Veterans Are Trained For Chaos — That's Why They Make Great Entrepreneurs

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Key Takeaways

- Veterans bring crucial skills to entrepreneurship, such as decisive leadership, resourcefulness and adaptability, honed under the extreme pressures of military service.
- Trust, clear communication and accountability foster a robust company culture, paralleling the trust built through shared risks and responsibilities in the military.
- The dynamic and volatile nature of today's business landscape requires the same agility and commitment to the mission that veterans have developed through their military training.

Most people think military service is about following orders. March here. Salute there. In reality, the best leaders in combat are trained for something entirely different: making decisions with incomplete information, earning trust fast and keeping teams aligned under extreme pressure. If that doesn't sound like entrepreneurship, I don't know what does.

When I was a young officer in Baghdad, I didn't have the luxury of waiting until every fact was in. A mortar could land on our base, or a convoy could stall in the middle of the city, and in those moments, seconds mattered. You had to

assess, decide and act. And your soldiers were watching every move. Did you project calm? Did you trust them to execute? Did you give them clarity when chaos reigned?

Not every veteran leads troops in combat, but all of us are trained for that dynamic. We learn to act when the ground shifts beneath our feet. We learn to communicate clearly under stress. And we learn that trust is earned through action, not words. Those habits stick for life — and they map perfectly onto what it takes to start and grow a business.

Entrepreneurs face the same pressure, just in a different theater. You'll never have perfect data. The market shifts, investors waffle, competitors come out of nowhere. Waiting for certainty is a losing strategy. Veterans are trained to move with conviction in uncertainty, to take responsibility for the decision and to bring others with them.

Related: 5 Things Being a Marine Taught Me About Being an Entrepreneur

Trust is at the heart of it. In the military, rank gives you authority, but real commitment comes when people believe you'll share risk, take responsibility and put the mission ahead of your ego. That same dynamic exists in a startup. When employees believe their founder will shoulder the weight with them, they'll go further than any stock option or motivational speech can carry them.

Too many founders miss this. They chase product-market fit or fundraising strategy and forget that culture is fragile. A single crack in trust can undo months of progress. Veterans understand this instinctively. In combat, credibility isn't built through charisma or slide decks. It's built through consistent action under stress.

That same environment teaches something else entrepreneurs will recognize: resourcefulness. In Iraq, we rarely had the exact tools or information we wanted. You make do with what

you have, you improvise and you keep the mission moving. Startups face the same reality. No company ever has enough capital, staff or time. The difference between success and failure often comes down to who can turn constraints into creativity — and keep morale intact while doing it.

Operating that way naturally demands flexibility. In the Army, we had a concept called "commander's intent." You set the big goal — secure this route, protect this convoy — but you trust your team to adapt to conditions on the ground. Business works the same way. Founders who try to script every move suffocate their companies. The great ones set a clear north star, then empower their people to improvise their way there.

That balance of clarity and adaptability is harder than it sounds. I've seen brilliant entrepreneurs crash because they clung too tightly to a plan that wasn't working. Veterans are trained differently. We know that no plan survives first contact. What matters is holding onto the mission while adjusting the tactics.

And here's the part people often overlook: These aren't just combat lessons. They show up in every corner of service. The mechanic who keeps helicopters flying in the desert learns how to work under pressure with limited resources. The medic who treats casualties in a remote village learns how to stay calm when the stakes couldn't be higher. The logistics officer who gets supplies across half a country learns how to adapt when plans inevitably fall apart. Different jobs, same training ground. Veterans come out of it with a toolkit that is built for entrepreneurship.

Related: I'm a Former U.S. Army Captain — This Is the Military Secret You Need to Know to Build High-Impact Teams

I've seen those skills translate everywhere: construction, finance, healthcare and technology. The industries may be different, but the underlying habits are the same —

decisiveness, accountability, resourcefulness, adaptability. Veterans don’t wait for the perfect conditions. They make progress in imperfect ones.

And that’s exactly the kind of leadership we need right now. The world is only getting more volatile. Supply chains shift overnight. AI rewrites entire industries. Capital markets swing wildly. In that environment, the leaders who succeed aren’t the ones who wait for certainty. They’re the ones who can step into chaos, bring order and keep their teams aligned on the mission.

Veterans are uniquely prepared for that challenge. They’ve already proven they can act under extreme pressure. They know how to unite people around a mission. They’ve learned to lead with conviction even when the path forward isn’t clear. Those aren’t just military skills. They’re entrepreneurial ones.

It’s easy to think veterans succeed as entrepreneurs because they’re comfortable with risk. That might be true. But the bigger reason is this: We’ve trained for it.

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How This Standard Business Practice Is Actually Holding Your Company Back

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Key Takeaways

- Replace traditional charts with work charts. Instead of mapping people and job titles, focus on mapping workflows, tasks and value streams. This enables teams to work dynamically.
- Once you identify the tasks in your work chart that can be automated, start implementing AI agents into these processes. Then assign human teams to high-value work.
- Implement safeguards to ensure AI has the right levels of oversight and governance. You should also reskill your employees so they're prepared to work effectively alongside AI.

