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Entrepreneur FirstClassGraphics

The entrepreneur interviewed for this essay is my mother and she owned and started a small business called FirstClassGraphics which is a screenprinting business selling t-shirts and their designs to large local suppliers like schools and events. Her early life began as an artist spending much of her childhood creating art which inspired her to get her associates in art. When she was nineteen she decided to get a job for a big sign printing company for six months learning the ins and outs of that job. Then she joined another big company doing t-shirt printing and learning everything she could and later left after another six months due to hating the environment. She hated working for a boss and often got bored after learning everything from the job. With this mentality and her previous experience from her past jobs, she decided to do freelance t-shirt printing. Everything was done by herself inside her mother's garage except for buying the blank T-shirt. Her process was first to create a design of the specifications of the customer on a computer program called Corel Draw. She would then print out the design to be in a mesh screen using ink and a squeegee using a printing machine. After that, the T-shirt would be put through a dryer. At first, when starting her business she struggled with getting marketing. After she took a marketing class at the Better Business Bureau, she started a new approach where she put her name on the Yellow Pages book and changed her business name to aFirstClassGraphics to put at the top of the directory. In addition, she gave out t-shirts that advertised the business's name to every one of her customers and lastly, she gave out the lowest

prices compared to her competitors, knowing that she could beat out everyone else because her business setup was in her parent's garage. For one order a t-shirt would be priced around 10 dollars and would cost 2 dollars to be printed. Overall, much of the equipment that my mother used would have cost around 30 thousand dollars to buy but fortunately, much of the equipment was made by her father. She started the business in the 1990s and ended the business around 2010 and she made a lot of money, so much so fact she was able to buy her first house within a few years of the business running. Money wise she had so many clients that she could not take some of them throughout the years. In the end, she decided to quit for many factors such as being too overworked and having a family to take care of.

Comparing the entrepreneur of my mother versus the material in the book, Intro to Business there are many ideas of advice them that they have in common, however, they have some things that are different about businesses. A common similarity is that it is always a good idea to have some experience with the industry before going into it, "Getting roughly three years of experience is a good rule of thumb. That way, you can learn what does and doesn't fly in your industry" (Williams 128). My mother did exactly this. She got all the knowledge she would ever need such as getting an associate's degree, working in many different jobs in her industry, and taking extra business classes. By the time that she did that she knew every process of the business before she went into it, which allowed her to be so successful with her business. A disagreement with the book would be that a person needs to love the industry to be successful in business, "Do what you love, and the money will follow. No words have ever created more failed entrepreneurs than the notion that just because you love doing something, it will be successful" (Williams 124). My mother would argue that it is crucial to like the industry that your business is in. If not, people who don't like it are more likely to give up or get burnt out.

Lastly, another idea that both agree on is that small businesses often have an advantage over large enterprises. “Many small firms are uniquely positioned to exploit market niches as they are sparsely occupied spaces in the market. In addition, with entrepreneurs wearing so many hats, They can hire fewer employees. They tend to work around costs with tactics such as establishing headquarters in the owner’s garage” (Williams 126). All of these are true local t-shirt buyers like schools are less likely to buy from a large retailer as opposed to a local business. My mother also saves a lot by being able to do every type of job that is needed, in fact, she only needs two people including herself to have an assembly line lastly, her home is her business which saves a lot on renting a place.

The last part of this essay is my overall expression of the entrepreneur. A couple of positive things are her ability to learn and her passion for the business. On her journey, she exhibited a large amount of curiosity as she wanted to learn as much as she wanted from every job she had. In addition, she has a lot of passion even if there is a hardship in the business such as when she first started and had to learn to be able to market to people. She decided not to grow the business any more than herself and a few employees which is ok. It would be very hard to grow the business especially since she would have had to hire more employees such as a manager and get out of the garage. One criticism of her is that she was overworking herself to the bone she was taking jobs from giving birth and working the next day. Next, she had no online presence a good social media account and a website would indeed bring in a lot more customers. Lastly, she made a huge mistake of forgetting to bill the customers sometimes losing thousands of dollars doing this and she could have gotten away with charging a little bit more for her product as she was getting too many orders. In the end, my mother is a very loving person and a great entrepreneur.

Works Cited

Kelly, Marce, and Chuck Williams. BUSN: Introduction to Business. Cengage, 2023