

TRP lessons from business: from ramen noodles to Forbes 30 under 30

872 upvotes | 26 February, 2018 | by CasaDeFranco

- My startup journey coincided with my application of TRP principles.

Dostoevsky once wrote, "To live without hope is to cease to live."

It is only through a life struggle that you will achieve greatness. The good life will kill you long before you are dead.

I went from an overweight supply chain exec in my mid 20's, living with an older woman, no real friends (post military social life died) or understanding of my life goal; to making \$7.6MM last calendar year, being listed on Forbes 30 under 30, fittest I've been since I left the military, a good close circle of friends who inspire me and finally a passion for my vocation. (Proof at bottom).

I won't expound on dating, relationships or lifting, these I'm trying to constantly improve but I will illustrate the principles that helped me find my direction, my raison d'etre and accordingly increase my SMV.

What's the most important skill for an entrepreneur?

A mentor dropped this question in my lap, he paused patiently waiting as I considered my response.

People.

Understanding people.

The biggest asset you have before you in your ability to understand people; including yourself.

1. Understand your customer

Understand a pain point you have or customers have. Would people pay for a solution?

Be it cloud data solutions, instantaneous translation; or quick internet data search.

Find a solution, build it and engage with customers who will pay for it.

2. How to recruit talent and manage people

People execute on your vision. Your ability to recognize talent, to convince them to take substantial salary cuts, to train young professionals, and most importantly to challenge, reward and retain them is critical.

Recruit students or recent graduates looking for a new challenge, or experience in a new vertical in your industry, the best candidates demonstrate they have worked in side projects or leadership in social activities. Demonstrate that your product or technology is potentially 10x better than any other product on the market. Sales is like dating, if you can convince a woman to get fucked you can most likely sell an opportunity to someone who's hungry.

Once you have these engineers on board, give them a probationary period, let them demonstrate you made the right choice. If you don't, terminate their employment. If they prove you're right; issue them equity (make this equity with a 12 month cliff and 3 year vesting - make them earn that equity and build it's value), pay them your wage, and build a company culture of working hard and encouraging competition.

Create objectives with quantifiable milestones.

If he is a mechanical engineer, design this component by the project plan timeline, if he is a sales

executive, close this contract or execute the MSA by date x, etc. Hire two of a role if budget permits, appeal to their competitive drive and transparently illustrate which of the two is performing better. Men want a challenge, they want to grow, they want someone who recognizes their hard work and rewards it. If you close x or perform beyond my slightly high expectation, we'll have a glass of whiskey to celebrate, I'll note your high performance at that weekly meeting and I'll give him a bonus in equity from the company ESSOP at their annual review.

Give credit where credit is due.

But conversely, critique bad performance, state I know you're working hard but I'd suggest you do this, prove you can live up to my expectation. Be short, concise in your admonishments.

Execution is everything.

If they continue to perform poorly, assess expectations, if they are reasonable then I'll line up a brief discussion, if there is no improvement you must terminate their employment. Hire fast, fire fast; dead weight will kill your company.

As a leader you will also have to continually improve and work on your leadership qualities which moves into the second point.

3. Learn from other people's mistakes

The greatest tool TRP ever taught me was that knowledge is best attained from wise counsel not by making mistakes. Either from reading the words of men long gone like Aurelius or by surrounding yourself with men who have more experience than you, this is the quicker and less painful method of learning.

If you read a book from an author who has been instrumental in your thinking, or who inspires you. Contact them; you will be surprised at how many will respond.

I identified 5 executives who were either still in industry or had recently retired, and invited them for a coffee to discuss their experiences and insights they could share. Rinse and repeat until you have a network of 10 executives. This will only cost you time and often instead of costing you money, this network will be critical for the most important element in your business, money.

4. Network with people

People don't invest in ideas or products, they invest in people. When they observe you, a young leader taking a limited wage, and a team of good engineers working under salary, that's the team many will choose to invest in.

If you're not rich, surround yourself with rich people - this sounds easier said than done. Dress nicely, get some nice quality cards printed and network at events like conferences, use LinkedIn to network, don't be afraid to leverage your personal network. Use monthly meetings to illustrate that you are hard working, always ask for assistance where possible and demonstrate that you are coachable, and finally have your actions illustrate that your team can execute.

Ask advisors for introductions to investors and network with investors.

5. Manipulate people - utilise propaganda

The key to understanding people is recognising people seldom think independently.

FOMO or fear of missing out is a big driver in investment and typically if your advisory board members invest their friends shall also.

This also applies to customers. An easy way to also get increased exposure if leveraging the media, we planted several stories in the media regarding our company which helped drive B2B customers to engage

with us. I can expound on this further as this is an art form itself and also a reflection that journalism standards have decreased considerably.

This helped us achieve our first 7 figure contracts.

Close your Pre A round, like managing your team set dates and keep people on point. Likewise drive customers through a CRM and keep them pushing through the cycle. Always be closing.

Also as with women, always have a plan B and plan C as investors can be fickle.

6. Understand yourself

Finally the most important person is you, as a senior executive in your company you're instrumental in determining the vector of your business and secondly in executing the boards directions.

Always get enough sleep

Eat well

Work out

Hold yourself to a high standard. Qualis rex, talis grex. Work hard with your team.

Use your team and delegate where possible. You want to make yourself obsolete and hire those who can do time consuming tasks better than you so you can concentrate on the broader vision.

Get a recommended financial planner, don't spend your money beyond when you were poor - particularly with women. Establish a trust in BVI and use it to hold your equity and purchase large assets like houses etc. Do not get married without a solid agreement executed before and mitigate the damage of a defacto breakup or divorce by shifting your assets to external vehicles - speak to a professional for localised advice.

Approach women with the exact same approach one takes to business, transactional. Business will teach you skill sets useful for women, act with indifference, use long silences used in negotiations, have a limited time schedule, listen more and talk less, dress for success and know your value.

7. Endgame

When you are at your top, be careful of the fall.

Have fun but not too much fun - keep on working and don't touch cocaine or other hard drugs. Say good bye to free time until you cash out.

Do not rest on your laurels, take a short break and repeat the above and leverage your experience and network to accelerate time between startup and IPO / Cashout.

Surround yourself with good people and focus on the next challenge. God speed

Casa De Franco

If anyone is starting a business feel free to post a comment with questions here and pm me.

