

Richard Hughes-Jones – Approach & Principles

Approach

You are the master of your own destiny: You would not be an entrepreneur if you didn't already believe this. Whilst optimism is a proven virtue, building a successful business requires much more than just positive thinking, including great strategic decision making and impeccable execution. I will support you not as a mentor, consultant or member of your leadership team (though I have experience across all these disciplines) but as your coach. My role is not to tell you what to do; you have others around you to help you direct your business in that way. Instead, I will help you to synthesise information in order to arrive at your own judgements and solutions. I'll add the benefit of my own experience if I believe it will add value and we agree it is appropriate to do so.

This is about you: only you can be the best version of yourself. I'm here to help you tap your inner potential and enhance your own performance so that you can be even more awesome. I will work with you to structure and reflect upon your own thoughts and promote self-awareness with a view to: **focusing on meaningful action, enhancing your leadership capabilities and building emotional resilience**. I offer a private space in which to open up on issues that you may not wish to discuss directly with your co-founders, investors, Board of Directors or other key stakeholders.

- **Focusing on meaningful action:** Early-stage businesses are frenetic, and whilst there may be many things that you *could* do, there will only be a handful of things that you can *actually* do with the limited resources that you have to hand. I will help you to appropriately frame your challenges and focus on meaningful actions to help you overcome them. I have a personal interest in cognitive biases and decision making under conditions of uncertainty, which I leverage to help you arrive at well informed decisions. You will leave our sessions with a clear idea about what you need to do next, the confidence to communicate your ideas to your team and investors, and reassurance that you can execute them in a risk-managed manner.
- **Enhancing leadership capabilities:** You are already a high performing individual. My job is to help you leverage your existing skills and build new ones as you navigate your transitional journey. There is no single approach to leadership and I do not come with out-of-the-box leadership solutions. I will work with you to define and develop your own leadership style. I also offer facilitated 360 feedback between yourself and your management team / Board members, to provide you with an evidence-based framework against which to develop.
- **Support on your emotional journey:** Building an investment-backed business is incredibly tough. The odds are greatly stacked against you and the dynamics are complicated. It can indeed be lonely at the top. Personal experience has given me firsthand appreciation of the challenges faced on the entrepreneurial journey. Consequently, my practical approach is never to the detriment of empathy and compassion. I recognise that the emotional journey is one of the toughest aspects of being an entrepreneur. I'm here to help you through it and build resilience along the way. Consider me an impartial companion on your journey.

We work together: Our working relationship is an equal one. We are open, honest and transparent with one another. I have your back. I will act as an objective observer and often challenge and provoke your ideas and thinking. Being a leader is tough and not all situations are rosy. If that's the situation then I won't pretend otherwise, but together we'll tackle your challenges head on and endeavour to navigate towards a successful outcome.

Principles

I am a trusted advisor: I cultivate trust based-relationships with my clients. As a trusted advisor, I understand that you don't get the chance to employ advisory skills properly until you get someone to trust you enough to share their problems with you. I seek to build genuine relationships with my clients on the basis that we might go on a long and successful journey together.

I act with honesty, integrity & professionalism at all times: All my experience to date has blooded me with these core ethical principles. I draw a competitive advantage from my mixed skillset and by blending traditional big business thinking with contemporary startup approaches. I leverage my extensive experience of working with cross-sector professionals and understanding how they think and operate. I have worked individually with Cabinet Ministers, senior government officials and members of the judiciary, Corporate CEOs, Partners from a range of advisory and financial services firms and investment professionals.

A commitment to complete confidentiality: I do not disclose any details about my coaching clients unless you give me permission to do so. I certainly never share the details of any of our conversations in a way that is remotely attributable to anyone or any business. To do so would be an abuse of the trust you place in me so I commit emphatically never to do it.

Embracing an entrepreneurial mindset: I work almost exclusively with entrepreneurs and I consider myself one also. I get that you are trying to change the way things are done and that businesses are built differently these days. I know that what you are doing is risky but that is why it's fun, even though the emotional stress is unbearable at times. I get that most of the time you feel like you are being pulled in a thousand different directions but if you can identify and hold your course then your dream could become a reality. I'm here to help you.