



# 1) Risk Taking & Experiments

The best part about being an entrepreneur is the fact that you have to take risks and you have to experiment, if you don't do both of the above, your business will not thrive and you might as well just work a 9-5 job. Being an entrepreneur allows me the freedom to execute on business ideas and strategies that others are afraid to try, and having control of my own destiny is ultimately what I seek as an entrepreneur.

Thanks to Jerry Lee, StoryLeather.com!

# 2) Freedom

I love being an entrepreneur because it gives me the freedom to make my own schedule and work as little or as hard as I want. Working for someone else you are bound to their schedule and rules, having my own flexibility enables me to be super creative on some days and take down time when I need to. I used to have this horrible feeling of being trapped and now I am as free as a bird!

Thanks to Gari Anne Kosanke, Bead Lovers Korner LLC!

# 3) Fostering a Positive Workplace

What I love most about being an Entrepreneur is being able to foster a positive workplace by hiring engaging, talented members to the team. I love developing and mentoring them to reach their highest potential. It's incredibly energizing to work with colleagues that aren't just good at what they do, but are also great people to work with!

Thanks to David Niu, TINYpulse!

# 4) To Find the Right Balance for Me

I worked for Fortune 500 companies for over a decade in eCommerce, managing marketing and merchandising for large scale web businesses (QVC, The Limited, Lowes and Charming Shoppes). The online stores are always open, 24/7 and I followed suit. I answered emails on my mobile device at all hours of the day, calls in the middle of the night, and much more. I always felt the need to be connected to work. I had received my MBA while working and I knew one day I wanted to run my own business and work my own hours and that is just what I did. I launched my own online children's business, My Kid's Threads in 2014. I have found so much happiness and balance in my life and for my family now that I work for myself.

Thanks to Lisa Batra, My Kid's Threads!

# 5) Grow the Business as a Family

After running my own business for 15 years and now in the midst of launching a new one, I will sometimes ask myself this very question. Because let's face it – being an entrepreneur is a tough commitment. It is a responsibility like no other. Whenever I find myself doubting the path I chose, I remind myself of the perks it offers (work from home, be your own boss, set your own guidelines, etc.) But if I had to select the one thing I love MOST about it, that's simple – being an entrepreneur gives me an opportunity to grow the business as a family. It allows me to involve my wife and young son in the decision making. It brings our individual worlds together, where we regularly share ideas, brainstorm together, and support each other in times of need. It becomes something that I can one day pass on to my son, allowing him to carry a torch that he had a hand in building. Bottom line – it allows us to truly be a "family"–24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Thanks to Joe Fiduccia, America's Footprints, LLC!

# 6) No Rules & No Limits

I can talk for hours about why I love being an entrepreneur but if I had a to pick, I would say it's because there aren't any rules or limits to what can be accomplished. There isn't anyone telling you what can and can't be done and how to do it. You are the one responsible for your success, so if you have a big idea and you want to test it or move forward with it, it's your time and possibly money. At the end of that trial, however, you either create something new, amazing and valuable or you learn from it, which is also extremely beneficial. Being an entrepreneur, you are already risking more than most, so why not keep pushing those boundaries to uncharted territories and see how much farther you can go.



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Thanks to Anna Crowe, Crowe PR!

## 7) Owning Your Success

The best part about being an entrepreneur is never having to wait on the sidelines for someone to offer you an opportunity to be in the big game. There's no need to ask for a raise or wish for a promotion. When you run your own business, you are in charge of your own destiny! There is no better feeling than the one of "owning" your own success.

Thanks to Filomena E. Fanelli, Impact PR & Communications, Ltd.!

## 8) Solving Problems & Disruption

Being an entrepreneur is great. It allows you to be creative every day when you're solving problems. Entrepreneurs are often breaking into new marketplaces where there are no set rules, meaning you really push the boundaries and disrupt. Today's technology ensures that whatever an entrepreneur can imagine can become reality.

Thanks to Daniel Lipinski, ParcelBright!

## 9) Many Things

I think being an entrepreneur has given me the flexibility to make mistakes, without being afraid of what a boss would say. It has given me the chance to meet, greet and handle customers with more of a family feeling, rather than a corporate one. It has given me the chance to say, "Yes! I can"! and mean it.

Thanks to Roberta Perry, Scrubz Body Scrub, Inc.!

## 10) Living My Passion

Being an entrepreneur is not about being your own boss or telling others what to do, this club of developers consciously decide present to the world their passion. Over the past twenty years, I have been able to live my passion. This passion is about assisting people live with dignity, respect and independence. At Evelyn Douglin Center for Serving People In Need, Inc. (EDCSPIN), we provide support and services to people with intellectually and developmentally disabilities, their families and the staff we employed. The ability to be of service to these groups is what I love the most about being an entrepreneur. Once an entrepreneur always an entrepreneur. And as a result, the creation and development of a single passion leads to another – for me, it became writing, speaking and coaching around the value of the WE. In my latest book, *Everybody Paddles: A Leaders Blueprint for Creating A Unified Team*, I discuss that productive environments where everybody matters creates an organizational culture of camaraderie. Whether you are driven to start a technology company, catering business or real estate group, living your passion in motion and enjoy yourself.