As a business owner, it's critical to organize your team in a way that provides the most value, productivity and collaboration. Historically, the best practice was to sit down and map out your organization into a maze of boxes and interconnecting lines that show how each individual connects to one another. While traditional org charts look great framed on the wall, they're an archaic approach that restricts innovation and throughput today.

The challenge is that organizational charts were designed for the Industrial Age, which required clear structure to enforce control and decision-making, especially in massive organizations with thousands of employees. Today, traditional org charts do nothing more than breed bureaucracy. They create decision-making bottlenecks as work stalls moving up and down the multiple layers and obscuring where work actually gets done.

The emergence of disruptive technologies has created the need for a new approach to organizing people. With automation being capable of completing complex tasks faster and cheaper than a human, the concept of people in roles with rigid job titles is becoming irrelevant. Instead, businesses should be looking for ways to create a structure that enables teams to work

dynamically.

The solution is the work chart. Instead of a map of people, a work chart is a living diagram of the work, tasks and output of the organization, whether executed by a human or an algorithm. Entrepreneurs must understand how to make this fundamental shift in thinking to redesign their organizations to function successfully in the age of artificial intelligence.

Related: How to Structure and Build a Team For Long-Term Success

1. Map your workflows, not people

The first essential step in transitioning from a traditional org chart to a work chart requires entrepreneurs to stop focusing on existing titles and shift their attention to value streams. A value stream represents an entire sequence of steps to deliver a specific outcome, product or service.

Shifting your mindset away from your current organizational structure will be the most difficult part of the process. You might be tempted to group certain workstreams together based on who performs them today, rather than how they make sense to be organized.

Mapping out these value streams end-to-end is a great exercise that not only lays the foundation for your new work chart but also helps identify inefficiencies. This rigorous process will shine a light on hidden bureaucracy, redundant steps, manual data replication and crucial friction points. Through the process, the goal is also to identify the individual steps or tasks that are prime candidates for automation.

2. Integrate the AI workforce

Once you've identified the tasks in your work chart that can be automated, you'll want to start implementing AI agents into these processes. AI agents are simply autonomous programs that take a high-level goal and execute the steps needed to complete it. These tasks can include monitoring financial transactions, creating marketing campaigns or analyzing supplier bids and qualifications. On the work chart, the AI agent is simply a non-human resource responsible for the task.

This is where most entrepreneurs get nervous. While it can be scary to think about handing critical tasks to a machine, it's a necessary step for businesses that want to remain competitive and relevant. The good news is that you don't have to jump headfirst into automation. Simply start with some of the most basic tasks and expand from there.

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3. Assign human teams to high-value work

There will still be a significant volume of work that can't be completed by an AI agent and requires human-centric skills such as critical and creative thinking, relationship building and handling ambiguous situations. The next step in the process is to assign humans to the remaining non-automated tasks. This is where the value of shifting away from job titles will become clear. Instead of workstreams being siloed into specific departments, a work chart allows you to assign tasks to small, cross-functional teams with the best skillset for completing the task.

With a work chart, management and oversight must also evolve. Technology can be utilized to help automate task boards and

provide visibility of who is performing what task. Your managers will need to shift from being controllers and decision gatekeepers to coaches and resource providers.

4. Implement guardrails and governance

As AI agents gain the ability to act independently, entrepreneurs need safeguards to ensure that AI has the right levels of oversight and governance. Many employees in the workforce today fear that AI will leave them jobless. While this is a valid concern for people in jobs that can be easily automated, the AI revolution will likely create an AI-fueled job boom by adding new roles in the form of AgentOps, a practice of monitoring and managing AI agent performance, security, ethics and compliance.

Entrepreneurs need to consider areas where new tasks and responsibilities can be added to workflows to track the performance and accuracy of the AI agents. This need will require new roles to be created, such as agent strategies to define the goals, constraints and success metrics for AI workflows or AI quality leads that audit AI's output for errors or compliance issues.

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5. Re-skill humans for AI collaboration

A major challenge is that most human workers don't know how to effectively work alongside AI. Employees must learn how to move from being a performer of routine work to a supervisor of automated work. As a business owner, you'll need to invest in providing your team with the right tools and training to make

this cognitive shift.

Training must go beyond basic AI usage and focus on deep AI literacy, prompt engineering, critical evaluation of AI outputs (such as understanding its limitations or potential biases) and ethical implications of automation. This deliberate reskilling ensures that your team is prepared for the future so your business can get the maximum benefit from AI.

The work chart is more than just a diagram. It’s the living, breathing operating model of modern businesses. If executed correctly, it can give entrepreneurs a significant advantage over other companies.

Key Takeaways

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Jensen Huang's Mom Taught Him a Leadership Mindset He Still Uses

Key Takeaways

- Jensen Huang has been CEO of Nvidia since the company's start in 1993.
- In a new talk, Huang says that he approaches problems with a specific attitude.
- He learned the mindset from his mom, who taught him English when he was young from a dictionary.

