



# Start It Up: Why Running Your Own Business is Easier Than You Think

*Luke Johnson*

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## **Start It Up: Why Running Your Own Business is Easier Than You Think** Luke Johnson

Now in paperback - Start It Up by Luke Johnson, 2012's most inspiring guide to running your own business. Running your own business is nowhere near as tough as you might think. So what are you waiting for? Luke Johnson is Britain's busiest tycoon, with a personal fortune estimated at £120 million. From Pizza Express and Channel 4 to his incisive Financial Times column, Johnson has spent two decades on the business frontline. In Start It Up, Johnson sets out to inspire - and guide - every budding entrepreneur. He tackles the issues that really matter: finding the right idea, sourcing funds, and getting the best from the people you meet on the way - chiefly yourself. 'A must-read for inspiring entrepreneurs, probably the best book available on the subject' John McLaren, Management Today 'Part rant, part outpouring of useful knowledge gleaned from 20 very successful years in business. There is a great deal here that is good' Richard Reed, co-founder of Innocent Drinks, Financial Times 'For the budding entrepreneur, this clear, thoughtful and passionate how-to guide will be an excellent first investment' Economist Luke Johnson is one of Britain's most successful entrepreneurs with an estimated personal fortune of £120 million. He is Chairman of Risk Capital Partners and The Royal Society of Arts, and a former Chairman of Channel 4 Television. He writes columns for the Financial Times and Management Today. In the 1990s he was Chairman of PizzaExpress, which he grew from 12 restaurants to over 250; he also founded the Strada pizzeria chain and owns Giraffe and Patisserie Valerie. He lives in London and is married with three children.

## **Start It Up: Why Running Your Own Business is Easier Than You Think Details**

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## From Reader Review Start It Up: Why Running Your Own Business is Easier Than You Think for online ebook

### Callum Bannister says

Not a fantastic book. A few helpful pointers. A bit hit and miss. I wouldn't really say this is a how-to book either. I was disappointed by this read.

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### Elisabeth says

It's an easy read - short chapters, lots of anecdotes, fast-paced change in topics. I just couldn't pin-point anything I really took from it.

On top of that Luke Johnson doesn't strike me as especially future-oriented. I get that he has a lot of experience and success to show for but I just couldn't get in tune with that raw feeling that seems to be very crucial to him for being an entrepreneur. I also couldn't shake off the impression that he thinks that your typical entrepreneur must be male - he can't hide that fact by writing a whole chapter on women inventors when another one is titled 'Fatherhood and the entrepreneur'. There are many better books on starting up out there, both when it comes to practical help and anecdotal insights.

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### Michaël says

Ma lecture de "Start It Up", un livre du multi-millionnaire Luke Johnson a été parsemée d'embûches, du début à la fin. J'ai lu le livre en version originale (anglais britannique), et ait été confronté à un vocabulaire très varié mais souvent incompréhensible pour le non-spécialiste.

En effet, ce livre n'est pas une introduction au monde de entrepreneuriat, comme pourrait le suggérer la quatrième de couverture, la couverture ou même l'introduction.

Je recommande la lecture de ce livre, uniquement pour la première partie "Beginnings" et la dernière "Entrepreneurs at large", où Johnson est percutant, énonce des idées novatrices et prend un point de vue global sur le monde de l'entreprise.

Si le titre "Start It Up" semble alléchant, car on pense avoir affaire à un traité sur les start-up, c'est plutôt une série de remarques désordonnées autour du monde de la restauration et des entreprises conventionnelles qui se cache dans l'essentiel de ce livre. Certes, le multi-millionnaire sait écrire, et ne cesse de montrer l'étendu de sa culture en enchaînant des citations sans les approfondir, mais trop souvent on n'arrive pas à deviner où il veut aller, ce qu'il cherche à démontrer.

Cela m'a amené à m'ennuyer de la deuxième partie à l'avant dernière partie, où Johnson escamote les détails concernant les entreprises qu'il a dirigé, toutes plus ennuyeuses les unes que les autres (Pizza Express ou Channel 4).

Je laisse tout de même une note de deux étoiles parce que le premier et le dernier chapitre sont vraiment bien écrits, que l'auteur a des idées novatrices et qu'il est percutant et original.

## F says

A brilliantly straight and honest discussion of entrepreneurship. If you're after some encouragement, or just a good read, this will do the trick.

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## Gyvinne says

Its a motivational book for beginners to have a rough idea about what they might face if they choose this path. Sadly it does not really teach HOW should things be done to startup a business which I believe most of the buyers would need and expect from the book.

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## DC Vairavel says

I picked up this book in the library without knowing a thing about the book or the author. Once in a while, you have to do such a thing because you do not know where a diamond is hidden!

I am really happy that I picked up this book to read. Whether you are thinking of doing a start-up or even if you do not want to do a start-up, but want to excel in whatever you are doing, this is a fantastic read.

What I liked most about this book is that it does not turn to be prescriptive and start giving you steps on how to start and run a business. I think there are umpteen number of books that can do that for you. What this book offers is practical advice on how to start up and run a business.

The author does that in a no-nonsense, conversational style. He also makes it clear on whether starting a business would suit you or not. The whole book is littered with several practical tips that one need to learn while running their own business or someone else's business.

I would highly recommend this book to everyone - whether you are an established business man or a wanna be or if you are just content with managing someone else's business.

