



Reinhold Karner about startups, entrepreneurship, success and failure



On the 30th of September, Mr. Reinhold Karner – serial entrepreneur, investor and mentor, was giving a talk for startups in [TAKEOFF](#) Business Incubator about [“The Art of Failure in The World of Entrepreneurship”](#).

In the talk [Mr. Karner](#) has lifted the curtain on his own experience with entrepreneurship, it's ups and downs, shared lessons learnt, gave advice and inspired young entrepreneurs.



12 things you need to know when starting a startup

1. Every tech startup needs a **geek, financial wizard and general manager**. But only one can be a captain! If you don't have a "complete" set, refer to an incubator, or let your mentor help with completion of the team.
2. Your business **plan should be easily understandable**. Try and test it – apply for a loan in the bank. If they give you a loan – you got conservative and predictable financing, if they don't – try to investigate why and learn your lessons.
3. **Involve a mentor** – startups with mentors are 3 times more likely to succeed.
4. Don't underestimate financing you need. Apart from general plan, prepare optimistic and pessimistic scenario. Others people's money (OPM) make you weak and heavily dependent, **look for hybrid financing model** and don't use FF (Family & Friends). The best thing is to involve strategic investor/partner.
5. Don't promise things you can't deliver and always **have plan B**.
6. Don't copy others, **you are unique** – do something different and use a "power of now"!
7. Growing bigger? Think of **growing better** or differently. Focus not on quantity but quality.
8. Money is just a medium for exchange, nothing else. It doesn't substitute **knowledge, connections, and passion**.
9. You need an experienced and **good lawyer**.
10. Know **why you want to become an entrepreneur**. You do it not for comfort but passion. You can get energy from driving a business when you are on a front line, not firefighting in a rear.
11. Do not blindly trust your partners, co-workers, investors – have **all important decisions in writing** and make sure you understand all contracts' conditions and know your business numbers.
12. Make a **strategy readjustment** before business peaks. Average lifespan of SME in EU is 12 years, to last longer you have to innovate and change.



There are always ups and downs both in life and business and Mr. Karner shared his experience to show, that not only startups, but also established companies might fail, **however not a failure itself, but how you deal with it defines whether you are a loser or winner.**

What is important to remember in hard times?

- Don't forget to take care of yourself and family – take time for yourself.
- Keep self-confidence and dignity.
- Reinvent yourself, nothing is linear, not business not you.
- Follow your philosophy, intuition and gut feeling.



There is no 'ultimate recipe' for successful business and probably that's why not everyone becomes an entrepreneur. Mr. Karner leaves startpers in the audience with a question **"If you would not run a business, what would you do?"**

You can read more about Reinhold Karner in his recent interview for Times of Malta → [here](#)