to get up and get on with it.

“A rooster crows when it sees the light. I have seen the light and I’m crowing.” - Muhammad Ali

(But as the Chinese New Year only begins on Jan 28th, there’s still time for the 2016 Monkey’s last tricks so be prepared!)

Read more at <http://astrologyclub.org/chinese-horoscope/2017-year-rooster>



The future is here

RENEWABLES CHEAPER THAN COAL



**WE'VE JUST EXCEEDED A HISTORIC
INFLECTION POINT. 2016 WAS THE YEAR
SOLAR AND RENEWABLE ENERGY
BECAME CHEAPER THAN COAL**

In December 2016, the World Economic Forum reported that solar and wind energy is now the same price or cheaper than new fossil fuel capacity in more than 30 countries.

Like Comment Share

Michelle Clarke, Marie Ruzicka and 238 others

Top comments

93 shares

13 comments

What's the Top 10 Trends coming this year? I'm here at Peter H. Diamandis' Abundance 360 conference. Peter is co-founder of XPRIZE and Singularity University, and this week he's brought the top tech experts on what's coming in the very near future.

It's been an amazing eye-opener into the future, and I wanted to share some of it with you.

Heres' 3 amazing facts from his top trends on how fast the future is arriving:

Global 1 terabit/sec Internet Access: ViaSat, a U.S.-based satellite company, has teamed up with Boeing to launch three satellites to provide 1 terabit-per-second global Internet connection. ViaSat is scheduled to launch its satellite ViaSat2 in early 2017.

Stem cell treatment reverses paralysis: This year Doctors from the USC Neurorestoration Center and Keck Medicine of USC injected stem cells into the damaged cervical spine of a recently paralyzed 21 year old man. Three months later, he showed dramatic improvement in sensation and movement of both arms.

Uber planning flying cars: Global transportation giant Uber announced plans to enter the “flying car” service arena by publishing a massive white paper this year detailing its plan to launch an “on demand aviation” service called Uber Elevate.

If you have been following me, you'll know I published my Top 10 Trends for 2017. Peter has published his own Top 10 Trends, and while there are many similarities, there's also some additions and plenty of great facts and examples in his ebook on each trends.

Here's Peter's Top 10 Trends:

Trend 1) We are hyper-connecting the world

Trend 2) Solar/renewables cheaper than coal

Trend 3) Glimpsing the end of cancer & disease

Trend 4) Progress on extending human life

Trend 5) Amazing successes with stem cells

Trend 6) The year of autonomous vehicles

Trend 7) Here come drones & flying cars

Trend 8) The march of artificial intelligence

Trend 9) Physics & exploration

Trend 10) Conquest of commercial space

Despite the challenges of the present, I'm super-excited for the future we're moving towards. If you're looking to stay on the cutting edge for yourself and your business, it's well worth downloading Peter's eguide on his Top 10 Trends. You can find it here:

<http://bit.ly/PeterDiamandis-top10>

"The best way to become a billionaire is to help a billion people." ~ Peter Diamandis

GIVING

Posts on the power of giving and making an impact

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

~ Winston Churchill



The paradox of entrepreneurship



The paradox of entrepreneurship: *“As soon as you stop wanting something, you get it”*

It used to really annoy me when I started with my first boot-strapped start-up and people with money said *“It’s not about the money”*. I would think *“It’s easy for you to say that, because you’ve already got the money.”*

It was only later in life I understood what they really meant. It's like a footballer saying *"It's not about the ball."* The footballer who is always chasing the ball isn't welcome on the team - and rarely gets the ball because it moves too fast.

The footballer who thinks *"It's not about the ball"*, and knows it's about positioning himself to be of greatest value to the team, is the one who constantly gets the ball passed to him.

If you're in business chasing the money, you will rarely get it. If you're positioning yourself to be of value to your customers, they'll happily pass you their money.

If you're constantly needing help, you will rarely get it. If you're positioning yourself to be of value to team members and partners, they'll happily pass you their time and skills.

So whenever you want something, whether it is support, resources, connections, or money, don't chase what you want but position yourself to be the natural choice for those who have these things to pass them to you.

Once you receive, pass it on.

"Only by giving are you able to receive more than you already have." ~ Jim Rohn



What could you achieve if you had this board?



Imagine if you could have a Board that had Bill Gates as the Chair and included well-known billionaire entrepreneurs like Richard Branson, Jeff Bezos, Mark Zuckerberg, Reid Hoffman, Michael Bloomberg and Marc Benioff, and the leading entrepreneurs in their countries, China's Jack Ma, Japan's Masayoshi Son and India's Ratan Tata to advise you?

This isn't a fantasy, but a real life board that was announced this week to run the new billion dollar fund, Breakthrough Energy Ventures. The goal of the fund is to invest in companies that reduce greenhouse emissions.

And the board members - who have a combined net worth of \$170 billion - are all committing their knowledge and networks to the future sustainability of the planet.

Put another way, Planet Earth just got itself a new billion dollar board.

Started by Bill Gates, this is his biggest new initiative since the launch of the Gates Foundation.

As he said today: “We need affordable and reliable energy that doesn’t emit greenhouse gas to power the future - and to get it, we need a different model for investing in good ideas and moving them from the lab to the market.”

“That is why today, I, along with an incredible group of people who care a lot about energy innovation, am announcing the launch of Breakthrough Energy Ventures, a fund that will invest more than \$1 billion in scientific breakthroughs that have the potential to deliver cheap and reliable clean energy to the world.”

The board will focus on “five grand challenges, corresponding to the biggest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions around the world:”

- 1) Electricity: How can we deliver reliable, affordable zero-carbon electricity to the world?
- 2) Buildings: How can we eliminate emissions from our homes, offices, hospitals, and schools?
- 3) Manufacturing: How can we make everything we use without emitting greenhouse gases?
- 4) Transportation: How can we get around our communities and the world without emitting carbon?
- 5) Food: How can we feed the planet without contributing to climate change?

You can download a PDF that explains the board’s mission and how they aim to achieve it through these five grand challenges and 55 technical quests here: <http://www.b-t.energy/landscape>

Lesson from Bill:

If you work on the biggest challenges, you attract the brightest minds.

Which means by thinking bigger, one day you can have a board like this thinking on your behalf.

In fact, given that they’re working on behalf of Planet Earth, you already do.



Martin Luther King Day



Happy Martin Luther King Day!

When Kathleen told me today was Martin Luther King day, I thought *“Not a lot of modern figures get their own national holiday.”* So I had a look to find out how a national holiday like this comes about.

Here's the eye-opening 32 year history to today's U.S. National holiday:

The holiday began as a union demand in contract negotiations with the U.S. government, with the idea of it being named after King taking place just 4 days after he died in 1968.

Throughout the 1970s, the unions fought without luck for a day of paid leave on this 3rd Monday of each new year, in the name of Martin Luther King.

In 1976, the unions formed a coalition with the King Center to campaign for full employment - with a march on King Day. This new, powerful coalition brought President Carter into the presidency and in return, President Carter endorsed the national holiday bill and ordered a commemorative stamp for Martin Luther King in 1979 (!)

However, Congress voted down the holiday bill later in 1979 by 5 votes as being too expensive, and on the basis that only two other private citizens had national holidays (George Washington and Christopher Columbus).

In 1980, the unions and the King Center hit back with a public campaign, funded by companies including Coca-Cola and the Miller Brewing Company.

The campaign was highlighted by Stevie Wonder releasing the hit single *"Happy Birthday"*.

Six million signatures were raised supporting the holiday and stands as *"the largest petition in favor of an issue in U.S. history."*

As a result, the holiday was finally signed into law in 1983, but it took another 17 years for all States to honor it (with the last, Utah and South Carolina, in 2000).

Martin Luther King died when he was 39 years old, leaving a lasting legacy.

It took another 32 years for the idea of a day in his honour to be fully embraced.

Whether you are familiar with the history of Martin Luther King Day or not (I'm guessing my American friends already know it well), this story is a good reminder that we overestimate what we can achieve in a week, underestimate what we can achieve in a year and seriously underestimate what we can achieve in 30 years.

I'll be spending Martin Luther King Day thinking about what he achieved in his short lifetime, the enormous work still to be done for social justice and equal opportunities, and what we can all achieve by 2045.

*"If you can't fly, then run,
if you can't run, then walk,
if you can't walk, then crawl,
but whatever you do,
you have to keep moving forward."*

~ Martin Luther King Jr.

Would you give all your money away?



Would you give all your money away? If so, where? This is the extraordinary story of Chuck Feeney, who finally achieves his 34 year mission of going from \$8 billion to broke this year.