Thanks to Charles A. Archer, Everybody Paddles!

## 11) Working with a Dream Team

I ultimately began down this career path to work with a dream team of partners and employees while working from my home in Southern California.

Thanks to Tiffany Romero, Sway Group!

## 12) Creating Something Tangible

I love being an entrepreneur and business owner for so many reasons. I would say the thing I love the most about it though is the creation of something tangible. I started my business with \$134, and it is growing into a real, entity. It exists, and I have a vision of what I am creating, and it is being created. Taking something that exists purely in your mind and turning it into reality is one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever had.

Thanks to Collin J. Slattery, Taikun Inc.!

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## 13) Availability for My Family

The main thing I love about being an entrepreneur is that I am available to be a wife to my husband and a mother to my kids. Meaning I have time to do the domestic duties and quality things that make me feel good as a woman. I can quit when I want because I determine how far I want to go and what needs to be done to make things happen. I am not in control but I am responsible. Knowing that my drive steers my destiny makes me know that I am capable to live the impossible and be a service to others. I have loved this role for over 15 years!

Thanks to Shannon Battle, Family Services of America!

## 14) Meaningful Impact

Of the many reasons I love being an entrepreneur, I'd say the ability to make a meaningful impact is the one I value most. This comes through in so many different ways: the way I structure my team, the world-changing clients I choose to work with, the approach we take with our work, and even things as small as the paper we choose to order for the office.

Thanks to Alyssa Conrardy, Prosper Strategies!

## 15) Personally Invested

Sure most CEOs are passionate about what they do, but when it comes to running a non-profit, I'm more than passionate, I'm personally invested. I was sexually abused from 11-17 by my live-in nanny, and now I've found a way to not only do something I absolutely love, but save childhood — and even lives — by spreading awareness and educating the public. I love the stories of survival and thriving I hear, I love the children who have come forward and exposed abusers because they've learned to from my educational curriculum. I love working towards the greater good, and eradicating society of a very heinous evil.

Thanks to Lauren Book, Lauren's Kids foundation!

## 16) Multiple Reasons

1) I enjoy creating the opportunity to see kids (and their parents) participating in an exercise activity together without spending a ton of money. 2) I also like that we are able to give back to the country: Wherever possible, our trampolines are 100% sourced in America and are the first and only patented trampoline arena in the United States (U.S. Patent #8,657,696 and #8,764,575). Supporting American-made products is important as well as encouraging kids to exercise. 3) I love creating a business opportunity for Americans who want a fun, family and fitness driven business opportunity in a Rebounderz Indoor Trampoline Arena attraction and family entertainment center concept. 4) Most importantly, I love inspiring kids to get off the couch, stop staring at a screen and start exercising and having fun with their family and friends!

Thanks to Mark Gurley, Rebounderz Indoor Trampoline Arena!

## 17) Freedom

The freedom! Before I bought MyCorp I worked for a few different law firms and, while the work was interesting, I felt like I was always on a short leash. It started to feel like even the smallest personal jobs — like picking up my kids from school — would be this huge inconvenience to the firm. I began to realize I was missing out on what was important, like spending time with my family. I mortgaged my home to buy MyCorp because I wanted more time to be with my them — I wanted to be able to secure their future and still be a part of their lives. Being a business owner is hard work, but I love the freedom that comes with it.

Thanks to Deborah Sweeney, MyCorporation.com!

## 18) Fulfilling a Goal

Of course I love being an entrepreneur because it is fulfilling a goal — I have always wanted to start my own business and I feel immensely proud to have a fantastic team around me and loyal customers. But more practically, I really enjoy the flexible schedule I am allowed. As a mother of a toddler, running VAUGHAN allows me to do things like take my son to classes in the morning and spend the early morning and evening at my desk. With enough planning, I can take long weekends at my leisure and even work from the road, something that is incredibly difficult when there's the pressure to be at the desk from 9-5 in

a corporate setting. This flexibility is a simple luxury I am grateful for every day.

Thanks to Lindsay Narain, VAUGHAN!

## 19) Living the American Dream

Aside from building my passion, a light bulb moment in time changed my life forever. I've gone from 15 years of helping others build their dreams to a life finally dedicated to building my own. My heart and mind are in this project every waking moment. I feel like I'm living the American Dream—I've given birth to an invention. I've built a brand and a company and thousands of people are using the service all over the world. It's the most rewarding feeling.

Thanks to Lori Cheek, Cheekd.com!

