

## **The Twelve Truths of Entrepreneurship**

Adopting an entrepreneurial mindset to thrive in uncertain times.

### ***Truth #4 : Beliefs***

By Brian Schwartz

What is reality? Reality is based on our beliefs. My view is that our beliefs are most heavily influenced by others and our environment. Those beliefs can heavily fluctuate from one group to another. If you were to analyze your closest relationships, I'd bet you'd find a set of similar beliefs and a common financial worth (if you took an average). For better or worse, we tend to mirror those we associate most with.

Where you are in life is in large part determined by your beliefs. The environment you live in and the people you surround yourself with tend to have a very large impact on our beliefs. If you didn't agree with a town's beliefs, you'd probably have few friends and likely seek a group more aligned with your beliefs.

If you are currently unemployed, and you surround yourself with others that are unemployed, there's a decent chance you're still unemployed. You can find instances of the impact of 'shared beliefs' in many areas of life; welfare, military, education, politics, etc..

My point is that if you feel 'stuck' where you are, it's largely due to the beliefs you have adopted from those around you. Nothing will likely change until you change your beliefs. And your beliefs aren't likely to change until you get away from the people and places which influence those beliefs. For me, I had always wondered why I was an employee and not an employer.

When I surrounded myself with entrepreneurs, my beliefs began to change, and the way I viewed the world shifted. I've concluded that our decisions in life are most heavily influenced by our beliefs and our environment. Different results can only come from making different decisions, so to change your decisions you must first change your beliefs. When your decisions don't turn out well, don't kick yourself for the choices you made, but instead step back and reevaluate your beliefs. As long as your beliefs remain unchanged, so will your decisions and ultimately the results.

It's hard for me now to associate in a professional sense with my former employees. I don't share their mindset or their beliefs anymore. Those I do share my beliefs with are other entrepreneurs. Starting with those I first interviewed for 50 Interviews, but now anytime I am at a networking event, I have a tendency to surround myself with other entrepreneurs.

At networking events, I possess a 'belief filter' that has me gravitate more towards entrepreneurs and less towards employees. It's nothing personal, and it's not even something I am likely conscious of.

So if you aren't somewhere you want to be, take a look around. Spend less time with those you are normally with and more time with those who are where you want to be! The more you associate with those you aspire to be, the more your reality will begin to reflect your wishes.

How? Begin by noticing where they go, who they talk to, what they talk about, what they read, and what they do. The most important thing is to get into the conversation.

If you interviewed 50 people early in your career, doing what you're doing now, do you think you would have learned a vital thing or two? Perhaps made some key connections and found a mentor or two? Maybe even picked a different path?

I spent over 10 years in sales, picked up some good and bad habits along the way. But if I had purposefully sought out the top performers and modeled them early on, if I had surrounded myself with the best, worked where they worked, attended the same events, read the same books, I likely would have adopted their beliefs and built valuable relationships along the way.

A final word about belief: entrepreneurs believe that things always do work out in the end. There is nothing to be gained about worrying about how things will turn out. Do you have a strong belief system that supports you, especially when things seem particularly bleak? The truth is that you are a perfect human with infinite ability if you would only believe in yourself and others. Most of us limit ourselves based on our own perceptions of what we falsely think we are capable of. Self doubt doesn't exist in entrepreneurs, whatever you set out to do, leave all doubts at the door... don't listen to anyone who fuels any inclination that what you are doing is not going to work. Simply stated; if you believe it will work, it will. If you believe it won't, it won't. Be very careful with what you choose to believe. But don't take my word for it, read some of these excerpts from *50 Interviews*;

"Have faith and confidence in knowing that you will get through the downturns."

–Trina Hoefling (GroupONE solutions)

"Believe in yourself, you'll be a lot more fun to be around."

– Greg Stroh (Mix1 Beverage)

"I have always viewed myself as self-employed which I believe has also helped encourage me to get to this point my life."

– Jon Susa (Susa Insurance)

"Time has taught me that confidence in yourself and others is the key ingredient; things will work out even though you may not be able to see how or why."

– April Thayer (Hubbuzz.com)

"I believe everything has gone according to a plan bigger than myself."

– Donna Visocky (BellaSpark Productions)

"We all need a focus outside ourselves and we can be greater than anything that can happen to us."

– Lynne Pittard (Visual Arts Network)

"He didn't know he couldn't fly, so he did."

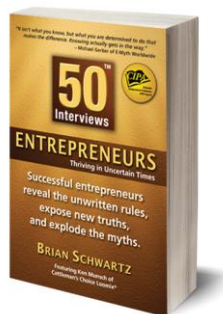
– Joseph Livengood (Livengood Engineering)

"People have to stay focused on what it is they want and truly believe that they can get it."

–The Pond Guy

"It's only when you have the courage to step off the ledge, that you realize you've had wings all along."

– Gail Lynne Goodwin (Inspire Me Today)



*50 Interviews: Entrepreneurs* is the first in a series of books that taps the wisdom of lessons learned from those who have successfully gone before. Revealing new truths and exploding myths, the series features 'in their own words' interviews with role models who inspire us by proving that anything is possible and we all have the ability to make a unique difference in the world. After going through the process himself, Brian is now mentoring others to create their own *50 Interviews* titles. The *50 Interviews* series is published by Wise Media Group (Denver, CO). For more information or to contact the author, please visit:

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