

**Succeed Your Way—and Live the  
Life You Want—With the  
19 Essential Secrets  
of Entrepreneurship**



# **You Call the Shots**

**Cameron Johnson**

**(He Started 12 Successful  
Businesses Before He Turned 21)**

**Foreword by David Bach,**  
*Author of **The Automatic Millionaire***

# ***YOU CALL THE SHOTS***

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Life You Want—with the 19 Essential  
Secrets of Entrepreneurship**

*From Someone Who Started  
12 Successful Businesses Before He Turned 21*

Cameron Johnson  
*with John David Mann*

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# Foreword

In the fall of 2005 I was asked to be the keynote speaker at a seminar for entrepreneurs. As I waited backstage before my talk, the host of the event came over to me and introduced me to the young man next to him, who stuck out his hand and said, “Hi, I’m Cameron Johnson—I’ve read your books, and it’s great to meet you!” It took a moment to dawn on me that this wasn’t a young fan who’d made his way backstage: *He was one of the other speakers.*

We spoke for a few minutes about financial literacy among young people, which we agreed was a problem that needs addressing, so that young people begin saving sooner and avoid racking up daunting credit card debt. Then he told me a little about his career as an entrepreneur. I was truly impressed. He also mentioned then that he was writing a book, and quite a book it has turned out to be.

Cameron’s story is compelling enough on its own, but he’s taken it further: He’s used it to introduce nineteen powerful success principles for young entrepreneurs. The principles he lays out aren’t just good advice for those on the younger side, though, they’re great resources for entrepreneurs of *any* age. That’s because they’re the product of many years of experience, even though Cameron is still so young.

Not only did Cameron start a dozen businesses while still in his teens, but he made every one of those businesses *successful*. It’s one thing to create something that takes off; it’s quite another to fly it around for a while after takeoff *and* bring it in for a safe landing. Ask anyone who was involved in starting Internet businesses during the late 1990s. There were a record number of business take-

offs in those days—and nearly as many crashes. Cameron cut his entrepreneurial teeth during those Internet “bubble” years, and it’s a measure of his maturity, and of the strength and value of the insights he offers in these pages, that he kept his feet solidly on the ground and never lost track of common sense.

Cameron has as firm a grasp of the principles of successful entrepreneurship. What’s more, he does a great job of articulating them so you can grasp them, too.

With the current boom in entrepreneurship, and so many easy-to-use and inexpensive business support services available on the Internet, there’s never been a better time to start your own business. Just as with saving for your future, starting out young in entrepreneurship will give you a leg up. In my investment seminars I’ve been impressed by the interest so many young people have in taking charge of their lives. A third of my audiences are under the age of twenty-five. The other day I had a fifteen-year-old bring her twelve-year-old brother to a seminar. As Cameron’s story shows, becoming an entrepreneur is a great way to make sure you’re in the driver’s seat of your life and you’re never too young to start.

The purpose of my work is to help people become financially free so they can live a rich life, true to their values and purpose. Cameron’s mission in *You Call the Shots* is to encourage people to take control of their work lives and find the work that will make them truly satisfied and happy. I believe every one of us was put on this Earth for a unique reason, to do something uniquely special. But most of us aren’t doing that, because we’re too busy living paycheck to paycheck. Starting your own business can be a great way to find your true calling, and to build a financially rewarding future. If that’s your dream, then Cameron Johnson’s story will be an inspiring source of a great deal of first-rate advice.

DAVID BACH

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Author of the #1 *New York Times* bestsellers

*The Automatic Millionaire* and *Start Late, Finish Rich*

October 2006

## INTRODUCTION

# *The Entrepreneurial Life*

I started my first business at age nine with \$50 and a home computer, and ran it from my room at home as a one-kid operation. By the time I was nineteen I had started nearly a dozen profitable businesses, and for my latest venture I had received a very attractive offer of \$10 million in venture capital. I turned that offer down and walked away because I didn't feel good about the conditions that would have been imposed on me if I'd taken the money. The venture capital firm would have called the shots, told me how to run my company, and paid me a salary that would've been less than I'd made on my own since I was twelve.

It was a lucrative offer, and who knows? Maybe with their backing and expertise I would have come out way ahead. But I didn't think it was the right deal for me. I made that decision without regret, and I've never looked back.

