

**“All humans are entrepreneurs,
not because they should start companies,
but because the will to create is encoded in
our human DNA, and *creation* is the essence
of entrepreneurship.”**



By:
Angella Nazarian

If there is one message we need to know is that we are founders of our own lives. To adapt to the challenges of professional life today, we need to rediscover our natural entrepreneurial instincts and use them to forge a life and career path that not only suits us, but the times we live in. Learning some of the strategies employed by successful leaders are valuable no matter your career stage—whether you're just out of college, a decade into the workforce and angling for that next big move, or launching a brand new career later in life.

When I was researching successful women for my newly released book *Pioneers of the Possible: Celebrating Visionary Women of the World*, I found that highly successful share the same traits. Here's a small sample of a few of the things I've learned...



TIPS AND TACTICS OF SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEURS

1. DEVELOP A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Develop your life and your business based on your strengths. Follow your passion. The person passionate about what he or she is doing will *outwork and outlast* the one motivated by solely making money. Here's an interesting fact: *Did you know a person needs 10,000 hours of practice to become an expert in anything?* How can you do that if you don't intrinsically like the work you do?

2. BE STRATEGIC: Pick a Hill that Has Less Competition

Reid Hoffman, the co-author of “The Start-up of You” and founder of the famous social networking site **LinkedIn**, has shared a particular key to success that all leaders need to be aware of – and that is the key of knowing your competition and therefore knowing which hill to climb.

His point in the importance of you knowing where you are most likely to succeed as well as the trouble spots where you are most likely to face fierce competition has helped many businesses strategize their moves accordingly.

3. ADAPT YOUR PLANS: Be in permanent beta!

Being Flexible is of utmost importance! Sheryl Sandberg is a perfect example of successful adaptability. Today, she is COO of Facebook and is in charge of the company's business operations. *Fortune* named her one of the most powerful women in business. You might think that someone so successful knew her goals and aspirations from day one. She hasn't stuck to a conventional career plan. After getting her degree in economics she went to work on public health projects for World Bank. After World Bank, she shifted course and left the public sector to enroll at Harvard Business School, where she earned her MBA.

After a one year stint at management consulting firm McKinsey, she realized the corporate career tract wasn't for her; so she shifted yet again, this time to Washington DC, where she served as then US Secretary of Treasury Larry Summer's chief of staff. Sheryl kept shifting, adding a VP of Google's Global Online Sales and Operations to her resume, and then six years later, she was picked up by Mark Zuckerberg to become the COO of Facebook. Partly, Sheryl's success is due to the fact that she learned to take risks and be flexible in plans.

4. ENLIST THE HELP OF OTHERS – GROW YOUR NETWORK

World-class professionals build networks to help them navigate the world. No matter how brilliant your mind or strategy, if you're playing a solo game, you'll always lose out to a team.

Master Chen Yeng—one of the pioneers featured in my book discovered and has harnessed the power of building a strong network. A penniless nun from Taiwan, she has founded and built the Tzu Chi Foundation – the largest medical non-profit in all of Asia with – built on the love and compassion of millions of volunteers and donors from around the world.

It's amazing the power one life can have in changing the lives of millions. She is just one example of many that I could pull from of a person who knew how to unite others to champion a cause.

Thinking and behaving like an entrepreneur enables us to create breakout opportunities in our work and personal life. I am beginning this new year by creating a “board of directors” for my daily living – people that I can run issues by and get feedback. Wishing you a successful year.



Angella Nazarian is a best-selling author and sought-after local, national, and international speaker. She incorporates her training in psychology and teaching experience in creating dynamic and engaging speaking engagements and workshops. She is also a regular contributor to the Huffington Post, Maria Shriver's "Open Field Network" and More.com.

www.AngellaNazarian.com