

STARTING UP ON YOUR OWN

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FINANCIAL TIMES



Module 2: STOP! Listen to your head NOT your heart

If you are an Independent the chances are that you've got a dream. If you want to become an Independent the chances are you've got a really, really big dream. Something that has sustained you through many months and many years. Something that only you really have that drives you forward and wants to get you into the situation where you're actually doing something for yourself.

What I'm going to ask you to do is take that dream that you've got and take it to pieces. Pull it apart. Shake it up. Turn it over. Look at it from the other side. Because the chances are that your dream, if you haven't really thought it through, or if you've had it for too long, can turn into an absolute waking nightmare. It could be something that can drive you out of business very very quickly.

I'll give you an example of this. I have a friend of mine, and he had a dream. And his dream was to open a wine store in a little town. In his dream he saw people flocking through the door and buying cases and cases of wine, leaving happy. He came to me and he said "What do you think of my dream? What do you think of my idea?" I said "It's very simple - you can't afford it. Because the main cost (and you haven't got very much money anyway) is going to go on rent, rates and utilities. That will suck away everything you've got, so if anything goes wrong - the slightest thing goes wrong - you are out of business. You are history. You are an ex-Independent."

I said "What you want to do is you take your assets. Here's your dream, turn it upside down. Now, what are you good at? OK, you've got contacts, you know the business, you've got a great personality, and you can sell. So you don't need that shop. What you need is a place to stock your wine, and then you get on your bicycle, or you get in your car, and you go and visit people. You visit them in their homes, you go to restaurants, and you do deals because you've got a great personality. You save this huge amount of money, and, using that money you can start and launch a very effective, very professional marketing campaign." That's what he's done, and he's become very successful doing that.

Now his other dream is still there, that one day he wants to be able to have this shop in this High Street. That is OK, but he is going to have to examine that in the light of what the economy is doing, what the market is like. Right now he is making money, he is happy. Mainly because he is using the strengths that he's got, focusing those to make that business as an Independent a success. So he is living his dream, except for one thing. He changed the way the dream turned out. Now it's happy ever after, I am pleased to say.

Remember where you heard it first.