[Proof](#)

Archived from theredarchive.com

Comments

LiveAFTSOV • 82 points • 26 February, 2018 02:24 AM

I'm really glad you explained how to properly recruit people I've had this problem where I've been forced to do everything on my own without a team or a gang to help me with

Docbear64 • 21 points • 26 February, 2018 08:28 AM

I think working with competent people is just like dating / fucking the first chick who treats you like Chad. After you experience a certain bar or performance it becomes very difficult to work with anyone who doesn't meet , exceeded, or invest in growing to that level of participation . No point in taking on deadweight.

[deleted] • 32 points • 26 February, 2018 03:47 AM*

It's impossible to do anything on your own. Eventually you need people to do things. The best way to lead these people is to read some great leadership books like "how to win friends" by dale carnegie, "the art of winning" by dennis connor, "the art of war", "the 48 laws of power", etc. These books will most likely blow your mind and open your eyes to the amazing possibilities at your fingertips; the power of people is huge if there is a good leader to guide them.

max_peenor • 9 points • 26 February, 2018 11:06 PM

Op left out a very critical part here: recruiting and people management are location and sector dependent. A lot of what he says here would cause serious problems in the valley or Japan, just to name a couple places. It would be ideal in other locations.

Do not take posts like this as prescriptive advice Like everything else, it should be viewed as a toolbox.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 10 points • 26 February, 2018 03:41 AM

Doing it solo is near impossible. If you can't recruit someone then get another founder.

[deleted] • 23 points • 26 February, 2018 02:58 AM

Question:

A friend and I are in the early phases of starting a business together, and I wanted your input on investor equity. In your experience, what is the best place to find investors (angel, or otherwise), and how much equity do you offer them up front? I know the number is surely different for different types of businesses, but I ask because one of my biggest concerns is giving up too much equity up front, only to discover that additional and substantial funding is needed later on.

Thank you for your time and insight, and congratulations on your success!

CasaDeFranco[S] • 21 points • 26 February, 2018 03:21 AM*

To answer your question, as per the post. Your board of advisors and mentors should be your early investors and network to other early investors. Rich people know rich people. Use platforms like angellist, events and linkedin to generate initial leads, then exploit network to expand it.

If you can, avoid dilution and bootstrap with money from customers.

Early stage / angel investors aren't worth the dilution unless they have network that can shift you into a Series A round.

If you dilute, do your DD on their previous investments first and see their appetite and followup potential.

max_peenor • 8 points • 26 February, 2018 11:10 PM*

Early stage / angel investors aren't worth the dilution unless they have network that can shift you into a Series A round.

This depends on the fiscal environment. A year ago, absolutely set sights on Series A though mezzanine placements (if it becomes necessary) from the start. In 2003 that would have been suicide; your best bet would have been to secure financing as soon as possible. The tides come and go, so keep an finger on the pulse of Wall Street (and it's peers, of course).

CasaDeFranco[S] • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 11:26 PM

True, I spend more time in China's VC ecosystem and it's performing quite differently from the SF VC scene. Do you think it's a bubble stateside?

max_peenor • 6 points • 27 February, 2018 07:14 AM

Do you think it's a bubble stateside?

Absolutely, but it isn't the same as 1996-2003. It won't be a tectonic shift (and shitting) for the economy this time, but heads will roll.

christmas_miracle_69 • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 03:04 AM [recovered]

Awesome post man. I am in sales, 2nd year as an account manager and finally uncovering some of the “secrets” to success. Resilience has been my number 1 asset thus far.

Love the idea of reaching out to my favourite authors, how have you done this in the past?

Also I need to do a better job of staying away from the nose beers..

CasaDeFranco[S] • 22 points • 26 February, 2018 03:33 AM*

I founded the company with a good friend. He was smarter, sharper and a better executive in every category. He bailed early on in the company due to personal reasons, long hours, low pay, bitch girlfriend et al.

Persistence is incredibly important.

In regards to authors, yes. Social influencers are very easy to connect with, if you look at the twitter handle and forgot my password, you will usually be able to find anyone's email or through five minutes of googling.

100% of 60% of the time they'll respond. People publish content as a conversation, they might not have the time to respond but if you write something short, with a question, they'll usually write back with thanks or a short response. A quick back and forth and now you have a correspondence. If you travel a lot, drop them a line to say I'm in town, can we have a coffee or a whiskey? Now you're drinking friends. Easy stuff, 99% of people don't write that first letter.

You should also try to write something once a month on a topics you're interested in.

Also actual paper mail has better results.

P.s Nose beers are okay but everything in moderation - including moderation. The problem with money is, it buys happiness, and cocaine makes you happy. It's best to get real highs instead of artificial ones.

christmas_miracle_69 • 5 points • 26 February, 2018 02:56 PM

Awesome, thank you and thank you for this post.

I remember when I thought the red pill was just a bunch of sad women haters because I only saw it mentioned on other subreddits and never took the time to actually have a look at it myself..

[deleted] • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 02:40 PM

What would you say are examples of real highs ?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 10 points • 26 February, 2018 03:08 PM*

Achieving something which you value as a challenge, publish a book, run a marathon, paint a self portrait, master French, finish a tour of Saxony.

I have a bucket list that I'm slowly working through. Acquire experiences and talents that make you a more well rounded man.

CHAD_J_THUNDERCOCK • 11 points • 26 February, 2018 01:38 PM

There are a lot of people who are worth \$200M+ and have only 1000 or so twitter followers. One I found because I loved his business books. When he writes blog posts I will share them and like them, and try to add value in some way by providing examples or reframing what he said to fit into another model and show where boundaries lie. I learn a lot from what he says and he enjoys the feedback and seeing what lower level people are thinking. And I can ask him huge questions like "if you were age 22 today where would you work before starting a business?", then offer 5 options, and he will - given all his knowledge of landscapes and how they change - just give me the best concise answer and refocus my trajectory for me. Its low effort for him and very high reward for me. I wont give his name though sorry to people here - find your own! There are loads of retired executives who are also a goldmine of wisdom. Get career advice from angel investors too, they always seem to be very wise on careers.

bape1 • 11 points • 26 February, 2018 06:13 AM

Thanks very interesting you have some good advice. Would you say you spent more time developing your product or more time working the business side of things and building connections etc?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 5 points • 26 February, 2018 06:20 AM

Good product first, a good 30% that demonstrates potential. Then sell to partners to leverage their market and customers.

I'm around 40% technical / 60% commercial on time investment currently. That said, a good product will make selling easier.

westhewolf • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 05:59 AM **[recovered]**

This was speaking to me... So real...and then you said... "Do not touch cocaine."

