

Quick Walkthrough

I don't want to give you all the answers, but I thought I would give some tips in case you are having trouble getting to the end of the game and seeing all the content I added.

The game is entirely keyboard driven, all inputs are made with key presses. Make sure to read the tutorial, and also read all the choice descriptions carefully, some are meant to be tricky. You'll notice that not a lot of information is shown to you, but supposedly your choices are affecting something. This is intentional, there are mechanics happening in the background that the player doesn't see until you start hiring employees. However, an experienced entrepreneur might have learned how these work from a previous play-through. From the play testing I did, it seems that sometimes you get lucky and can win very early, while other times the game is pretty much unwinnable. Not sure what your experience will be, but to be honest I think the variance kinda emulates real life.

Also, I can't promise the game is bug free. I tried to spend more time on the research and entrepreneurship content rather than game stuff. Below is my research sources, along with what information I used from them.

Bibliography

<https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/start-buy-business/start-business/how-start-business-canada>

This article says that "Close to 40% of new businesses with one-to-four employees don't make it to their fifth birthday." I used this to gauge the difficulty level of the game.

<https://www.bdc.ca/en/about/analysis-research/entrepreneurship-skills>

This report shows the different stages of growth in Figure 6, and also describes how businesses can progress through these. I loosely based the progression of game-play on this, however mine is simplified.

<https://www.bdc.ca/en/about/analysis-research/consumer-trends>

This report has a section about what customers value, and specifically says "95% of consumers report that good product quality and durability is important, making this attribute the most important of all measured." To represent this you are able to improve the product quality in the game which makes it more desirable to customers.

<https://www.bdc.ca/globalassets/digizuite/42504-report-investment-financing-outlook-survey-july-2023.pdf>

This report has some statistics on overall financing needs of businesses. The numbers on how many plan to request funding and what that funding was going to be used for were the most useful for the related game mechanics. In addition, the survey on SMEs about their number of employees was useful for determining how often the player should be able to hire.

<https://www.bdc.ca/globalassets/digizuite/41066-report-canada-venture-capital-landscape-2023.pdf>

This report has data on VC funding in Canada, as well as number of IPOs. These values were useful for adding related mechanics into the game.

<https://www.bdc.ca/globalassets/digizuite/40309-report-growth-ambition-march-2023.pdf>

This report identifies the different aspects a business wants to grow, and ranks how important they are. I pretty much directly used these for in-game statistics.

<https://dais.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Getting-to-Scale-FINAL-online.pdf>

This report creates a distinction between start-ups and scale-ups. It says that in Canada the start-up ecosystem is healthy, but the scale-up one isn't. I tried to make the later part of the game more difficult to represent this.

<https://www.gemconsortium.org/reports/latest-global-report>

This report found that "New entrepreneurs frequently declare that they take social and environmental implications into account when making strategic decisions about the future of their business." There is a small part of the game that involves environmental repercussions.

<https://www.gemconsortium.org/news/canada-performance-strong-compared-to-peers-in-latest-gem-global-report>

This article says that exits are much more common in North America. An entrepreneur in Europe would be much less likely to have a profitable exit as their ultimate goal.

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/231127/dq231127a-eng.htm>

No direct impact from this source.

<https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/sme-research-statistics/en/key-small-business-statistics/key-small-business-statistics-2022>

This article found that "Businesses that began operations with a large number of employees had a higher survival rate than businesses that began with a smaller number of employees." There is no way to start the game with more employees, but hiring early does give an advantage.

<https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/sme-research-statistics/en/determinants-entrepreneurship-canada-state-knowledge>

This article says that "In Canada, and much of the OECD, markets are increasingly dominated by fewer firms than in 2006." The market share game statistic is based on a low firm market.

<https://thoughtleadership.rbc.com/proof-point-the-ranks-of-canadian-entrepreneurs-are-shrinking/>

This article shows that for many reasons entrepreneurship is becoming less and less popular in Canada. Sort of as a reference to this, at the start of the game it says "You have left a high-paying job."

<https://www.torontomu.ca/diversity/reports/SupportingEntrepreneurshipAndSMEs.pdf>

One of the recommendations this report gives is for founders to be able to better identify the skills they need from employees. To emulate this, I have intentionally made it not obvious what the benefits of hiring are, and what the different roles do.

https://www-oecd-ilibrary-org.proxy.queensu.ca/industry-and-services/financing-smes-and-entrepreneurs-2022_e9073a0f-en

This report says that there is a growing focus on digitalisation. To represent this, most of the marketing and promotion the player can do has a digital focus.

<https://onlinelibrary-wiley-com.proxy.queensu.ca/doi/full/10.1002/smj.3010>

This paper is focused on entrepreneurial strategy, and how entrepreneurs make strategic choices. I tried to make several different strategies viable in the game, so that a player can choose the one they like the best.

<https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/characteristics-of-successful-entrepreneurs>

One of the characteristics of successful entrepreneurs that is listed in this article, is being able to manage risk. I tried to incorporate risk taking into the game the best that I could.

<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/challenges-facing-entrepreneurship>

This article says that “For entrepreneurs whose organization is doing well, they may consider partnering with other professionals or businesses.” To represent this, many of the prompts are about friendly co-operations with others.

<https://www.shopify.com/ca/blog/challenges-of-entrepreneurship>

While there are many useful tidbits in this article, I directly used the concern for founder mental health given in this article, as well as Christian Alaimo’s story from class, to inspire a little bit of how the happiness mechanic works, specifically that it is relevant even if the player doesn’t hire anyone.

<https://medium.com/swlh/how-much-does-it-cost-to-build-an-mvp-2c88016da045>

I used the example cost to create an MVP from this article.

<https://www-statista-com.proxy.queensu.ca/study/49240/emobility---market-insights-and-data-analysis/>

Some of the industry statistics in this study were useful for gauging reasonable values.

<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/b/business-valuation.asp>

I used one of the valuation methods described in this article.

<https://www.midstreet.com/blog/business-valuation-cost>

I used the example cost of a business valuation from this article.