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The Rebel Entreprenuer: Rewriting the Business Rulebook

Jonathan Moules
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Almost everybody knows that starting a successful new business requires an original idea, a lot of capital, and a carefully written business plan that will be adhered to no matter what. But what almost everybody doesn't know is that they are wrong.

In his new book, *The Rebel Entrepreneur: Rewriting the Business Rulebook*, Jonathan Moules analyzes the successes and challenges faced by the hundreds of companies he's profiled as *The Financial Times* Enterprise Correspondent and offers would-be entrepreneurs a better approach to the challenges of starting a business.

Focusing on eight key areas—financing, pricing, leadership, business models, cost management, sales strategies, the need to change, and the fear of failure—Moules breaks his subject down into a series of manageable sections. With each chapter, he begins by introducing a counterintuitive concept. For example, Chapter two: Don't innovate, imitate, opens with the challenging statement, "Entrepreneurs are often mistaken for inventors. They are not."

He explains the logic behind his rebel idea by telling the stories of a few popular companies and their products. In this case, it was Napster and Kazaa, not the patent holders behind mp3 technology, who first figured out how to share music (illegally) in the digital marketplace and who created the first business models to sell music. But it was Steve Jobs who figured out how to beat the pirates by getting the big labels to use his iTunes service. After all the inventing was done—the mp3 format and the business models—it was not the inventors who were successful, but the entrepreneur who brought the innovation and the marketplace together.

In this manner, Moules strikes down one-by-one the most misleading cliches about running a business: too much funding can lead to poor fiscal management and a lack of innovation; an original idea may not be the best one—if it was, there's a good chance somebody else would have done it already; and a founder's myopic approach to the original business plan can lead to missed opportunities.

Like all good journalists, Moules knows to balance his anecdotes with statistical evidence. But like a great writer, he never bogs readers down with endless numbers. The flow from story to proof and back to story is equally engaging and informative. Beyond being an invaluable resource for those about to start their own business venture, *The Rebel Entrepreneur* offers readers more than a series of guidelines. It provides an insightful look at how the business world truly works, not just the way almost everybody thinks it works.
JOSEPH THOMPSON (August 8, 2012)

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