

CHECKLIST: AMBITION



Ambition (noun): strong desire for success, achievement, or distinction.

MUSCLE YOURSELF

Ambition is not an innate gift. It is like a muscle, you can train it. It means that anyone can become ambitious.

MUSCLE YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Ambition is deeply linked to your environment. Surround yourself with ambitious people, it will raise your expectations. Maybe you'll fake it first, then you'll end up being truly ambitious. Your investors are a good indicator: if they are ambitious, they'll push you to do more, but if they are weak, they'll drag you down.

BE RADICAL

Ambition is not about making good decisions. Ambition means that sometimes you'll fail or even die. That's part of the game. In addition, being remembered should be your secondary goal as an entrepreneur. No one remembers average. Everyone has a CV (in Greek "path of life"), even entrepreneurs: you should build yours. Ambition is like a secondary money that applies to entrepreneurs: you trade it against memory.

POLARIZE TO WIN

If you want to check if something is ambitious or not, just look at how people react. Ambitious ideas/moves always have hard supporters and hard opponents. You are not a politician: your goal is not to create consensus. Searching for consensus is a total waste of time for entrepreneurs. It is your decision and anyway you'll be the only one to pay for the consequences. Be clear with your team and investors: you aim at making the right decision, not at pleasing anyone.

CHOOSE YOUR CAMP

The lack of ambition can be much more damaging than the excess of it. The safe and secure path can be hell, even if your decisions seem rational. Do not try to avoid bad things, it will get worse anyway ;), and you'll end up doing nothing. So be 100% optimistic. Things will always go wrong but you'll always find a path: jump, swim and keep moving.

DO NOT FALL INTO A CARICATURE OF AMBITION

Ambition is about acting, not just selling yourself. Ambition often looks small: it is hard, it is slow, it is a step-by-step journey.

MANAGE YOUR OWN PSYCHOLOGY

Emotions are real, deal with it. The most important thing is to talk and to share your feelings. Find a partner who will be your rock. Do not confuse storytelling and sharing your feelings: do not lie, do not fear being transparent about your struggles with trustworthy people that surround you.

BUILD AN ARMY

You'll never build ambition alone. Each and every hire must share the same level of ambition as yours. Any teammate that is not in the right mindset is a threat for the others. Personal behavior and courage are as important as skills when recruiting. Build an army: not a team, an army.

GO VIRAL

Ambition is also key in your communication: it creates a bond with your clients. Showing ambition will allow you to create a tribe that will become viral if the message is strong enough: people will find it crazy and share it. Be careful: It's not about making buzz. Buzz is not a goal nor something you can decide or plan. Work hard and do not expect it, since that's the best way to achieve it.

YOU NEED SUPERFANS

At the beginning, when your product is not yet fancy, the only way to gather superfans is to spend a lot of time with your users. Make friends with your first users, organize parties, take that relationship to the next level. Be ambitious about the bond you build with your users.

YOU ALSO NEED HATERS

Each and every time you increase the level of ambition, you'll be hated. Celebrate it. Your haters' level of intensity is an incredible indicator of success. Gustave Flaubert said: "You can calculate the worth of a man by the number of his enemies". Same applies to startups.

BE CRYSTAL CLEAR

If you are confused about anything in your business, if your communication is not clear, you have a problem: it means your product / offer is not radical enough, which means you failed to make a decision.

BE WRONG

Being wrong is the only way to get answers and learn fast.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT YOUR REPUTATION

Do not be afraid to ruin your reputation: you do not have one. And by the way, nobody is waiting for you and you are not the center of the universe. Do not be childish. However, there are some things you can do as a very young company that you won't be able to do as a more mature firm: being spammy for instance. So don't hesitate ;)

HAVE FUN

Being an entrepreneur is a luck. You are outstandingly free. Do not forget to enjoy.

LET YOUR SOUL OUT

Be honest and true to yourself.