



Birth or upbringing?

 Lesson code: 85BL-611B-DREX-6

INTERMEDIATE

1 Warm-up

How did your upbringing influence your career choice?

2 Key words

Match the following words to their correct definition:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. upbringing | a. a characteristic of somebody's personality |
| 2. a founder | b. a large building which is used for storing goods until they are sold to shops |
| 3. an entrepreneur | c. a person or business that sells goods in large quantities to shops and businesses |
| 4. a wholesaler | d. a person who establishes an organisation |
| 5. assistance | e. a person who starts their own business, taking risks and trying to make a profit |
| 6. premises | f. help |
| 7. opportunism | g. the land or buildings owned by a company or organisation |
| 8. a warehouse | h. the way that you were treated and educated during your childhood |
| 9. a character trait | i. using every situation to your advantage |

3 Predict the answers

You are going to read an article about entrepreneurs. Tick six character traits of successful entrepreneurs that you think will be mentioned and check your answers by reading the text:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| opportunistic | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| creative | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ambitious | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ready to take risks | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| sociable | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| confident | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| aggressive | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| hardworking | <input type="checkbox"/> |



THE
INDEPENDENT

Is success due to birth or upbringing?

A brain for business is often thought of as something you are born with. But entrepreneurial personalities differ greatly - and the necessary skills can be learnt.

Veejay Lingiah seems born to be an entrepreneur. The 32-year-old founder of Artlounge, which sells paintings and other art forms, grew up surrounded by business. His mother's family had fishing businesses, while on his father's side the field was jewellery. At school, he ran a business with his sister, and she has also established her own business.

At school, he sold goods to other pupils using his parents' wholesaler connections. While still a teenager, he made and sold sandwiches for local shops and also sold art by art students at car-boot sales.

Nick James, on the other hand, had none of these advantages. His parents encouraged him to be creative and ambitious but could offer little practical assistance for going into business. He decided to become a furniture designer and set up his own business, but he was totally unprepared for what happened next. During his search for appropriate premises for the business James Design, he rented a disused warehouse. It started as a studio for himself and for a friend, but grew into a business providing sites for a range of other creative people. Mushroom Works has grown rapidly and James has suddenly found himself running two successful businesses.

Despite their differences, both men have recently appeared in a list of leading entrepreneurs

published by Arena men's magazine. Lingiah was named Entrepreneur of the Year, but the presence of James on the list suggests that it is possible to grow to be an entrepreneur rather than simply be born to the role.

He believes that much of his success has been due to opportunism. "It's about keeping your ear to the ground and finding out what's going on and using that to your advantage," he says.

A study published in late 2004 by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business points out that entrepreneurs are commonly believed to have special character traits that make them successful. For instance, entrepreneurs are considered to be especially skilled at spotting new business opportunities, or they are regarded as confident, aggressive and ready to take risks. However, despite a lot of academic study, "no one has been able to identify a truly unique set of entrepreneurial personalities."

Dr Pauric McGowan, Director of the Northern Ireland Centre for Entrepreneurship, believes that entrepreneurs are both born and made. Success depends on developing entrepreneurial traits and also learning skills, such as management skills. He also believes that everyone has the potential to become an entrepreneur.

Adapted from The Independent, 02 July 2006



4 Checking understanding

Answer T(True) or F(False) to the following statements:

1. Veejay Lingiah had no help from his parents when he was at school.
2. Nick James had help from his parents when starting his business.
3. Nick James' success was unexpected.
4. Studies show that entrepreneurs have a special set of skills.
5. According to Dr. McGowan, people must be born with special traits to be successful entrepreneurs.

5 Expressions with 'business'

Complete the phrases from the text and make a sentence with each expression:

establish go into run set up spot successful

1. establish a business ⇒ to start a business that will exist for a long time
2. _____ a business ⇒ to start a business
3. _____ a business ⇒ to be in control of a business
4. _____ business ⇒ to start becoming involved in business in general
5. _____ a business opportunity ⇒ to see or notice a business opportunity
6. a _____ business ⇒ a business that makes a lot of money

6 Talking point

What do you think makes a successful entrepreneur? Do you know any successful businessmen or businesswomen? What character traits do they possess?

7 Review

Review the words and expressions from this lesson with the Expemo memorization system. Go to www.linguahouse.com, enter Lesson code: 85BL-611B-DREX-6, add the lesson to your knowledge collection and click 'Start My Review'.

Remember to review your knowledge collection regularly if you want the lessons to stay fresh in your memory. If you have a large collection, try to review it every day for at least 15-20 minutes.



1 Warm-up

Check that the students are familiar with the word 'upbringing' (the way in which someone is treated and educated when they are young, especially by their parents). Encourage students to consider factors such as education choices, early exposure to business, etc.

2 Key words

1. h 2. d 3. e 4. c 5. f 6. g 7. i 8. b 9. a

3 Predict the answers

- opportunistic
- creative
- ambitious
- ready to take risks
- confident
- aggressive

4 Checking understanding

1. False 2. False 3. True 4. True 5. False

5 Expressions with 'business'

Draw the students attention to the difference between the uncountable noun 'business' (the activity of buying and selling goods and services) and 'a business' (a particular company that does this).

2. set up
3. run
4. go into
5. spot
6. successful

