

Entrepreneur Interview

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Questions

1. What inspired you to start your own business,
2. How do you balance the demands of running a business with your personal life?
3. What role does networking and building relationships play in your entrepreneurial journey?
4. What advice would you give to aspiring entrepreneurs?
5. How do you incorporate social responsibility and ethical considerations into your business practices?
6. How do you approach decision-making in your business, especially when faced with difficult choices?
7. Can you share a valuable lesson you've learned from a business failure or mistake?
8. How has your business improved or innovated over time?
9. How did you identify the business opportunity?

Stepping into the world of being an entrepreneur can be a daunting task. At the same time, being an entrepreneur can bring forth a world of prosperity or success. This could be a potential reason many pursue this type of lifestyle. Yet, being an entrepreneur can also lead to failure or shortcomings. Approaching entrepreneurship is a complex task and truly understanding the intricacies can help set someone up for success. Understanding what it takes to be successful in this field and what skills are needed are great places to start. A useful way to learn about how to enter the world of entrepreneurs is to speak to someone already in the field. Breaking down what they have learned and the advice they may have for someone who is entering the field for the first time. Setting out to learn more about entrepreneurship I conducted an interview with Josh Colo. Josh runs a lawn care business that he has found success with within the past year. Throughout this interview, I gathered insightful and useful information that could be applied to future endeavors.

Josh Colo is a 31-year-old Navy veteran originally from Ohio. He now lives in Virginia due to it being his place of deployment. During his time in the Navy, Josh worked as an aviation crew member. Spending most of his time on the deck supporting catapult officers in the launching of aircrafts off the flight deck. Joining the Navy wasn't his original plan but after being uncertain of what he wanted to do while in college. He decided to join the Navy. This was also in mind since his grandfather had also served in the Navy. His main reason for going to college was to play football. Once getting hurt and deciding he wasn't going to return to football he fully committed to the Navy.

Looking back at his time served in the Navy, he enjoyed it for the most part. While he was in the Navy he had two children, one boy, and one girl. This was one of the major things that

drove him to decide to leave the Navy once his contract ended. Wanting to be able to be more involved with his kids' lives rather than on deployment. Once completing his contract in the Navy during the summer of 2023. He looked for career opportunities but wasn't sure what he wanted to do. One major thing he knew was that he didn't want to be managed how he was during the Navy. Of course, this is because the Military can be super strict, and higher-ups are often a hassle to deal with. Due to this desire to pursue an opportunity that would give him the freedom to manage himself, he looked for opportunities. During this time, he looked into lawn care because he knew it was something that he could do. Noticing that many landowners needed their lawns cut where he lived, he figured it could be a viable business opportunity.

While Josh had no prior experience in entrepreneurship, he wanted to give it a shot due to his desire to be his own manager. Josh used funding that he had saved from his time in the Navy as well as family members to purchase lawn care equipment. At the start, he only focused on what he felt was necessary to get the job done. He felt that this would be the best way to approach this endeavor without spending too much money right off the bat. This would also prevent him from losing too much money if he wasn't able to get enough business. The next thing he focused on was trying to get a clientele. His main approach to this was going door-to-door to houses in the surrounding neighborhood. This would prove to be effective, but he wanted to branch out further. He started to use social media at this time to promote his business. Asking friends to share his business page or recommend him to others. He would also use the NextDoor app which is how he got most of his customers. After a short period of time, he had a good number of customers. Due to the business being in lawn care, he would often have customers who would request him to come weekly or on a set schedule. This would provide him with

recurring customers. Making him feel more stable and secure that he would always have a set amount of income or workload.

Over time, he was able to expand his business to the point he felt that he would need help getting all the yards done. Additionally, he felt that if he hired someone else to help him, he could finish each yard faster. Allowing him to still acquire more customers without having to spend more time each week cutting grass. This proved to be an effective strategy. The only new thing that this introduced was having to manage someone as well as pay them. He found that hiring someone who was young and just looking for a side job was sufficient. This allowed him to pay them in cash after each day they came to work. Luckily, he hasn't had any issues arise with the individual he has hired. Noting that he was originally concerned that they could manage someone's property or hurt themselves. Leading to him having to be responsible for any incident that could occur. Aside from these concerns he went over the major downsides of being in this type of business. Since he works outside and with grass weather can have a large impact on his ability to work. Pointing out that different seasons bring different issues. At the same time, he learned that he could offer additional services during different seasons to make up for the lack of grass-cutting that has to be done. He said that he would offer leaf removal, snow removal, and other services to make up for the impact weather or a season had on his business. He felt that winter has been his worst season so far since it introduced concerns and impacted his ability to cut grass. His major concern is if he would have to traverse in snow or poor conditions and the potential dangers it brings.

When going over expenses he mentioned the prices of equipment, gas, and his employees. Saying most of his expenses come from having to buy gas for equipment and that the expense varies depending on gas prices. Noting that he wished gas prices were much lower

because it could save him a lot of money. During the initial start of his business, he was more concerned with spending money since he wasn't certain of its success. Now that he has a steady income and a set amount of customers he isn't as worried. This made it easier to justify buying new equipment or fixing them if they had issues. He felt that it would allow him to get the job done easier or more efficiently. In turn, this allows him to either cut more lawns or be able to have more free time. Essentially, he was okay with putting money towards or back into the business.

Overall, he is happy with the decision he has made to pursue this type of opportunity. Saying that even though there are times it's hard or new issues arise he can manage them. He did point out that since he is a veteran, he still gets disability and benefits from the Navy which aids a lot. Preventing him from having to spend money on benefits or insurance. This made it much easier for him since he knew going into this opportunity, he wouldn't have to stress about requiring benefits.

I found that this interview was useful and gave me a better look into what it takes to be an entrepreneur. It seems that depending on the business you want to start the more complex it could be. In this case, his lawn care business is small, so he doesn't have to worry about a lot of things larger businesses do. I also felt that lawn care is similar to the business idea that I came up with being the trashcan cleaning service. Since I was able to interview him, it gave me more information about how to approach such a venture. Both of them are similar in format and feasibility. Realizing that all business starts somewhere and doesn't require you to spend a lot of money out of the gate. At the start, you should focus on the immediate needs or things that are required. Then later on you can try to expand or put more money back into the business to help with expansion.

After interviewing Josh, it was clear that there are skills that are required or aid in the success of an entrepreneur. It was clear that Josh was a charismatic person and was able to speak on topics in an effective manner. You have to be able to market yourself as well as a business if you want to garner customers. Additionally, being accountable is important because without that he wouldn't show up or fail to meet the customer's expectations. There are other skills that someone should have but are more implied than an entrepreneur should have. Without such skills, it will reflect on the business's success.

Overall, I think that I could have the potential to be an entrepreneur and this interview made me more open to the possibility. I realized that it is okay to be uncertain and have concerns about the process but as long as you put effort towards it, it may work out. After interviewing Josh, it gave me more information about the skills, knowledge, and challenges that come with being an entrepreneur. Understanding the importance of having a plan and fully committing to it to have the best chance of finding success.