

June 2019 Vol 1 Issue 6



Tell Your Story Newsletter (TYSN):

Specializing in Entrepreneurial and Organizational Storytelling

Let me tell your story!

Welcome Mid-June, 2019!

While gardeners and farmers alike are searching the skies and the forecasts for signs of heavier rain, summer is virtually here and many of us take delight in the warm sunshine and the ease of life it brings. Such weather grants us some distance from the memories of those heavy parkas, ski pants and scarves of last winter.

In this month's issue, I visit American entrepreneurial guru James Wedmore's ebook on how struggling entrepreneurs must learn to get out of the way of our own success. And in "Storytellers' Corner," I share a humorous groan from the annals of writers' comedy.

Happy summer to you, my valued readers! May you have some vacation time for reading, relaxation, movie watching and any other delights made easier by this mild season!

Sincerely,
Elizabeth

Principal
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Article One: What do you do when you're the greatest risk to your own business? James Wedmore answers that, in "Hardwired for Entrepreneurship"

American James Wedmore is an online entrepreneur who believes, like me, that success is more influenced by one's attitude or perspective than by tactical strategy. I found a powerful wake-up call for junior or (perennially) struggling entrepreneurs in his recent ebook, "Hardwired for Entrepreneurship."

Wedmore takes as an epigraph from psychologist Wayne Dyer's insight that "When you change the way you see things, the things around you change." What gets in our way as entrepreneurs, Wedmore contends, is always "in our heads." How we see our businesses determines what is possible.

We have to challenge the unconscious beliefs, thoughts and perspectives we have about our bizzes, in order to make them simpler, more enjoyable and clearer. Wedmore writes: "Don't believe everything you think."

Here are some of his other, key takeaways:

- When we make decisions based on our perceptions of how our businesses are going, we get results that are limited by those perceptions, in a "self-fulfilling prophecy." For instance, try not to make meaning out of someone's rejection—it means "absolutely nothing" about our businesses or our talent or credibility.
- If we are to succeed as entrepreneurs, we have to think like them: As Albert Einstein has said, "We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used, when we created them." We need to try to adopt new ideas and new ways of thinking about our businesses that enable us to succeed—they usually defy common sense and are counterintuitive.
- In fact, business involves a simple kind of thinking: it's about identifying a problem or a need and getting paid to solve it. Our businesses grow in proportion to our capacity to solve bigger problems for more people.
- Wedmore argues that there are "two pieces" to the "puzzle" of entrepreneurship:

(1) Build an audience and . . .

(2) Sell that audience what they want.

- When we overwork, trying to perfect our projects as entrepreneurs, we make it "harder than it needs to be," and that, paradoxically, is a "protection mechanism" by which we hide and procrastinate. We do "busy" work that neither improves our profit margins nor helps us to grow as entrepreneurs.

He writes: "Putting yourself out there to the world, proclaiming your authority status and selling your stuff can be extremely exposing and vulnerable. And most struggling entrepreneurs, and this may be you, would rather struggle and hustle and stay busy than actually put themselves out there."

It's tough to take entrepreneurial risks, when we're taught from infancy to be "survival-oriented" and "risk averse."

So, if you've been "holding or playing small by simply staying busy IN your business [when we should work ON our businesses] . . . you've made your 'complicated and confusing' business the REASON why you can't put yourself out there" and that must change (25).

You can't build a business by hiding and playing small. Struggling entrepreneurs tend to rely on their "FEELINGS of productivity as their evaluation of how their day went. Did they FEEL like they got a lot done? Did they stay busy? Did a lot get crossed off the to-do list, if so . . . you must have had a *great day*" (26). Trouble is, you haven't, if you haven't progressed or created forward momentum or profit.

- Wedmore insists that business is effectively a GAME that we should measure by numbers and for which some of the numbers are clear (e.g. sales goals). But we must create the game and the metrics worth measuring, because "what you don't measure, can't grow" (27).
- When we start objectively analyzing our bizzes, by testing hypotheses and running experiments to test what works and what doesn't, only then do we "stop internalizing failure, a trap that 99.9% of human beings fall prey to."
- Successful entrepreneurs are "results-oriented, not effort-oriented. "And in business, RESULTS are the only thing that matter. Working harder and longer hours than ever to try to succeed is part of the "busy" work fallacy. Hard work is "the enemy of growth," because you can't "scale it . . . sustain it" and because "it takes you away from your ACTUAL ROLE as an entrepreneur" (29) of solving clients' problems.
- Tim Ferris (author of the bestseller, *The 4 Hour Workweek*) has said, by contrast, to aim to work less: "It's lazy thinking" that will give us the strategy we need to progress. (Overthinking is deadly and produces self-fulfilling prophecies.)
- Some of the kinds of things we fail to do when being "busy," confused, stressed-out entrepreneurs are "crafting our vision, marketing our products or services, seeking future opportunities, strategic partnerships" and "leading the business" itself (30). Instead of "freaking out or playing victim" when we run into temporary setbacks, Wedmore says we should ask ourselves "where the opportunity lies? What lesson comes from this? How will I grow from this?"

"Discovering and mastering the lessons that you need is a big, BIG part of the PROCESS" (40) and "growth happens in stages" as we progress through it.

- The struggle with struggling as entrepreneurs is (paradoxically) the "BIGGEST thing holding [entrepreneurs] back" (39). No one is going to buy services or products from someone riddled by stress, doubt, anxiety and fear. Clients will buy

from those who most “CONNECT” with them, because we’ll show traits such as “courage, authenticity, leadership and innovation” (39).

Wedmore concludes by suggesting that working “downstream” (not upstream, as most do) should involve the following steps: (1) identifying our **market** whom we want to serve and help (figuring out where we can find them and identifying what they’re asking for that we can deliver) so as to (2) make an **offer** they’ll want and then (3) provide that **service** or product and be compensated for them.

The more common “upstream” approach uses the reverse order (**service** to So, if you’ve been “holding or playing small by simply staying busy IN your business [when we should work ON our businesses] . . . you’ve made your ‘complicated and confusing’ business the REASON why you can’t put yourself out there” and that must change (25).

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The more common “upstream” approach uses the reverse order (**service** to **offer** to **market**). In that approach the entrepreneur puts his/her interests or skills first and loses connection with the audience for them.

Put more simply. Wedmore says, “Sell it first. Make it second.”

“Hardwired for Entrepreneurship” is an ebook that teaches struggling entrepreneurs to make their businesses “less of a dream and more of a reality.” I recommend it highly to you.

And now it’s your turn. Are you, or do you know, a struggling entrepreneur? Could they find a course-correct by Wedmore’s insights? Please weigh in on my contact page; I’d be happy to extend this conversation.

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STORYTELLER'S CORNER: Words, Stories, Riddles and Jokes on Writing and Editing . . .

A hungry African lion came across two men. One was sitting under a tree and reading a book; the other was typing away on his typewriter.

The lion pounced on the man reading the book and devoured him. Why?

Even the king of the jungle knows that readers digest and writers cramp!

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