Jensen Huang approaches every new problem with the mindset *How hard can it be?* – an attitude he learned from his mom.

In a talk at the Cambridge Union earlier this month, the Nvidia CEO explained how his mom used “a piece of paper and a dictionary” to teach him English, even though she didn’t speak the language herself.

Huang, who was born in Taiwan, was sent to the U.S. when he was nine years old for better educational opportunities, per Business Insider. His mother, who spoke Taiwanese Hokkien, started teaching him English before he left to get him ready for the transition.

“My mom taught me English, and she doesn’t speak English,” Huang said at the talk, adding, “In a lot of ways, that kind of defines Nvidia, kind of defines me. I approach almost everything from the perspective of, *How hard can it be?*“

Jensen Huang. Photo by Yui Mok / POOL / AFP
Huang co-founded Nvidia in 1993, immediately stepping into the role of CEO, a title he has now held for 32 years. Under his leadership, Nvidia has grown to the most valuable company in the world, surpassing a market value of $5 trillion last month. Nvidia now has a market capitalization of $4.58 trillion, more than its competitors, including AMD, Intel, Micron and Qualcomm, combined.

Related: Nvidia Is Investing $5 Billion in Rival Intel

Huang pointed out that he had never been a CEO or a manager before Nvidia. He approached new endeavors with the same mindset: Break everything down to first principles and learn along the way. After all, how hard could it be?

The most important thing for him was staying in the game long enough to learn the sport. “I was able to do what I’m doing today because I didn’t get bored and I didn’t get fired,” Huang said. “That I think was the magic of it. It’s 100% of

it.”

Related: Nvidia’s CEO Jensen Huang Says He’s ‘Created More Billionaires’ Than Anyone Else

Huang’s mom also told him when he was young that he was “special,” and she encouraged him to do well on tests. Huang says that’s where he learned to set high expectations.

“If people tell you that you’re better, greater, more capable than you are, you might live up to that expectation,” Huang said. “It reminds us to do the same with our companies, and it reminds us to do the same with each other.”

Huang has created a unique management culture at Nvidia. He has 60 direct reports, preferring to keep the organization as flat as possible, but doesn’t do one-on-one meetings. He personally reviews compensation for all of Nvidia’s 42,000 employees every earnings cycle.

Huang was the ninth-richest person in the world at the time of writing, with a net worth of $162 billion.

Key Takeaways

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- In a new talk, Huang says that he approaches problems with a specific attitude.
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How to Lead With Clarity — Even When Everything Feels Ambiguous

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Key Takeaways

- Great leaders don’t pretend to eliminate ambiguity; they bring calm into it and create clarity where there is none, helping teams move forward even when the path isn’t clear.
- In moments of ambiguity, teams don’t need definitive answers; they need clear priorities, consistent communication and trust that someone’s guiding the ship.
- To lead with clarity, leaders should communicate even when they don’t have answers, reground the team in priorities and model calm, confident action.

Uncertainty is a constant. But how we show up in it is the

leadership variable.

When the landscape gets foggy, most teams aren't looking for a crystal ball. They're looking for a steady hand — not someone who has all the answers, but someone who knows how to keep things moving, prioritize the next step and communicate what matters.

In my time as the founder of ButterflyMX, I've learned that the best leaders don't pretend to eliminate ambiguity. They bring calm into it. They create clarity where there is none. And in doing so, they give their teams the confidence to act, even when the path ahead is murky.

Related: The 3-Step Framework to Lead with Clarity and Confidence

Ambiguity isn't the problem — misalignment is

We live in an era of perpetual instability. One news cycle, one customer shift, one economic wobble, and the ground moves. Startups feel this acutely. Plans get scrapped. Forecasts become fiction. Suddenly, it's not about optimization; it's about orientation.

And yet, ambiguity itself isn't the real threat. Most teams can handle a hard pivot or an unknown variable. What breaks them is the leadership's response to it — or lack thereof.

Too often, leaders go quiet. They wait for more certainty, more information and a better answer. Or worse, they spin up a flurry of reactive decisions that confuse more than they clarify. In both cases, the result is the same: a team untethered.

What's missing isn't answers. It's alignment. People want to know: Where are we focused? What matters right now? Who's

steering this thing?

When those questions go unanswered, chaos fills the void, and burnout follows. Not because the work is too hard, but because the uncertainty is unmanaged. People can grind through tough conditions. What they can't sustain is confusion with no end in sight.

Clarity is a leadership skill

Clarity is not the absence of ambiguity; it's leadership's response to it. Great leaders don't try to control uncertainty. They shrink the zone of confusion so their teams can focus. That might mean reframing the problem, tightening the time horizon or just stating what we do know with confidence.

The point isn't to provide false certainty. It's to provide direction.

In moments of ambiguity, teams don't need definitive answers; they need clear priorities, consistent communication and trust that someone's guiding the ship.