2016 is the year his Foundation gives the last of his money away. In the process, he has become the hero of Bill Gates and Warren Buffett, who said "Chuck has set an example not only for people of my age but also younger generations. He will be an example 100 years from now or 200 years from now."

"He is my hero. He is Bill Gates' hero. He should be everybody's hero."

Here's Chuck's 3 steps to making, and giving away \$8 billion.

START BY DECIDING TO GIVE IT AWAY BEFORE YOU MAKE IT

Chuck was born into a poor, Irish family during the Great Depression in 1931. He shovelled snow and sold Christmas cards door-to-door as a kid to make

money to take home. While young and in poverty, he read Andrew Carnegie's classic essay, "The Gospel of Wealth".

Andrew Carnegie's essay was a revolutionary call for those who create wealth to live modestly, and to give all their excess wealth to support others while still alive: "Giving while living."

The words touched him so deeply, Chuck decided at that moment that he would dedicate his life to create wealth to give away, saying "I want the last cheque I write to bounce."

THEN TRAVEL THE WORLD

As a teenager, Chuck joined the US airforce during the Korean War. He got to see first hand the difficulty servicemen had in getting the products they wanted from home. So he set up a business to import and sell them the goods they wanted. He found a way to sell them without duty, by setting up stores on the air-side of airports and his company, Duty Free Shoppers took off.

Ever bought anything from a DFS shop at an airport? That's Chuck's company.

But from the early days, Chuck had already set up his company so that all the proceeds went into his foundation, the Atlantic Philanthropies, so the money the company made could be given away each year. The money has gone into causes around the world in health, education and human rights.

When Chuck sold DFS in 1996, his Foundation took all the money from the sale, and committed to spend everything within 20 years - by 2016. By the time it gives the last of his money away, it will have given away \$8 billion.

AND CHUCK IT ALL THE WAY

What about Chuck? Surely he has kept enough aside to live in luxury? Today, at 85 years old, Chuck does not own a home or a car. He still famously wears a watch he bought for \$15, and he carries his papers in a plastic bag.

Chuck says "I always tried to live my life as though nothing changed. People would say, 'You can have a Rolls-Royce'. I'd say to that, 'What do I want with a Rolls-Royce when I can have a bike?'"

Instead of measuring his success by his level of money in the bank, he measures it by his level of happiness: "People used to ask me how I got my jollies, and I guess I'm happy when what I'm doing is helping people and unhappy when what I'm doing isn't helping people."

2016 marks the end of Chuck's giving, but just the beginning of his legacy. His story inspired Bill Gates to also give all his money away, and to launch the Giving Pledge, which now has 142 of the World's Billionaires pledging to give

the majority of their wealth away while alive - including Richard Branson, Mark Zuckerberg, Elon Musk, Tim Cook, Warren Buffett and many more.

Bill Gates credits Chuck for the new age of giving, saying "Chuck Feeney is a remarkable role model, and the ultimate example of giving while living."


As you begin another week, how would things change if you were to know everything you make will be given away to a cause far bigger than yourself?

Where would you contribute the money you are yet to make?

How would it change your sense of purpose and determination?

Make that decision now so you can focus at money flowing through you, not to you.

"There's a limit to what you can get. There's no limit to what you can give."



11 things Michelle Obama achieved in 8 years



As the US switches President next week, I can't help but admire the outright winner through the 2016 election race: Michelle Obama.

Although she wasn't running for President, the popularity polls put her ahead of all the candidates (and Barack Obama). The WSJ/NBC poll that took place before the election had her popularity at 59%, ahead of Barack Obama (51%), Hillary Clinton (40%) and Donald Trump (29%).

Here's 11 things Michelle quietly achieved while her husband was running the country:

1) She launched the "Let's Move!" movement to fight childhood obesity, with over 12 million kids now exercising 60 minutes a day through their school programs.

- 2) She partnered with the U.S. Olympic Committee to give free or low cost athletic training to more than 3 million kids.
- 3) She passed the “School Lunch Program” which now provides free and low cost healthy meals to 21 million children in low-income families and provides healthier school meals and snacks to over 50 million kids every day.
- 4) She launched “Chefs Move to School”, with 2,500 chefs and 4,000 schools signing up to teach kids about healthy eating and help school kitchens prepare healthy meals
- 5) She launched MyPlat and MiPlato badges to help parents identify healthy food - now used by over 100 national organizations and 6,100 community groups.
- 6) She got Walmart and Walgreens, to commit to build 1,500 stores in communities with limited or no access to healthy food, impacting 9.5 million people.
- 7) She created “Let’s Move! Cities, Towns and Counties” to help local officials build healthier communities, with over 81 million people (1 in 4 Americans) benefiting.
- 8) She worked with the US Tennis Association to build more than 6,200 kid-sized tennis courts, trained 12,000 coaches and signed up 250,000 kids to complete tennis lessons.
- 9) She launched the Reach Higher Initiative, to inspire young people to complete their education past high school.
- 10) She joined President Obama and the Peach Corps to launch Let Girls Learn, to help girls around the world to go to school and stay in school, now active in 44 countries
- 11) She also set a Guinness World Record on the White House Lawn for the most people doing jumping jacks in a 24-hour period (300,000 jumpers)

She didn't have to do any of this. But she did all of it because she was driven by her own personal mission, saying: “I believe that education is the single-most important civil rights issue that we face today.”

“Because in the end, if we really want to solve issues like mass incarceration, poverty, racial profiling, voting rights, and the kinds of challenges that shocked so many of us over the past year, then we simply cannot afford to lose out on the potential of even one young person. We cannot allow even one more young person to fall through the cracks.”

What an inspiration.

The rockstar formula that works



“Believe in yourself. Believe in your dreams.
If you don't, who will?”

- Jon Bon Jovi

Like Comment Share

Kyron Gosse, Daniel Priestley and 672 others

395 shares

32 comments

I am in New York City & New Jersey today, so what better place to visit than Jon Bon Jovi's Soul Kitchen? Are you an entrepreneur looking to make a difference in the world? Here's a rockstar formula that works...

A year ago, Jon Bon Jovi opened the Soul Kitchen as a community restaurant, with no prices on the menu. Diners in need who come to the Soul Kitchen are empowered — they earn a seat at the table for themselves and their families through volunteer hours at the Kitchen or other local

organizations. They are served by the wait-staff with the dignity of having earned their meal.

Those who can afford to dine anywhere are rewarded with not only a delicious meal but an invitation to donate, and that has resulted in over 11,500 meals in the first year with over 30% going to those in need. Over 12,000 volunteer hours have also been clocked in the first year.

When you're next in the area, drop by (<http://www.jbjsoulkitchen.org>).

It's possible to do good and do well, all at the same time.

The Soul Kitchen's motto is "*Hope is Delicious*". What can you do today, to make a delicious difference?



Remembering 2015 for the right reasons



This is a photo of a young buddhist monk being evacuated from the Himalayas in May 2015.

It's easy to forget the earthquake and humanitarian outpouring that happened in Nepal this year, because it's easier to remember 2015 for other things.

It's easier to remember 2015 for the terrorist attacks in Paris, and for ISIS, and Putin in Ukraine and Syria, and Donald Trump everywhere. It's easier to remember 2015 for the crisis in Greece and the scandal in FIFA. It's easier to remember 2015 for Steve Harvey at Miss Universe.

Because the media gets us to focus at one person or one thing, usually in a negative way, which means it's easy to miss the bigger picture.

I hope we remember 2015 as the year we reached out to support those who lost their homes in the Himalayas, and through the Syrian crisis. I hope we remember 2015 as the year that the countries of the United Nations listened to their citizens and agreed to new Sustainable Development Goals to end poverty, fight inequality and tackle climate change.

I hope we remember 2015 as the year that we had new tools to marvel at the universe, that water was found on Mars, that we became more human, that same-sex marriage finally became legal across America, that we became better people, and that entrepreneurial individuals, not governments, made commitments to give their time and fortunes to the causes they supported, to connect us all, to be accountable to a better future.

If we remember 2015 for these things, I believe we will also remember 2015 as a turning point from a time when we suspected that, collectively, we had greater power and greater wisdom than any leader or government, to a time when we knew that to be true.

And from 2016 we no longer waited for someone else to make this world a better place, but we began to work collectively, united in our own wisdom and power to stand accountable and shape this world for the better.

50 years ago, Robert F. Kennedy said:

“Let no one be discouraged by the belief there is nothing one person can do against the enormous array of the world’s ills, misery, ignorance, and violence.”