I knew this was not a now-or-never choice. There would be plenty of other opportunities to create even more successful businesses—because I'd learned the skills it takes to do so. Once you learn these skills, you never have to be tied to any one particular enterprise. I realized that while I could have taken someone else's \$10 million investment, I'd rather invest in myself.

I've been fortunate enough to make my first million before graduating from high school and buy my own house at twenty. At twenty-one, I've now put away enough in savings and other investments that I could practically retire today . . . if I wanted to. But of



course, that's the last thing on earth I'd want to do. I just enjoy it all too much. Not to say the money isn't important, but frankly, it's not why I do what I do. I do it because I love it.

I've always loved starting new businesses. I take pleasure in every aspect of it, from coming up with a new concept, or a unique twist on an existing concept, to finding a name that perfectly captures the nature of the business, to building the team, launching the enterprise, and watching it take off and grow. Of the more than dozen successful businesses I've launched over the past twelve years, every one of them has been a unique experience, and I've loved the process every time.

That's what I want to share with you in this book. How to build successful businesses, what it's like to do it, and why I love it so much—and hope you will, too.

Starting your own business is a great path for creating success on your own terms. It's an excellent way to build a financial base for yourself, but it's more than that. It's also about finding ways to exercise your creativity, to challenge yourself, and to rise to new levels of ability and experience. It's about the satisfaction of creating something that makes a contribution to other people's lives. And perhaps more than anything else, it's about freedom: the freedom to set your own hours, to do things your own way, to try out new ideas and put your talents to the test.

I wouldn't exchange the thrill of that freedom for anything in the world.

Entrepreneurship is more than a type of career; it's a way of life, and an exceptionally rewarding one. I was fortunate to learn this at a very early age, which is why I started my first business so young. I grew up in a family of self-made businesspeople, so I was exposed early on to the unique kind of satisfaction that comes with the entrepreneurial life.

In the South Roanoke neighborhood where I grew up, at the foot of southwestern Virginia's scenic Blue Ridge Mountains, most of my extended family lived within a four-block radius—my aunt and uncle, cousins, grandparents, and great-grandparents. And in

one way or another, practically everyone in our family has been an entrepreneur.

In 1938 my dad's grandfather, Harry G. Johnson Sr., started his car dealership, Magic City Ford. Roanoke earned the nickname "Magic City" just before the dawn of the twentieth century, when the convergence of several major railways ushered in an explosion of jobs and the city's population boomed from six hundred to five thousand in just two years.

Harry Sr.'s son, Harry Jr. (my grandfather), eventually took over the business, and in 1972 *his* son, Bill (my dad), started out washing windows and worked his way up, eventually taking the reins when Harry Jr. retired.

My mom's dad, Hugh Jones, ran a wholesale food distribution business called Roanoke Restaurant Service. He died when my mom, Ann, was just thirteen; her mom, Dot, took over the business. After graduating from high school my mom started college, but soon dropped out to run the company. She did quite well, building the company to about \$30 million in annual sales by the time she sold it to U.S. Food Service in the early 1980s.

It was always clear to me that my parents loved their work and relished building something of their own that they could be proud of. Talking about their businesses with each other was everyday conversation, and that made a huge impression on me. They weren't frustrated about their work, and they didn't come home full of stress. They were happy enough with their work that they wanted to share the doings of the day with each other, and with me, too.

Including me in the day-to-day flow of their businesses was normal for them, because that's what their parents had done. When my mom was little, her parents kept a cot for her at their office so she could nap whenever she needed to, and when she wasn't at school, chances were good she'd be at the office, doing her homework, reading, or napping on that cot. Sometimes I wonder how much business conversation soaked in while she slept.

My parents even took me with them sometimes on their business trips. My mom always considered travel a valuable education; in her view, learning how to adapt to different customs and cultures

and styles of interaction was every bit as important as academic learning. They traveled a lot for my dad's business, and even as a very young boy, I was often allowed to accompany them to meetings. While I didn't understand everything they were talking about, I got to experience the life and shop talk of a business owner—and I loved it.

Maybe the most important thing I learned from them about being an entrepreneur was something my dad used to say: "If you love what you do, you'll never have to work a day in your life."

Some people never get around to starting their own business out of the fear that it's too difficult, or that the risks are too high and the chances of success are too daunting. Don't believe it. Starting your own business is hard work, but it's not rocket science. I started my first company with no real business training and almost no money, and although I had entrepreneurial parents, they never funded any of my businesses or helped me run them. The truth is, building a successful business is more about common sense and the right attitude than it is about any kind of special training or inherent talents.

