

## Great Ideas vs. Entrepreneurial Ideas

Posted At : November 11, 2013 9:01 AM | Posted By : Dr. Dena Hale

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What do you get when you have a great idea, mixed with passion and energy? Some might say you have an invention or inventor, but in reality you only have a great idea. Now, add in the ability to communicate the benefits of that great idea, the reasons the idea is important to stakeholders and why the great idea is valuable enough to pay for and you have an *entrepreneurial* idea.

Many great ideas never make it to market because the concept is never communicated effectively to potential investors and users. Many entrepreneurs might cringe at the word “sales,” but successful entrepreneurs must be good sales people in order to take the idea to market. Sales skills become most important for the entrepreneur in at least three areas:

- 1) when searching for funding and partners,

- 2) when hiring the first set of employees, and
- 3) when working with buyers and customers.

Success in changing a great idea into an entrepreneurial idea is based on very basic, but crucial non-technical skills:

1. Time-management
2. Effective communication
3. Goal setting and achievement
4. Relationship building (networking)

Passion and a sense for business are essential to bring success to your ideas, but not enough when speaking to Venture Capitalists or investors about joining your team. The skill sets needed to successfully communicate the benefits of your idea, to both the end user and the investor, include relationship building, identifying the gaps between “what is” and “what should be” and strong communication skills. What makes these skills so essential for entrepreneurs is the concept of customizing the communication so that it resonates with each individual stakeholder.

The message you deliver must be adapted or changed to fit the needs of each person you speak with.

Whether you are a new entrepreneur just starting, or a seasoned entrepreneur finding new barriers in your way, brushing up on your sales skills could prove to be the best return on your time and money. Your salesmanship skills can be honed by participating in sales seminars, webinars, or taking some classes at your local university. There is even a plethora of books available at your local bookstore.

Entrepreneurial ideas are the ones that change the world, make lives easier and bring forth financial rewards. Entrepreneurs will likely discover that sales courses provide the missing piece that can make an idea go from *great* to *entrepreneurial*.

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