“Few will have the greatness to bend history, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events. And in the total of all those acts will be written the history of a generation.”

With technology, social media, and our awakened, shared global conscience, we have the power to write our future history. We don’t need to wait for anyone. We’re the ones we’ve been waiting for. Let’s go do it.

Happy New Year!



Invent new tools



Managers use the tools they're given. Entrepreneurs invent new tools.

That's why Mark Zuckerberg and Priscilla Chan just pledged \$3 billion to build new tools that will transform disease prevention in the next decade.

New tools have always preceded major change: Like the invention of the internal combustion engine, and the creation of the Internet. Major scientific breakthroughs took place after we invented the telescope and microscope.

And the fastest growing companies of the last decade - from Google to Facebook to Apple - grew rapidly after giving us new tools to work, play and connect with.

Are you managing with existing tools, or are you creating new tools?

Mark Zuckerberg said today:

“Throughout the history of science, most of the major scientific breakthroughs have been preceded by some new tool and technology that allows you to see in new ways.”

“The telescope helped us understand astronomy and the universe, the microscope helped us understand cells and bacteria to help us develop treatments for infectious diseases, while DNA sequencing and editing helps us fight cancer and genetic disorders.”

With the right tools: “Can we cure all diseases in our children’s lifetime?”

In pledging \$3 billion today to build the right tools to help cure all disease, Mark says “Today, most people die from four kinds of diseases:

> heart disease (10.8 million, 19.2%)

> cancer (8.2 million, 14.6%)

> infectious disease (8.5 million, 15.1%)

> and neurological disease like stroke (6.8 million, 12.1%)”

“It’s easy to imagine modern tools that could unlock progress in each of the four major disease categories today: AI software to interpret brain imaging or datasets of cancer genomes, a chip to diagnose any infectious disease, continuous bloodstream monitoring to identify diseases early, and maps of all the different cell types and states to help design drugs to combat any given disease.”

“Tool development often requires groups of scientists and engineers working together over long periods of time. For example, the internal combustion engine was developed by scientists and engineers over decades. Eventually, this tool unlocked many inventions, including cars and aircraft. But it took a big investment, large scale collaboration and a long time horizon.”

“But the current structure of scientific grants does not encourage big scientific efforts with world-class engineers teams, like the ones you’d find at great technology companies. This is required for developing many modern tools, so this will be our focus.”

“That brings us to our plan. We’re going to focus on bringing scientists and engineers together to build new tools that can empower the whole scientific community to make breakthroughs on the four major disease categories.”

Think about that... A 32 year old software engineer and his 31 year old wife have both just pledged \$3 billion of their own money to fund a plan to cure all disease.

Whether you think they will succeed or not, the point is they’re doing it.

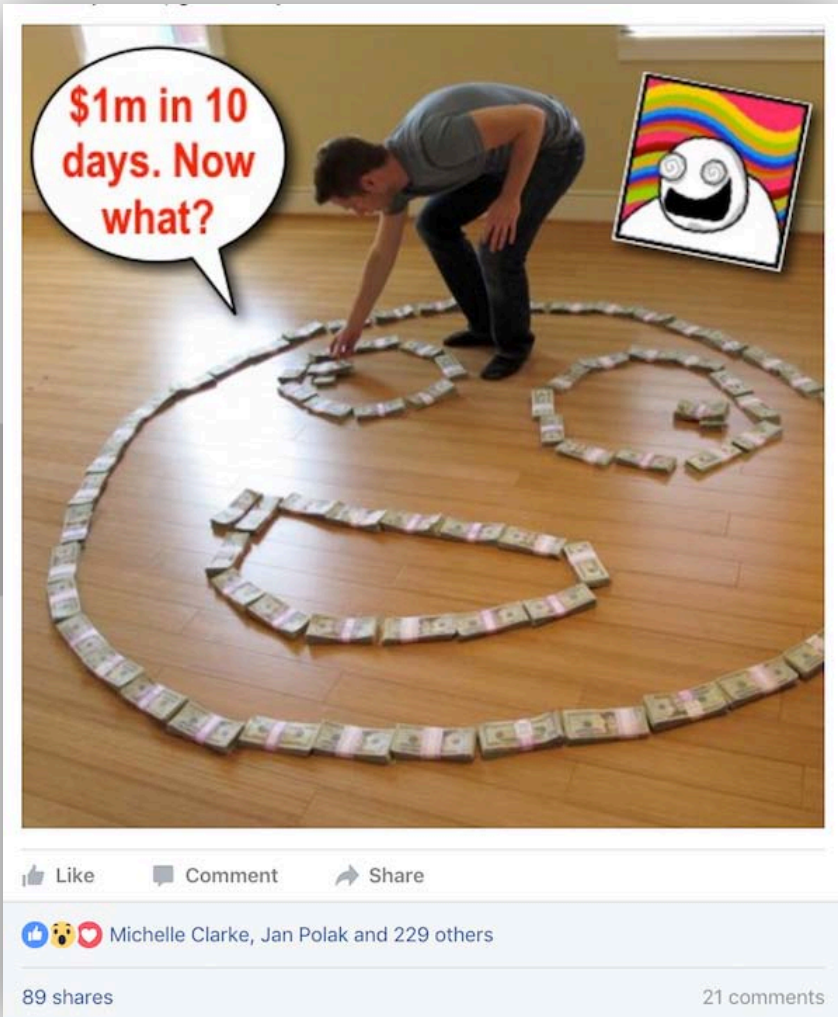
And they're doing it by focusing at building new tools, in the same way Facebook built the tools for me to post this post and you to read it - from anywhere in the world a moment after I posted it.

Whatever big problem you're trying to solve, don't focus at solving it with old tools. Focus at creating new tools which enable new solutions.

"No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it." ~ Albert Einstein



\$1 million in 10 days



How do you raise \$1m in 10 days? Here's one way... Matthew Inman created 'The Oatmeal' website 3 years ago and his first book a year ago (5 Very Good Reasons To Punch a Dolphin in the Mouth). Then, 2 months ago, something happened...

Matthew was served with a defamation notice from Funny Junk, for writing blogs criticising the website, where his cartoons were getting posted by

users. Funny Junk's lawyer demanded \$20,000 in damages from Matthew. So what did he do?

Having heard about crowdfunding but never having tried it himself, he decided to try and raise \$20,000 from fans - not to pay Funny Junk, but so that he could take a photo of the money, send it to the lawyer with a cartoon of his mother making love to a bear, and give all the money to charity. He named it Operation BearLove Good, Cancer Bad, and set up the fundraising on Indiegogo.

Within the month, instead of raising the \$20,000, he raised \$211,000 for the charities, and Funny Junk dropped the suit. (http://theoatmeal.com/blog/charity_money)

But that was just the beginning. Having suddenly realised the power of crowdfunding, this month Matthew was back on Indiegogo again. This time, to try and raise \$850,000 to buy scientist Nikola Tesla's original laboratory and turn it into a museum.

Just two weeks after launching 'Operation Let's Build a Goddamn Tesla Museum' he has already raised over \$1.2 million, and there's still another 30 days to go...

(http://theoatmeal.com/blog/tesla_museum_1m)

If Matthew hadn't tried the \$20,000 idea, he wouldn't have tried the \$1 million idea. He tested the water and then jumped in. What could you (should you) be testing to ride a wave with your company or charity right now?

What can you test right now? Crowdfunding? Micropayments? A mobile site? Rapid prototyping? A new market in a new country? A partnership with a hyper-growth company? Each of these have a mountain of momentum waiting for you to ride.

Start small. When it works, do it again - bigger.

Matthew started small. Two months later, he's building a Goddamn Tesla Museum. Good for him. So what small step leads to your big idea? Do it! And if you do, good for you.

ENTREPRENEUR SPIRIT

Posts on living life to the fullest in your entrepreneurial spirit

"The tragedy of life is not that it ends so soon, but that we wait so long to begin it."

- W.M. Lewis



Wash the dishes to wash the dishes



Is your daily routine mindful or mindless?

Do you serve a customer to make money? Or do you serve a customer to serve a customer? Do you wash dishes to get them clean? Or do you wash the dishes to wash the dishes?

Here's a story from Buddhist Monk, Thich Nhat Hanh, about 'washing the dishes to wash the dishes' and the difference between mindful and mindless:

"In the United States, I have a close friend named Jim Forest... Last winter, Jim came to visit. I usually wash the dishes after we've finished the evening meal, before sitting down and drinking tea with everyone else.

