How do I prepare to become an entrepreneur?

INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship.

From SaaS start-ups to small roadside businesses, this world of innovation and its bright lights of success lure all of us in.

At first glance, business is much more appealing than the standard “graduating with a degree” career route. Following your own path as your own boss? Sign me up!

Yet it’s incredibly easy to lose sight of the immense road filled with speed bumps that gets you there. You can re-read the articles and listen to the podcasts on loop, but not every business is a get-rich-quick blitz.

The majority of start-ups fail. That’s common knowledge.

No, it’s not because of their lack of business skills or experience. Anyone can start a business but keeping it going requires something else entirely.

You can’t dive head-first into the sliver of success without knowing about the innumerable failures.

That’s exactly what it boils down to. Preparation is key to business progress.

So what is entrepreneurship, exactly?

You’re not just a business owner. It’s a *lot* more than that.

An entrepreneur can expect countless dead ends, unexpected problems, and Plan Bs before even having the faintest glimmer of a chance at success. After all, every business can’t be a winner.

Someone like this would develop, launch, and market an idea as a business. Even though we typically associate this with small start-ups, all of the world’s best were jump-started with entrepreneurship.

The risk is certainly there- a lot more hangs in the balance than a nine-to-five job. For these aspiring businesspeople, however, the potential of grand success is what makes this path all the more alluring.

They’re people who can identify a high-risk, high-reward opportunity or idea, and capitalize immediately. In short, an entrepreneur would *identify a need* and find (or create) a viable market for that idea.

To put it into perspective, notable entrepreneurs include:

- Steve Jobs (Apple)
- Elon Musk (Tesla)
- Bill Gates (Microsoft)
- Jeff Bezos (Amazon)

Although these are extreme cases of multi-billion-dollar corporations, others like Uber and Shopify are examples of a start-up utilizing growth and scaling effectively.

But what are some recurring traits that are synonymous with entrepreneurial success? How do we prepare in hopes of a similar journey?

TIP #1- Motivation, not Procrastination

You won’t last a day in the business lifestyle without motivation.

No boss, no deadlines. The only thing keeping you from giving up altogether is… you. There’s just very little to keep you accountable.

Be realistic. I’ll say it again- you won’t get to Tesla-level prosperity through a week of sweat, blood, and tears. It’s a *long* road of grueling work, and procrastinators don’t make it past the gate.

To be frank, it’s a multi-year process, and even the most focused of individuals find themselves straying from the ultimate goal, because they get themselves stuck in the same groove.

Motivation is going to dry up, if you create a routine out of a supposedly freeing alternative to a corporate job.

Take it a step at a time. Keep grinding, no matter how far away success seems to be.

TIP #2- Stay Realistic

Let’s face it. Everyone is not embarking on the path of the next zillionaire the moment they write down a business idea.

You can read the SaaS success stories on Reddit and watch the countless business documentaries- but try not to expect this every single time.

The media and the gurus make it seem easy. It seems like a carefree, effortless way of life, where you can put yourself on the road to riches instead of toiling in an office. It seems like a fun adventure you're starting, without a moment of boredom.

Right. Let's bring it back down to earth.

It's fun, there's no doubt about that. The truth is, you'll probably be struggling under more difficulties than you've ever faced before. Entrepreneurship has a way of weeding out the unmotivated and the mere dreamers.

Stop dreaming. Get working.

TIP #3- Tune Out the Noise

Did I mention the distractions? As an entrepreneur, the pressure from the outside can affect you enormously.

Reading about the "overnight success" can be deflating, especially if you're still grinding it out. You might hear about your business pals enjoying quick success and compare it relentlessly to your own start-up.

News flash: Your business won't pop off within a day of launch. If you were looking for a quick success, entrepreneurship might not the right choice for you.

There will be doubters. Skeptics will play down your business idea as nothing, but patience will get you through.

Staying on track is crucial in the entrepreneurial journey and maintaining focus on the next goal can prove difficult if you allow external pressure to get to you.

At the end of the day, you're not competing with others for the best start-up, nor trying to seek the validation of others.

TIP #4- Don't Get Caught Up in Mistakes

Sure, being a perfectionist gets you results. Most of the time, anyways.

But if it gets to the point where it holds you back from growth and progress, that's when it starts affecting the start-up negatively.

You *will* make mistakes because that's just reality. It's inevitable. What you can do, however, is ensuring that you don't fail in the same way again.

If you get hung up over a setback, and beat yourself up over it, you'll never get past it. Unless you take the lesson to heart, there's zero possible growth in the start-up.

There's always room for growth, not perfection. Failures help a lot, since they identify your weaknesses, especially in the business world.

Once you start looking at a mistake as a solution for a problem- it doesn't seem that big of a deal anymore.

TIP #5- Learn from the Best

What's better preparation than trying the same methods as the pros? Having been there and done that, being under the mentorship of seasoned entrepreneurs can be a huge help.

From the podcasts featuring industry-leading experts, to the online courses of the experienced crème de la crème of the field, and to this amazing blog (of course), the lessons of the trade are right at your fingertips.

This last tip combines all of the lessons from this article. Learning from their mistakes helps you develop a similar stance and mindset and replicate their success.

CONCLUSION

Life as an entrepreneur isn't easier than any other job or career. If anything, it's harder.

Yet countless individuals choose to get going with entrepreneurship, despite the warnings and evident challenges. Why does this happen? Does the grueling grind not resemble a challenge? Are the immense workloads and responsibilities appealing, by chance?

Nope. They know the bumps in the road exist- and that's the primary reason they succeed.

And by having read this article, you're prepared- it's no longer a blind foray into risk.

You're just as likely as the next person to lift a start-up into the upper echelons of success.