And I realized where I got soft. Pursuing my own dopamine. Relishing in my own glory. Basking in my wins. but... There are more hills to climb. More wars to be won. And more hyenas to slaughter. Do not rest. Do not become weak.

Thank you.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 21 points • 26 February, 2018 06:03 AM

Exactly, in my post I stated "It is only through a life struggle that you will achieve greatness. The good life will kill you long before you are dead" and it was absolutely true for me at 25.

I thought if I was getting n count and working 9-5 I was good, I invested way too much time in good times

and chasing pussy. The more time I invested in me, the more pussy chased me.

westhewolf • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 06:09 AM [recovered]

So true.

I lead a band. Play in a couple others. Low key local famous. Professional career. Crypto trader for Mills. Have a large family of friends, co-conspirators and followers. Party house, etc. But definitely have gone too hard over the last two years. The bigger my empire gets... The *bigger* I get. 31 is hard. Need more monk mode, keto, and lifting. Everything is still moving forward and working... But I know that I need to maintain myself if I want to expect other people to also push themselves for my causes.

At any rate. If you are ever in PDX. Let's get some vodka and hit the town.

Categoricallyme • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 11:00 AM [recovered]

Start with trimming down your massive ego that prompted you to hack another dude's post with your life story.

Kill your ego and get your discipline back.

westhewolf • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 03:11 PM [recovered]

Okay Ms. Tone Police. Thanks.

Point is, never forget rule #1 Lift or Die. You can do everything else, but if you don't Lift, you can do everything else right but you will eventually drown. I let it slack for pursuit of other endeavors and went from 190 lbs to 225 lbs and not in a good way. I'm doing okay everywhere else, but another 6 months and I could easily be tubsy wubsy.

Categoricallyme • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 04:14 PM [recovered]

That snarky response right there is you protecting your ego instead of allowing yourself to change.

westhewolf • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 04:54 PM [recovered]

Man this Reddit stuff must be serious business and have some sort of bearing on my life.....

Categoricallyme • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 05:44 PM [recovered]

"This Reddit stuff"???? You're so resistant to criticism it is borderline insane. Best of luck to you.

westhewolf • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 05:54 PM [recovered]

You saying I have a big ego is so fuckin laughable. Stating facts about the shit you do and who you are isn't egotistical, especially on TRP. It's contextual. And the context is... You can kick ass with focused practice on your career, hobbies, and community, but if you party too hard (side effects of bringing people together) and don't stay disciplined with your health, then none of it will matter. If you don't like the way you look, or feel good about your own skin, then when you are one stage you can't let go and deliver because you are worried how you look. you won't be able to take the lead comfortably and step into situations with people at your back. It's not ego. It's confidence. But if you at all think I go up to people and talk like that face to face, then you are clearly a fucking idiot. Reddit != Reality. So the shit I say here on an anonymous forum has a different purpose and intention than

what I say in real life.

westthewolf • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 03:16 PM [recovered]

PS.... Any reference to size I was talking about my physical weight. Not how cool I am, cuz I'm definitely not that cool. Just have friends and do stuff. But nobody likes fatties.

Categoricallyme • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 04:13 PM [recovered]

What does your physical size have to do with trimming down your enormous ego?

crespo_modesto • 5 points • 26 February, 2018 12:32 PM

That feeling though, if I could maintain that everyday... haha I would be dead but. Feeling like you're awesome in command, I've improved my interaction with women but man... when you come down and start talking badly about things in front of the women haha... goes bad quick

Shakaconrad • 18 points • 26 February, 2018 02:56 AM

Great post. Any advice for someone in undergrad? All the content you mentioned seems at least 10x more valuable then anything I am learning in class.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 35 points • 26 February, 2018 03:25 AM*

Get experience, during summer instead of backpacking try to get some industry experience or volunteer at a company to cut your teeth.

If you tutor at college, pay other students to tutor other students and cut your margin from the top. A good friend of mine had this hustle and it paid more than his post grad engineering job - simply having having Chinese students teach Australian students physics and math at inflated prices.

Jdpnobs • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 10:37 PM [recovered]

Woah this is really an opportunity, I am about to get a part time job in a fast food to earn extra cash but after reading this I will get a part time (if they would allow) at a company. Can't be hustling when I need to study more myself.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 10:51 PM

Needing to work something that pays the bills is cool but if you can extend yourself further and get paid also, go for it.

halfback910 • 2 points • 26 February, 2018 05:10 PM

Thank *god* you said this. I'm like two-three years out of college and the number of people who utilized summers to vacation, back-pack, etc. drove me nuts. It's such a waste of such an important time.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 5 points • 27 February, 2018 01:44 AM

It's useful socialisation absoutely, I never did it and regret it but yeah, you could invest that time more wisely. That said, life is serendipitous.

dingman58 • 7 points • 26 February, 2018 08:50 AM

Excellent post.

I've recently come to the conclusion that life is about people, and here in your first paragraph apparently that's

what it's all about.

So my question to you then is, how do you get to understand people? What techniques or practices have you done to cultivate your understanding of people and their desires?

Thanks

CasaDeFranco[S] • 15 points • 26 February, 2018 08:57 AM

Hemingway said “Any man's life, told truly, is a novel”. I found when I first started approaching women, on the train etc to ease into I started having conversations with anyone, not just younger attractive women.

I developed a genuine interest in people's story.

Simple stuff but FORD (family, occupation, recreation, and dreams) are easy platforms to learn a lot about a person very quickly and if you do 10% of the talking.

People will fill silence and tell you what's on their mind in an unfiltered fashion. There are ways to build trust quickly but simply listening is the easiest and the fastest.

dingman58 • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 09:04 AM

Sure that's a great way to get people talking about themselves, but how do you read between the lines and see what they really mean? Often people don't know what they want even though it's right there in front of their faces.

Listening to people and picking up on their deeper emotions is not a common skill.

That's the kind of insight it takes to really know people in a general sense. Do you hone that skill just talking to 1000 people? By introspection and really knowing yourself? Possible the answers to these questions are different for everyone.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 13 points • 26 February, 2018 09:58 AM

Listen to their actions, their behaviour and not what they say.

bape1 • 7 points • 26 February, 2018 06:00 AM

Not sure if you answered this but what does your business do? Do you think college is worth it/necessary in 2018?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 12 points • 26 February, 2018 06:08 AM

We manufacture a component which is used in consumer electronics. It's 10% thinner, uses 90% less power (makes laptops thinner) and has a significantly better user experience.