One night, Jim asked if he might do the dishes. I said, "Go ahead, but if you wash the dishes you must know the way to wash them." Jim replied, "Come on, you think I don't know how to wash the dishes?" I answered, "There are two ways to wash the dishes. The first is to wash the dishes in order to have clean dishes and the second is to wash the dishes in order to wash the dishes."

Jim was delighted and said, *"I choose the second way-to wash the dishes to wash the dishes."* From then on, Jim knew how to wash the dishes. I transferred the *"responsibility"* to him for an entire week.

If while washing dishes, we think only of the cup of tea that awaits us, thus hurrying to get the dishes out of the way as if they were a nuisance, then we are not *"washing the dishes to wash the dishes."*

What's more, we are not alive during the time we are washing the dishes.

In fact we are completely incapable of realizing the miracle of life while standing at the sink.

If we can't wash the dishes, the chances are we won't be able to drink our tea either. While drinking the cup of tea, we will only be thinking of other things, barely aware of the cup in our hands. Thus we are sucked away into the future

- and we are incapable of actually living one minute of life."

~ Thich Nhat Hanh

Are you focusing more at being successful, or being mindful? It is a conscious choice that shows up in your daily routine - Being present in every moment shows up in the quality of your products, your service, your communication.

Being aware leads to care. It's the contrast of being careful and being careless. This care becomes quality, and that's why greater mindfulness leads to greater success.

Your daily routine isn't a means to an end. It's an opportunity to experience the miracle of life every day.

"Be here now."

~ Ram Dass



Forgiveness

FORGIVE OTHERS,

— not because —
they deserve forgiveness,
but because you deserve
peace.

— Jonathan Lockwood Huie

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Michelle Clarke, Matt Vincent and 1.3k others Top comments ▾

1,252 shares 48 comments

Why is forgiveness so important for entrepreneurial success?

"Really successful business owners can separate themselves from what's been done to them and take 100 percent of the responsibility for their part in the story. When you can then see and accept your part in the nightmare, the answers to your problems will come."

"When you become mired in blame and anger, you are highly likely to repeat your mistakes, ignore the red flags surrounding your choices, and basically fail as an admirable leader."

~ Shawne Duperon

Shawne Duperon is a six-time Emmy Award-winning producer, international speaker, incest survivor, and the creator of The Project Forgiveness Foundation. According to Shawne, from her own experience, here's the three gifts she got granted when she put forgiveness first:

> Confidence - *"With this notion of forgiveness, I became able to promote without shame, and my confidence level grew. Now I'm powerful in my sharing, and I can make a difference in my company and the world."*

> Perseverance - *"My ability to keep going, keep asking for help, and continue to take emotional risks stems from my capacity to grieve my losses and forgive myself. When I got rejected by prospective investors for instance, shame would pop up and stop my progress...until I allowed myself to grieve the loss."*

> Responsibility - *"The fact is that every drama that's created in our business we generate ourselves. When a leader finally gets that, that's where the powerful success comes from."*

Who do you need to forgive?

Forgive them today, send them love, and set yourself free.

And to achieve your greatest success? The most important person to forgive is yourself: *"Forgiving yourself is one of the hardest things to do."*

When you forgive your own failures, you stop beating yourself up on what could have been, and free yourself to look forward to what will be.

"Forgiveness says you are given another chance to make a new beginning." ~ Desmond Tutu

Here's more on *"why you must forgive yourself for your company's sake"* - <http://bit.ly/1TewK4B>



A story of Turkeys and a Unicorn on Thanksgiving weekend



Do you believe in luck? Here's the incredible story of 34-year old William Tanuwijaya, who has created Indonesia's first Billion dollar 'Unicorn', and the lucky set of coincidences that led to him raising \$100 million when he most needed it...

When he became a teenager, Williams' father sent him on a one way ticket from Sumatra to Jakarta with the family's savings, hoping he'd end up with a better life.

William enrolled in a college and for three years worked 12 hour night shifts in an Internet cafe to pay for his tuition. Using his nights exploring the Internet, he got inspired to start his company, Tokopedia, as the first online marketplace for Indonesia in 2009.

The good news? From day one, Tokopedia started growing. The bad news? There was no startup funding scene in Indonesia at the time.

William remembers the struggle as he visited potential investors: "I was told 'William, don't waste your time. The guys who started Amazon, Facebook and Google, they are special people. Unfortunately, you are not.'"

William said, "I decided right then that I will never give up on myself."

He picked up a small investment from a company that invested in mining companies, giving him time to look for more. Then, five long years after launch, in 2014, luck struck. Within less than a week, he raised \$100 million by a series of chance events.

As William recalls:

"I'd been in a 7 years relationship, a long distance one with my girlfriend. She studied medicine, and on her graduation, she wanted to go to visit Japan, and asked me to go for holiday with her."

"But I said no to her, that I can't take a holiday, as Tokopedia needs me, and Tokopedia was almost running out of cash by November."

"Secretly, I bought a ticket, filled out a leave form for the first time in 5 years, asked her parent's approval, and planned for my secret proposal to her on 1st of October in Osaka."

"At the end of September, I got a call from SoftBank, that Son-san (Masayoshi Son, one of the first tech investors in Asia and one of Japan's richest men) requested a meeting in early October. Living in Indonesia, you need 5 working days to arrange a VISA. That request was less than 5 working days."

"But, I already had the VISA, ticket in hand!"

"Then, on the 30th of September, one of my shareholders asked me to meet with Sequoia Capital. The Sequoia venture partner called me and ask for a meeting the day after. I told him that I am on the way to airport going to Osaka. When I arrived at Osaka, the venture partner was also there, took the same flight with me, and ended up chatting with me the whole day. I almost skipped my proposal."

Then, the proposal. She said yes.

"The day after my proposal, I flew to Tokyo to met with Son-san."

"That week, 3 proposals happened. And the rest is history."

William got married, and raised \$100 million from Softbank and Sequoia - the first company in South East Asia to raise that amount. That event sparked the beginning of the investing wave into Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia, with Tokopedia being the first investment by Sequoia Capital into Asia.

In April this year, William raised another \$147 million, and today Tokopedia is worth over a billion dollars.

Some people think luck is completely random. Others think it's "what happens when preparation meets opportunity". I see it as the same four things that make a great footballer 'lucky' enough to keep being at the right place, at the right time, to score the goals:

LOCATION - Be at the right place, at the right time, and the universe will reward you. Most of us are too busy being in the wrong place, at the wrong time.

UNDERSTANDING - Understand the game is on, which means looking out for the ball - the opportunities - coming your way, and take action when they arrive.

CONNECTIONS - No matter how good a player you are, you won't get any balls passed to you if there's no one on the pitch. Surround yourself with the right people on your team.

KNOWLEDGE - Keep practicing. You only score the goals if you know how to kick the ball when it shows up.

Location, Understanding, Connections, Knowledge = L.U.C.K.

Follow these principles, and you'll get more lucky. Maybe not happy marriage lucky. Maybe not \$100 million lucky. Maybe different lucky. And maybe better lucky.

"Synchronicity is an ever present reality for those who have eyes to see." ~ Carl Jung



When you get inspired, do you take action?



Forrest Li
(named after Forrest Gump)

Followed Steve Jobs' advice in his Stanford Speech, Built his startup into South East Asia's most valuable Unicorn.

Like Comment Share

Michelle Clarke, Karl Commissariat and 1.3k others

596 shares 66 comments

When you get inspired, do you take action? When Steve Jobs gave his famous 2005 Stanford Commencement Speech, Forrest Li was a student in the audience. Inspired, he decided to take action and as a result, he's built the biggest billion dollar startup in Southeast Asia.

Today, he's raised his latest round of funding after a recent \$170 million round, valuing his startup at \$3.75 billion: The biggest 'Unicorn' in Southeast Asia.

Forrest remembers the day of the speech, saying "I was fortunate to be among the audience there for my wife's graduation that day and deeply impressed by Job's entrepreneurial spirit".

Forrest then replayed the video on YouTube every day for months, and now says "It gave me the courage to do what I am doing now."

He took to heart Steve's advice to "Stay hungry, stay foolish" and followed the three big lessons in Steve's speech:

LOVE and LOSS:

Forrest followed his then-girlfriend, Liqian Ma, back to Singapore, where they got married. That was the love. There, he attracted some angel investors and launched his first start-up, GG Game. That was the loss...

With the Global Financial Crisis in 2008, his company failed and he went back to tell his investors he had lost their money. As Forrest says, "They appreciated the honesty."

FOLLOW your HEART:

As Steve Jobs said, "Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition." Forrest decided to learn from his mistakes and try again.