And the risks? Part of being an entrepreneur is learning how to take only those risks you can afford. You don't have to take out loans or go into serious debt to build a successful business. I've never taken a single business loan—from a bank *or* from my parents. Risk is definitely part of the game, but you can take calculated risks without risking your shirt. You can make plenty of profit with a fairly small operation, then leverage those earnings by using them to build your next enterprise, growing your financial base step-by-step as you build your knowledge base. I've launched more than a dozen successful businesses and never lost a cent. This is not just luck. I've watched my expenses carefully, used common sense, and have never taken foolhardy risks.

During the "Internet bubble" years, a lot of entrepreneurs let their growth and projections get away from them. They lost touch with the core, everyday realities of business, and as a consequence, when the bubble burst, hundreds of thousands of people lost money—in some cases, *millions*—practically overnight. People then

ran scared from the Internet because so many lost so much during those few years. And it wasn't just those involved in dot.coms who lost. Millions of people who worked at more traditional companies had invested their money in these new dot.com stocks, or had their 401(k)s invested aggressively in technology mutual funds—and they all lost money, too. The whole country lost money, and for the next few years everybody was afraid of Internet companies.

I was fortunate during that time: several of my businesses rode those same growth trends on the Internet, but were able to avoid getting blindsided or suffering dire consequences. In fact, one of my businesses, CertificateSwap.com, was singled out by *Entrepreneur* magazine as an example of the new generation of Web-based business successes.

While I've had lots of success with Web-based business, this isn't a book about how to start only Internet businesses. The success secrets I'll share with you in this book apply to starting, building, and managing *any* kind of business. The reason I didn't have the troubles so many others did during those days was that I had learned to follow faithfully these fundamental principles.

I credit a big part of my success to the experiences I've had in traditional storefront environments, from working summers in my aunt's furniture store to managing 140 employees as general sales manager at my dad's dealership, Magic City Ford. In fact, having the ability to combine the best of both worlds—the power and reach of the Web along with the tried-and-true lessons of traditional business—is one of the most important keys to successful entrepreneurship today.

The Internet boom isn't over. Far from it. In fact, I think it's just begun. Accessing the Internet is fast becoming easier, cheaper, and more convenient than ever, whether through cellular phones, PDAs, or laptops with wireless cards. (I used this same technology in Japan six years ago, when I was fifteen. We're still that far behind Japan in our consumer electronics—it's amazing to think of the great technology still on the way.)

Soon we'll all be connected to the Internet anytime we want, and anywhere we go.

In his 2005 book *The Next Millionaires*, bestselling economist and two-time presidential economic adviser Paul Zane Pilzer wrote:

Many people now have a pessimistic or fatalistic view about the future of the Internet. “Oh, the Internet opportunities . . . they’ve come and gone, and it wasn’t all it was cracked up to be.” Nothing could be further from the truth! The fact is the Internet is a new and emerging growth super-industry that has barely gotten started. It is about to jump off our desktops and PC screens, onto our cell phones and into every aspect of our lives.

I agree completely. Technology is going to keep evolving, and it’s only going to make business easier, better, and more efficient. There is as much opportunity today as there was ten years ago—no, strike that: there’s *more* opportunity today.

The real subject of this book isn’t me—it’s you. The reason I’m sharing my story is so you can take whatever insights or ideas it may give you, and use them to create your own success. To create a life where *you* call the shots.

The truth is, you can start a successful business at any age; it doesn’t matter if you’re nine, nineteen, or ninety. You don’t need big capital, expensive education, or specialized knowledge. You just have to have faith in yourself and in your ideas, be willing to take smart risks, and follow the basic principles that every successful entrepreneur learns sooner or later.

These secrets are simple, but that doesn’t mean they’re obvious. I’ve done the best I can to explain them by sharing my story of how I’ve learned them myself. At the end of the book I’ve added a brief section of specific tips and how-tos, along with references to some great resources on the Web that you can use for learning more of the nitty-gritty of how to plan, launch, and manage your own business.

I don’t pretend to be a guru or a mogul. I’m just a seriously happy serial entrepreneur who’s had some interesting and valuable experiences that I know can help you find your own success.

To me, true success is about being happy, living a full and rich life with great friendships, and about thoroughly enjoying what you do. It's about growing the economy in innovative, creative, and ethical ways, creating growth and jobs and opportunity for others. It's about leaving the world a better place than you found it—and having a seriously good time while you're doing it.

