

# The Art Of The Start Summary

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**1-Sentence-Summary:** *The Art Of The Start* is your guide to beginning a company and explains everything from getting the right people on board to writing a winning business plan and building your brand.

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



You've heard that "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." This is sound advice, but too frequently we get stuck before we even make the initial push forward.

This is especially true if you're thinking about starting a company. And who can blame you? With such a momentous task at hand, it's no wonder you'd get stuck in the planning stages.

But if you don't ever start, you're not going to experience the success that becoming an entrepreneur will bring you.

That's why you're going to love Guy Kawasaki's tips in *The Art of The Start: The Time-Tested, Battle-Hardened Guide for Anyone Starting Anything*. It'll teach you all the planning you need to do and just what your first steps need to be so you can build a winning company.

Here are the 3 biggest lessons I've learned from this book:

1. Your first goal as an entrepreneur must be to create meaning, not make money.

2. Prepare your Milestones, Assumptions, and Tasks to have direction and purpose right from the start.
3. Set yourself up for success by creating a business plan.

Got your winning business idea ready? Let's jump into these lessons and discover how to make it happen!

## **Lesson 1: Making money isn't as important as creating meaning.**

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Before I began my entrepreneurial journey, I was apprehensive about it. I'd see corrupt billionaires and guys advertising their get rich quick scheme with flashy cars and big houses. I wanted nothing to do with any of that stuff. And I definitely didn't want to become that kind of person.

The reason these things are so tacky and obnoxious is that they go against everything that business should be. It's more about the money than making a difference, which is what winners focus on before cash.

Your company does this by making a product or service that makes the world a better place. **And the more what you do or sell improves the lives of your customers, the more successful your business will be.**

This happens because when your primary focus is money, the main motivation is greed. That attracts dishonest people that make your customers feel uncomfortable, just like the guys with sports cars.

Contrast this with a company that focuses on creating value and truly helping people. If you've ever worked at such a place then you know the powerful motivation that trying to make a difference brings.

You can build this meaning into your company from the start by identifying a mantra that supports it. This is different than a mission statement but is also a short and powerful phrase that reminds everyone of your why.

Nike's, for example, is "Authentic athletic performance." And Disney uses the mantra of "Fun family entertainment" to remind themselves of their purpose.

## **Lesson 2: If you want purpose and direction from the beginning, prepare your Milestones, Assumptions, and Tasks with the MAT framework.**

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Have you ever worked at a place that seems like it's going nowhere? I've been there before and it's not really fun. You don't want to create this kind of environment for your employees. To avoid this, use the MAT framework to get direction:

1. Milestones
2. Assumptions
3. Tasks

The initial step is to identify milestones, which are the big events on your way to accomplishing your business goals. **This is vital because it lets you see clear steps in the path to success and review how well you're doing at each of them.**

You might, for example, set a milestone of establishing a “proof of concept” for your product to make sure it will actually work. A good follow-up step would be to finish the prototype. And last, you'd want to track the milestone of getting funding to make it.

Next, you must review the assumptions you're making about your business. Brainstorm a list of everything that you think is true about your idea that might not actually be accurate. You want to look specifically for thoughts that you have no data to back up. Keep track of them to see whether or not you were right about them.

Last comes listing the tasks that you need to do on a daily or weekly basis to meet your milestones. These can be anything from setting up insurance policies for your employees to acquiring office space.

### **Lesson 3: A business plan will set you up for success.**

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In the words of Benjamin Franklin:

| “If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail!”

A plan is anything that identifies our objectives and the steps we're going to take to reach them, and this is no different for a business. Although it might sound formal and even maybe useless for a startup that has a lot of unknowns, but this is a vital step on your path to profit.

Think about your stakeholders, for example. They might not ever read it, but you'd better bet they'll ask for it. And you're never going to get funding from investors unless you have a business plan.

Having one is great, but the steps you'll take to make it are also helpful for many reasons. **The process of writing it gives your team a chance to work together more efficiently, for example.**

It might even tell you how much you don't want to work with the people you've got on board. That's a really important piece of information to have as early as possible!

Additionally, the process of reviewing all that you need for a good plan will show you gaps in your thinking. For instance, you might have nobody on your team preparing for customer service.

The trick to making an effective business plan is making sure the executive summary is spot on. It's a four-paragraph abstract of the entire plan and is the first thing anyone reads. Make it good and you'll attract attention and success!

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## **The Art Of The Start Review**

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It's funny, with all the talk *The Art Of The Start* had of iPods and Hummers, I definitely got a big 2004 vibe from it and guess when it came out? 2004! I think that's also a big reason why I struggled with many of these ideas-because they're already outdated! Luckily he recently released version 2.0 which we'll have to summarize soon. I'm looking forward to it too because I felt like this version makes starting a business more difficult than it needs to be!

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## **Who would I recommend The Art Of The Start summary to?**

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The 24-year-old who is thinking that they want to become an entrepreneur, the 56-year-old CEO that has a new idea for a product but needs some help planning it out, and anybody that wants to know how to start a business.