



Ross Bradfield

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Becoming a Successful Entrepreneur

An Article by Ryan Blair

About

Ross Bradfield

Ross Bradfield is an Event Specialist for Copper Services, a technology company that offers online event management, business content and conferencing.

In his position, Ross manages key account relationships, produces high touch conferencing events, and provides expertise on Copper's various services.

Ross focuses on creating partnerships for Copper, working with business organizations to create programs that benefit their memberships.

In his spare time, Ross has an entrepreneurial focus and runs a book storefront on Amazon as well as a nutritional supplement distributorship with Visalus.

Becoming a successful entrepreneur is all about looking in the metaphorical mirror and constantly adjusting your game. As you accelerate toward your goals and approach destinations you've only dreamt about, like financial independence and time freedom, you have to take time to adjust and modify.

It's not about finding balance; It's about finding imbalance and adjusting.

For instance, one of the biggest sources of imbalance in a business owner's life is time management. In my book *Nothing to Lose, Everything to Gain*, I included a chapter called "First Things First" where I talk about setting your priorities straight so you can reach your goals. My first goal as an entrepreneur was financial freedom. So I sat in front of that 'mirror' and asked myself what I needed to overcome to achieve that goal.

My biggest struggle was focus (because of my ADD) and staying consistent. I had a hard time compartmentalizing my time between work, family, and fun. All the societal, employee minded rules—you're supposed to be at the office at 8am, weekends are for fun, nighttime is for family—didn't work for me. They don't work for most entrepreneurs, and likely these rules don't work for you either, otherwise you wouldn't be reading this post.

I was raised by a struggling single mother who escaped an abusive marriage split apart by drug addiction and alcoholism, and we lived in abject poverty until we were rescued by the man she eventually married, my stepfather and mentor Bob Hunt. With the work ethic instilled in me by my new father, I got off the streets, went back to school, and worked my way up in a company within a short period of time, before starting my own business and selling it for an absurd amount of money at the age of 25. You better believe I went out and partied like a rock star. I made great relationships along the way and I had a lot of fun, but eventually the imbalance started to prevent other pieces of my life from functioning efficiently. Not to mention that I ran out of money, and had creditors calling me around the clock. It was effectively my first lesson in time management. I had to go back to that mirror, rest and recuperate, adjust, and start over financially, and take a personal loan out at a very high interest rate as my last ditch effort toward my next entrepreneurial goal. This was a major adjustment period in my life.

After selling SkyPipeline, I was an employee for a short period of time within the company, until I could no longer tolerate the constraint of working for my new bosses, and launched another business. A short while (and a false start) later I became the CEO of ViSalus. As a result of my adjusting, experimenting, and tweaking, now I have an effective 24-hour a day lifestyle. I see my life as a whole, in its entirety, with all the compartments integrated. Everything I do is an entrepreneurial endeavor and my focus follows. My passion for my business ventures runs rampant in all aspects of my life, and I dream of business even during my average of four hours of sleep a night.



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I have found my definition of true entrepreneurship, where the journey, not the destination, is the reward.

Now, instead of feeling guilty about being too social, I'm getting entrepreneurial results while I'm out being social. I've hired and done business with a variety of associates I've met at social events, whether it's the CEO of a fortune 500 company, or an employee I've eventually hired—having fun isn't a detriment to being productive. My employees even call me the Chief Entertainment Officer. This is called title, job, and life integration, and it's fun. I prefer being called *socially-made as opposed to self-made*.

In Malcolm Gladwell's *Outliers*, he talks about putting in your 10,000 hours, the necessary time and practice it takes to master any given skill. Most people don't put in 10,000 hours because their time is compartmentalized. When you're working 24-hours a day at becoming a multimillionaire entrepreneur, logging those 10,000 becomes a lot easier. For instance, as I'm writing this, I have a bevy of my employees in my New York penthouse. That way I get to spend time with my friends, my son, and my family, while I'm working. And by the way, you shouldn't hire someone you wouldn't want to have hanging out in your penthouse. As a socially made entrepreneur, you should only hire people you'd like to spend the majority of your time with. So, if you wouldn't take your employee out for a drink, then don't hire him.

Today I've reached the point where I can jump on a jet, at any time, and go hang out on an island if I feel like it, without risking my business. But after attaining financial independence and time freedom, I've started to ask myself—what is it all for? So, my next goal is giving back. Now I teach others to do what I have done, whether that's learning how to manage your time or think like an entrepreneur. I believe that we will take nothing with us when our days are over, so why not leave behind a better world? And that's why I became an author. Because if one person successfully changes his or her life by reading my book or through one of the charitable foundations I've created or endowed, then, to me, it's all worth all the time I am granted in this world.

So, what does this mean for you?

It means you need to find your rhythm and adjust to your imbalances as I noted above. The success of every entrepreneur is rooted in that. Once you find it, you can maximize it and use it to achieve whatever it is that you desire. It doesn't mean that it will come easy, but if it truly matters to you, then you can find a way. Don't give up... keep going... *you have everything to gain*.