Amazingly, his investors decided to invest another \$1 million in him.

The reason Forrest thinks that happened? "For angel investors, they bet on people, and they feel that someday you can make something happen."

Forrest used the money and started again with another startup, Garena (which stands for "Global Arena"). Aimed at the online gamers, he tried to get Riot Games, the game developers behind League of Legends, to let Garena be their distribution partner in South East Asia.

His big break came in 2010, when Riot Games' board met to approve the deal. "I did not sleep much that night", Forrest remembers, "By 6:40 a.m. I received confirmation that the board approved the license to Garena. I was exhilarated, immediately rushed to the office and got the term sheet signed at 7:15 a.m."

CONNECT the DOTS:

With deal in hand, Forrest began growing Garena rapidly, and in the last six years he has grown annual revenue by over 95% year on year to over \$300 million in 2015. He's attracted 23 million gamers from 210 countries, and raised over \$500 million in funding from Tencent, Keystone Ventures and a series of investors.

Realizing there was a pattern in the investors he was attracting, and the new opportunities that then resulted, he connected the dots and branched out from gaming to Shopee (e-commerce) and AirPay (online payments) which are now both growing rapidly, which has then in turn attracted new investors, including Singapore's Temasek, Indonesia's DPG and Japan's Misteltoe (run by Masayoshi Son's brother).

In Forrest's official statement on the new investment today, he referred back to Steve Jobs' speech, saying "We are proud to welcome three of Asia's most respected investment firms to Garena. Their insights and connectivity across the region will support and accelerate our mission to 'connect the dots' for our customers."

Millions have watched Steve Jobs' 2005 commencement speech, but how many have followed it literally the way Forrest has?

The true power of inspiration is not in the thoughts that it inspires, but in the action that it inspires.

What's your greatest inspiration and what action are you taking as a result?

Meanwhile, Forrest (who's Chinese name is Li Xiaodong and who chose his English name after Forrest Gump) will keep following his heart and connecting the dots to grow what is most likely going to be South East Asia's first \$100 billion business.

Have you found your Ikigai?

生き甲斐
ikigai

ikigai is the Japanese concept of “a reason for being.” Everyone has an ikigai. To find it requires a journey of self discovery. But the search is worth it.

Your ikigai is the meaning to your life.

What you love
What you are good at
What the world needs
What you can be paid for

PASSION
MISSION
PROFESSION
VOCATION
ikigai

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“When you bow deeply to the universe, the universe bows back.” ~ Morihei Ueshiba

Have you found your ikigai? Ikigai is the Japanese concept of “a reason for being.” Everyone has an ikigai, but yours is personal to you. Your ikigai is the intersection of your passions (what you love), your talents (what you are good at), your purpose (what the world needs) and your enterprise (what you can be paid for).

If you haven’t found it yet, don’t stop searching. Because once you find it, the universe bends towards you. When you find it, you find your flow.

Here’s a simple exercise you can do right now. Score each of these four questions from 0-10 - from 0 being not at all, and 10 being 100%:

- 1) Every day I am doing what I love to do
- 2) Every day I only do what I am good at

- 3) Every day I am doing what the world needs
- 4) Every day I am getting paid well for what I do

Got your score? Add them up

(and post the total in the comments if you like!)

Now score yourself for where you were at the end of 2015.

How much progress have you made?

And now set your target score for the end of 2017.

If you like having measures to keep track of your progress, how close you are to your ikigai is the most important measure of all.

“It is never too late to be who you might have been.” ~ George Elliot



How Mark Cuban couldn't keep a job and started on his own



How Mark Cuban couldn't keep a job, so started his own company instead and made \$3 billion.

"I joined Mellon Bank after graduating from Indiana University in 1980 at 22. A lot of my peers at Mellon were just happy to have a job. I wanted to be more entrepreneurial. I started writing a newsletter. I did updates on current projects. I tried to inject a little humor. I thought my boss would love me for doing these things."

"Instead, my boss called me into his office one day and ripped me a new one. "Who the f--- do you think you are?" he yelled."

"I told him I was trying to help Mellon make more money. He told me I was never to go over him or around him, or he'd crush me. I knew then it was time to get out of there. That's how I found myself back in Indiana, then on the road to Dallas."

“In Dallas, I moved into a tiny apartment with five buddies at a place called The Village. We had only three bedrooms and three beds. I slept on the floor.”

“Our rent was \$750 split six ways. In order to get some extra time to pay our rent, the guys would write checks to one guy who would collect them all and make a deposit and he would then pay the bills. It would give us three or four days of float. One time our roommate Dobie collected all the checks and skipped town. That was the last we ever saw of him.”

“I initially got a job as a bartender at a place called Elan, which was a hot Dallas club. While tending bar, I applied for jobs. I got an interview with a company called Your Business Software. I got the job.”

“I was happy. I was selling, making money. About nine months in, I got an opportunity to make a \$15,000 sale to a guy named Kevin. I was going to make a \$1,500 commission, which was enormous. It would have allowed me to move out of the apartment and maybe have a bed.”

“I asked a co-worker to cover me at the office. I called my boss, the CEO, whose name was Michael, and told him I was going to pick up the check. I thought he'd be thrilled. He wasn't. He told me not to do it. I thought: "Are you kidding me?" I decided to do it anyway. I thought when I showed up with a \$15,000 check, he'd be cool with it.”

“Instead, when I came back to the office, he fired me on the spot.”

“But being fired from that job was the determining factor in my business life. I decided then and there to start my own company. I was 25.”

“I went back to that guy with the \$15,000 job and told him that I didn't have the money at the time, but if he let me keep this job and the money, I would do the work and it would help me start my own company. He said, "Sure.”

“I started a company called Micro-Solutions. I remember one day I had to drive to Austin for some PC part, to a place called PCs Limited. The place was run by this kid who was younger than I was. We sat down and talked for a few hours. I was really impressed by him. I remember telling him, "Dude, I think we're both going places." That "dude" was Michael Dell.”

“That year I made the decision to get MicroSolutions into local-area networks. We were one of the first to do that. This was literally the foundation of my later career. MicroSolutions grew into a company with \$30 million in revenues. I sold it a few years later to CompuServe.”

“That start enabled me to found AudioNet, which became Broadcast.com, which my partner, Todd Wagner, and I sold to Yahoo. Then came the Dallas Mavericks and everything else, of course.”

“Oh, yeah. A few years ago, I got an e-mail from my old roommate, Dobie. It said, "How you doing, man?" I wrote back that I wasn't going to talk to him

until he paid me the \$125 he owed me for rent back from The Village. He sent me the check. I cashed it.”

Mark Cuban is now worth \$3.3 billion. He wrote this story in Forbes.

Whatever life throws at you, as Mark says, it “doesn’t matter if the glass is half-empty or half-full. All that matters is that you are the one pouring the water.”



Definition of wealth



**“Be still like a mountain
and flow like a great river.”**

LAO TSE TUNG

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Michelle Clarke, Penelope Wee and 959 others

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Of all the many entrepreneur lessons I have learned, one of the very best lessons came by accident, on a river in Sri Lanka.

When I visited Sri Lanka, I went white water rafting. On the trip down the river, my raft drifted into a beautiful valley, and my guide pointed at the tea plantation on the hillside, the beautiful houses with amazing views, and the bustling town by the river.

“My father, this was all his.” he said

“Which part of it?” I asked

“All of it!” he said.

Thinking his Dad must be a wealthy landowner, I asked him what his background was. That's when he told me an amazing story.

"My father left the Indian mainland at the beginning of the 20th Century, and came to Sri Lanka to explore. He found this valley, and he liked it so much he decided to stay. He didn't have any money, so he cleared some land and learned how to plant tea."

"People liked the tea, so he made more. Then he hired others better than him to plant the tea, as he now had money from his tea sales to pay them."

"But people didn't want to travel, so he built extra houses for them and rented the houses to them."

I interrupted him, "So he paid them a salary and then they paid it back to him as rent?"

"Yes." He replied

"And he used that rent money to build even more houses?" I asked.

"No. They already had houses. But they wanted nicer food. So he used the rent money to build a restaurant."

I repeated what I heard, just to be clear: "So he paid them a salary, which they paid back in rent, which he reinvested to run a restaurant, so they worked harder to earn more, and pay for nicer food?"

"Yes. That's how all these shops started, and the roads got built, and the train station got built, and that bridge got built. Actually, over about 20 years more than 2,000 people have come and settled in this beautiful town, and most of them didn't even work on the plantation because there was so much else they could do here."

