What Entrepreneurs Can Learn From Paul Newman

Opinions expressed by *Entrepreneur* contributors are their own.

Hollywood is full of great actors. Not many of them are like Paul Newman.

Newman was born on January 25, 1925, in Clevland, Ohio. Growing up, Newman dabbled with acting in school plays but deemed football his main passion and aspired to go pro. After a brief stint in the Navy during World War II, Newman ended up at Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio on a football scholarship. But the football dream soon died — "I got thrown in jail and kicked off the football team. Since I was determined not to study very much, I majored in theater the last two years," he told *Interview* magazine in 1998.

This was the beginning of a prolific acting career that included a degree from the Yale School of Drama, appearances in more than 60 movies, roles in six Broadway plays, three Golden Globes, one Oscar and one Emmy. But Newman's life extended outside the world of Hollywood. He was an entrepreneur, a philanthropist, a race-car driver, a father and a husband. In 1982, he founded Newman's Own, which is now a half-a-billion-dollar enterprise. It began when Newman started making bottles of salad dressing to give out Christmas gifts. He ended up with some leftover bottles and decided to try to sell them to stores, which wound up being extremely successful. The company was founded on philanthropic roots, and its motto, "Let's give it all away," reflects the fact that 100% of profits are distributed to the Newman's Own Foundation to be used for charitable purposes.

Related: **Paul Newman Leaves Entrepreneurial Legacy**

Read more below about Newman's career, business, love life and more, below.

Who was Paul Newman?

Paul Newman was best known as an actor. His most popular movies included *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *The Sting*, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and *The Long Hot Summer*. Movie critic Pauline Kael said audiences were so attracted to Newman because he was one of those actors who had "such a traditional heroic frankness and sweetness that the audience dotes on them."

Beyond acting, Newman had one other main passion. "I have two interests: my family and my acting career," Newman said. He was a father of three and married to his first wife, aspiring actress Jackie Witte, when he met Joanne Woodward, according to *USA Today*. After a messy divorce that devastated Witte, Newman married Woodward, who would go on to become an Academy Award-winning actress in what was known as the Golden Age of Hollywood.

In 2007, Newman announced his retirement from acting. "I'm not able to work anymore as an actor at the level I would want to," he said during an appearance on *Good Morning America*. A year later, Newman passed away from cancer in his Connecticut home.

What is Newman's Own?

Newman's Own, a food company founded in 1982, is a reflection of Newman's entrepreneurial mind and philanthropic spirit. What started with Newman and his partner A.E. Hotchner making salad dressing in a garage has expanded to sell beverages, snacks, pet food and more. It donates 100% of its after-tax profits to the Newman's Own Foundation, which supports various

educational and charitable organizations. It has donated more than $570 million to charitable causes since 1982.

Newman founded the Scott Newman Center in 1978 after his only son died of an accidental overdose of alcohol and prescription drugs. He also established Hole in the Wall Gang Camp to give children with life-threatening illnesses a free-of-cost holiday.

Newman is the father of five daughters, two of whom recently filed a lawsuit against the foundation, according to an August 23 report from the *Wall Street Journal*. Elinor "Nell" Newman and Susan Newman claimed the foundation is inappropriately using funds meant to aid charities and are seeking $1.6 million in damages to be allocated to philanthropy.

"The years since Mr. Newman's death consist of a long and consistent pattern of disregard, by those in control, of Mr. Newman's specific intentions and direction, coupled with mismanagement, scandal, and questionable practices," the suit read, per *People*.

The daughters also claim that their personal annual allowance for donations has decreased from $400,000 to $200,000. "This lawsuit does not seek personal compensation for Mr. Newman's daughters, but simply seeks to hold NOF accountable to the charities they have shortchanged in recent years and would ensure they receive an increased level of support in the future, in line with Mr. Newman's wishes," the daughters' attorney, Andy Lee told *People*.

The foundation responded to the lawsuit in a statement to *People*: "Best practices surrounding philanthropic organizations do not allow for the establishment of perpetual funding allotments for anyone, including Nell and Susan Newman." Calling the lawsuit "meritless" and based on a "faulty wish," it added that honoring the lawsuit "would only divert money away from those who benefit from Paul Newman's

generosity.”

Related: What You Can Learn From Brand Heroes Like Newman’s Own, Burt’s Bees and Ben & Jerry’s

What is HBO’s new series *The Last Movie Stars* about?

HBO Max and CNN Film’s new series *The Last Movie Stars*, airing on Thursday, July 21, outlines the lives and careers of Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward, one of Hollywood’s most iconic, long-lasting couples. Director Ethan Hawke yearned to share the story of the intricacies of their marriage, especially the parts that weren’t reported by the media. The series has six parts in total.

https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/431919