We were able to partner with a large OEM and leverage their customer base to secure large volume B2B contracts (not licensing as margins were unsustainable).

I studied engineering - it was almost free to attain my degree in my country. It's useful for engineering and hard sciences and for validation to investors but to answer concisely - no. I learned more in industry than from the degree. They're useless but you still need a degree to open doors.

yawalt • 4 points • 26 February, 2018 04:48 AM

Really appreciate your post. Everything you laid out in here is priceless—you've got a lot of wisdom to share.

Self-honest • 7 points • 26 February, 2018 04:09 AM

Great value post. Some points you made parallel critical side bar material.

Bitch management:

let them demonstrate you made the right choice. If you ~~don't~~ didn't, terminate their employment.

Whether that position is FWB, plate, LTR, etc; use the probation period to asses red flags and be aware of any signs that a woman isn't worth your time.

Reward good behavior or terminate employment.

Hire fast, fire fast. Dead weight will kill your company.

If she's not high value, fire that bitch. Hire a new bitch. Don't let someone keep a job they are not cut out for.

Thanks for sharing your lessons and experiences. There is a lot of good stuff in your post.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 10 points • 26 February, 2018 04:12 AM

Thanks, appreciate you highlighting the parallels that translate very well to sexual dynamics. It reminds me of the quote by Oscar Wilde "Everything in the world is about sex except sex. Sex is about power."

redblueninja • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 04:57 AM [recovered]

Good post. Two questions:

1. What's your end game?
2. How did you find and approach mentors? What objectives do different mentors fulfill for you?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 7 points • 26 February, 2018 05:30 AM*

1. Honestly, after I sell this business I want to do another focused on an area I'm passionate about. Mostly applications around robotics and AI; but using the skills I've learned in optimisation and design for manufacture to bring Boston Dynamics type of products to affordable level that consumers could purchase one (<\$10,000 COGS). Mostly for simple applications like household tasks like dog walking, folding laundry etc.

After this, maybe something to do with politics. I'm a joint European citizen and I'd like to run for office later in life - in mostly third positionist / nationalist politics.

I'd also like to have a reasonable large family but I'm a long way off in this regard.

2. I went through a program that the university hosted that connected active angel investors and startups. I also from industry experience connected with my bosses boss at events and built up a small network which was valuable when I resigned and started my business. Speaking at conferences, look at who's hitting goals in your industry, has had multiple exits in your vertical etc and send them an email or ask for an intro if you have mutual contacts.

They give you direction, advise if your approach is wise, lead to introductions where required. You only know what you know, having someone with decades industry experience is useful to mitigate making silly mistakes. They aren't always right but 90% of the time they are on point.

redblueninja • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 05:57 AM [recovered]

Great reply. One last question. If you had infinite time and money, what one thing would you do?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 5 points • 26 February, 2018 06:01 AM

Basically what I'm doing now.

Start another company with early employees in robotics - it's a little more cash intensive.

Donate some more money to charities I'm passionate about - veterans and homelessness. Set my family up so they are financially independent.

Invest more into political campaigns and lobbying - assist the funding of far right grass roots movements like Génération Identitaire and other Nouvelle Droite movements.

redblueninja • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 06:49 AM [recovered]

The fact that your definite and indefinite time plans coincide says so much about how successful you are.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 4 points • 26 February, 2018 07:46 AM

Appreciate the kind word Ninja.

sssimasnek • 4 points • 26 February, 2018 01:59 PM

Easy on the politics buddy

party_dragon • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 08:25 AM

I hope you succeed at (1). Even better if we do it together (I'm a programmer who's into AI / robotics as well).

CHAD_J_THUNDERCOCK • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 02:06 PM

What visa strategy/route did you use to move from Europe to USA?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 2 points • 26 February, 2018 02:13 PM

I'm not European, most of my business was in my home country and remaining 50% split between China (Shenzhen, Beijing and Taipei) and SF.

I have EU citizenship through family.

CHAD_J_THUNDERCOCK • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 02:21 PM

Ah I see. Thanks for this AMA btw; really loving it. I really like your networking tactics.

ImHerWonderland • 5 points • 26 February, 2018 06:13 AM

I'm actually an early 20s guy that's been on trp for a year and some change or so. Also post-military, would love to pm you and throw you my current situation, type of business and what I have and see if you'd have any advice for me before I crash and burn.

Lennythetrp • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 03:00 AM [recovered]

Thanks for the post.

Can you expand on your business and the actual steps you took towards entrepreneurship and perhaps some of the big events that took place which skyrocketed your success? It's clear you're a shooting star here, I'd love to hear more about the journey.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 19 points • 26 February, 2018 03:38 AM

There was no big events for the first two years, work like a dog in obscurity for 2 years. Then one day you're an overnight success.

You will work on the small pivot points, seed funding, govt grants, locking in early partnerships with strategics, and then securing first large contracts. Mentors will point you in the right direction - get this federal grant, meet with the BDM to sign off a strategic supply agreement etc, follow their advice as you won't know everything.

The moment you stop failing is the moment you succeed. Persist through the hard times, keep selling and make money and adapt to stay alive.

apskidb • 6 points • 26 February, 2018 02:23 PM

There is no magic pill to success. The answer really is buckle down and do the hard work it takes to get there. And even then, success is not guaranteed.

It's nice to hear a real story that doesn't hide from this fact. Most people like to sensationalise their success. Congrats and thanks for sharing.

[deleted] • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 02:39 PM

Yep. Thanks for sharing. Have you ever read "The Corporate Mystic" ?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 2 points • 27 February, 2018 01:55 AM

Not yet but I'll add it to my list and pick it up on my kindle.

coppa000 • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 09:53 AM **[recovered]**

Have a high IQ Educate yourself Be dark triad

ShadowBlaze80 • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 04:54 AM **[recovered]**

I always had a dream of starting my own media company in my town, it's a small town so I may not get far. Its just a dream, as my real goal at the moment, since I'm in highschool, is just a small start-up media group. I haven't been very successful, as media talent at my school is lacking, me and my friends really and one of them does nothing but make excuses. Ive taken on doing video for a youth group at church and slowly gonna work my way higher up into the media department. Hopefully one of these days I'll be successful, and that doesn't just mean getting rich.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 6 points • 26 February, 2018 05:52 AM

Doing what you love is success. Be financially independent is your goal, outside of that and you're good.

spencerc25 • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 07:35 AM

I've been slaving away every free minute I get outside of work building an application that I believe can become a SaaS business. Enjoy reading posts from success stories. Congrats! I'm hoping in the next few years I'll be asking questions about series a funding and how to scale haha.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 1 point • 26 February, 2018 07:41 AM

Keep at it, one tip I have is pre-rev, if you have good metrics and growth hit up some early seed investment to accelerate the growth. SaaS startups tend to raise well on potential alone if the team is solid.

spencerc25 • 2 points • 26 February, 2018 04:04 PM

Anything regarding funding is so outside my realm of knowledge and expertise. Thanks for the tip. Hope I will be able to apply the advice in the next couple years.