As we drifted down the river, his story made me think about how money is like a football. If you're playing football and try and chase the ball, you never get it because it's moving too fast, and you annoy all the other players.

But if you focus on the game and pass the ball on when it comes to you, you get passed back the same ball over and over again. Just like my guide's father, he wasn't focused at chasing money, but on letting the money flow.

Just like footballers who play the game and have the ball passed to them many times, he had the same money passed to him again and again every day, through his plantation, properties, restaurants and shops.

And every time there was a money exchange, it was because he was adding extra value until there was an entire thriving town that was his home. True entrepreneurs do not chase money. They add value. The money is simply a by-product, which they use again to create more value.

“Be still like a mountain, and flow like a great river.” ~ Lao Tse

“Where is your father now?” I asked

“He passed away twenty years ago.”

“Oh, sorry to hear that.”

After a long pause, I said *“So did you inherit all of this from him then?”*

My guide laughed. *“No! During the civil war the government came in and took all my father’s land and businesses away. They confiscated it all and sold it to others. They left us with nothing but a small house by the river. My father was too old to go back to work so he died penniless.”*

Shocked, I said, *“That must have been devastating!”*

My guide just smiled and looked out at the river, *“No. He died happy. He lived where he wanted to live, with people he loved. Everywhere he went in this valley, he was friends with everyone. They bought him drinks, treated him to meals. He had no need for money.”*

“My father taught me what real wealth is. That’s why I am a river guide.”

My guide gestured up at the hills and down the river, *“Why would I go into a big city and have to work hard for money that I would spend on things I don’t need, when I already have all of this.”*

I left that trip with less money, and more wealth; with less fear, and more flow; with less to get and more to give.

And I left with a new definition of wealth:

“Wealth isn’t how much money you have. Wealth is what you’re left with if you lose all your money.”



What are you doing with your spare time?



What are you doing with your spare time? A year ago, 30-year-old Eric Martin decided to spend his evenings after his 9-to-5 job to help startup founders he had never met with a new website that was yet to launch.

He got 100,000 shares for his efforts which - a year later - are worth over \$20 million.

That's because that new startup - jet.com - just sold to Walmart for \$3.3 billion. Martin's reaction? "It feels good. It feels really good. The way I think to describe it is 'occasional hysterical laughing.'"

It was only last Feb 2015 that Eric stumbled on a launch that entrepreneur Marc Lore had put together for his new startup. Marc sold his previous

company, Quidsi (which included sites like diaper.com and soap.com) to Amazon for \$540 million in 2010, and he was ready for his next big thing - a new retail site to beat Amazon at their own game.

His new startup - jet.com - would find the lowest price across the Internet for any product. But how could he get a buzz going before the launch? Marc decided to run a competition for whoever could refer the most subscribers to a 6 month free trial for jet.com when it launched, with the winner getting 100,000 share options in the company.

That's where Eric came in. Working at a funeral insurance company, Eric came across Marc's story in his dad's copy of Businessweek and got excited. "Challenging Amazon is an incredible feat to try," he thought. "100,000 stock options in a company trying to do that is just really exciting to me."

So he signed up for the competition 3 weeks before it was ending, and started inviting the few people he knew to join - starting with his wife, brother, sister and parents.

That's when he noticed something odd... After his first referral his rank in the competition went up fast from 232,582 to 13,767. The second took him to 7,518, then the third to 5,232nd. Maybe he could work out how many referrals he would need to win?

So he used a 30 day free trial of a statistics app he downloaded to work it out, and figured he would need just 2,000 referrals to have a chance.

So what did he do? "I was really thinking about it... I thought, 'I think I can win. Should I win? Should I do this?' I think I prayed about it a little... If it's going to me or someone else, I thought, why not do it?"

So he did it.

Marc spent the next 3 weeks online after work trying everything to get referrals. He tried Facebook ads. That didn't work. He thought of Google Adwords. But others were already trying that. Then his sister-in-law told him about sites like Swagbucks and Gifthulk that already attracted people looking for free rewards in return for doing surveys.

Eric explains, "One of their most important demographics is mothers. They'll do a survey in exchange for a one-month trial of cosmetics." This was his target market, and they were already "trained to sign up for things."

So Eric took the plunge and paid Swagbucks \$3,000 of his hard-earned salary for a campaign. Within a few days, he had 2,000 sign-ups and was in 7th place.

But there was a problem. He learned the first place in the competition had over 4,000 sign-ups and rising fast. So Eric decided to go all in, thinking "If this works out, it should be worth well more than my investment."

He ended up spending \$18,000 in campaigns, admitting “My wife was nervous.”

He ended up with 8,167 referrals and at midnight on Feb 5th 2015 he found out he had won, and went down to the grocery store to buy some crab legs to celebrate.

Today, just a year after jet.com's site launched, it has been sold to Walmart for \$3.3 billion and Eric's 3 weeks of work, \$18,000 in costs and 100,000 share options are worth an estimated \$20 million+.

What Eric did is something anyone could have done if they had the same initiative, commitment and focus. He won it by deciding to win it - even though he didn't know how.

What are you doing with your spare time? Who could you be helping? What could you be reading to find the right opportunities?

Your efforts may not, like Eric, take 3 weeks. It could be less. It could be more. And your results may not, like Eric, be \$20 million+. It could be less. It could be more.

But for success today, it doesn't take the best talent. It doesn't take the greatest idea. It doesn't take rare know-how.

It simply takes choosing to help, choosing who to help, a lot of action and a little luck.

On today's news, Eric says "I don't think I'm some genius person that I thought Jet was going to work out. It was a gut instinct... I'm taking time to process it. I haven't really had a chance to really feel what it means yet."

"But I'm very, very happy."



The value of nothing



“
Wisdom tells
me I am nothing.
Love tells me
I am everything.
Between the two
my life flows.”

Nisargadatta Mahara

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Penelope Wee, Jan Polak and 659 others

214 shares 23 comments

Are you too busy? Overwhelmed? Is your to-do list too long? Here's what the Chinese "Tao" says about the value of nothing:

Thirty spokes meet in the hub.
Where the wheel isn't
is where it's useful.

Hollowed out,
clay makes a pot.
Where the pot's not
is where it's useful.

Cut doors and windows

to make a room.
Where the room isn't,
is where it's useful.

So the profit in what is
is in the use of what isn't.

~ Tao Te Ching

Making time and space for nothing is a choice. Instead of feeling guilty for taking the time for yourself, make it a necessity. This week, make the time and the space for nothing:

It is the empty space that makes the masterpiece

It is the dramatic pause that creates the comedy

It is the gaps between the notes that make the music

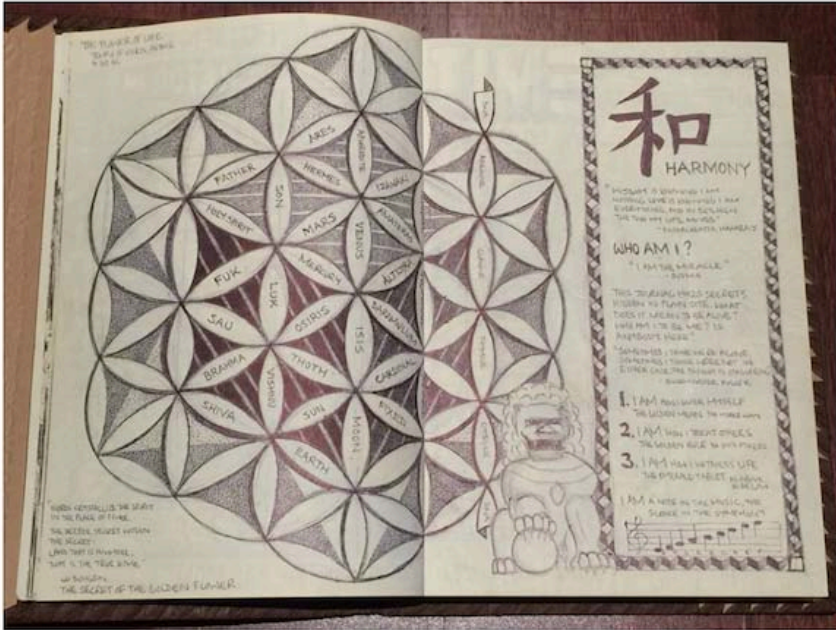
It is in the absence of thought where infinity waits

Give "nothing" the same priority as "everything" and balance your life between the two.

