



How to Catch a Mouse with No Cheese: Real World Lessons and Experiences from an Entrepreneur

Donnie P.

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Even the most blue-sky Pollyannas wince when you ask them if it is possible to build a business without cash. It's likely, though, that they haven't read *How to Catch a Mouse with No Cheese*, where author Donnie P. makes a convincing argument for that very possibility. Cash may be king in many quarters, the author writes, but it doesn't always take tons of moola to create a successful enterprise.

Donnie P. launched a series of successful franchises in the home health care niche, his first opening while pursuing a college degree. His motivation was desperation: His father had decided to stop financially supporting him. Broke and distraught about his chances to complete his studies, he piggybacked on the knowledge and network his parents had already acquired and established in the health care market (they were then operating an outpatient mental health clinic) by offering outpatient substance abuse counseling services to low-income adolescents. Without seed money, he harvested non-monetary assets, such as his parents' credibility and impeccable reputation; the expert advice of his lawyer sister, and his own disciplined focus.

The book contains much of the same information readers can find in other how-to-start-up books, such as discussions about business models and marketing strategy. What sets it apart is a stronger focus on the essential traits entrepreneurs need to foster—faith, self-determination, self-awareness and a service orientation—in order to survive the trials of growing a business with no cash. And he tells readers how to leverage low or no-cost strategies, such as brand development via self-promotion (in person and online) and creating business alliances.

Melding optimistic notes with a dollop of common sense, this book provides an interesting mix of motivational advice and business how-to. Readers curious about how franchising programs work should find Donnie's P's book especially informative, since it's a model that worked for him.

Also available as an ebook.