As a founder, I've learned this the hard way. Saying "I don't know" isn't weakness; it's honesty. What matters is what comes next: "But here's what we're doing in the meantime." Clarity is a muscle. And the more you use it when things are unclear, the more trust you earn when it matters most.

Related: How to Lead Effectively When Everything Feels Fragile and Nothing Feels Certain

3 moves that cut through chaos

So, how do you lead with clarity when everything feels ambiguous?

Three tactics:

1. **Communicate even when you don’t have answers:** Silence creates anxiety. A quick check-in or update, even just to say “Here’s what we’re watching,” goes a long way. Make it rhythmic, like a weekly all-hands, a daily stand-up or a Monday memo. Build trust by being visible.

2. **Reground the team in priorities:** In chaos, people need to know what’s non-negotiable. Pick the one or two things that matter most this week. Repeat them often. Clarity doesn’t come from knowing the future; it comes from knowing what to do now.

3. **Model calm, confident action:** Your tone sets the temperature. You don’t have to pretend everything is fine. But you do need to show that we can handle it. When people see you act with composure, they’ll mirror it.

Don’t fake certainty; anchor direction

Let’s be clear: Clarity isn’t about pretending to have it all figured out. That’s not leadership, that’s theater. And in high-stakes, high-ambiguity moments, people can smell the performance a mile away.

Overconfidence doesn’t inspire, it unnerves. When leaders default to bold declarations or overpromise outcomes they can’t control, they might win short-term applause. But long-term? It erodes trust, fast. People stop believing you. They start hedging. And soon, alignment frays.

The nuance is this: Clarity does not equal certainty.

Clarity means being honest about what’s unknown while still

pointing the way forward. It means resisting the urge to tie everything up with a neat bow and instead anchoring the team with principles, priorities and a steady cadence of action.

Saying, “We don’t know yet,” isn’t a weakness. It’s a mark of credibility if it’s followed by, “Here’s what we’re watching,” or “Here’s what we’ll do in the meantime.” That second part is what builds confidence. It shows the team that while the outcome isn’t fixed, we’re not frozen.

Related: As a Leader, You Set the Tone — Here’s Why Staying Calm Builds a Stronger Business

Leadership in ambiguity is less about control and more about conviction. You don’t need to map the whole journey. You just need to make the next step visible and take it with clarity, consistency and care.

Because at the end of the day, clarity isn’t about having all the answers. It’s about giving people enough direction to keep moving forward together.

In high-ambiguity environments, clarity is your greatest leverage. Not because it solves everything, but because it creates momentum, focus and trust when your team needs it most.

You don’t need to be the loudest voice in the room. Just the clearest. When things feel chaotic, that’s what people follow.

Key Takeaways

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Uncertainty is a constant. But how we show up in it is the leadership variable.

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Use This Counterintuitive Hack to Unlock Your Next Great Idea

At CES 2025, will.i.am shared a surprising take on what truly drives creative breakthroughs.

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At CES 2025, I spoke with will.i.am, and our conversation offered a powerful reminder that breakthrough creativity isn't always about inventing something entirely new, but about re-imagining how everyday tools can become extraordinary. He emphasized that creativity begins with asking "better questions," challenging assumptions and inviting serendipity. Drawing from his work as a creative consultant for LG, he described how he helped push the audio brand's XBoom line toward studio-level tuning and immersive sound experiences — bringing his musical sensibility into product form.

But his vision for creativity goes beyond sound. will.i.am also discussed how his LG consultancy role intersects with broader technology platforms, including robotics, AI and home automation. He positioned creativity as the capacity to "make the world better" by connecting disciplines — music, product design, robotics — and insisted that partnerships fuel that work. By aligning his creative voice with LG's tech roadmap, he showed how creative consulting today means more than brand endorsement — it's about co-creating the future of technology.

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This is the Real Difference Between Running a PR Agency and Doing It Alone

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Key Takeaways

- Working for yourself versus having others work for you bring differing degrees of flexibility and autonomy.
- Freelancing grants you complete control over your workflow, but business ownership teaches you how to relinquish some control and replace it with more growth opportunities.
- Which path is right for you depends on what professional

route you're best suited for and most appeals to you.

When I started my public relations career, freelancing felt like freedom. I could pick my clients, set my schedule and choose my projects. But as the years went on, I realized that freedom has limits … and those limits were my own — specifically, my time, my energy and my capacity. If I kept taxing them all to the max, there was the real danger of crashing and burning. That's when I realized that launching my own PR agency with a support team to assist my efforts might be a viable solution for my future.

If you're considering the same thing — transitioning your gig or contractor career into a full-fledged small business — you should know that being a freelancer and running your own company aren't just two different sides of the same coin; they're two entirely different animals.