"Wisdom tells me I'm nothing. Love tells me I am everything. Between the two my life flows." ~ Sri Nisargadatta Mahara



Harmony



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Michelle Clarke, Sandra Morrell and 266 others

23 shares

38 comments

"Wisdom is knowing I am nothing. Love is knowing I am everything, and in between the two my life moves." - Nisargadatta Maharaj

Do you share a sneaking feeling the world is out of harmony at the moment?

This is a photo of a double page from my journal called "Harmony".

"Who am I?" - I've drawn the flower of life on the left with all the examples of 'Trimurti' (three great ones) in every ancient culture, showing how we are all simply intersections of two other points.

We are the intersection in space of our mother and our father. We are the intersection in time of our parents and our children. We are simply a space in time - Nowhere and everywhere:

On the bottom right is a quote from "The Secret of the Golden Flower" (This is one of only two books translated and brought back from China to Germany by Richard Wilhelm and published by Carl Jung 100 years ago. The other was the I Ching):

*"Words crystallize the spirit,
In the place of power,
The deeper secret within
the secret:*

*Land that is nowhere,
That is the true home."*

~ Lu Dongbin

ie. Crystallized being is an illusion. The secret is the land of nowhere, where we are nothing and everything.

I've hidden this message in the flower of life in the penultimate right column of the flower. I've drawn the DNA strand showing the two DNA protein pairs that make up our 64 codons of DNA, adenine, guanine, thymine and cytosine (in the same way the flower of life contain 64 tetrahedra when it is seen in 3D as a 64 tetrahedra grid of time, which link to the 64 hexagrams of time in the I Ching).

At the bottom the DNA strand turns into the Chinese lion. This was a mythical creature in Ancient China as the nearest real lions were in Africa. The Chinese Lion was always in pairs, guarding sacred gates, signifying the guardians to the gates of our lives.

This lion is the one that guards the Forbidden City in Beijing, with a ball with the 3D flower of life engraved in it. The lion has always been my spirit animal. The symbol of two lions and a gateway which is "*nothing*" (the door) and "*everything*" (beyond the door) is the same symbol of the triangle in architectural form.

"*Harmony*" - On the right hand side I wrote a column of text to reconcile my own journey through the human condition of being everything and nothing (When we think we're everything, we feel ego. When we think we're nothing, we feel the abyss),

With a quote from Bucky:

"Sometimes I think we're alone.

Sometimes I think we're not.

In either case, the thought is staggering."

- Buckminster Fuller

Have you had these same experiences? Where everything is awesome, and then nothing is working? Sometimes in the same day? Or in the same hour?

To me, the word that brings all of this together is "*Harmony*".

The Chinese character at the top right is "*Harmony*". In its original form, the left hand character is "yu" - A bamboo flute. The three parts of it are "j" (assemble), "p" (add holes), "si" (in bamboo).

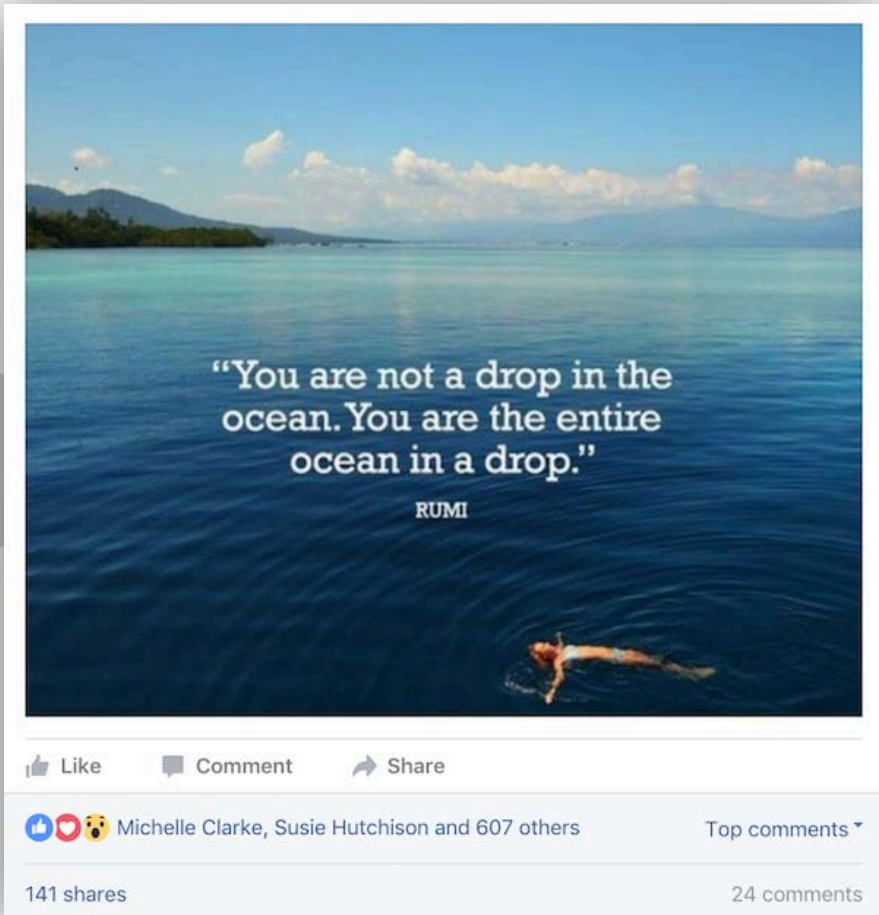
The right hand character means "*grain*" or "*whole*" and together the characters are also similar to "and" and "*peace*".

When I meditate on this page, it helps me see myself as just an intersection of the lives of others - like a little bamboo flute where I find my place when I tune in (or others tune me in), to create harmony and flow.

The 1,2,3 on the bottom right are the intersection of how I conduct myself (the Golden Mean - the middle way...), my conduct with others (the Golden Rule - do unto others...) and how I witness life (the Emerald Tablet - as above, so below...).



Give up the drop to become the sea



A rain drop falls onto a seaside jetty.

"I'm a drop!" it thinks, excited to be there.

"We're all drops!" it thinks, as it sees many other drops also on the jetty.

But as the rain falls, the drop looks on in shock as some drops miss the jetty and fall straight into the sea, disappearing. *"I'm glad I landed on the jetty, and am still a drop."* it thinks to itself.

Then, as the wind blows, the drop sees other drops on the jetty get blown into the sea.

Now, in fear, the drop tries to lay low and hold on, so it does not meet a similar fate. It's pleased to see it is not alone. Other drops on the jetty also hold on against the wind.

The sun comes out, and gives warmth. But... "Oh no!"

The drop sees some of the drops holding on evaporate and disappear in the sunshine.

"Should I hold on, and disappear in the sun? Or should I let go, and disappear in the sea?"

Caught in this existential bind, the drop finally chooses a leap of faith.

"I know for sure if I stay here, I'll evaporate." it thinks, "But I don't know what fate awaits me in the sea."

So the drop lets go, and is blown off the jetty towards the sea. In full surrender, the drop falls, and falls, until finally it hits the surface of the sea.

Only to discover, to its surprise, that the drop has not disappeared.

It has become the whole sea.

"Give up the drop to become the sea." ~ Rumi

Pale blue dot



"Look again at that dot. That's here. That's home. That's us. On it everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever was, lived out their lives."

The aggregate of our joy and suffering, thousands of confident religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines, every hunter and forager, every hero and coward, every creator and destroyer of civilization, every king and peasant, every young couple in love, every mother and father, hopeful child, inventor and explorer, every teacher of morals, every corrupt politician, every "superstar," every "supreme leader," every saint and sinner in the history of our species lived there - on a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam.

Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the Universe, are challenged by this point of pale light. Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark.

The significance of our lives and our fragile planet is then determined only by our own wisdom and courage. We are the custodians of life's meaning...

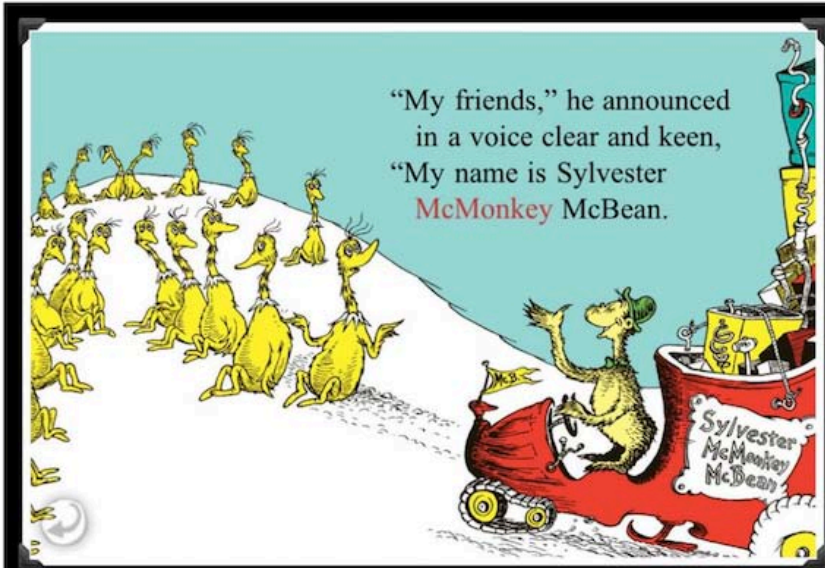
If we crave some cosmic purpose, then let us find ourselves a worthy goal.” ~ Carl Sagan,

"On the return trip home, gazing through 240,000 miles of space toward the stars and the planet from which I had come, I suddenly experienced the universe as intelligent, loving, harmonious...