ReadySetGonads • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 08:49 AM

This is awesome right here.

RoadkillPharaoh • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 09:06 AM

I started up my business this week, I'm 18, this is just what I needed to read to get my game on.

I've lost so much, but I am ready to get back up.

Thanks for the motivation, my best wishes!

Jonlife • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 09:07 AM

Thank you for sharing. Very inspirational

GoGetting • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 09:53 AM

Was this startup made in California?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 5 points • 26 February, 2018 09:59 AM

No but the company acquiring our company is.

GoGetting • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 12:09 PM

How did you indentify which market to target?

I've recently done some web scraping work on websites that list sales statistics on their products, and it's a complete hockey stick. Most products, thousands, making next to nothing, and the top few making huge.

(It's true execution is critical, but if you execute full bore on the wrong thing you risk burning out and ending up in survivor bias statistics.)

Also how did you get to the initial point of being able to hire people?

Thanks

CasaDeFranco[S] • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 12:40 PM

I knew the market was large because most consumers have two or three of our products integrated in consumer electronics they own, we didn't work from market backward but rather consumer demand.

The first point of being able to hire was done through a matched funding state grant, for every dollar I put in the Govt matched. We later were able to secure a grant from a strategic partner before they invested in a Pre Series A round. This funded most of the intial staff but I didn't pay myself for a few years which was tough as my savings didn't last as long as forecasted due to legal costs.

GoGetting • 2 points • 26 February, 2018 01:00 PM

I see. Did you do any testing work (e.g. MVPs) to confirm the strength of the demand, or did you get access to some other existing compelling data (e.g. from interviewing those executives and many of them saying "yes this is needed")?

Also am I reading right (from "integrated") that this is a product sold to businesses (manufacturers)?

I'm suspecting this is a better arena to target, because of the wildly different margins & capacities to pay vs more consumer targeted items. It seems B2C is more "leader takes all" vs B2B, but I'm not sure this is correct.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 01:15 PM

We developed the MVP and sold that to strategic partners (our technology used their display). They loved it and helped sell it up the value chain. If we went direct, it would have been a hard no.

We manufacture it through Contract Manufacturers; we take the risk and sell it to the OEM that integrates it into the full consumer product like laptops.

B2B is also leader takes all, lower margins but we partner with the leaders and leverage their volume. We make small margins but small margins * large volumes works for us.

GoGetting • 2 points • 26 February, 2018 01:26 PM*

Cheers.

Interesting, it seems more "who you know". Do you have any advice on where or how networking should be done to get in contact with these types (guys integrated in the money flows), vs typical types at a "networking event" (poorer less-connected people who're there because they've been told to network). Also, what they are looking for in a 20s guy so they'd be interested in further discussions with him.

I get the part about dressing well etc, but I'm interested to know what to look for in the room (e.g. if it's a conference). What line of conversation to pursue. Or what they're looking for in a LinkedIn reach-out that they'd want to respond to, etc.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 01:32 PM

Who you know is important, but your opener has to capture their attention. The initial email has to be an illustration of a product that is compelling.

Later on, if your product has exposure or warm intro's from mutual connections absolutely helps but in early days, and to also close deals, it's all down to the product and your technology.

For procurement and contract related networking, establish who the decision makers are, we hired a guy from their team; he ended up selling our tech to his mates in the other department and that made the process much smoother and helped open the right doors for acquisition discussions.

He sold the idea of us hiring him actually, when we couldn't afford him he gave us insights into the best approach.

Cold calling, or asking for warm intro's through mutual contacts is 90%. That or if you know a contact will be at an event, hunt him down, exchange cards, talk shop for 10 minutes and ask to reconnect over coffee to pitch him. Keep it like dating, get their attention, keep and then close.

They're looking for passion and someone who gets shit done. Make up for inexperience with either a solid team and / or ability to learn.

GoGetting • 2 points • 26 February, 2018 02:01 PM

OK makes sense. On that product, what indicated it to you as something to pursue? What was the thought process, i.e. how did you initially think of it / what indicated it should be made, and what encouraged committing to that product creation as a compelling play (versus other things you were perhaps thinking of)?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 2 points • 26 February, 2018 02:11 PM

I wanted the product, it didn't exist; or at least cheaply (\$1.5k - \$70 with our solution).

Honestly, there wasn't a significant degree of forethought after patents were filed, in hindsight I would have went with a nonhardware startup that could engage B2C to lessen the early stage financial hurt I put on my shoulders.

Our approach had custom components that had massive MOQ and several under thousand in NRE alone. It meant we went from wanting to make around 1,000 units a year to selling it only to +300k unit volume customers, go big or go home.

The business plan and strategy evolved to a totally different point than I imagined so I'd be lying to suggest I had planned the course of the business.

What made us pursue this approach was our initial sale attempts were successful, we had LOI's, and MOU signed off which helped get initial capital for jointly developed solutions paid by the customer.

[deleted] • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 10:24 AM

Any advice for a 25 year old just starting out (in copywriting)?

Honestly, how did you rise up from your shitty beginning?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 10:32 AM*

I was lucky in some respects, my first corporate role had a massive restructure and a lot of senior engineers and management were fired so I was thrust into a must senior role quite early. I reinvested that experience and increased salary to start my company.

[deleted] • 2 points • 26 February, 2018 10:43 AM

Ah, well, it's ok you were lucky. Anyone that says otherwise would of grabbed the opportunity by the horn too.

Oh well, I wish you luck and I wish myself luck as well.

inspireddev • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 05:52 PM

24 year old over here starting out in sales. Lets hustle and get it brother.

[deleted] • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 01:15 PM*

You didn't touch on your personal pivot point. What were your motivations? How did you decide to pull yourself out of mediocrity? Was there a dramatic change of circumstance or a slow grind to success? When you failed, how did you find the will to drive on? How did you find that first mentor? Etc etc.

