

Why Some People Get More Stuff Done (and Start Real Businesses)

Given two ambitious intelligent people, both of whom have some big ideas, why does one start getting things done while the other one stays stuck in the dreaming stage? What's the difference between two people whose success is premised on executing tasks across a variety of disciplines—as is the case in most start-ups— and one seems to be able to do more quicker, while the other person spends excessive time fretting, planning, dreaming, or consulting people? Here are some differences I see:

- **People who get stuff done maintain a high commitment to themselves.** They don't want to let themselves down, the chief motivation to achieve comes from within, not externally. It is easy to not keep promises you make to yourself (“Gee, I think I’m going to stop smoking” or “Gee, I’m going to join the gym this month”).
- **People who get stuff done think about the short-term future.** At the end of meetings, they ask, “So what are the next steps?” It’s easy to analyze the present or dream about the distant future, but actionable tasks over the next two to four weeks are most important for keeping the ball moving.
- **People who get stuff done “dream” and “talk” as much as the next guy, but they share these dreams and ideas with others.** By sharing your intentions with others, you introduce yet another accountability mechanism.
- **People who get stuff done begin.** Taking that first step can be the hardest. Act now! As Taoism founder Lao-tzu said, “A journey of one thousand miles begins with a single step.”

What mindset allows me to be productive? I’m fortunate not to have many onerous projects that I loathe to work on. Loving what you do is key to getting stuff done and not simple talking about it. When I’m focused on work, I take a “let’s kick some butt” attitude. If something is difficult, I break it down into parts and organize its related tasks on my computer. When I’m effective and productive, I treat myself by going to the gym, eating an energy bar, or making time to do a blog post.

Do you want to be known as a doer or a talker? Do you want to start businesses or just talk about starting businesses? The answers to these questions—and others like them—are better indicators of your future success in business than the slickness of your b-plan, the extent of your funding, or who you know, **It’s all inside you.**

Casnocha, B. (2007). *My Start-Up Life: What a (Very) Young CEO Learned on His Journey Through Silicon Valley*. USA: John Wiley & Sons.