

Autor: Luke Johnsonon
Seite: 8
Druckausgabe: Hauptausgabe

Gattung: Sonntagszeitung
Auflage: 758.236 (verbreitet)
Reichweite: 2,13 (in Mio.)

WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEUR

The Sunday Times Business columnist and former City analyst Luke Johnson on the traits necessary to become a self-made tycoon

Luke Johnson on

In his new book, *The Wealth Elite: A Groundbreaking Study of the Psychology of the Super Rich*, the historian Rainer Zitelmann attempts an empirical investigation into the link between personality traits and the creation of enormous wealth. He suggests there are five overriding characteristics of self-made multimillionaires: they are optimistic; they are nonconformists; they are driven by gut instinct, not business analysis; they are likely to have been athletic in their youth; and they are good at selling and did sales work of one sort or another when they were growing up. Having been partners with dozens of highly successful entrepreneurs, I think these highlights are well observed.

Yet there are other aspects to the entrepreneurial personality. Almost all entrepreneurs want autonomy; they refuse to report to a boss. Instead they feel a visceral urge to control their own destiny. This hunger for freedom and independence in their work is generally a key element of their character. They

would rather earn less by running their own business than take a job and make more as an employee. To them that would be surrender, a betrayal of their values. At a business event I polled a group of high-net-worth entrepreneurs and a majority gave self-determination as the biggest driver for founding a business. Many entrepreneurs are creative, and feed this craving by constructing a business.

At a talk I gave recently, a 70-year-old entrepreneur said he continued to start businesses - he had done so seven times in his life - because he loved the challenge of doing something better than existing suppliers. He saw his mission as solving problems in a market, satisfying customers more efficiently than the incumbents. That is what gave him a zest for life, still dynamic after 50 years of work.

Some founders start companies because they thrive on the drama of it all. They relish taking risks and would feel horribly bored stuck in middle manage-

ment. They enjoy the struggle, overcoming the danger that they could lose everything - their savings, their reputation, their income, their confidence - if the business were to crash. They live for the adrenaline rush of beating the odds and winning.

Entrepreneurs tend to be great motivators and can inspire others with their vision. They are numerate and can identify talent and build teams. They spot opportunities and seize them with vigour. They are energetic, ambitious, competitive and persistent in pursuing their goals. They are frequently workaholics and often obsessive about their venture. By nature they tend to be restless individuals, but they also understand the importance of priorities. Above all, they are impossible to categorise and institutionalise.

Entrepreneurs spot opportunities and seize them with vigour. They are energetic, ambitious and competitive

Wörter: 455