

Introduction: A bad case of the 'whys'

Entrepreneurs are the rock stars of our time.

Wherever you look these days you see them splashing about in all their entrepreneurial glory.

They take every opportunity to tell us:

- How they started with nothing and built an empire.
- How they're living the four-hour working week dream.
- How they succeeded in business by taking risks, dreaming big and reaching high.

And it's all so exhausting.

As I read these articles, dressed in my PJ bottoms and dropping biscuit crumbs onto my keyboard, I feel a brief twinge of envy.

But I also feel a quiver of confusion.

Because I should want all of that, right?

I know my business dreams should feature me being on stage, with my hair groomed and the lapel mic dangling tantalisingly from expensive smart casualwear. Oozing confidence from every orifice, I'd be pushing out little spits of Ted Talk genius to the adoring crowd, and generally basking in the glory of my own success.

But the problem is, I don't want all of that. In fact, this whole entrepreneur thing makes me feel a bit gaggy.

When I started my business I had one simple goal – survival. I just wanted to leave the horrors of the boardroom behind and make enough money to live comfortably. The notion of entrepreneurialism (a word I still struggle to say out loud) never crossed my mind, and becoming an entrepreneur was never part of my game plan.

(Okay, let's be honest. I never even *had* a game plan.)

As for the personal attributes of the entrepreneur... well, I'm not particularly glamorous, confident *or* wise. My spirit of adventure rarely extends beyond taking a new route on my daily dog walk.

And the thought of taking a risk actually makes my nipples invert.

I've stumbled, and bumbled and failed my way through running a business.

There have been moments of utter joy and to terrible crushing misery and think I've experienced every emotions possible (and discovered a few new ones I never knew existed).

Oh, and I've done it all without a business coach (unless you count my dog, who's a great listener but occasionally wees on my printer). There's never been anyone to guide me through the choppy business seas to the calm pond of success. I've paddled my own business canoe all the way. And my arms are tired.

But without wanting to toot my own horn I've developed not one but three successful businesses. I'm making way more money than I ever did as an ad agency manager, and working far fewer hours to earn it. And all in my crumb-covered PJs from a hut in my back garden.

I'm the first to admit that a lot of it happened by happy accident rather than design. I've never followed the so-called rules of business. Most of the time I've either ignored them or deliberately broken them.

So in this book I want to explain my approach to business, and how it's helped me on the road to success - often despite myself.

While I haven't exactly cracked the four-hour week, I am working just a few short days a week – bookended by school pick-ups and drop-offs. And money? Well, let's just say I'm doing okay. (Talking about money makes my wiggly bits cringe.)

Mind you, I don't measure financial security in private jet miles, but rather in not having to check the receipt at Coles, and being able to enjoy a wine-fuelled online shopping spree without crippling the family finances.

More importantly, my business success lets me work how I want and when I want. No greasy boss man to set my objectives, and no-one to answer to except me, myself and I.

For me, the chance to carve your own path, love what you do, and earn money doing it is the true spirit of entrepreneurship.

And that's why I'm writing this book.

I hope that by sharing my business highs and woes I can offer you a little reassurance. I want to show you there are many different ways to the top. And that your top doesn't need to be the same as everyone else's.

I'm sharing my story so I can pass on what I've learned along the way — little Toon tips that will hopefully make your business life easier.

Most of all, I hope I can make you smile, and maybe even snort tea onto your own crumb-covered keyboard. Because let's face it: business can be stressful, boring and difficult (a nice way of saying that sometimes it totally sucks balls). And being able to laugh and take the piss out of both myself and my business has always helped me get through the tough times.

Who shouldn't read this book?

You won't find any get rich quick schemes in this book. And I won't be selling you some impossible dream of working ten minutes a day from a hammock either.

And if you're looking for a serious, hard-hitting business tome or philosophical deep-dive, you should head back to Amazon. This book is business life — and proud to be.

Who *should* read this book?

If you've ever looked at those "Top 10 Entrepreneurs" lists and struggled to identify with *any* of them, then this book is for you.

Confessions of a Misfit Entrepreneur. V1

It's for people trying to juggle shopping, getting the dog shampooed, and broken washing machines with lead generation pages, social media scheduling and plugin updates.

It's for people who get a tight feeling their tummy when they scroll through Facebook late at night and see their competitors rising up the ranks.

And it's for people who are struggling to make sense of their place in the business world, questioning what's normal, and who keep asking themselves, "Am I good enough?"

In other words, it's for normal human beings like you and me.

This book is for those of us who don't fit the standard entrepreneur mould. Who want to be reassured they can still be a success without needing to set up their own magazine or employ 212 hipsters in a warehouse.

And by the end of the book you'll know you *can* be a success. Just on your own terms.

P.S. Yes, you *are* good enough.