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EXECUTIVE INSIDER

# 5 Business Success Secrets From An Unlikely Entrepreneur

Alan Manly Executive Insider June 10, 2020



When you think of a typical entrepreneur, you might envision a tech savvy Zuckerberg-ish type with quality education or \$ behind them. But in truth, there's many forms of entrepreneurs and not all of them are as you'd expect. I'm neither a genius nor over educated and I'm definitely not the creator of a world marvel - but I created a thriving global business from scratch. And you know what? You can too. Here's 5 key things I learnt about creating your own entrepreneurial success:

### Dress to exude success

Remember that every call is a sales call. Style your image to be comparable to the most successful in your field. Every industry has a dress code of sorts. If you don't feel comfortable or don't wish to conform to the current industry code, buy an expansive outfit that declares success! The goal is to look established thereby by dismissing the image of a risky entrepreneur. After all, being an entrepreneur is risky enough without having your wardrobe scream that you are a rebel as well. The message you want others to get from a meeting with you is of a confident and successful business person proposing a product, not your daring in the fashion world.

### Get a customer.

All you need to have a business is a customer. Sounds obvious, but it is the real challenge for any entrepreneur. The first customer is harder to get than anything else. A major challenge is that the risk taking entrepreneur has to sell their product to their first customer based on the opportunity of using a new product. Overcoming the natural concern of buying a product from a risk taker is the skill required by an entrepreneur. Keeping the first customer is the second half of the same challenge. All first customers know deep down that they took a risk and will be angry with you if anything goes wrong. What is worse, they will be angry with themselves for knowingly taking a risk and getting it wrong. The irate customer will vent their anger at anyone who will listen. Sadly that can include your potential customers. Strangely enough all unhappy customers seem to know your other customers. To reduce this risk the unlikely entrepreneur has to get close to their first and subsequent customers so that they understand why they bought your product and to constantly re-enforce their decision. Let them know that you are both on this unspoken risky journey together.

### Going into business is like going to war.

With the battle cry of "fear no pain" the unlikely declare war on failure. They know that the rich, gifted and talented are a different race. The unlikely have to be totally committed as they cannot draw on any inherited talents or wealth to be successful. Success will need to be fought for. The risk of failure is high for the unlikely, consequently they will fight to learn, fight to earn and fight to keep every advantage they ever acquire. The status quo is not for them nor will it support them. The unlikely's are the warrior class of the entrepreneur tribes.

### Have an elevator pitch.

Knowing what you are about is not enough. You may have thirty seconds to sell your idea to a total stranger. It is not easy to encapsulate the best idea in the world into a thirty second spiel but with practise it will not only be remembered, but it will become second nature. It is not as easy as it sounds. The take away must be that the stranger knows what you are about and even if they're not interested will maintain a favourable opinion of you as the promoter of your product. A brief outline of your pitch should also live on the back of the card that you will always offer at the end of your pitch.

### Learn to listen

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Or more bluntly, use silence as a weapon. Being given an opportunity to sell to a prospective client the temptation is to over sell by delivering the message and not hearing the response. Once the elevator speech is delivered, let it rest. You have fired your best shot. Your next statement should be a question that easily leads your listener to talk about themselves. "Tell me, what business are you in?". This works every time! Then listen. Silence is not only golden, it is a weapon. Silence is a statement. Let it reign. Let your reply be one or even two seconds slower than expected. So many times someone will fill the gap with more information.

These are just some of the things that worked for me, but there are plenty more. The unwritten secret is being willing to read an article like this and consider the ideas. Then of course the challenge is with you to be brave enough to give them a go. Rest assured, when you try a new idea and feel that you were imperfect, don't even consider giving up. Charge ahead because you are now one mistake closer to success!

Written by Alan Manly. Here's what you've missed?

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Alan Manly is the founder of Group Colleges Australia. He is also the author of When There Are Too Many Lawyers ... There Is No Justice (\$24.95). Alan Manly is an opinion columnist for the CEOWORLD Magazine. Follow him on LinkedIn.

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