

High School, Inc.



High School, Inc.
Michael Mack

West Coast Pop Publications

SmarterSTEM

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication data

Mack, Michael

High School, Inc.

Educational non fiction

Published in the United States of America

High School, Inc.

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Introduction

High School, Inc.

High School, Inc. is an educational curriculum guided by the principle that students can learn the skills necessary to start businesses and become employers. They can acquire these skills at the 9th-12th grade level with no experience and minimal capital. They can use these skills to enhance opportunity along their educational pathway, or start income-producing businesses.

High School, Inc. uses text, screenshots and video sequences to explain how to start a business at home or in a small office with one computer and an internet connection.

Forward

One great thing about living in the USA is the social mobility, people are constantly rising from the bottom to the top. Even though this is true, people still like to associate with those of their kind. If you're poor, your friends are probably poor. If you're rich and famous, you likely have rich and famous friends too. We tend to live our lives in these social circles and rarely leave them. When we venture outside of these familiar groups of people it is usually only temporarily, we usually go right back to our familiar crowd.

My goal is to get you to think outside of your normal "circle", and show you how to use the tools that are available to you to do this. I think the first part is the hardest, just believing that you have power to make changes. The second part, using the tools, is actually pretty easy.

The source of success for people who reach great levels of achievement begins with their understanding of this power – they somehow have figured out that they can do it, so they try. It happens in that order, first they decide to not let little things stop them and then they seek out tools to get farther and farther ahead.

The first thing that everyone faces is that they are afraid of new things. We all want to stay safely within our familiar surroundings. We question whether or not we have the power to get what we want. This is normal and everyone has these feelings. Even the people who try new things are afraid at first, they are just like you and me. The difference is that they move ahead even though they feel fear, they don't let it stop them. I hope I can help you understand this part too.

We will learn more about these two topics, finding the *power* to decide to move ahead and finding the *tools* you can use once you decide to go.

Chapter 1: What's in Your Head?

Success Will Match Your Mindset

Everyone Starts from Nowhere

When you were little you had to learn language. It wasn't easy, and you got frustrated spelling and pronouncing new words. When you learned a new sport or skill it was difficult before it was fun. Everything is hard at first. But soon we are surprised by our success at learning. Things begin to come to us and we gain confidence.

No matter how much or how little you think you know about business, you need to decide one thing before you start. You need to decide that you have the ability to try. You may not be sure of yourself, that's okay. All you have to do now is decide to try. Once you have made this decision you can move on and learn the things you need to know. If you decide to learn the things you need to know you will always be able to take care of yourself. Even if you know nothing about business you can decide to try.

I understand that this decision can be difficult to make. That's why this lesson starts with what's going on in your head before we learn anything about computers or websites or banks or dealing with customers. So remember to keep things in order, don't get ahead of yourself. And remember another thing, you are not alone. You are on the same level now as lots of people were who started businesses. At one point in their lives they too had to decide to try something new. They were just like you.

There is *one* thing that may be different for you – you have much more opportunity than people had before you. With today's inexpensive computers and the internet, we have more access to information and ways to use that information than business people had in the past. You do not need a building space with an office and an expensive phone system. You do not need a warehouse to store boxes of inventory. You do not need a loan from a bank. I hope this encourages you as you face your decision.

Slow Money

Even though you think big, you need to accept the fact that you will get there slowly. Expecting fast and easy money or immediate success will not work. To be successful you need to grow and learn. There are no immediate fortunes, they are not part of this process. The expectation of fast money is a trap, it causes you to expect returns without effort.

Another thing that works for you when you expect to work longer for your results is that you learn the habit of persistence. You learn to not let small obstacles stop you. Moving deliberately, step by step, will guide you past the setbacks that will come your way. Moving too fast makes it likely that you will crash, and one crash can stop you while a little speed bump will be easily overcome.

You will also learn a lot more by going slowly. The process you are about to begin is your “university”. Every step is a lesson that you can use for the rest of your life.

Respect the Process

The things you do in your life and career are like links on a chain. They are all connected and they all help or hurt each other. A strong link makes the chain good and a weak link makes it bad. With the right attitude you can fix the weak links and make them strong. The more strong links you build up the more success you will have. You build up good habits a little at a time, this is the “Process”.

I had a “regular” job before I started my own business. I traded my money for time and got paid a salary. That’s how jobs work, you and your employer agree that your time is worth a certain amount of dollars, and you trade your time hourly or by salary for stuff your boss wants you to do. There is nothing wrong with this, it’s just how an employee/employer relationship works.

