

Can you be a successful entrepreneur?



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Introduction

Everyone, even the most successful entrepreneurs, have one point or the other had this question...

Can I be a successful Entrepreneur?

Let us find out what one of the world's top advisor to entrepreneurs says and what one of the world's top business school discovered.

Shall we?

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The age old question

To Figure out if you have what it takes to be a successful entrepreneur, the fundamental question to be answered is :

Are successful entrepreneurs born or made?

This has been an age old question dodging many scholars and entrepreneurs and there was no clear cut answer.

So, let us look at it from the perspective of one of the world's top advisor to entrepreneurs.. **The legendary Seth Godin.**

Flipping the definition

Seth Godin says..

"We'd need to start with an understanding of what an entrepreneur is. They're all over the map, which makes the question particularly difficult to navigate."

"Let us start with an understanding of what an entrepreneur is."

"The mistake that's easy to make is based in language. We say, "she's an entrepreneur," when we should be saying, "she's acting like an entrepreneur."

What Seth is saying is Entrepreneurship is a bunch of traits or characteristics.

So, if it is just a set of traits, Can anyone learn it?

It is like asking... can anyone learn to play basketball? Of course yes.

Just 4 things to learn

So, it stands to reason that if entrepreneurship is a bunch of traits, then anyone can learn them, if they decide to learn.

None of us knew reading or writing or the fun games we play. We just learnt them.

So Seth says, being an entrepreneur boils down to one simple thing. Your choice to learn or not.

Seth says, "If you make the choice, to learn those entrepreneur traits and if you act like one, you are an entrepreneur!."

He says, there are only 4 things people do when they're acting like entrepreneurs.

1. They make decisions.
2. They invest in activities and assets that aren't a sure thing.
3. They persuade others to support a mission with a non-guaranteed outcome.
4. They embrace (instead of run from) the work of doing things that might not work.

He says , Everything else you can hire.

Is it risky?, you'll be surprised.

Seth says , "All four of these elements are unnatural to most folks."

"Particularly if you were good at school, you're not good at this."

"There are no right answers, no multiple choice, no findable bounds in entrepreneurship."

But those four elements can be learnt.

Many people are with the belief that entrepreneurs are Risk takers.

But Seth says it is not

"if you're acting like an entrepreneur, you don't feel like you're taking a huge risk."

He adds

"Risks are what happens at a casino, where you have little control over the outcome. People acting like entrepreneurs, however, feel as though the four most important elements of their work (see above) are well within their control."

He says "Everyone should give it a try. Entrepreneurial behavior isn't about growing big or remaining small, it's about a desire for a certain kind of journey."

3 Real life stories

The Harvard Business School also agrees with what Seth Godin says. They also say that some of the world's most successful entrepreneurs share some [characteristics](#), which anyone can learn and become an entrepreneur.

So, since entrepreneurship is just learning those four traits, if you can learn and practice those, you can become a successful entrepreneur.

Let us check out 3 real life stories...

CD Baby :

Derek Sivers did not know programming, he did not know how to start and run a business. Plus, he did not have money.

Yet, he started CDBaby with just \$500 and eventually sold his business for multiple millions.

Real life stories - continued

Geek Squad :

During his younger years Robert Stephens used to take apart door knobs, TV's and most of the time, he used to put them back together.

His parents were liberal and supportive too. They allowed him to take apart their things as long as he can put them back together.

When he grew up, he wanted to pay for his college, so he learnt technology and started fixing people's computer problems.

He used to go on a bicycle to people's houses and fixed their computer issues.

He did not know anything about business, but he learnt as he went along and finally sold his company to Bestbuy for multiple millions.

1-800-flowers:

Jim McCann worked as a bartender and he left this job to become a social worker, but the pay was not enough.

To supplement his income, he accidentally found a flower shop for sale, he bought it and without knowing much, he slowly learnt the ropes and became a multi-millionaire.

The final verdict

So, the final verdict is....

Yes, definitely , there are some people who are gifted and born with these traits, but for the rest of us, who are not born gifted, we can learn and become entrepreneurs.

So... entrepreneurs are both born and made. Aha!, what a relief.

But as Seth Godin says, the majority of them are made, If they make the choice.

Derek Sivers from CDBaby , Robert Stephens of Geek Squad, Jim McCann from 1-800-flowers and countless others made the decision to learn these traits.

it's your turn...

Will you make the choice?



"All human beings
are born as
entrepreneurs."

Elon Musk, Founder
of Tesla



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