I want to show you a way you can achieve all that and more: the entrepreneurial life.

## *Put Yourself Out There*

I have always believed in going after the things you want in life. So many people tend to hesitate, to overthink, or second-guess. Not entrepreneurs. One of the keys to being a successful entrepreneur is being willing to put yourself out there, to throw yourself headlong into the pursuit of your dreams.

It's natural to worry about how others will react to your ideas, about whether they'll try to shoot them down, say they're too risky, call them pie-in-the-sky, tell you they don't have a chance of working. But it's not their business, it's *your* business. And a big part of being an entrepreneur is having the courage to take chances, to embrace the fact that your success ultimately comes down to you, your vision, and your passion.

Becoming an entrepreneur requires learning how to take lots of noes to get to yes—learning to consider no as a challenge, not a defeat.

There's a lot to learn about being an entrepreneur, and most of it you can learn as you go. But there is one thing you have to know from the start: if you want it to work, you have to put yourself out there and ask for what you want.

In fact, the best business people will respect you all the more when you do.

This is a lesson I learned during the summer after third grade, and it's one I'll never forget.

\* \* \*

In late 1992, just after my eighth birthday, I saw the movie *Home Alone 2: Lost in New York*. Most of the film was shot at the famous Plaza Hotel in New York City, at Fifty-ninth Street and Fifth Avenue. Just a few years earlier, Donald Trump had purchased and renovated this landmark (at the cost of some \$50 million—not counting the \$400-million-plus purchase price). He even made a cameo appearance in the film.

I had never been to Manhattan, and when I saw the movie, I knew I had to go. My dad said he'd make a deal with me: "Tell you what: you get straight A's and I'll take you to New York."

So I did. For the second half of my third-grade year, I got straight A's. When the school year was over, I said to my dad, "Okay, I'm ready for New York! And by the way, can we stay at the Plaza?"

My dad agreed, and our travel plans were all set. What my parents didn't know was that once I knew for sure that we were going, I wrote a letter to Donald Trump:

*Dear Mr. Trump,*

*Hi. You don't know me, but my name is Cameron Johnson, and I live in Roanoke, Virginia. My family and I are coming to New York next month, and I've never been to New York before, and we are staying at the Plaza. Could I possibly see the suite where they filmed the movie Home Alone 2? I would really, really like to do that.*

*—Cameron Johnson*

I didn't hear back from him, but after all, he was a busy man.

Finally the day came: we flew to New York and took a cab straight to the Plaza. At the check-in desk, the lady registering us leaned over so she could see me and asked, "Are you Cameron Johnson?"

"Yes, that's me," I replied.

My parents were flabbergasted. Why was this woman talking to me instead of to them?!

"Well," the woman continued, "Mr. Trump has left some gifts here for you . . ." and she gave me an assortment of things that



included a Talkboy tape recorder, just like the one Macaulay Culkin had used in the movie. I was impressed—but she wasn't finished yet.

“Mr. Trump has also arranged for a personal shopper to accompany you tomorrow morning to FAO Schwarz for a private shopping tour before the store opens” (I think my mom's mouth was hanging open at this point) “and, of course, you'll want to see the suite where they filmed *Home Alone 2*. Actually, Mr. Trump has arranged to upgrade your room—you'll be *staying* in that very same suite.”

As if that weren't enough, when we got up to the suite, we found it filled with cookies, “I ♥ NY” T-shirts, and all sorts of New York-related gifts. And next to all the gifts, there was a note from Mr. Trump that said:

*I hope you enjoy your stay here. Wishing you much success.*

—Donald J. Trump

The next day, when we got back to the room after breakfast and our amazing visit to FAO Schwarz, the light was blinking on the phone in our room. We had a message: Donald Trump had called to make sure everything was okay. Had we met the man at FAO Schwarz? And had he taken care of me okay, and did I have everything I needed?

Trump had also left a signed business card for me. Of course, I didn't have any business cards at this point, but I'd gotten some little cards at FAO Schwarz, so I signed one of those and left that for Mr. Trump, along with a carefully handwritten message:

*Dear Mr. Trump,*

*Thank you for the Talkboy, the suite, and for everything else. Keep watching, because I plan to be the next Donald Trump.*

—Cameron Johnson

That whole experience at the Plaza taught me how important it is to go after what you want. There was no real reason why my parents and I should have been treated so well. We weren't VIPs, or

connected to Trump or the Trump organization in any way. So why did we end up in that suite, and me with my own personal shopper and private tour of FAO Schwarz?

