

SNAPSHOT

Secrets of success

Brad Sugars
Action International Business
Coaching

Who is Brad Sugars?

Brad Sugars has either owned or been involved in about 30 different businesses, including magazine publishing, pizza manufacturing and dog food. Action International operates in 19 countries and has business coaches in 700 offices. Brad, father of two and in his own words 'a very average golfer', is the author of 15 business books, including four international bestsellers.

When did you and your family first realise that you had an entrepreneurial flair?

When I was seven, my dad caught me selling my Christmas presents to my brothers, so I guess he knew around about then that I was going to be different! By the time I was eight years old, I had worked out that you shouldn't sell anything that you can rent — that way you get to keep the present and also get paid over and over again. Apart from that I was a fairly normal kid.

Why did you start Action International?

In 1983, after consulting with one of his local promoters, I was asked by Robert Kiyosaki to teach marketing at his business school for entrepreneurs in Hawaii. From this I discovered a love of teaching and went on to build my own seminar company teaching business courses.

Soon enough, we wanted to continue our overseas expansion and found that we needed to overcome distance, language and cultural differences; the answer to achieving this was franchising.

Why did you call your company Action International and what does it do?

'Action' is what it's all about. Many people know what to do but the successful people are the ones that are actually doing it. 'International' because I had faith from day one that we would eventually be global. Today Action International is essentially a business coaching company. My coaches work with business owners teaching them how to improve their sales, marketing, team building, systems and management.

What holds people back from becoming successful entrepreneurs?

Fear, lack of desire and lack of knowledge. Most often, people have no big reason to be a success, only a big reason to stay safe. What sets successful entrepreneurs apart is that they feel the fear, and do it anyway.

Business can be a scary world to be playing in and there were lots of times when I wanted to give up. The fact that you just have to keep going gets you through. For me, there's no allowing myself to throw in the towel, it's just not who I am.

Also tenacity with flexibility is key to success. Some people use the saying, 'If at first you don't succeed try and try again'. But



Man of action: Brad Sugars reveals what makes a successful entrepreneur

remember that you need to try it a different way, not just the same way over and over again.

What are your top tips for becoming a great entrepreneur?

1. Your job should be an apprenticeship for having your own business. You should endeavour to learn as much as you can from each job that you undertake in order to fuel the knowledge that you can use in your own business. By viewing your jobs in this way, you won't get stuck in the rat-race rat like everyone else.
2. Knowledge growth equals profit growth. The more you invest in yourself and in seminars, books, tapes and CDs, the more you will know about producing positive cashflow in your business.
3. You must have a good business coach. When you have the advice of people who have already made the mistakes and proven successful, then you have a blueprint to help you avoid those mistakes.
4. Do the work once and get paid for it forever; that's leverage.
5. Work harder than anyone else you know, do more, be more and make bigger opportunities for yourself. Bite off more than you can chew and chew like crazy.

6. Test and measure everything. You cannot manage what you do not measure. When you measure things, make sure you have certain quality control levers in order to accurately see if you are staying on track.

7. There is a lot of advice in my books for aspiring entrepreneurs and I would recommend them to anyone who is serious.

At one point you had one of the fastest growing franchises in the world. What were the key ingredients to making that business grow so rapidly?

This year we were ranked as the 16th fastest growing franchise on the planet by Entrepreneur Magazine. I believe this is due to four factors:

1. In handling growth, we were decisive and had strong leadership.
2. There are good people on the team, especially the sales and marketing teams.
3. We have a great product or service to sell.
4. We have created 'raving fans' so our customers and franchisees do our selling for us.

This is an edited excerpt from the newly released book *Secrets of Male Entrepreneurs Exposed!* by Dale Beaumont (Dream Express \$32.95).