I will be picking up a copy (a Kindle one, of course) for keeps to be in my reference library!

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## Janis Orlovs says

Nothing special

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## Emme Jacob says

'Start It Up' pitches itself as a cheerleader for entrepreneurialism, heralding a "fire in the belly", optimism, and a 'can-do' attitude as all one needs to become the next Richard Brandon. Johnson sees

entrepreneurialism as a genetic disposition, one that if one has, should not be ignored for the sake of an ever-changing societal and economic climate. The book begins by listing Johnson's business venture failures, almost as simple as a bullet point list, giving the reader the impression that any failure is just another notch on the belt. Johnson doesn't dive deep into the financial and emotional set-backs of these failures - maybe it is Johnson's genetic disposition for optimism and ambition that never allowed him to feel these set-backs, or maybe it's my own cynicism.

Although claiming to be a "How-To Book", I would not regard 'Start It Up' as a go-to guide for starting a business, in fact, Johnson himself states he prefers to buy an already existing company rather than investing in a start-up venture. Instead, this is a "How-To Book" for running a business. Johnson provides key elements that should not be ignored when running a business, these span across: listening to users, the importance of a name, fostering of creativity, collaborations and partnership, and management strategies to name a few.

'Start It Up' provides countless inspiring business ventures and experiences from Johnson's career, from running themed parties at a club as an 18 year old, to renaming the London Institute to University of the Arts London. I personally would have appreciated a more transparent approach to understanding these ventures, like financial commitments, pitfalls and infrastructure headaches, but again, this book is all about "optimism". Johnson is an author who clearly does not like to dwell, and in fact believes that to dwell would kill the reader's desire to experiment and innovate - a crime against Johnson's desired humanity.

Johnson's writing is approachable, funny, and succeeds in taking the fear and stress out of starting your own company. 'Start It Up' is not a "How-To Book" on start-ups like you would expect, and instead aspires to convince the ambitious, creative, and undefeated (male) readers into following their dreams, or at least, Johnson's dreams. I stopped reading at page 90: "Fatherhood and the entrepreneur". For a book that was first published in 2011, I am saddened by the sexist slant Johnson has taken with his writing, and the abundance of male entrepreneurs he quotes and values as his hero's of ambition, hero's of which made their millions or billions many decades ago. I personally would find it more worthwhile to learn from the young and diverse entrepreneurs of today, young not in terms of age, but young in terms of their careers and success in the 21st Century.

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## Ahmed says

A beginners guide to starting your own business and different types of businesses.

It's not that detailed and isn't too insightful if you've read many business nooks before.

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## David Delaney says

This was a really nice read and hugely motivational when thinking of starting your own business. Luke's candid view of his successes and failure as well as the many insights into the realities of setting up a small business was refreshing as much as it was informative.

Well worth a read for those wanting their own business.

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## **Bilal Hafeez says**

Luke Johnson is the the man behind Pizza Express, Strada, Giraffe and Patisserie Valerie. He was also Chairman of Channel Four and a one-time columnist for the FT.

For all us salaried corporate types, it's always nice to imagine a life free from the shackles of office politics and feelings of insignificance. Here are his main points on how to achieve it:

1. Your salary is the payment to sacrifice your dreams. Get out of an industry in structural decline.
2. You often need less capital to start business than you think. You don't need a radical new idea, rather it's the execution that matters. Imitate and continuously improve.
3. Partnerships are less isolating. A 50:50 split is the easiest way to divide the spoils. Be careful of disputes, especially later fights over people taking credit for success. Get a mentor.
4. As a leader, making decisions is more important than having charm.
5. Hire people who have front-line experience, rather than slick internal-facing corporate types.
6. Beware of becoming beholden to stars in your staff.
7. Know the personal life of your employees, especially mid-life crises.
8. HR, legal, IT etc are expenses and lead to bureaucracy. Keep these costs low and outsource. Don't rent expensive offices. Use PR, rather ads.
9. Starting a business will take time away from your family
10. Politics flourish when there is less work to do .
11. Never personally guarantee your company'd debt.
12. Know your competitors. Customer service is everything.

Perceived failures are not actual failures they are set-backs and are inevitable

Good luck!

Bilalhafeez.com

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## **Pavan Sharma says**

Decent all round advice for running a start up. There isn't an actual blue print or step by step guide, but it does provide some solid advice on staying motivated, sources of finance, startup successes and general management. Easy to read and very short, worth picking up for a quick read.

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## **Emily says**

A few decent insights, and a quick read, but basically didn't deliver what the title promises - ie any discussion of why it's not so hard to start a business (let alone how to do so). Also, rather disjointed and stream of consciousness.

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## **Anubhav Tyagi says**

this book has good advice and not just boring philosophical bullshit. This is how any book on the topic of entrepreneurship should be because no start-up guy has the patience to read a novel on how not to give-up when things look gloomy.

It's not a must buy, there is no secret recipe hidden in the message of the book, but if you looking forward to buying something to calm the startup bug that's been biting you, you better get this and get over with it. You'll enjoy the book as the book says - "advice on how-to by someone who has" - how cool is that!

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## **Dgg32 says**

General tips, more like an self help encourage book. If you are looking for a guideline or a step-for-step manual for creating your own startup, look somewhere else.

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