

Why Every Entrepreneur Needs a Support Network – and How to Know When You’ve Truly Found Yours



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What does it mean for you to find your support network, and how can you tell when you’ve truly found it? I was one of the people who would use the term “finding my support network” to describe the process of connecting with like-minded individuals or entrepreneurship communities who share their values, interests and goals.

I wanted that sense of belonging, and I strongly felt that having those connections would be essential for my personal and business growth and success. At the time, I didn’t realize

that I raised part of my support network, my children. When I wanted opinions from people I trusted, that's who I would reach out to, in our family group chat. Sometimes I reached out not because I needed their opinions but because I wanted to make them feel included in my journey. I recently connected with a few cousins who I did not grow up with, and they are now part of my support network.

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My support network

One of them always reaches out to check on me and to make sure that I'm taking regular breaks and continuing to practice self-care. The other one will sit on the phone and brainstorm with me regarding my different business ventures. They are all very opinionated and have great insight. I also have a friend who has offered to invest in my business if I would ever like to go that route. Then there's my old coworker who provided me with information about an opportunity where I could earn the money I needed to pay for marketing campaigns. My support network was right there the whole time. They weren't what I initially thought my network would look like, but they've been the best.

My support network was not a big one, but it was a solid and trustworthy one, which is what's most important to me.

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members." – Coretta Scott King

At the beginning of my journey, I had trust issues due to past negative experiences, but once I started to be more open while setting boundaries, my support network started to grow.

I've since had great collaborations with some of them. I've even started connecting some of them with other brands, which

I feel would be beneficial to both sides.

Finding your support network as an entrepreneur can provide you with a helpful, knowledgeable and inspiring community that can significantly contribute to your success and well-being on your entrepreneurial journey.

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How to know when you've found your support network

Here are some ways entrepreneurs can know when they've found their support network:

1. **Trust and loyalty:** Trust is a crucial component in any business, and who better to trust than family? Their loyalty can be invaluable, especially in the early stages of a business when finding reliable team members can be challenging.
2. **Shared values:** Entrepreneurs typically connect with their support network when they share similar values and beliefs. This might include a commitment to innovation, a passion for a specific industry or cause, or a dedication to ethical business practices. When you find others who align with your core values, it's a sign you've found your support network.
3. **Common interests:** Your support network may consist of people who have a strong interest in the same industry, niche or area of expertise as you. Whether it's tech startups, eco-friendly businesses or social entrepreneurship, shared interests can create a strong bond.
4. **Networking and events:** Entrepreneurs often attend

networking events, conferences or industry-specific gatherings to meet others who share their entrepreneurial spirit. When you consistently encounter familiar faces at these events and establish meaningful connections, you're likely building your support network.

5. **Supportive environment:** Your network should provide a supportive and nurturing environment where you feel comfortable sharing your ideas, challenges and aspirations. Mutual encouragement, advice and mentorship are common indicators of a supportive entrepreneurial network.
6. **Collaboration opportunities:** Entrepreneurs often collaborate with members of their support network on projects, partnerships or ventures. When you find people who are eager to work together and leverage each other's strengths, it's a positive sign.
7. **Sense of belonging:** Feeling like you belong and are understood by others in your support network is a strong indicator. When you can relate to their experiences, challenges and aspirations, and they can relate to yours, you've likely found your people.
8. **Personal growth:** Being part of a support network can also contribute to your personal and professional growth. If you find that your network inspires you, challenges you and helps you develop as an entrepreneur, it's a good sign you're in the right group.
9. **Long-term relationships:** Building lasting relationships with fellow entrepreneurs is a hallmark of finding your support network. These relationships can extend beyond business and become valuable connections in your personal life.
10. **Online communities:** In today's digital age, many

entrepreneurs find their support networks through online communities, forums, social media groups and specialized platforms. Engaging in discussions and forming connections in these virtual spaces can be just as meaningful as in-person interactions.

11. **Gut feeling:** Ultimately, finding your support network often comes down to a gut feeling. You'll sense a genuine connection, shared purpose and a sense of belonging when you've found the right group of people.

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Keep in mind that your support network can evolve, and you may be part of multiple networks based on different aspects of your life and interests. Keep an open mind, actively seek out connections, and be receptive to new opportunities to find and nurture your support network.

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