

Misfit Mogul: An Outsider's Transformation from Invisible to Innovator

Hisham Ahmad

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Misfit Mogul models the benefits of youthful ambition in its story of a teenager becoming an entrepreneur—and coming to terms with his cultural identity.

Hisham Ahmad provides a youthful perspective on achieving business success through his inspiring memoir *Misfit Mogul*.

Ahmad was an ambitious teenager used to receiving high marks on his academic assessments when he started out on his road to success. He writes that he felt stifled by the limitations of his traditional high school education. The Muslim child of immigrant parents, he also felt alienated from his peers in Texas. Often, he preferred to skip class and spend time in the library. There, he dreamed up new ways of solving common social problems.

A visit to an educational center dedicated to science, technology, engineering, and math introduced Ahmad to Mr. Faizan, a successful entrepreneur and a person with a cultural background he could relate to. Mr. Faizan became his mentor. Ahmad was thus empowered to seek out a patent for one of his ideas, a lockbox for online deliveries. He followed this success with more product ideas, becoming rich in the process. As his success grew, he received numerous accolades from business and financial leaders. But success could not assuage his desire for acceptance and approval from his peers.

Though it ably illustrates Ahmad's growth as an entrepreneur and his coming to terms with his cultural identity, the book's prose is quite informal; its unconventional style limits its audience. Its uses of "dude" and "bro" are frequent, and expletives are prevalent throughout. In addition, the book often deviates from the central narrative to emphasize Ahmad's thoughts and desires. And while its account of Ahmad's pursuit of his business goals is robust, the book is less thorough when it comes to fleshing out supporting figures—as with Mr. Faizan, a wealthy NASA consultant whose background and personal pursuit of success are kept vague.

The book is also lean when it comes to supporting data and references and clear guidance for others to follow. It includes a few charts that reflect the lessons that Ahmad learned in his pursuit of success as well as questions for others to consider, but such calls to action are spare when it comes to detailing how to achieve their objectives. For example, while the book shows Ahmad obtaining financial literacy as a teenager, the corresponding call to others to "get a financial education at a young age" is too broad to be helpful.

Misfit Mogul is a compelling memoir by a young, successful entrepreneur who models what hard work and learning from others can accomplish.

GAIL HOFFER-LOIBL (April 8, 2024)

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