

10 STEPS TO BECOMING A SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEUR



By Lynda Zugec

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1. Use Technology.

The more you are able to use technology to your advantage, the better able you will be to keep costs low and

efficiency at a high. New technologies are being introduced into the market on a daily basis. Find out which ones could save your business a lot of money and time. You will be very happy and thankful you did!

2. Stay Current in Your Field. In the day-to-day operations of a business, it is easy to lose sight of new developments within your area of expertise. However, it is imperative that you stay on the top of your game as this will ensure you understand the market and where it is going so that you are able to adjust your business plan accordingly. Failure to recognize major market shifts may destroy everything you worked so hard to obtain so be sure to squeeze in some activities that will keep you updated.

3. Get a Handle on Social Media.

This is a tough one, especially if the thought of a twitter account makes you flap your arms like they're a set of wings. But not to worry. Everyone is confused. The advent of social media is quite new so you are not alone. Others are trying to navigate the field just as you are. But be sure not to neglect social media altogether.

It is a good idea to be aware of what is out there, but be mindful of the amount of information you need to digest and what you need to use. Not every business needs a blog, twitter, or Facebook account. Find out which are most important for your business and manage those (1 or 2!) most effectively. Once you get rolling, you can hire a social media consultant to take care of the rest for you and build on what you currently have.

4. Research and Utilize the Resources Available to You.

Many times entrepreneurs are not aware of the no-cost or low-cost resources they have at their disposal. Need to develop a business plan? Why not see what the library has in stock. Need to speak to someone about exporting your product? Why not visit one of the government-funded small business offices in your city for advice on where to get started. Oftentimes, what you need is available. You just need to do a little digging, but the reward is worth it.

5. Network, Network, Network. Determining what you can do for others and helping them is often a surefire way to success. Ask what people need and help them fill that need. Create a meaningful dialogue when you meet someone new and discover what (or who!) you may have in common with them. You never know where the trail may lead and the fruitful relationship that could result.

6. Prioritize. It is very easy to get bogged down nowadays. With so much at our fingertips and so much more out there to be discovered, you may feel overwhelmed. Determining your priorities will help you muddle through the important items. Make a list everyday with the things that are of utmost importance and set aside the minutiae for when you have time or when you need to take a break.

7. Learn From Past Mistakes. Don't fret. We all make mistakes and understanding that you are bound to make some will help you get through the times you do. Just learn from what happened, apologize if you need to, and remember not to do it again. There are no mistakes – only new things you have learned.

8. Don't Get Discouraged. There will always be a naysayer, but you must not get discouraged. If you have done your due diligence and have a passion for completing your new venture, don't let people discourage you. It can be tough to start your own business. If your family is depending heavily on your income, adjustments may have to be made. But remember that fear will disable you so you need to keep going!

9. Ask Questions. I still have yet to find someone that knows everything. As an entrepreneur, one of the most important skills lies in knowing how to ask the right questions in the right way. If you can communicate your needs clearly and succinctly, you will be better poised to get the information you need. Much of your time can be saved by communicating properly, so be sure to develop yourself in this arena.

10. Sleep, Eat, and Rest! Yes, mama was right. You need to be healthy in order to perform at your optimal levels during the day so opt to get a full night of sleep, eat a properly balanced diet, and rest on occasion when necessary. Entrepreneurs have a tendency to burn the candle at both ends. There is always something to do. Whether it be a call to follow-up on a client or some task that you have been meaning to complete. Be sure NOT to overdo it so you can avoid burning out! 

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