

Develop Your Personal “Know-How” Network!

Glenn E. Robinson

A few years ago, when I was working in Chile, I met a budding young entrepreneur (I will call him Eduardo, although that is not his real name) at one of the country’s top incubators. When I asked him to tell me a bit about himself, he said, “A few years ago, I developed a product and started a company. We did well for a while, but hit some snags, the company failed, and I lost my car.” He continued, “I got a job, earned some



money, then had another idea, and started another company.” “How did that go, Eduardo?”, I queried. He said, “We did quite well

for a while, our customer base and revenue grew nicely, but suddenly we found ourselves on the edge of the Valley of Death, could not raise the required funding to continue our growth curve, the company failed, and I lost my car and my house.” “What are you doing now?” I asked. “I am starting my third company!”

Entrepreneurship is not a career; it is a mindset. And it is not for everyone. It is a dynamic mix of confidence, resilience,

patience and intestinal fortitude, all this in the face of what might end up in disappointment and failure. The entrepreneurial lifestyle can be a lonely road, and quite often fraught with tremendous pressure from family and peers to “get a REAL job, earn some money and be responsible.”

So, you may be asking, what should I do to prepare myself for this? Surrounding yourself with people who raise you up instead of dragging you down, who catch your

vision for your business and desire to help you be successful, is critical. As one of my mentors says, “each of us needs all of us, and all of us needs each of us.” Creating your own enterprise cannot be done in a vacuum. Seek out two types of mentors: those who care for your personal development and growth as a leader, and those who provide advice, counsel and “know-how” in subject matter related to the development and growth of your business.

Remember that YOU

are a critical asset to your business, and “self-care” is a key component to keeping you healthy and focused on reaching your goals. A robust, well-rounded, holistic “know-how network” helps you maintain balance. If you get the right people involved, lever their “IQ points” and listen to wise counsel, this adventure can be tremendously satisfying and rewarding.

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