

# VIEW FROM THE TOP

TREETOP VENTURES NEWSLETTER

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## From The Editor

The following articles are all from Forbes this month. No, we haven't bought the magazine. They just have some great articles that every business should read. In fact, we couldn't have said it better ourselves so we are bringing you the links to the articles. 23 questions to ask to be successful, the three ingredients to having and promoting a successful product and how and what to present successfully to a VC.

Enjoy!

Brett Nelson puts it on the line with his 23 questions every business should ask themselves. See how many you have considered.

## The 23 Most Important Questions In Business

*Brett Nelson - Forbes*

*What you are about to read is for anyone trying to make money, create a job or get a better one.*

If you're losing sleep over your livelihood, here's some comforting news: As much and as fast as the world changes, the fundamental reasons for success and failure endure. To reckon with them, you have to ask the right questions.

I know, you've heard that line before and almost smacked the condescending jerk who said it. The truth is, though, "asking the right questions" is much more difficult, constructive and wallet-nourishing than it sounds.

Below is a modest stab at assembling the most important questions in business. After 14 years at Forbes studying companies young and old, with various business models and in a host of industries, I can safely say that, if you dig deep enough, nearly every strategy, tactic and in-the-trenches decision stems from the answers to these questions. Each case study has its nuances—business is ultimately about people, and no two are alike, let alone entire management teams, client lists and corporate cultures. Yet it turns out, as in fiction, that there are only so many plot lines to go around.

**[Click here to read the full article.](#)**

Stumbling into success by being lucky is not what Brian Clark says is true business insight and how start-ups become successes. Having content, audience and an unfair advantage = luck.

## Three Reasons Why Every Smart Startup Is A Digital Media Company

*Brian Clark - Forbes*

How many times do you plan to win the lottery in your lifetime?

Seems like a silly question. Even if you reply "Just once," you seem bad at math at best.

But this is the exact mentality that's fueling Internet Gold Rush 2.0. People look at companies like Instagram (acquired for a billion without a dime of revenue), and even Twitter, which started as something a few comfortably wealthy guys created for fun.

These stories get all the press. Just like those Mega Millions lottery winners last month.

These are exactly the wrong examples to pay attention to, because they provide little true business-building insight (other than luck happens). The self-serving noise coming from Silicon Valley fuels the lottery mentality, because the investors have learned how to buy tickets in bulk.

**[Click here to read the full article.](#)**

The provocative title might have you say “Whaaat, not pitch my idea?” But read on. John Greathouse succinctly describes what to present when presenting to a VC. The VC is already sold on the idea or they wouldn’t be talking to you now sell them on YOU!

## Entrepreneurs Shouldn’t Pitch Their Ideas To Venture Capitalists

*John Greathouse - Forbes*

Although it is tempting to overly intellectualize modern-day venture capital, its underlying construct has been part of human society for thousands of years. From the earliest days of seafaring traders, affluent dilettantes have been entrusting their capital to less-affluent, enterprising workers willing to share a portion of the resulting gain with their benefactors.

Two early venture capitalists were King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, who backed Christopher Columbus. The traits these royal investors sought in Columbus are surprisingly similar to the characteristics modern investors look for when evaluating startup teams.

Ideas are infinite, and in the absence of competent execution, they are worth nothing. Nada. Zip. Zero. Conversely, money in pursuit of outsized returns is plentiful. Thus, if both ideas and money are abundant, what is the scarce constraint in the fundraising equation?

Trust.

Skilled entrepreneurs bring ideas and money together by building a bridge of trust.

If you are fortunate to pitch a sophisticated investor in person, assume they already believe in the veracity of your idea, the market and the underlying technological trends. Unless an investor specifically asks you to educate them regarding your space, focus your pitch on why you and your team are uniquely qualified to exploit the opportunity and turn the idea into a lucrative, self-sustaining business.

In too many instances, when entrepreneurs come to Rincon Venture Partners’ offices to pitch me and my partners, they waste valuable time attempting to sell us on the opportunity, often even after we say, “we believe in the opportunity, now tell us why we should place a bet on you.”

**[Click here to read the full article.](#)**

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