

4 THINK BIG, ACT SMALL

I used to carry two business cards with me. The first said KEVIN PLANK, PRESIDENT. I'd give it to my vendors and fabric people to let them know if they needed to get paid, I was the guy to deal with. The other card just said SALES MANAGER. When you're sitting there making a sale, the customer wants to think there's a bigger resource behind you to invest in. You

never lie, but you give the impression there's a bigger team behind you. I made my first sale to Georgia Tech. For this 23-year-old to sit there and sell them, they want to have confidence in a larger organization. **Kevin Plank** chairman, president, CEO, Under Armour



Plank

5 CONQUER FAILURE

In 1994 I sold my company and went to work for Southwest Airlines. Five months later I was fired. That was the best thing that ever happened to me, because the day I cleaned out my desk was the day JetBlue began. It was a drive to do better and to innovate that led me to launch JetBlue.

David Neeleman, founder and chairman, JetBlue

Gently keep digging to understand why someone says no. Given the same facts, good people come to the same conclusions. Keep your mind open. Usually, the other party will come around or you'll discover why the original "no" was a smart answer.

Jim Balsillie, co-CEO, Research In Motion



David Neeleman

6 A GOOD IDEA OR PRODUCT SELLS ITSELF

First impressions literally don't mean shit if you've got the goods. A friend helped arrange a meeting for me to present to a large supermarket. Being early, I grabbed a smoke, picked up my briefcase, and went upstairs. Nervously waiting in the lobby, I set my briefcase on my lap, and before you knew it I was brought to the meeting.

The interaction with the buyer was like great sex. She loved the price points, loved the brand, and was about to give me a PO when she abruptly said: "That's all the time I have. Thanks for coming in." No handshake, no smile. Nothing. As I was leaving, I ran into the friend who arranged the meeting. Without even saying hi, she pointed to my jacket sleeve and said, "Andy, is that shit on your arm?" Apparently, I was so nervous about how I'd do that I didn't even notice I'd put my briefcase down in a pile of dog doo-doo while I was smoking and got it all over my suit when I was waiting in the lobby.

The next day we got a large PO. The moral of the story? If your product is truly great, it can sell itself no matter how good or bad you come across. Trust your product or idea, relax, and the rest will take care of itself. And I put total trust in my partners. Knowing what they can do, I find myself nothing more than a funnel from which their hard work flows.

Andy Schamisso, founder and president, Inko's White Iced Tea

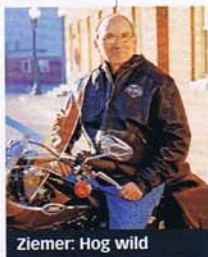
10 TAKE CARE OF YOUR OWN

Our employees live and breathe motorcycles, work incredible numbers of hours, and then go out and spend their weekends riding. Sure, they're well compensated for their efforts. But many of them put forth efforts that far exceed their compensation for the simple reason that they love everything about what they're doing.

Jim Ziemer

Don't be cheap with the people who work for you. Too often people in business become too focused on what the shareholders want; they tend to lose sight of what really drives your business to succeed every day...the employees.

David Neeleman



Ziemer: Hog wild

11 THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS LIMITATIONS

I was \$600,000 in debt when I discovered my agent in China had been stealing from me. The factory hadn't been paid, because the agent had a gambling problem. This was when we had just put in our largest toy order ever—\$500,000 worth. I had to fly to China and hire an interpreter. I called my agent and said I would meet him at the factory. He was very reluctant. The factory owner was furious at Kidrobot because he thought we were ripping him off. I had to convince him that this agent was the one ripping him off, and make a separate deal with him to get my toys onto a boat out of China.

The lesson you'd expect from this might be not to trust people or something about proper business practices. But that's not it. The lesson I took away was about personal capacity and the realization that I could handle more extreme situations than I thought. What became clear was that what I thought were my personal limitations were totally illusory. I still get scared when things aren't going well, but pressure can be useful.

Paul Budnitz

Parade magazine called snowboarding the worst new sport. I thought so many times about bailing. Anyone who has ever been involved in a successful start-up, that seems to be a common theme.

Jake Burton

12 Get rich or die trying

When it comes to retirement, I know my exit strategy: cremation.

Bob Parsons M



Parsons: He's your daddy