

Successful Startup Personality Traits



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Passion is a powerful driver for entrepreneurs seeking to make an impact. However, it's typically insufficient on its own to drive lasting success. Successful startup founders have a specific handful of personality traits.

Venture capital investors look for those startups and founders that are on the right track, supporting them as they grow their projects into ambitious and impactful ventures. While there's no exact formula for success, according to an article in [Forbes](#), there are some common key components that continue to prove essential for founding teams and their approach.

Here are some of the traits of successful startup founders that attract investors:

Founders Must Have A Deep, Narrow Focus

Startups frequently develop new solutions to existing problems; as a result, founders may find themselves in the unenviable spot of competing against large, established companies in their space. However, that difference in size is actually where a startup can secure a competitive advantage.

As a small and nimble organization, startups can quickly hone their focus on one specific aspect of a customer's need in a way that a mammoth company cannot do. With that single focus, a startup can also filter out distractions that can otherwise mire a startup founders and slow their progress. Thus, it's critical that founders learn how to say no to things that are beyond the particular challenge they're addressing.

Moreover, it is vital that founders make certain that their laser focus isn't trained on the wrong target. If so, that perceived advantage will quickly transform into a fatal weakness.

Founders can confirm their bearings by asking, "What unique value is my company providing to our customers, one they can't get anyone else?" The answer to this question will help bolster that significant differentiation all startups need to succeed against the competition.

Domain Expertise

Venture capital investors also may look at the path founders take to discover their unique solution to a particular challenge. Some have a story of past frustration where, in

their prior work, they themselves came up against a roadblock that required a solution. Or some have seen who customers ask for something their company couldn't provide. This kind of insight into a genuine customer problem is invaluable to a startup entering a space in the market. However, this can only come from real experience and expertise in that particular domain.

Taking a problem-first approach also helps startups be certain that they're not mistakenly creating a solution to a problem that doesn't exist—a frequent error for founders who don't have that direct experience themselves.

A Clear Vision

When a startup sees that its unique insight weathers the test of genuine need, its future implications can start to appear. At the beginning, startups are small teams trying to make a big impact and quite literally “change the world.” That's because they're working to create something that doesn't yet exist. This requires them to look at what the world might look like in the future.

To be successful, startups and their founders have to have a clear vision of the part their company will play in that future state to provide a truly valuable product or service. As a default, that vision must also be distinct. If it was obvious, others would've already brought the product top market. Nonetheless, founders should understand that they must stress-test their assumptions and confirm the solution they're building hasn't yet been attempted for lack of proper vision and not for lack of need.

Cultural Leadership by Founders

Venture capital investors look at a startup and founders who are building a company to see if they're form a team around a common mission and defining a shared culture. This is an important element in that process. This culture sets the measure for future actions of the startup, including the way in which decisions are made and the types of talent it wants to recruit.

It's vitally important to set the right tone from the outset. Venture capital investors say that successful founders establish cultures of empowerment and ensure that their teams will perform with confidence even without them. In fact, the best entrepreneurs are those who sell their vision and also create an environment that encourages everyone on the team to thrive while they perform their meaningful work.

Resiliency and Resourcefulness

As they strive to realize their vision, founding teams will experience many challenges along the way. Venture capital investors say that successful startups are those that quickly learn to be creative and think outside the box to solve their problems while getting more done with less.

Those that overcome these challenges will do so by continuing to consider new approaches until they find a way to get where they need to go. Plus, it's important for founders to understand their natural limitations just as well as their expertise. With this knowledge, they can look for help they need early on instead of discovering blind spots only after problems happen.

Takeaway

Success for founders and startups is not assured, to be sure. However, by developing these traits founding teams can conduct an honest assessment of themselves to determine areas of improvement. Applying passionate drive to their own development can make them a valuable investment.