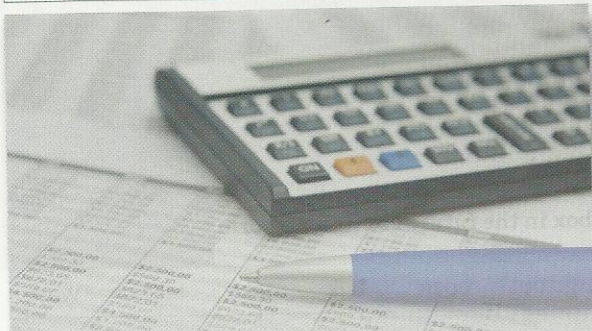


VOCABULARY Building up a business

A Complete the story with the words in the box.

competition set up loss profit ploughed
broke even raised floated bid turnover



About ten years ago, my brother and I decided we'd had enough of working for other people and that it was time to ¹..... our own company. We had some savings and with the help of the bank, we ²..... the rest of the capital we needed. For the first few years, we ran at a ³....., but eventually we ⁴..... and before too long we were making a healthy ⁵..... We ⁶..... all the money back into the business and expanded quite quickly. Next, we ⁷..... the company on the stock exchange, but then the economy went into recession and we starting facing some very stiff ⁸..... We were the subject of a hostile takeover ⁹..... and only survived by merging with a rival firm. It's been a tough ten years, but we're still here! We now have an annual ¹⁰..... of over three million dollars.

B Compare your answers in pairs. Then discuss these questions.

- Do you know anyone who runs their own business? What kind of business is it? How long has it been going?
- Do you know how it's doing?
- Would you like to run your own business?
- What kind of businesses are doing well at the moment? What kind are struggling?
- What do you think are the biggest problems that small business face in your country?

READING

You are going to read about the traits of successful people.

A Read the article on the right. Give yourself a score of 1, 2 or 3 for each characteristic, depending on the degree to which each describes you. (1 = this doesn't sound like me, 3 = this is me!)

B Add up your score (out of 30). Compare your scores in pairs. Explain your decisions. Then discuss these questions:

- Do you agree with the definitions of success in the article? Why? / Why not?
- Are there any other characteristics – or habits – that you would expect successful people to have?
- What does success mean to you personally in terms of your own life?

C Can you remember the nouns that the words below were used with in the article? Read it again to check your ideas.

- push themselves to the
- set high
- have a wide of friends
- maintain
- be on the for new ideas
- accept for your actions
- stay one ahead of the crowd
- maintain your
- act on
- seize an

TEN CHARACTERISTICS OF SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE

- 1 They work incredibly hard and push themselves to the limit. They set high standards and put in the hours needed to meet them.
- 2 They were high achievers at school and are always keen to learn more. They are inquisitive, read widely and are interested in everything around them.
- 3 They're social animals. They have a wide circle of friends and acquaintances and are always networking. They are good listeners and work hard at maintaining relationships.
- 4 They're perfectionists. They are never content to sit back and relax. They're always focused on improving themselves and their performance.
- 5 They display a healthy degree of impatience. They want results – and they want them now! They tend not to perform well in bureaucracies.
- 6 They're creative and they innovate. They're constantly on the lookout for new ideas, new opportunities and for faster, better solutions.



- 7 They don't waste time moaning or looking for people to blame. They learn from their mistakes and move on. They accept responsibility for their actions.
- 8 They're keen observers. They notice new trends, observe changes and keep notes. They keep one eye firmly on the future and try hard to stay one step ahead of the crowd.
- 9 They tend not to get stressed. They are patient and well-balanced – and maintain their cool and their sense of humour under pressure.
- 10 They often act before having the full picture. Successful people respond immediately – and act on impulse. If they see an opportunity, they seize it.

Which of the following extracts from a CV/resume and different application letters would help the candidate to get an interview, and why?

1

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to express my interest in applying for the position of Community Fundraiser advertised in the Morning Herald on 13 May, 20--. I am looking for a challenging entry-level position that allows me to contribute my skills and experience to fundraising for a charity.

2

I am writing to express my interest in the position of Account Manager that was advertised on your website on 13 February, 20--. I'm extremely interested in this position, and I would like the opportunity for an interview in which I could show you how I can benefit your company.

3

I play for the university basketball team. We have won the national university championship for the past two years.

4

My parents are French and Russian, and because they work for a multinational company, I grew up in four different countries. I did all my schooling in English, but I speak and write fluent French and Russian. I can also read Italian, Spanish, Romanian and most Slavic languages.

5

Employment

Saturdays, 2006–8, and full-time July 2008, Right Price food store, West End Avenue (shelf-filling).

July 2009, Port Authority Bus Terminal, 8th Avenue (bus cleaner).

August 2009, grape-picking, Napa Valley, California.

November 2009–June 2010, tourist guide at St Patrick's Cathedral, 5th Avenue (Saturdays).

6

I have travelled extensively during my last three summer vacations. In 20--, I travelled around the Mediterranean (Spain, France, Italy, Greece) for ten weeks. In 20--, I went to Florida for a month, and I spent six weeks in Bali in 20--. I have consequently met a great many people from many different cultures, and I am absolutely convinced that these cross-cultural experiences make me suitable for a position in international marketing, and that your company would have a great deal to gain from employing me.

7

Dear Mr/Ms [name],

I am applying for the Sales Associate position which we discussed during the Career Fair at the National University in [city] on [date]. I believe my varied sales experience and my Bachelor's degree in Business Administration are an excellent match to the qualifications you are seeking.

As you can see from the enclosed resume, I have sold a variety of products in part-time jobs during my studies and have worked in sales departments during two internship positions. This experience, as well as my oral and written communication skills, should prove valuable in increasing [company name]'s sales volume. I am enthusiastic about pursuing a career in sales with [company name] because of your varied product line and international distribution network.

8 I am seeking a challenging position with a progressive company that will offer opportunities for professional growth and advancement. I am results orientated, a self-starter and a team player. I'm a good communicator, and have excellent project management, interpersonal, people management and negotiation skills. I can also work unsupervised. I am committed, creative, competitive, ambitious, adaptable and flexible. I am good at meeting deadlines, solving problems and making decisions.

9 As you will see from my CV, I scored an average of 91% in my university examinations (94% at the end of the first year, 87% in my second year, and 92% in my final year exams). I stayed on to do a post-graduate degree in finance and banking, and was encouraged to extend my Master's dissertation into a doctorate, which I have done in the past ten months. I expect to be awarded my PhD in six weeks' time.

Notes on CVs/resumes

- European and Asian CVs generally include photos; US resumes do not.
- British CVs include personal details such as date of birth, marital status, number of children, etc.; US resumes do not.
- British CVs usually include outside work interests (sports, travelling); US ones sometimes don't.
- Your CV should be totally honest; you should emphasize your strengths, but not lie about your experience or skills. It should not say anything that contradicts what you've put on your Facebook page, or similar!
- Leave out information that is irrelevant or that could give some people a chance to discriminate against you (personal details such as your height, weight, health, country of origin, religion, etc.).
- Limit your CV to a maximum of two pages.
- Lay your CV out neatly.
- Check for grammatical and spelling or typographical errors, and do not rely on an automatic spell checker.
- Get someone to check your CV before you send it.



*"Mind if I take this, chief?
It's a headhunter who's been after me for weeks."*

© The New Yorker