



Empowering Entrepreneurship: The Journey of Chris Maslin

Chris Maslin founded Go EO, empowering business transitions to employee ownership. Overcoming challenges, he streamlined services, emphasizing innovation, community impact, and financial acumen. His journey inspires collaborative empowerment in entrepreneurship.

In the bustling world of entrepreneurship, where innovation and ambition intersect, stories of visionaries carving their path towards success often stand out. Chris Maslin, the dynamic founder of Go EO, embodies this spirit of innovation and empowerment. In an exclusive interview with Entrepreneur Prime magazine, Maslin shares his journey from a driven accountant to a pioneering advocate for employee ownership trusts.

Based in Kent, Maslin's venture into entrepreneurship was not just about creating another business; it was about revolutionizing the landscape of ownership and empowerment. Drawing from his own experience of transforming his accountancy firm into a trust, Maslin recognized the transformative potential of providing an affordable exit strategy for business owners while ensuring their teams had a stake in the company's future.

"What inspired you to start your business?" The question posed to Maslin unveils a narrative of purpose and determination. His journey was not merely about financial gain but about instilling a sense of purpose and value in every venture undertaken.

Navigating the tumultuous waters of entrepreneurship, Maslin encountered his fair share of challenges, particularly in acquiring those crucial first customers. Yet, fuelled by his unwavering belief in his vision, he overcame these obstacles, laying the foundation for his subsequent successes.

The genesis of Maslin's business ideas lies in perceiving gaps in the market and ingeniously streamlining services to offer cost-effective solutions. This approach, akin to "IKEA-ising" services, has proven to be a game-changer,

democratising access to essential business strategies.

Reflecting on his journey, Maslin dispenses invaluable advice to aspiring entrepreneurs, emphasizing the importance of innovation, adaptability, and financial acumen. His insights resonate with clarity, offering a roadmap for those embarking on their entrepreneurial odyssey.

Moreover, Maslin's ethos extends beyond business success; it encompasses a commitment to giving back to his community, evident through his charitable endeavours in Tunbridge Wells. His dedication to creating a positive impact underscores the essence of entrepreneurship as a force for good.

In a world where entrepreneurship is often synonymous with individual success, Chris Maslin stands as a beacon of collaborative empowerment. Through Go EO, he not only facilitates business transitions but also fosters a culture of shared ownership and prosperity. As entrepreneurs embark on their own quests for success, Maslin's journey serves as a testament to the transformative power of innovation, resilience, and unwavering dedication.

What inspired you to start your business?

As an employee, I was like the stereotypical four year old. My manager would ask me to do something. I'd ask why, or query whether I could do it a different way. I'd be told to just get on with it. I've always been happy to work, but I need to understand the purpose, feel what I'm doing is worthwhile, and do it in a way I accept is sensible. I think I was destined to run

my own business!

What challenges did you find at the beginning of your journey and how did you overcome them?

Getting those first few customers! It's an obvious hurdle, but one people from the employed world may underestimate.

How did you get the idea for your business and why did you think it would work?

The initial business was an accountancy firm. I've set up two further businesses since then (MVL Online and Go EO). Both are based on what I perceived to be a gap in the market. I've heard them referred to as "IKEA-ising". Take what was previously a bespoke service offering, limit the choice so you can streamline things then offer at a significantly lower cost.

How did you raise the money to start your business?

It's a myth that you need a lot of money to start a business. So many businesses these days can be started with just a PC and internet connection. I've always been frugal, so from a few years employed as an accountant, combined with my wife's salary, we had about £10k savings when I quit my employed role. That £10k was the buffer, for living costs, whilst income picked up. It initially took a lot longer than I'd hoped to get any reasonable level of income... but once I'd got over that early hurdle, things snowballed.

What motivates you to keep going?

I'm now in the lucky situation where business success to date combined with inexpensive tastes means I already have more money than I need. I'm working because I want to, rather than because I have to. I still get motivation from a sense of achievement and doing good in the world. Also just alleviating boredom(!) I couldn't enjoy the rest of my life rotating between holidays and golf!

What makes your business unique?

With my current business Go EO, nothing it provides is unique. Yet I still feel there's a big gap in the market that it's aiming to fill. In effect it'll be providing a basic, affordable version of many things related to Employee Ownership. We already do this for business sales to Employee Ownership Trusts. We'll soon be doing this with share option schemes.

What advice would you give to someone who is trying to become an entrepreneur?

You don't need to invent something totally new. You do need to do something a little differently to the rest of the market. You do need to be able to sell and be reasonably good with finances.

What are your tips for employing a team?

Start small. Perhaps start with freelancers, or a part time employee.

Don't micromanage. Firstly, it's massively de-motivating for the employee, suggesting you don't trust them. Secondly, it will limit your growth, as you checking everything will become the bottleneck. Let them know what you want them to achieve, then let them do it their way. Check in on the results and offer support.