Because I wrote to him and asked.

Of course, Mr. Trump is also a generous, classy guy who knows how to treat people well. But that wouldn't have mattered if I hadn't taken a chance and written him that letter. I expect that he was also a little impressed that I'd done so.

There's an old expression in sales: *You can give the best presentation in the world, but you still have to ask for the sale.*

Are you always going to get a response like the one I got from Mr. Trump? No, but *sometimes* you will. And the more you put yourself out there, finding where your passion takes you and going after it, the more *often* you will. The truth is, success is not so much a matter of looking for opportunity; it's more that you actually *create* opportunities. And one way of doing that is not being afraid to ask.

Many people see “asking for the sale” as one of the most intimidating ways there is of putting yourself out there. But asking for the sale is the essence of what an entrepreneur does and even if you don't think of yourself as being “in sales,” if you're in business for yourself, then no matter what your title is or how you see your role, *you're in the business of selling*. When you make yourself part of your brand, put yourself in your ads or speak with media contacts; reach out to your social network to look for contacts, resources, or customers; go looking for prospective partners or strategic alliances— as you go about building your business, you're selling *you* every step of the way.

I didn't launch my first actual business until I was nine years old, but I'd been having fun selling for years before that.

As I said in the introduction, my dad runs a Ford dealership in Roanoke, Virginia, that was started by his grandfather. When I was five years old, the May 1990 edition of *DealerWorld* featured an article on our family's business, which included a photo of my grandfather, my dad, and me. The piece was all about my dad and his father, but it mentioned me right at the end:

As Bill Johnson talks about his “family business,” his sprightly five-year-old son Cameron runs around the offices selling employees his drawings of cars for a buck each.

The following year, I got a little more organized in my pursuit of the entrepreneurial life.

My great-grandparents owned a farm in Bedford, Virginia, about twenty miles from our home. In the summer, there would always be a surplus of tomatoes and corn, which we would bring home to Roanoke.

One day I asked my mom if I could take some of our tomatoes and sell them in the neighborhood, and she said she thought that'd be fine. So I loaded up my little red wagon and started down the street in our neighborhood. Halfway down our block, I came to a neighbor's house. I rolled my wagon up the walk to the front porch, reached up, and knocked on the door. A lady answered.

“Hello,” I said. “Would you like to buy a tomato?”

“Well, I might,” she said. “How much are they?”

“A dollar apiece.”

She said, “That's a lot of money for one tomato!”

And I replied, “Well, ma'am, they're the best tomatoes you'll ever taste.”

“Is that right?” she said.

I replied, “It is.” And before she could think of the next thing to say, I added, “Does your husband like tomatoes?”

“He sure does,” she answered.

“Well, then,” I said, “you should buy two.”

And she did. She gave me two dollars, I gave her two tomatoes, and I was off and running.

“Door-to-door” selling is supposed to be one of the hardest sales methods there is. The prospect of selling door-to-door strikes dread in the hearts of even some of the best salesmen in the world. But I didn't know that, and the truth is, I was having an absolute blast selling those tomatoes door-to-door to my neighbors.

Of course, not everyone I visited said yes. I got at least as many noes as yesses. But that didn't bother me—in fact, in a way I

enjoyed the noes even more than the yesses. I saw the rejection as a challenge, part of the process—and part of the fun. When a customer said no, or no, thank you, I learned that this wasn't the end of the sale at all: it was when the actual selling really started.

I knew our tomatoes were delicious, so whenever someone said no, I was genuinely curious about why. Rather than simply take their no for an answer, I would ask them why they didn't want to buy. Sometimes, in the process of answering, they actually changed their minds. Sometimes they didn't. Either way, I was having a great time.

That summer, I watched some kids in my neighborhood open lemonade stands. I noticed that they often sat at their stands for hours, selling very little lemonade. I figured, there *had* to be a better way to get people to stop and buy. I thought about that for a while. When I set up *my* lemonade stand across the street, I sold not only lemonade but also cookies, brownies, and muffins. I also charged less for my lemonade—the lowest price in the neighborhood.

The first day my stand was open, I quickly sold out, and I continued selling out every day after that, too. The other kids eventually closed their stands and became my customers.

Of course, the lemonade stand was limited to the summer months, and I thought it would be great to have a way to make a little pocket money throughout the year, so when fall came, I decided to have a yard sale.