Related: Your Story Isn't Just Branding — It's a Blueprint For Beating the Competition

The freelancer lifestyle: where flexibility meets fragility

Freelancing offers many advantages — if it didn't, so many people wouldn't be doing it. You have your autonomy, the thrill of landing a new client on your own, the satisfaction of singlehandedly delivering results you can be proud of. Freelancing keeps you nimble, adaptable, and always learning. Best of all, you get to work directly with your clients one-on-one, often witnessing the impact you make immediately.

But freelancing can also be very unstable. The workflow is sometimes hit or miss, drought or onslaught, and that inconsistency can be difficult on your mental state, not to mention your wallet. The pressure to always have to find new work never really eases, and one unpaid invoice or client loss

on your roster can be greatly detrimental. Further, though a freelancer indeed gets to wear many hats for variety on the job – marketer, publicist, networker, accountant, scheduler, social media manager – that precarious juggling act can really cap your growth potential over time.

The freelancer's biggest roadblock isn't capability, then, it's scalability. Bottom line: you can't double your output without doubling your hours.

The leap to business ownership: scaling beyond yourself

Enter the solution of launching your own agency or firm, which equates to you becoming the platform instead of the product. In the process, you will devise systems, establish a culture and create a brand that extends beyond your personal capacity. As you switch from doing all the work yourself to enabling others to do it, it can be scary. But it can also be incredibly empowering.

Either way, it's a massive mind shift, and of course that's going to be uncomfortable at first. You're not used to letting go of control; you're not necessarily skilled at managing anyone else but yourself. So everything feels like a risk. To mitigate that risk, though, you can hire talented people, define productive and efficient processes, and create a distinctive position for your business in your market. All of this paves the way for tremendous growth opportunities that turn fear into excitement.

As the leader of a crack team, you can take on bigger clients, you can develop thought leadership, and, most significantly, you can maintain your business even when you're not directly touching every deal or deliverable.

When I started R Public Relations, I had to rewire how I

thought about success. It was no longer about how many pitches I could submit in a day; it was about how many meaningful relationships my team could build with the media and with clients. The metric changed from individual wins to collective momentum.

Related: **How Founders Can Build Lasting Trust with Investors**

Leadership over labor

All of this isn't to say that heading your own agency isn't challenging. The hardest part for me hasn't been keeping the stream of clients flowing; it's been learning how to build a team and building up all those people on the team. Freelancers don't have to be concerned with team leadership, all the emotional intelligence, mentorship and communication that go into it. Instead of being responsible for only campaigns, you're now accountable for your team's growth, workplace culture and well-being.

Effective leadership also entails making forward-looking decisions that aren't about today's cash flow. Rather, they need to be focused on your company's sustainability and reputation five years from now. Not only that, but leadership can be isolating in a way that's different from the isolation of freelancing. Then, it was about the independence that solitary work afforded; now, there's a dependence on you to provide boundaries, clarity, and consistency.

Despite all these challenges, I'm here to tell you that when your company starts to thrive without your perpetual involvement in every single aspect of the business, it's immensely rewarding. It's no longer about the financial compensation for me — success to me now is about having built something that's supportable and sustainable over the long term.

Knowing which path is best for you

There’s no right or wrong path you can take, there’s only alignment with your goals.

So defining those goals is paramount. If you’re someone who craves creative independence, minimal supervision and ongoing flexibility, freelancing might remain your sweet spot. But if you’re someone who dreams of constructing something that extends far beyond the four walls of your home office – the chance to craft your own business model, value system and lasting footprint in your industry – then the agency route might be right up your alley.

Know this, however: freedom feels different on the other side of leadership. I don’t view freelancing as having fewer responsibilities than business leadership now. I view business leadership as owning the responsibilities that matter most to me.

Freelancers build careers. Founders build legacies. Both can be wonderfully fulfilling. Sometimes, the way to find out which option is best for you is to just take the first step and see how far your vision can reach.

Key Takeaways

- Working for yourself versus having others work for you bring differing degrees of flexibility and autonomy.
- Freelancing grants you complete control over your workflow, but business ownership teaches you how to relinquish some control and replace it with more growth opportunities.
- Which path is right for you depends on what professional route you’re best suited for and most appeals to you.

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like freedom. I could pick my clients, set my schedule and choose my projects. But as the years went on, I realized that freedom has limits … and those limits were my own — specifically, my time, my energy and my capacity. If I kept taxing them all to the max, there was the real danger of crashing and burning. That's when I realized that launching my own PR agency with a support team to assist my efforts might be a viable solution for my future.

If you're considering the same thing — transitioning your gig or contractor career into a full-fledged small business — you should know that being a freelancer and running your own company aren't just two different sides of the same coin; they're two entirely different animals.

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Robots Are Stepping Off The Factory Floor and Into Our Daily Lives Sooner Than You Think

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Key Takeaways

- A look at how emerging technologies are reshaping familiar spaces in ways that may surprise readers.
- An exploration of the forces driving a major shift in how intelligent systems integrate into everyday life.