You mentioned a partner. Partnerships are hard to sustain. How did you find him? When and how did you decide to go all in?

Thanks for your contribution here, sir.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 5 points • 26 February, 2018 01:22 PM

Honestly, I was dating a much older women who made bank. My father had also been successful before his

business collapsed in the 80's. I wanted to try it before it was too late, I had no kids, no wife and no excuses.

I was working long hours and wanted build something of my own.

A big part of what drove me is I knew I had a good product and once we hired people, I didn't want to let them down. They invested in the idea, and I wanted to make sure their stock, and mine also didn't die.

First mentor was easy, I shot him an email. I had sent him a welcome to x (he moved to my country to retire) package - flag, some sterotypical food etc an a small note. He responded. He opened many doors.

AwkwardEmpath • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 02:12 PM

This post is much appreciated, I'm not quite there yet but this has been saved and will be useful later on, thanks.

Popeman79 • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 02:13 PM

Great post. Congratulations on your achievements, and thank you for taking time to share your experience. These are some in-depth and detailed advices, very enlightning.

[deleted] • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 02:28 PM

This is a great post, thank you so much for sharing. You might be interested in a book called "the corporate mystic". It basically describes you.

Nev144 • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 02:34 PM

Currently in college studying electrical engineering. What skills should I learn beside school stuff that might come handy later on?

Scroph • 4 points • 27 February, 2018 12:01 AM

I'm only a student myself but, assuming your curriculum doesn't already cover them, I'd say programming and some data science know-how wouldn't hurt. The former is useful for automation while the latter will help you detect patterns in the current state of things and make educated guesses about the future. You don't need to know advanced concepts of software engineering like design patterns or testing, simple scripting would suffice.

Soft skills like public speaking, leadership and good communication are more on the street-smart side of things, but from my experience, they are appreciated by employers and clients alike.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 2 points • 27 February, 2018 01:54 AM

Try to be multi-disciplined, have knowledge in 3d modeling, basic software development (c#), rapid prototyping (CNC, 3d printing) and also manufacturing processes. Bonus points if you can speak a little Mandarin.

Any experience like the above will put you ahead, or demonstration that you have independentlydesigned and made a project.

_MysticFox • 3 points • 28 February, 2018 06:02 AM

Why Mandarin over a language like Russian or German?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 3 points • 28 February, 2018 06:10 AM

All manufacturing is in Mainland China.

_MysticFox • 1 points • 28 February, 2018 07:33 AM **[recovered]**

I actually talked to an older gentleman who said that the Chinese fucked him as far as

manufacturing goes so he stays local. How was your experience?

Also, I don't know whether I can leverage the fact that I had exposure to south Asian languages at a young age. I can speak Urdu-Hindi fluently with an American accent. A bit of Bengali here and there. Spanish was taught to me in the U.S. for some time as well, so I have elementary proficiency.

I've heard a lot about German and Russian being big in the finance industry as well.

Any use for other languages or go straight to Mandarin?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 3 points • 28 February, 2018 07:40 AM

We're B2B hardware, the margins are too low for domestic manufacturing or to go outside of China /Taiwan. People will fuck you everywhere where you can make money, there are ways to avoid it.

Languages are useful if you're in an international setting particularly if it appears you cannot speak said language. Chinese will speak openly in Chinese at a board room meeting and assume you can't understand.

If you're doing oil and gas, Arabic or Russian, if you're working in manufacturing, Mandarin, etc. English is useful everywhere though.

_MysticFox • 2 points • 7 July, 2018 06:51 AM

What are the ways to avoid getting fucked?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 2 points • 7 July, 2018 07:35 AM

NNN agreements with manufacturers, patents, distribute your supply chain across multiple vendors, establish key partners with binding strategic agreements with monopoly suppliers or invite them to your board through investment or as an advisor.

gdiocarez • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 05:37 PM

Im glad you posted this on TRP. I have an insight now on becoming an entrepreneur.

suske127 • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 09:53 PM

Hey Casa, Thanks for the post. I've been working on getting my own business running and this short read was some good inspiration. I'm glad for you and your success; Enjoy the kingdom you've built!

GoGetting • 3 points • 27 February, 2018 07:58 AM

Could you paint a picture of what your work day was like in the early stages?

When you woke & slept roughly, how you divided up the day, how many hours a week work total, days a week.

Thanks

CasaDeFranco[S] • 6 points • 27 February, 2018 08:37 AM

Wake up at 6 or 7, walk and feed dogs. Cycle to work. Breakfast and respond to US emails / phone calls. Stand up meeting with team at 10. Work until noon on mentally engaging tasks.

Lunch at desk or walking and eat whilst I take calls with China.

Back to work, work until 6. Cycle and listen to podcast on 2x speed or take more calls.

Cook a meal. Work out and take calls with China / Taiwan concurrently.

Walk and cook dogs meal.

Work on laptop for last minute emails so US team is moving forward. Read kindle.

Pray.

Sleep at midnight.

Repeat 6.5 days per week.

_MysticFox • 3 points • 28 February, 2018 06:06 AM

How much equity were you okay with giving up to employees? My mentality is to retain as much of it as possible.

How did you feel about giving up hobbies and other 'interesting' endeavors that TRP preaches to sink it all into working?

I'm a 2nd year business undergrad at an underfunded, small state school. I know I'll have to teach myself if I want to work for myself. I know you talked about learning to code, 3D modeling, and sales skills. Would you recommend anything else or any particular resources?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 1 point • 28 February, 2018 06:18 AM

Equity?

A lot. 30% in total.

Hobbies. Fuck hobbies.

My work involves my hobby. I go golfing a lot for work. I sail on Sundays. I go hiking and camping when possible. I sometimes take a day off just because, but I like my work as it's always changing and it makes me learn new things.

**Skills* I know 3d modeling, basic electrical engineering, code (is shit but I know c and c#).

Honestly, in the first few months it's good to know and from a fundamentals perspective it's useful but hire to fill these gaps.

Focus on learning sales, sales and negotiation. Also get a good lawyer and accountant on your advisory board.

_MysticFox • 2 points • 28 February, 2018 07:39 AM

A lot. 30% in total.

Would you do it over if you could? How much did you give away per employee?

I go golfing a lot for work.

I'll be picking that up soon, apparently it's a big money hobby.

I sail on Sundays. I go hiking and camping when possible.

I also sail. Are those all for fun or does it have potential to build clients? I wonder why hiking / camping is a common thread for rp males

Get a good lawyer and accountant on your advisory board

There's a guy on my floor who's doing grad accounting. I might slip into Pre-Law club sometime soon.