The day of my sale arrived—and it rained. But I wasn't willing to let that ruin my plans. I hauled all my items down to our basement and held my sale there instead. It not only worked, it worked so well that I made it a regular event, selling my old toys, stuffed animals, old records, whatever I could think of that we didn't want anymore. I called them “rainy-day sales” and continued running them for the next three years.

I soon branched out from selling my own old stuff to selling my friends' things for a commission, and this led to the idea of selling *new* toys that I won at fairs or game arcades. One arcade had those

quarter-a-try crane machines that picks up toys, and I found one that was not all that hard to win. That summer, I won about a hundred stuffed animals from that machine, and sold them for three to five dollars apiece. Since I'd invested only a quarter a try, I thought that was a pretty good return.

I was making good money and having a lot of fun doing it. And while I never stopped to think about it in these terms at the time, I was also learning the basic principles of business.

Starting out so young gave me a certain courage that comes with blissful ignorance. I had the confidence that comes with not knowing any better. As I've grown older and seen more of the business world, there have been times when I've had to overcome doubts and work to maintain my confidence, just like anybody else. But the thrill of trying out new ideas and seeing them take root and grow has always made it worth the effort.

I was fortunate to learn very early on the key principle that all successful entrepreneurs need to know: *First, you have to believe in yourself.*

It's actually not that difficult to succeed. It's much more common sense than rocket science. But it starts with finding the courage to put yourself out there.

Believing in yourself is what gives you the confidence and resilience to deal with the rejections and doubts. It drives you to do the best job you can, no matter what you're doing.

Over time, I've learned to trust my instincts—and that's crucial. You can learn all kinds of things from other people, but ultimately it's your own instincts that you'll need to rely on. The bottom line of your business is *you*.

Whether you are selling door-to-door, on the phone, through an infomercial, or on a Web site, ultimately the venue doesn't matter. All of these methods work. First and foremost, you must be able to sell *yourself*. People don't buy your product or service only because they like it or want it; they also buy it because they like *you*. If they don't like you, then in many cases it doesn't matter how much they like the product you're selling, *they won't buy it*.

If you put yourself out there with confidence, you'll find that most people respect you and respond well to you, whether or not they want what you're selling.

Believing in yourself leads naturally to a second principle: *You have to believe in what you're selling.*

People sometimes think of selling as the art of being pushy, crafty, or even manipulative. In fact, it's exactly the opposite. The best salespeople focus on asking questions and listening, not pushing.

I don't believe in high-pressure selling. High pressure is what people use when they're selling something nobody wants, or charging far more than their product is worth. There's a difference between being persuasive and applying pressure. I'm persuasive when I'm selling, but that's because I truly believe in what I'm selling and the value it will create for my customer. My feeling is, I'd be doing my customers a disservice if I let them *not* buy my product.

The best salespeople are so dedicated to giving customers what they want that they are willing to be as rigorous, patient, and dedicated as it takes to make the sale. They don't give up easily because they believe in what they're doing.

I believe in everything I'm selling, and this makes it so much easier to give customers reasons to buy. I truly feel they're making a mistake if they don't buy my service or product. When I told that lady, "Well, ma'am, they're the best tomatoes you'll ever taste," I wasn't making that up. They *were* delicious.

I'm always genuinely fascinated to know why people *wouldn't* want what I'm selling. If you're not passionate about the product or service you're offering, how could you possibly approach people with genuine confidence? Make sure you're proud of what you sell and the value it creates in people's lives, and you'll instantly become a better entrepreneur.

Believing in yourself also leads to a third success principle: *When you respect yourself, treating other people with respect comes naturally.* The amazingly thoughtful response I got from Donald Trump at the Plaza is a great example of this.

Of course, Trump is a master of promotion, and never misses an opportunity to increase his public exposure. But what did he have to gain by impressing an eight-year-old kid or his parents? He had no idea I'd be writing this book thirteen years later. It was as clear to me then as it is today that he was simply being the gentleman that he is, and treating me with respect.

Trump is famous for his tough-talking, combative persona, but don't let that fool you. He knows what every truly successful businessperson knows: treating other people with great respect is one of the most powerful secrets of business success. Keep doing that over time with everyone you encounter, and you'll find that people are consistently receptive to you and to your products, services, and ideas. Any fears and doubts you have will start to melt away.

And then you won't hesitate to go ahead and ask for the sale.