At CES 2025, robotics made one message unmistakably clear: the technology has moved far beyond factory floors and is rapidly becoming part of mainstream consumer and commercial life. This year’s show highlighted a wave of AI-powered personal companions, autonomous service robots and adaptive machines designed for hospitality, healthcare and retail — signaling a pivotal moment for entrepreneurs watching the next big frontier of innovation. Robots are no longer industrial curiosities; they’re entering homes, assisting with daily routines and even offering forms of emotional support. Automation is evolving from a back-end efficiency tool into a seamless part of everyday living.

For founders, investors and business leaders, the implications are enormous. The robotics industry is changing quickly as new breakthroughs in AI, automation, and global workforce trends push the field forward. This convergence is driving the rise of general-purpose robots — machines capable of observing, adapting and collaborating with humans across dynamic settings. From domestic helpers and elder-care companions to warehouse, delivery and customer-service robots, the market is expanding well beyond niche applications.

Of course, hurdles remain. Trust, safety, regulatory clarity and integration into human-centered spaces are key challenges entrepreneurs must navigate. But if CES 2025 is any indication, the momentum is undeniable: intelligent, everyday robotics is no longer a distant vision — it’s an emerging industry with massive commercial potential. The companies that lean in now won’t just ride the wave; they’ll help define how

humans and machines work together in the decade ahead.

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How to Push Past Fear and Doubt to Create the Future You Envision

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Key Takeaways

- Be serious about believing in your goals, and develop a unique set of skills that can make you stand out in a sea of resumes.
- Take risks. Instead of asking, “What if this doesn’t work out?” ask, “What happens if this does work out?”
- Don’t be afraid to ask for help, and say “peace out” to those who don’t share in your joy.

“This can’t be the end for me. I haven’t even traveled the world yet!” I remember shouting some variation of those words to a friend after we had been told that the job market was shrinking before our careers ever got started in 2008. I was headed into my sophomore year of college, and the doom of what was ahead of us, young and hopeful kids, was looking more like a reality I wasn’t willing to accept.

But the many headlines alluding to the bleak world I was about to enter post-college did keep me up at night — no lies there. *“College Grads to Face Toughest Job Market in Years” — PBS News, June 6th, 2008*, for example, is one of many headlines I remember reading and wondering if I had any clue what I was

doing in school. I had classmates actually give up and quit college to go back home and brace for the chaos.

And yes, there was a time I considered skipping a year of school to save the money and see how things would shape up. Instead, I held tight to my goals, my dreams and all the things I wanted to do … *get married, have a family, travel, see the Cubs win a World Series* (I think my fandom counts as hard work). And while I'm still figuring out a lot of life, for the most part, I've succeeded in my baseline goals.

It's clear to me that right now, today's students and recent graduates are facing similar challenges with doom and gloom headlines left and right – some even saying that AI could wipe out 20% of jobs in the next five years. I may not have all the answers, but I do have these words: Fear nothing. Take risks. And keep going. Here are my tips for *succeeding anyway*.

Related: 5 Things I Wish I Knew When I Was Starting My Career

Be serious about believing in your goals

In 2008, I was 20 years old, and I thought nothing could stop me. At all. I had made it through my freshman year with all of its challenges, doubts and fears. After struggling to pay for books and meals that first year, I knew it was game on. The headlines were scary, and my goals were scarier. I told myself, "I'm going to host my own sports talk show on ESPN." I said, "I'm going to live in Chicago in the tallest building." I said, "I'm going to travel the world and see all the things."

Of those three statements, a few came close to coming true – I get to travel the world *whenever I want*. I do not live in the tallest building in Chicago (although the 33rd floor is high enough), and I am not hosting a sports talk show on ESPN

(still on the list of to-dos). The point, however, isn't about achieving all the goals – it's about being so serious that you don't hear any voice telling you that it's not possible. It's writing your goals down and talking about them (to the right people, which I'll get to later!). It's about setting up a plan and sticking as close to it as you can.

Liam-Neeson it. Develop a unique set of skills.

Want to hear a secret? College doesn't teach you everything! I loved my experience as a student, but there was and still is so much for me to learn. Before starting a new job, ask yourself, "What else can I bring to the table?" Get a certification or extra training in a field you're really passionate about. Learn a new skill that might be ancillary to your degree. You can even find someone willing to mentor you on the job in an area that requires hands-on experience.

It may seem like extra work, and I can hear some folks already saying, "I just took out all these loans, I can't afford more!" Trust me, I get it. College isn't cheap, but neither is not having a job. Think of college as a solid foundation, and think of your first job in finance as an opportunity to learn QuickBooks! Or your first job in sales presents a chance to learn the art of building sales funnels through CRMs. *Surprise* – these aren't always skills you're learning in a classroom. These are skills that can make you stand out in a sea of resumes.

Related: **5 Ways to Learn New Skills Effectively**

Do the thing you've been scared to

do

Taking risks is scary. The uncertainty, previous failures, doubts and all the judgment that comes with it are all reason enough to simply not chance it. I have found, at least in my life, that risk is where the magic is. Risk is where your dreams live and await your awakening. In 2016, my husband and I took one of the biggest risks of our lives … we quit our full-time corporate jobs — on the same day.