Thank you for this advice. This is the type of stuff you can't find in a business book or a podcast. If you wouldn't mind answering, why would you share this knowledge to strangers rather than keeping it to

have more knowledge to offer when making professional connections?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 2 points • 28 February, 2018 07:49 AM

One C level and early employee up to 10%, the lowest a fraction of 1%. Depends on how early they came in and what type of risk they took.

It's not too expensive, golf club fees will kill you.

Sailing is more for leisure, you network with good people though but not my industry. Good place to meet daughters of wealthy men though.

Another good place is male only gentleman clubs, they cost a lot but given you access to international venues and networks. Mostly older / retired professionals but being the only guy under 30 is novel.

Hiking is popular for most active men I'd wager.

Why share? It's a community, people share information which is useful. This is useful, hopefully it changes someone's approach in life - there are a lot of people that don't take that step. People did the same for me, men who's time was more valuable than mine is now.

_MysticFox • 2 points • 28 February, 2018 02:26 PM

Good place to meet daughters of wealthy men

You do much else for meeting women or just stick to whatever comes your way?

hopefully it changes someone's approach in life

Appreciate it a lot, but I'm surprised you do it without an incentive since people are self-interested.

Many of us don't have role models, or in my case, you were born with two resentful enemies for parents. I want to do some philanthropy type stuff one day regarding masculine role models once I hit financial independence. Even then, I'd use that opportunity to maximize charitable contributions.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 2 points • 28 February, 2018 09:29 PM

I never stick to whatever comes my way, women will pursue you purely for money. At first I assumed I had got better with women, I merely was a better mark.

Honestly I care less about women than I did before, they're time parasites. The reason why I denote wealthy daughters is is alignment of direction; they have more to lose entering a relationship and the ones who are raised well are worth the investment. If they are sailing on every Sunday dawn, less chances they were out partying the night previous evening.

I have some incentive, pride, ego, connect with those similar to me etc. I have charitable passions interested in, veteran homelessness etc given my former career but most philanthropists donate what their tax obligations would be, or set up a family office which pays their family large management fees and denote that as charitable. People care only about themselves and they should, if you care for others they will drag you down and stomp on you.

EpochTRP • 2 points • 26 February, 2018 12:58 PM

Could you name a few authors that were influential to your thinking?

Do you have "role models"? And if so, who are they?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 2 points • 26 February, 2018 01:13 PM

I've mentioned some books before, How to Make Friends and influence people, Hard things about hard things, Zero to One.

Role models, I can't directly but my father, the SVP of the company acquiring us, and the Director of a Strategic Partner. Terry Guo, Barry Lam are some other inspirations.

[deleted] • 2 points • 26 February, 2018 05:33 PM*

Good stuff,

My business is starting to pick up, My business partner and I injected about 7k when I started monk mode 2 months ago, You need to be able to be in the shoes of your clients and employees. Find out what makes the fuckers tick.

I started the company on campus advertising and recruiting (cold approach) it as a successful foreign business aiming to spread here regionally. The reality is, I had nothing to my name. Not even a suit. Kids my age want to make money; the men want to impress the women, the women want to show off to their female pals. They wanted money, I sold short term dreams, 2 year dreams, cars, handbags, designer. I had them under 3 weeks unpaid internships to train them and they built a clientele. The training experience was so great they didn't ask about the money. I did lose a handful because of small things e.g. our car broke down once and our employee lost interest because we lost credibility/trust by being late

I had to design bank statements and leave them around in the meeting rooms I arranged. Mirror successful people in movies for body language, tonality, stance, word play. Three years later, i'm kicked out of college for missing an exam while being ill, I have 7 employees to my company, 112k a year before taxes, i'm going to have my business partner squeeze the juice out of our campus and i'm going to go back to another college for a 2 year accreditation and spread my business like cancer.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 2 points • 27 February, 2018 01:50 AM

Keep up the great work, but it's important you position the business that it can reward the founders so that you're putting coin aside as the business grows.

[deleted] • 2 points • 26 February, 2018 07:42 PM

so you gonna invest in crypto and turn that 7m to 700m or what?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 6 points • 26 February, 2018 09:48 PM

I turned 100k into a 10m+ in 2 years, double that a year later. It's best to stick to investments you know rather than riding industries which I'm uninformed.

[deleted] • 2 points • 26 February, 2018 08:48 PM

Congratulations on the recognition!

One of my good friends from high school made that list a few years ago, had his company bought out and got quickly plumped into the industry.

He is still happy and successful but no longer living his dream. Just remember: "If you don't build your dream someone will hire you to help build theirs."

— Tony A. Gaskins Jr.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 1 point • 26 February, 2018 09:51 PM

Thanks. The rise and fall is fast in this industry so I'm under no illusion. That said, once this business is sold

I can repeat much quicker with my own capital and with an exit under your belt, getting VC capital is significantly easier.

CrowleyEusford • 2 points • 27 February, 2018 03:59 PM

I really appreciate this post. I am doing an internship in Android development and in my spare time I am trying to think about problems that could be solved. But my skill level is not high enough that I can solve these problems. Even in my internship I ask a lot of questions, because I am really new to it. I want to start a business in software, but I am not sure where I should go and what I can offer. Do you have maybe advice for me?

numice • 2 points • 1 March, 2018 02:52 PM

Hi! I'm pretty excited reading your story. I have two questions that I have been pondering for awhile.

1. How did you initially spot the market and demand?
2. How much money did you save up to open a business? I'm an international student in a very high COL country. I feel like I still don't have enough savings to open any kind of business. I mostly live month to month now.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 2 points • 1 March, 2018 09:52 PM

I researched the market using sources like IDG and determined it was worth the gamble.

Around \$200k USD so save everything.

numice • 3 points • 2 March, 2018 12:16 AM

How many years did you save? Sorry for being repetitive but I want to know whether my goal is realistic

trpinoy • 2 points • 26 February, 2018 12:32 PM

Question.

I've started a business with my friends(Digital ad agency). Our biggest hurdle is getting accounts, since all of us came from the execution side of things. What advice could you give for those who are not trained in sales to improve on it?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 1 point • 26 February, 2018 12:37 PM

Most of our founders were technical. I developed a lot of the skillset during selling the vision to strategics and investors but to close our large B2B deals we hired two BDM who had experience working for the company we were selling to.

