



3 Reasons Why Wanna-Be Entrepreneurs Never Start Their Own Businesses

By Brian Acord, Young Entrepreneurs of America

How many times have I heard that one? I do a fair amount of public speaking...usually about entrepreneurship. At some point I invariably ask the audience “How many of you want to start their own business?” and many hands go up. My next question in the sequence is always “Why haven’t you started one already?”

The answers to the second question typically fall into three categories:

1. “I don’t have a great idea”
2. “I don’t know where to get the funding”
3. A variety of lame excuses that really mean “I don’t really want to put forth the effort...I like the idea of being an entrepreneur, I just don’t want to put myself out there and commit to the work.”

The **first excuse** (if it really isn’t a disguised version of number 3), is a stumbling block far more often than it should be. Take a minute to think about all the entrepreneurs that you know personally. Forget about Michael Dell, Oprah Winfrey, etc. and think about the people you see on a regular basis that run their own successful business. In my neighborhood I know the owners of a picture frame gallery, a sandwich shop, a mortuary, a construction business, an independent consultant, a medical clinic, a therapist, two heating and air-conditioning guys, and a road construction company.

None of these businesses would be classified as “great ideas” yet they are all well-run, profitable businesses that allow the owner the benefits of entrepreneurship while providing a good living for their families. What’s more, even on the rare chance that someone is able to come up with the next big thing, chances are, they didn’t come up with the idea before they started the company. Usually, entrepreneurs stumble across those big ideas while they are already working on a different business. (See my article on [“Running with the Pack”](#)).

The **second excuse** is also not a very valid excuse. Most successful entrepreneurs start business without venture capital. They begin by [bootstrapping](#) the business and grow the company until they have proven the concept. At that point, most companies have suffered through the worst and can often continue in a slow growth mode with no additional investment required. Those that choose to take an investment to accelerate growth are often presented with a variety of options to help fund the company and they get to pick which method and partner is right for them.

Don’t take this the wrong way, finding money to start your business and acquiring capital for growth are both long, arduous processes even for the best of companies. I am merely suggesting that most successful entrepreneurs seem to succeed with or without the investment and that painful process usually brings a series of unexpected benefits that help shape the company’s success.

The **third excuse** is probably the only legitimate excuse of the bunch. If you don't have the nerve, conviction, vision, strength, support, moxy, or fire in your belly to do whatever it takes to force your business to be successful, you would be better off not starting down that path to begin with. Be honest with yourself and realize that you just wouldn't make it as a successful entrepreneur and enjoy the benefits of not leveraging your personal finances to the hilt, spending every waking moment worried about the business, giving up all hobbies and many relationships just to make sure you can survive to next month.

Most people admire entrepreneurs in much the same way as they look up to Indiana Jones. But let's face it, you don't really want to be dragged by a truck through the desert, spend the night trapped in a cave of slithering snakes, be shot at repeatedly with live ammunition, or be beaten to a pulp while you dance through helicopter blades. If they were honest with themselves, most people would rather wait for the movie than have a 99% chance of becoming salted desert bones.

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