My view of our planet was a glimpse of divinity. We went to the Moon as technicians; we returned as humanitarians.” ~ Edgar Mitchell, NASA Astronaut



The Sneetches by Dr Seuss



“My friends,” he announced
in a voice clear and keen,
“My name is Sylvester
McMonkey McBean.”

Dr Seuss predicted 2017 in 1953

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When I opened my Facebook and Twitter feeds today, they were filled with messages of conflict and intolerance. I looked for wise words to make sense of what's going on. I found it in "The Sneetches" - Dr Seuss' children's story uncannily playing out in real life today. I hope we make it to the same ending.

The Sneetches. By Dr Seuss 1953

Now, the Star-Belly Sneetches
Had bellies with stars.
The Plain-Belly Sneetches
Had none upon thars.

Those stars weren't so big. They were really so small
You might think such a thing wouldn't matter at all.
But, because they had stars, all the Star-Belly Sneetches
Would brag, "We're the best kind of Sneetch on the beaches."

With their snoots in the air, they would sniff and they'd snort
"We'll have nothing to do with the Plain-Belly sort!"
And whenever they met some, when they were out walking,
They'd hike right on past them without even talking.

When the Star-Belly children went out to play ball,
Could a Plain-Belly get in the game...? Not at all.
You could only play if your bellies had stars
And the Plain-Belly children had none upon thars.

When the Star-Belly Sneetches had frankfurter roasts
Or picnics or parties or marshmallow toasts,
They never invited the Plain-Belly Sneetches.
They left them out cold, in the dark of the beaches.
They kept them away. Never let them come near.
And that's how they treated them year after year.

Then ONE day, it seems...while the Plain-Belly Sneetches
Were moping and dopping alone on the beaches,
Just sitting there wishing their bellies had stars...
A stranger zipped up in the strangest of cars!

"My friends," he announced in a voice clear and keen,
"My name is Sylvester McMonkey McBean.
And I've heard of your troubles. I've heard you're unhappy.
But I can fix that. I'm the Fix-it-Up Chappie.

I've come here to help you. I have what you need.
And my prices are low. And I work at great speed.
And my work is one hundred per cent guaranteed!"

Then, quickly, Sylvester McMonkey McBean
Put together a very peculiar machine.

And he said, "You want stars like a Star-Belly Sneetch...?
My friends, you can have them for three dollars each!"
"Just pay me your money and hop right aboard!"
So they clambered inside. Then the big machine roared

And it clonked. And it bonked. And it jerked. And it berked
And it bopped them about. But the thing really worked!
When the Plain-Belly Sneetches popped out, they had stars!
They actually did. They had stars upon thars!

Then they yelled at the ones who had stars from the start,
"We're exactly like you! You can't tell us apart.

We're all just the same, now, you snooty old smarties!
And now we can go to your frankfurter parties."

"Good grief!" groaned the ones who had stars at the first.
"We're still the best Sneetches and they are the worst.
But, now, how in the world will we know," they all frowned,
"If which kind is what, or the other way round?"

Then up came McBean with a very sly wink
And he said, "Things are not quite as bad as you think.
So you don't know who's who. That's perfectly true.
But come with me, friends. Do you know what I'll do?"

I'll make you, again, the best Sneetches on beaches
And all it will cost you is ten dollars eaches."
Belly stars are no longer in style," said McBean.
"What you need is a trip through my Star-Off machine.

This wondrous contraption will take off your stars
So you won't look like Sneetches who have them on thars."
And that handy machine
Working very precisely
Removed all the stars from their tummies quite nicely.

Then, with snoots in the air, they paraded about
And they opened their beaks and they let out a shout,
"We know who is who! Now there isn't a doubt.
The best kind of Sneetches are Sneetches without!"

Then, of course, those with stars all got frightfully mad.
To be wearing a star now was frightfully bad.
Then, of course, old Sylvester McMonkey McBean
Invited them into his Star-Off Machine.
Then, of course from then on, as you probably guess,
Things really got into a horrible mess.

All the rest of that day, on those wild screaming beaches,
The Fix-it-Up Chappie kept fixing up Sneetches.
Off again! On again!
In again! Out again!
Through the machines they raced round and about again,

Changing their stars every minute or two.
They kept paying money. They kept running through
Until neither the Plain nor the Star-Bellies knew
Whether this one was that one...or that one was this one
Or which one was what one...or what one was who.

Then, when every last cent
Of their money was spent,

The Fix-it-Up Chappie packed up
And he went.

And he laughed as he drove
In his car up the beach,
"They never will learn.
No. You can't teach a Sneetch!"

But McBean was quite wrong. I'm quite happy to say
The Sneetches got really quite smart on that day,
The day they decided that Sneetches are Sneetches
And no kind of Sneetch is the best on the beaches.
That day, all the Sneetches forgot about stars
And whether they had one, or not, upon thars.

The end.



How Olympian are you?



👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

👍 🤔 Jan Polak, Leslie Choudhury and 154 others

167 shares

22 comments

What does the Olympics have to do with you and your life? Few people relate psychologist Carl Jung with the Olympic symbol, yet he is the original designer - and the five rings symbolise the five strengths to live an Olympian Life.

When the founder of the modern Olympics, Pierre de Coubertin, was looking for a symbol for the games, he turned to his friend Carl Jung. Jung knew the circle was the symbol of potential and life in ancient cultures, and introduced the idea of the five interlocking circles as a reflection of five energies - the same five found in Chinese philosophy (Jung was the first to publish the I

Ching in the West, and at the 2008 Beijing Olympics the Chinese returned to the initial concept with their five mascots representing water, wood, fire, earth and metal).

This year the symbol is 100 years old, and in 1912 when Coubertin introduced it he also introduced what he saw as the keystone Olympic event, the Modern Pentathlon. This had five disciplines that to him summed up the five key attributes every 'Olympian' individual should have. How do you square up in these five areas in your life and business?

1. **SWIMMING** (Element = Water / Spirit / Blue): This discipline is about rhythm. Rhythm keeps us breathing, above water, and moving forward at pace. What is the level of rhythm you have set in your life and business, and where is there stress and disharmony where rhythm has been lost and where you're out of synch?
2. **SHOW JUMPING** (Element = Wood / Spring / Green): This discipline is about power. Not the power of the rider, but your ability to harness the power of the horse. How well are you harnessing the power of your business, your market, your industry? A clue: If you're the one doing all the work, you're not the rider. You're the horse.
3. **FENCING** (Element = Fire / Summer / Red): This discipline is about flair. Your success is dependant on having an opponent to spar with and how well you dance with them. Who are you fencing with in a way that you both are upping your game? Who should you be fencing with? And are you doing it with honour?
4. **CROSS COUNTRY RUN** (Element = Earth / Autumn / Yellow): This discipline is about perseverance. Cross country is about running through the elements and adjusting with the terrain, slowing when you need to and speeding up where you can. Where should you be slowing down and speeding up to win your race?
5. **SHOOTING** (Element = Metal / Winter / Black): This discipline is about precision. As distinctly different to the other four as they are to each other, this is not about physical exertion, but the ability to quiet the mind, let the body disappear, and hit the target. How well are you hitting your targets by doing the opposite of working hard?

Today, winning an Olympic medal isn't on many people's to-do list. Mainly because - without the right skills and sacrifice an Olympic medal is simply out of reach. De Coubertin's vision was not this. It was to make sport accessible to everyone, and to use the Olympics as a way to demonstrate how sport can highlight the skillsets we need to excel at an 'Olympian' level in life.

So to make the most of this year's Olympics - Be inspired by the athletes competing in the London Olympics, but also bring these five disciplines into your own performance in life, and claim your own gold.

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