Sales is difficult to master but typically for our product the most compelling sales element was product and specification focused, sale leads came to us due to press exposure so it made the job much easier.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 1 point • 26 February, 2018 09:55 AM

No but company buying our company is.

Zyvoxx • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 05:34 PM **[recovered]**

I've been thinking of starting a business, however one thing I'm afraid of is how to start reaching out to customers. When starting up essentially your customer count is 0, how you do attract the first ones?

Advertisement? I don't exactly have a huge capital, I don't think any would be able to be used for advertising as most of it would be used towards purchasing and managing inventory. My business idea is selling a product that

every household could have use for, however it's a one-time purchase (i.e. customers that purchase the product once won't need it again so it's necessary to have an expanding customer base) - in that sense I'm not sure how well starting by selling to relatives/people in your network would work, as once they have done a purchase they won't need it again and while there's a chance they may recommend you further there's also a chance they won't and if they won't I'm stuck there.

Any insight on this? Great read by the way

CasaDeFranco[S] • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 09:54 PM

We went from unknown to news of us working with the largest OEM and their main customer. Customers came to us.

It's very easy to generate this type of press exposure. We were covered in WSJ, and Guardian and it then distilled to a few hundred publications. I spent \$0 on advertising.

Leverage the press.

djschroeder • 1 point • 27 February, 2018 03:18 AM

Can you provide more color on "establish a trust in BVI"? Why this vehicle/location combination?

CasaDeFranco[S] • 2 points • 27 February, 2018 03:59 AM

Flexibility, tax neutral, low cost, efficient structure (no annual filings etc), confidential, quick to establish. BVI is perfect of off shoring assets.

ThatSamaraiGuy • -1 points • 26 February, 2018 08:15 AM

So is nobody going to ask this poser for proof of his claimed status before trusting what reads like a middle schooler that's just read his first kierkegaard book?

TheRedPike[M] • 7 points • 26 February, 2018 10:58 PM

Its the internet. Assume he made everything up and argue the points, not the person. No more dick sizing from either of you.

CasaDeFranco • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 08:17 AM [recovered]

PM the mods and they can verify. I'm not going to dox myself.

Thanks for the kind words too.

ThatSamaraiGuy • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 05:28 PM [recovered]

You've practically already "doxed" yourself through the information in your comments. Lol; weak points, weak theory, yet unsurprising coming from a weak minded person.

zxstevens • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 03:12 AM [recovered]

-To convince them to take substantial salary cuts -Recruit students or recent graduates looking for a new challenge

This advice just sounds like taking advantage of people. Shouldn't your goal be to retain employees rather than take advantage of their cheap labor? I can't imagine anyone would take a hit willingly and be able to maintain their lifestyle for a job they were manipulated into.

This whole post screams 'sleeze' to me. Also your account history only shows 2 months of history, yet what you're writing about would take at least a year or two to build up from nothing.

crimsonpowder • 4 points • 26 February, 2018 05:16 AM

The morality police never dies. CasaDeFranco is 100% right.

When I was young I took long hours and less pay to grow fast. My young employees are doing the same thing--they ride a rocketship that will forever make them better than their peers. Some will go on to be like me.

Want to see people taken advantage of? Plop them into an F500--2% annual increases and small promotions every decade.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 4 points • 26 February, 2018 03:47 AM

Most firms do this.

Even well funded startups like SpaceX overwork and underpay their talent - people do it for the passion and experience.

You will have to take advantage of people to get ahead sometimes; but reward those who make this sacrifice.

In regards to the account history, new account. When I started the company in 2016 I didn't have time to post, I mostly lurked and dropped by once a week to read top posts.

CrazyHorseInvincible[M] • 1 point • 26 February, 2018 08:49 AM

Do not moralize.

therealjohnfreeman • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 04:06 AM [recovered]

It is sleeze. The rest of his comments are "it's who you know, not what you know" and "leech on the people through government grants". "Reward those who make the sacrifice"... but not too much reward, like substantial equity; that's for investors who sacrifice comparatively little.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 6 points • 26 February, 2018 04:31 AM*

Name me one post Series C startup that didn't utilise networks for seed capital or government grants? As a government employee, you clearly don't know the industry you're commenting about, these grants specifically exist to be spent. Most will have published KPI's on how many grants were issued in a highly competitive process. What's sleezy about this process?

Early stage employee's made 7 figures on their equity, they built the company, why wouldn't they be issued substantial equity? Most of the early stage employees have more equity than investors.

therealjohnfreeman • 1 points • 26 February, 2018 06:09 AM [recovered]

I'm not the former government employee here; you are.

You're thinking only in terms of the Silicon Valley Seed-A-B-C fundraising bubble. There are companies finding success on the merits of their product instead of power brokers and good ol boy networks.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 1 point • 26 February, 2018 06:18 AM

We did one round given to lock in our strategic partners and reinvested profit. Some business models aren't sustainable without doing SC + rounds like Amazon. Razor thin margins but incredibly disruptive.

I do agree that companies like Snap are incredibly overvalued but they're incredibly rare within the industry.

CrazyHorseInvincible[M] • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 08:50 AM

No moralizing.

midgetpooooo • -2 points • 26 February, 2018 05:39 AM

A post like this for cryptocurrency investments would be spectacular haha (wallet to use, which coins to buy, what app to use to invest/monitor, etc)

CasaDeFranco[S] • 7 points • 26 February, 2018 05:55 AM

I bet that content already exists - if anyone finds one please link it. I sold my bitcoins (I sold early and didn't make bank). Crypto is interesting but currently a lot of unsophisticated investors are doubling down, i.e when Doug from next door is day trading, you know it's a bubble market. There are some interesting emerging applications of blockchain outside of currency though.

midgetpooooo • 2 points • 26 February, 2018 06:00 AM

Yes, thats right. I'm doing my Master's thesis on it.

CasaDeFranco[S] • 2 points • 26 February, 2018 06:10 AM

Interesting stuff, thinking of starting something in this area. I'd love to hear what your thesis is on.

midgetpooooo • 3 points • 26 February, 2018 06:22 AM*

It's about the characteristics of blockchain technologies that give rise to it's emergent qualities, which enable the innovative capabilities we see startups and the like using to build products. Then the strategies and use-cases for a current business on how they can stay innovative in the short term (with a research case study). Future strategies for the long term for new user experiences and the possibilities that will be enabled conveyed through future concepts by videos, writings, and/or prototypes (think in the realm of making a concept called AirBnB when the web first came out in the 90's).