I am glad I had the jobs I had, they were part of my process. You too, should “respect the process”. This means you try to learn from everything you do, find the good in it. If something negative happens it causes you to think and work to find the solution to fix it.

The very least you should give is 100% effort, this will become very valuable to you in the long run of your career because it will form positive work habits in you. In my jobs, I learned how to create projects, work with people, meet deadlines. I learned how businesses are structured and how people make decisions. In my business today I use the things I learned from my previous jobs.

Even if you dig ditches, respect that process, there are many positives from it if you choose to see them. You will be outdoors in fresh air, the effort will make you physically strong and you will gain a perspective that will serve you well in your next, better job. The perspective is momentum, work hard and improve, use that again and again and you will rise higher and higher.

I decided that I wanted to learn websites and make a business out of them. I wasn’t really sure which products to sell, but I knew I wanted to build websites and be in control of how they worked and how much time I would put in.

Why You Can't Argue with "What Is"

Evaluating the Environment Around You

In your typical day you will have some good things pass your way, and some bad things. In order to prevent from feeling helpless, you will try to figure out how to maintain control. The amount of control we maintain relates directly to how much we feel happy. The problem with this is the amount of control we actually maintain is very narrow.

The good news is that there is one thing that we can actually control. We can control the mindset we use to respond to the things that happen around us. We can keep a good attitude. If we can keep a good attitude and not be afraid of the things happening around us, then we will begin to experience an interesting change. What happens is the amount of control that used to be so narrow will begin to increase. We can even begin to look for new challenges. This is how we experience a growth in confidence. This is how we change.

When this begins to happen you will find new energy. You will stop procrastinating and find new urgency. You can start to let go of the past, of the things you were once afraid. You will be open to new ideas and be more willing to try new things. You will be less likely to give in to the status quo spirit of doing things the way they have always been done, the "safe way".

People who see this in you will respond instinctively by getting out of your way or admiring you with new respect. Instead of blocking, they will want to join you. This is your new momentum. In this way, you will have eliminated obstacles. You will have created your own favorable situation.

Remember that nothing changed in the world around you. You changed. You viewed it with a new perspective.

The Disguises of Opportunity

Opportunity comes to us in many ways, sometimes even in disappointment or defeat. First of all, defeat means you tried something. When you try things you learn, this adds to your opportunity. If you had fear of failure you may start to realize that the failure wasn't so bad and was really nothing to be afraid of.

Failure makes you strip away the inessential. If you didn't need to seek, you may have never worked for what you ultimately needed to find. If you lose a job, you are forced to regroup and seek a new one. You are forced to evaluate your skills and possibly acquire new ones. When a competitor makes your product obsolete you have to improve and build a better mousetrap.

Failure makes most people quit. If you know this and don't let it discourage you, then you will have an advantage over those that give up. Instead of giving up, you can become curious about why something did not work. This curiosity can be very valuable.

Failure defines your will. The fact that you can emerge wiser and stronger from setbacks builds up your confidence. It forces you to look forward and decide what to do next.

Failure defines your friendships. Those who stay with you during trying times will have proven their special meaning to you.

Failure is your chance to reset and start anew. It makes you realize that the magic is inside you. It is proof that everything you need is already inside.

Be Grateful for Your Foes

Human Beings Need Opponents

Nobody likes to lose, but our toughest opponents can be our best teachers. They hold the greatest lessons and usually give them to us for free. We can learn simply by competition. The best thing an opponent can give to you is to pass down some wisdom by totally beating you in a game, contest or other competition. You can not receive this gift from someone merely equal to you, or someone you dominate with your own expertise. This wisdom comes within the loss we suffer, but don't think of the loss, think of the massive value of the experience you have just acquired.

When you find a particularly successful opponent the best path is to follow is the one that made them so powerful. Get to their level. Do what they do. Use their routines and habits to improve yourself. Don't be too proud to ask for advice. Don't be jealous or vengeful, stop plotting how you can get them next time.

Stop looking for excuses why you "lost" your particular battle. Instead, open yourself to the humility it takes to accept the wisdom from these greater foes. Be thankful for your defeats. You will rise up a few notches in greatness with this newly found wisdom. Eventually you will be handing out lessons with your victories over lesser competitors. And in turn (if they are wise) they will be grateful for your lessons.

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