

How To Do Business Without Your Own Money: A Guide for Entrepreneurs

Mofopofoluwa Joseph

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How To Do Business Without Your Own Money aims to help cash-strapped, first-time entrepreneurs start their dream businesses.

Mofopofoluwa Joseph's faith-based business guide *How To Do Business Without Your Own Money* is aimed at hopeful entrepreneurs with little to no initial capital investment.

With the notion that every entrepreneur should begin by identifying an unmet customer need, the book gives common sense advice, such as about assessing and utilizing available resources when starting a company. It recommends cultivating personal traits like flexibility and optimism, but also developing strategic business policies and objectives. Its advice extends to the best ways to establish business relationships. All of this work is designed to be done without using one's own money; thus, the text also covers funding, business structures, and even the relationship between faith and business.

The book covers gig economy work like freelancing, content writing, and application development among its possibilities, but also contemporary revenue streams like Airbnb and Uber; even buying and selling flight mileage is presented as a possibility. Joseph argues that these opportunities can be approached with little monetary backing. However, his encouragements don't extend to practical suggestions for people from developing countries, or who are not in urban settings. Many such suggestions presume a vibrant economy, advanced technological skills, and knowledge and tools that are not widely accessible.

Further, too much of the book's limited space is taken up by lively but superficial stock images, and too little space is devoted to explaining the topics in depth. Though the text names different types of businesses, its information on how each can be started is short; and the challenges that an entrepreneur will face when setting up each specific business type are underaddressed. General challenges are acknowledged, including stiff competition and market changes, but without useful information for navigating them. And the book's examples of people who started their businesses with very little—as with an anecdote about a young entrepreneur—are short on advice; indeed, the book often credits their successes to personal values like determination or leadership styles, without showing how those qualities pushed the entrepreneurs past their specific challenges. The book's encouragements and assertions often feel too familiar to be of fresh use.

The book incorporates tools like rhetorical questions, asking its audience to envision their lives five or ten years in the future; to consider starting a particular business; and think about how they can achieve their business goals. Some such elements stand to be persuasive. Still, the book's scope is too limited, and its practical and spiritual suggestions are not sufficiently fleshed out.

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EDITH WAIRIMU (August 13, 2021)

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