

## CARD 3

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## MAKING A MILLION

Marc Maiffret was once a 17-year-old who hated going to school and turned to hacking out of boredom. Now 21, he has made a fortune out of computer security. "The thing I'm happy about is that my biggest passion in life is something that actually makes a good business", says Maiffret. So what advice does Marc have for young people? "Be ready to work a lot. If you're younger, it is harder to impress people. You'd better be ready to make work your only focus and know what you want to achieve. You've still got to have fun and make time for that, but it takes a lot of hard work and a lot of dedication", he says.

Rather than going high tech, Mike Becker went in the opposite direction. As a teenager, he collected toys and items from his childhood. "I knew there were people like me out there so I set up a cool little business based on what I love", he says. Becker decided to bring back the bobblehead ( a plastic toy that you wear on your head) and invested his savings of \$35,000 dollars in his business. His company now makes around \$2 million a year. "Be very clear about what it is you're selling. Ask yourself whether there is a market for it. Be prepared to extend your range of abilities", Becker advises. "Everyone comes across a good idea in their life, but seldom do anything about it. It's really about putting things into practice".

The good idea that Andy Wolf came up with was the snowskate. "If you snowboard", he says, "you are surrounded by snow and you can't do skateboard tricks. I wanted to do both, so I came up with the snowskate. It's like a snowboard you

don't tie to your feet". His product is becoming so popular that mountain resorts are starting to build snowskate parks. His advice? "There are definitely set ideas on how you should run a business. Not all those things are right. Believe in yourself and don't give up. You have to have a plan and stick to it".

Sport has made Robert Tuchman well off, but he started with nothing. After university, he couldn't find a job in television, so he worked in advertising. "What companies really wanted was to take their clients to sporting events. I established a business to do that. We now make \$10 million a year. If you want to be successful, you've got to go for it. Don't ever let anyone say it can't be done. If it doesn't work the first time, give it another try, until you find a way to make it work".

John Christakos and his business partners couldn't afford designer furniture when they were students so they decided to produce their own. They all studied business and knew that there was a large market for cheap but stylish furniture. Their business is now worth about \$3 million a year. When asked for his advice to young entrepreneurs, John says: "Work for other small companies in other fields. I never did that, so we discovered problems and solutions for the first time. If you were thinking of going into business on your own, you'd learn a lot from the right kind of experience".

So, whatever your interests are, if you want to make a million, the opportunities are there. Every billionaire has to start somewhere!

## Bibliography and Internet resources

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