## 20) Determine Your Own Value

I love doing what I love to do and getting paid for it. There's nothing like being able to determine your own value. The moment I decided to give entrepreneurship a wholehearted chance was when my boss proudly gave me my annual raise letter and it was \$1500 for the YEAR! While this was an annual occurrence that never bothered me before, this time was different. I knew that my value was worth way more than that, so now I get to set my own value as an entrepreneur. I also love that I can be selective about the type of work I do and the clients I work with. Sometimes people just aren't a good match which makes for a miserable existence in life and business. So as an entrepreneur I have the freedom to choose not to work with a client or project that is not a good fit, instead of having it thrust upon me. I love autonomy with true fulfillment. Although I had a level of autonomy in my last job, I wasn't fulfilled because I knew I was purposed for more. I absolutely LOVE being an entrepreneur and wouldn't trade it another another J.O.B.

Thanks to Cheryl Holland, A'Sista Project!

## 21) Its Own Reward

The business you choose should be something you love, because you may eat, sleep, and breathe it for years. The experience is its own reward. Having a great team and a support system is extremely important – as well as learning to delegate. There have been so many milestones. There's the first warehouse space we rented, our shop opening, but it was the moment we first purchased a group health insurance policy for our employees, that Pierre and I looked at each other in awe. This hobby has grown large enough to impact our employees' quality of life – amazing.

Thanks to Jamyla Bennu, Oyin Handmade!

## 22) Be My Own Boss

Many ask why I love being an entrepreneur. I could answer that question by saying that I want to be my own boss. That I want set my own schedule. That I want to do things on my terms; all those things have truth, but the bottom line is that entrepreneurship has opened the door for inspiration. As a business owner over the years, I've learned right from wrong, success and failure and everything in between. Once I discovered that I could help someone else learn entrepreneurship, I woke up everyday feeling fulfilled doing what I love. Many times as entrepreneurs, we make mistakes because we don't have a person leading us in the right direction. As an experienced businesswoman, I made it my duty to help keep others on the straight path. I know that when you have a coach guiding you, it's so much easier to avoid the mistakes that come with being a business owner because the leader already has been through the process of building a brand. That's why I love being there to push, guide and lead others to build their empires through entrepreneurship.

Thanks to Ariana Pierce!

## 23) You Never Know What's Coming Your Way

What I love most about being an entrepreneur is that you never know what's coming your way at any giving point in time – either for the good or for the bad. We hustle our asses off every day to push our projects forward, and then randomly – BAM! It explodes and all that work pays off. Of course, the opposite

also holds true, but that's all a part of the game, right? Big risks, big rewards. But unlike working for someone else, when things take off like a rocket you reap 100% of the rewards. And that's where the thrill lies.

Thanks to J\$!

## 24) More Time for Friends & Family

What I love about being an entrepreneur is that I have more time for friends and family. This certainly wasn't the case when I worked a traditional career, and even in the beginning of starting my own business I was working some rather long hours. But because of all of that hard work, I've finally started enjoying consistent success, so I finally do have more time to spend with my friends and family. It really makes for a more enriching life in my opinion, and I wouldn't want any other sort of career.

Thanks to Andrew Schrage, MoneyCrashers!

## 25) Creating Positive Disruption

Entrepreneurship is identifying and creating opportunities and providing unique contributions to society. It is a way of thinking and progression. As a 3rd generation family jeweler, I embraced my passion for entrepreneurship by bringing innovation to an otherwise stale, traditional practice. I started an eCommerce venture called Four Mine, a specialty retailer of online engagement rings and wedding bands. The vision is simple: to provide consumers an outside-the-box online and offline experience that disrupts industry conventions. I set out to pinpoint a major opportunity and add value to consumers so they can make better, more informed decisions. As a company, our way of thinking has fully embraced the entrepreneurial mindset. The best part about being an entrepreneur is that it gives you a reason to create positive disruption.

Thanks to Anubh Shah, Four Mine Co LLC!

## 26) Solving a Problem

As an inventor and entrepreneur I have enjoyed taking my product, Covermade Easy Bed Making comforters, from concept to consumer. We recently signed a deal with Brookstone, a leading retailer in innovation. The initial concept came about a few years ago, when I became very frustrated with "cover stealing", rushed mornings, and making the bed. I thought that there should be a bedding product on the market for consumers that could simplify bed making. I searched everywhere, online and in stores, and soon realized the market had nothing to offer. That's when Covermade was born! What I love most about being an entrepreneur is that I am solving a problem for consumers that was never addressed in the past, all while building a business and a product that I love and can truly call my own. A product that once only existed in my head is now in the hands of consumers, and it is has been so satisfying to watch the process unfold!

Thanks to Natalie Monaco, Covermade!

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### ABOUT GRESHAM HARKLESS JR.



Gresham Harkless is the Blogger-in-Chief for CEO Blog Nation. CEO Blog Nation is a community of blogs for entrepreneurs and business owners. Started in much the same way as most small businesses, CEO Blog Nation captures the essence of entrepreneurship by allowing entrepreneurs and business owners to have a voice. CEO Blog Nation provides news, information, events and even startup business tips for entrepreneurs, startups and business owners to succeed.



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