We were excited to see what was around the corner. What we left behind was secure income, health insurance, careers that hadn't even fully taken off yet — but what we gained was worth more than that. This is where I want to encourage anyone reading this to perform a risk assessment for yourself. Know your limits and understand what you're willing to lose if you take a huge risk.

And if you're thinking, "What if it doesn't work out?" flip it. Ask yourself, "What happens if this thing works?" I'm sure anyone you've been inspired by probably did "the thing" you admire about them with a sprinkling of fear. I'm not asking you to be fearless. I am asking that you do what you need to do despite your fears.

Ask for help

You don't have to do anything alone. Maybe you've been let down or taken advantage of in the past, and those memories still sting. Just know that you can always start anew with the right resources and people who want to see you succeed, not fail. Asking for help was one of the hardest things for me to get over. Growing up, I did a lot of things on my own — some by choice, other times because that's just how things were. I learned to enjoy my solitude, which eventually turned into a stubbornness that shaped my stoic independence as I got older.

And as life became more challenging, as it happened, I found myself stuck yet unwilling to ask anyone for help. “I can do this!” became, “I can’t figure this out,” which led to, “It’s not possible.” I had hit a low point in my early adulthood, but by that time, I was tired of pretending that I knew it all – or anything for that matter. It took some serious self-reflection, and eventually I mustered up the strength to send an anxious email (something I had been scared to do), and I asked someone to help me out.

Not only was the response inviting and joyful, but it reassured me that reaching out is not a reflection of my failures; rather, it was a reminder that I was not alone. Whether you need guidance with your career or relationships or just the next steps, asking for help is a good place to start.

Related: **How to Ask for the Help You Need To Succeed**

Say “peace out” to those who don’t share in your joy

“I don’t know why you quit your job when you could’ve kept a nice position at the university.” Someone very close to me said this to me when my husband and I decided to become entrepreneurs. It didn’t hurt, but it didn’t help either. And here’s a truth that I hope doesn’t take you too long to realize: Not everyone will be as excited or happy for you in life. They’ll doubt your abilities, try to talk you out of taking the next step, or worse, they flat out tell you that you can’t do it.

To that, I say, “Peace out!” Why? Because we’ve got bigger, better things to do than hang around anyone who only spreads fear and doubt. This is a key reason why I stated earlier to be careful who you talk to about your goals and dreams. Fearful thinking is like a super-contagious illness – it makes you question everything and stunts your inner will that drives

you forward.

Fear designs false narratives and makes you actively try to avoid a problem that isn't there at all. And sometimes the people spreading this life bacterium are people close to you … parents, friends, spouses and relationships that are difficult to truly walk away from.

Here's what you *can* do: keep your plans to yourself and *show* them. Show them why you work hard. Show them the results of late nights. Show them what happens when you believe in yourself rather than the fears. When you're sharing your big ideas with someone who can envision your future with you, it should feel invigorating and inspiring, and you should walk away feeling energized instead of drained. You'll know the difference.

What's coming ahead isn't the end for you. It wasn't the end for me either. In fact, what's coming ahead will have its challenges and issues – just like everyone before us! And that is nothing to be afraid of.

Key Takeaways

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This AI Startup Just Made Its 4 Co-Founders Billionaires – And They're All Under 30

Key Takeaways

- AI coding startup Anysphere's latest funding round values the company at $29.3 billion.
- The funding round, announced Thursday, makes Anysphere's four co-founders billionaires.
- According to one estimate, each founder holds a 4.5% stake in the company worth at least $1.3 billion.

AI coding startup Anysphere completed a $2.3 billion Series D

funding round on Thursday, valuing the company at $29.3 billion. Accel and Coatue co-led the round, with substantial investments from tech giants like Nvidia and Google. Anysphere's flagship product is Cursor, an AI code editor.

As a result of this new funding round, the four co-founders of Anysphere, who all met at MIT as undergraduates and founded the startup in 2022, have become billionaires for the first time, per *Inc*.

The four co-founders are Michael Truell (Cursor CEO), Sualeh Asif (chief product officer), Arvind Lunnemark (former chief technology officer) and Aman Sanger (chief operating officer). *Forbes* estimates that each founder holds a 4.5% stake in the company worth at least $1.3 billion. All four founders are under 30 years old.

Anysphere's ascent has been rapid. In January, the startup became the fastest-growing company to hit $100 million in annual revenue, reaching the milestone in 14 months. Anysphere is the fastest-growing startup of all time, according to its investors. The startup has grown nearly 12-fold in valuation since January and has reached annual recurring revenue exceeding $1 billion in the past two years.

Related: This AI Startup Spent $0 on Marketing. Its Revenue Just Hit $200 Million in March.

Millions of software developers on teams at Nvidia, Adobe and Uber use Cursor, per *Forbes*. The tool has skyrocketed in popularity among individual developers since its launch last year.

Anysphere has grown because of "the value" the company's Cursor AI tool offers software developers, Truell told Bloomberg earlier this year. Cursor can generate new code based on prompts, a practice known as vibe coding. It also acts as a spell check for code, automatically correcting errors.

Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang said the tool was his “favorite enterprise AI service” in an interview with CNBC in October. Google CEO Sundar Pichai said he was using Cursor to help vibe code a webpage in June.

Google CEO Sundar Pichai. Photo by LUDOVIC MARIN/AFP via Getty Images

Cursor’s co-founders aren’t alone in their newly minted billionaire status. Last month, the three co-founders of AI recruiting startup Mercor became the youngest self-made billionaires in history after the startup secured a $350 million funding round that valued the company at $10 billion. Each of the three founders is 22 years old and beat out Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, who became a billionaire at age 23 in 2008.

Related: Want to Build an App? Here’s How ‘Vibe Coding’ with AI Can Help You Do It in Minutes.

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AI Isn’t Taking Your Job. It’s Forcing You to Evolve.

Opinions expressed by Entrepreneur contributors are their own.

Key Takeaways

- AI isn’t replacing humans — it’s redefining roles and amplifying creativity, strategy, and empathy.
- The most successful companies blend human oversight with AI efficiency to drive performance.

AI is actively becoming a daily routine for businesses worldwide, with 78% of organizations using AI at least in one focus area, and most implementing it across three or more. There’s a common fear that machines might replace humans, but automation powered by AI has actually created around 97 million new roles, transforming the labor market where humans and technology work side by side.

For entrepreneurs, this is an orange flag: act, don’t ignore the AI revolution. It’s already redefining business models, skill sets and competitive dynamics. The question now is how to interact with AI wisely and responsibly.

1. Better together: Human + AI

Management sentiment surveys show that 63% of executives don’t believe that employees from their teams can be replaced by AI tools without sacrificing quality. AI’s brilliant at handling repetitive, data-heavy tasks, but not so good at bringing creativity, empathy and strategic thinking.

Human oversight is a very important step in order to maintain high-quality service and engagement. Companies that combine both AI tools and hiring new employees are sure to show the highest performance.

Related: Spotify’s New AI Feature Could Transform the Way You Listen to Audiobooks

2. Can AI replace managers? Not so fast

Performance reviews are one of the most transformed by AI processes, with a Gartner survey showing that 71% of companies now use technology to support employee evaluations. And with managers spending around 200 hours a year on these reviews, while only 14% of employees find them fair, it’s easy to see the appeal.

Same old story: AI gets the data, but fails in empathy. It can track metrics, find patterns and make suggestions. And real leadership makes conclusions also based on context, trust and other ‘Yes, but’. People still need to feel seen and valued by other people.

SuperAGI used AI to help assess performance, cutting review cycles by 30% and boosting satisfaction by 25%. This whole integration was overlooked by the company's HR for a smoother flow, but still, the final decisions were made by real people based on the automated recommendations. It saved more time for managers for strategic planning, while improving the quality of feedback and keeping motivation and fairness intact.

3. Multimodal AI: When text, voice, and video work together

AI in business mostly took the shape of chatbots first, but we're now moving further with Multimodal AI. These are systems that understand text, voice, images, and video. A McKinsey report this year found that companies using multimodal AI saw a 35% boost in productivity and a higher satisfaction rate from customers. Start building a central "AI brain" that connects all your data into one ecosystem. It's a strong solution to understand your customers better.

For example, a Multimodal AI system in healthcare could analyse X-rays, patient notes, and doctors' voice memos together for faster, more accurate diagnoses. In retail, it could combine product photos, reviews, and questions to deliver hyper-personalised recommendations. XenonStack already helps enterprises build such systems, integrating multimodal data to improve marketing, communications, and internal training.

Related: Recruiters Say Hiding AI-Friendly White Text in Your Resume Doesn't Work. These New Hires Say Otherwise.

4. Transparency and trust matter

more than ever

AI without transparency quickly turns into a powerful “black box”, yet poorly understood. While employees recognise the risks of automation, 71% still trust their employers to use AI ethically. That trust has to be earned and justified. Companies must build a culture of responsible AI adoption where employees know how and why AI makes decisions, and educate teams on its limitations.

In 2025, over 1,000 organizations chose Microsoft AI solutions to boost efficiency without losing employee confidence, from EY to First National Bank. The point is to focus on explainable AI with clear understandable algorithms.

5. New roles at the human-AI intersection

AI won’t make jobs disappear, but will surely redefine them with 30% of work tasks projected to involve direct human-AI collaboration. New jobs like AI designers, prompt engineers, and industry-specific AI coordinators appear on the labour market. Identify which functions in your organization will benefit most from human-AI synergy. Invest in training, upskilling, and internal mobility to prepare employees for these evolving hybrid roles.

There’s no place for a fight of humans versus machines, but rather for learning to work smarter together. AI can handle the heavy lifting, but it’s people who bring meaning, creativity, and empathy to the mix.

Key Takeaways

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