

A STUDY OF THE SUCCESS AND FAILURE OF APPAREL ENTREPRENEURS

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A STUDY OF THE SUCCESS AND FAILURE OF APPAREL ENTREPRENEURS

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A STUDY OF THE SUCCESS AND FAILURE OF APPAREL ENTREPRENEURS

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Amanda Marie (Pauszek) Vallone, daughter of John Joseph Pauszek and Kathleen Paula (McIntyre) Pauszek was born on August 23, 1984. Amanda has a younger sister, Jessica Michelle Pauszek. Raised in Dunkirk, New York, she attended grade school at St. Hyacinth's Catholic School for nine years. In 1998 her family moved to Deltona, Florida where she attended and graduated Deltona High School in May, 2002. She then attended Auburn University for three years and graduated December, 2005 with her Bachelor of Science in Apparel Merchandising, Design, and Production. On May 15, 2004 she married George John Vallone III, son of George John Vallone II and Joanne Barbara (Smith) Vallone. After graduating with her Bachelors Degree, she began working on her Masters of Science in the College of Human Sciences at Auburn University to focus on Apparel Entrepreneurship. Amanda has accepted a position in Chennai, India, to research and create case study's to implement into classes within Auburn University. Amanda's research will include an international perspective of business, textiles, fashion, and engineering in India.

THESIS ABSTRACT

A STUDY OF THE SUCCESS AND FAILURE OF APPAREL ENTREPRENEURS

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Anyone can be an entrepreneur, but to run a successful venture within the apparel industry may be more complex than one would believe. Planning every aspect of a business from finances to employees, down to having an exit strategy are important segments to having a successful business. Planning is only one of the pieces to success; the ability of the entrepreneur to be reliable, ambitious, and disciplined are a few of the characteristics that make an entrepreneur successful.

Little academic research has been done on the topics of success and failure of entrepreneurs within the apparel industry based on business planning and personal characteristics. There has, however, been more research in other areas of entrepreneurship based on similar topics. This study investigated apparel entrepreneur's personal characteristics, their business planning, and their success.

A convenience sample of 33 apparel entrepreneurs was recruited to participate in this study. Profile information was gathered and subjects were e-mailed an anonymous, online questionnaire through SurveyMonkey. The self-administered questionnaire was used to collect personal reactions to statements within personal characteristics, success, and business planning categories.

Findings show a pattern of apparel entrepreneurs encompassing the personal characteristics of successful entrepreneurs. A similar pattern occurred within the entrepreneurs that felt they were successful. Though many perceive themselves successful, a majority felt they underestimated aspects of the business such as finances and time. Therefore, those that did not do the most planning possible, including a business plan, financial plan, and having a board of advisors were those that have underestimated similar problems.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES.....	xvi
LIST OF TABLES.....	xvii
CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background and Setting.....	1
Gaps in Current Literature.....	5
Problems Statement and Purpose of Study	5
Significance of the Study.....	6
Objective and Research Questions.....	6
Definition of Terms.....	7
CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	9
Business Definition.....	9
Business Types.....	9
Franchise.....	10
Home-based Business.....	10
eBusiness.....	11
Business Structure.....	14
Entrepreneurs	14

History and Definitions.....	15
Advantages and Disadvantages.....	17
Personal Characteristics.....	18
Risk Taking.....	19
Ambition.....	20
Self-Efficacy.....	20
Discipline.....	21
Positive Attitude.....	22
Locus of Control.....	22
Gender.....	23
Distinguishing Factors.....	24
Innovation.....	24
Success.....	25
Social Recognition.....	27
Social Status.....	27
Perceived Financial Attainment.....	27
Financial Planning.....	28
Social Reputation.....	28
Perceived Career Achievement.....	29
Business Plan.....	30
Sources of Capital.....	32
Board of Advisors.....	33

Failure.....	34
Apparel Industry.....	36
Retail Lifecycle Changes.....	37
Apparel Entrepreneurs.....	40
Challenges.....	42
Seasonality.....	43
Manufacturing Offshore/ Outsourcing.....	45
Survey Research.....	45
Opportunities.....	47
Problems.....	48
Email vs. Mail.....	48
Research Questions.....	49
CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY.....	51
Research Objective and Research Questions.....	51
Selection of the Method.....	53
Development of Instrument.....	54
Pretest.....	56
Selection of Respondents.....	57
Collection of Data.....	57
Method Analysis.....	58
CHAPTER IV: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS.....	60
Description of the Sample.....	60

Analysis of Demographics.....	60
Gender, Age, and Ethnicity.....	61
Education.....	62
Statistical Analysis.....	62
Summary Statistics of Measures.....	63
Personal Characteristics.....	63
Individual Measurement of Personal Characteristics.....	65
Locus of Control.....	65
Ambition.....	66
Self-Efficacy.....	67
Positive Attitude.....	69
Discipline.....	70
Innovation.....	72
Risk Taking.....	73
Success.....	74
Social Recognition.....	79
Perceived Career Achievement.....	80
Perceived Financial Attainment.....	82
Personal Satisfaction.....	83
Social Status.....	84
Social Reputation.....	85
Business Information.....	86

Location of the Business.....	86
Accessibility.....	87
Format and Structure.....	87
Retail Category.....	87
Start Type.....	88
Aspects of the Business.....	88
Board of Advisors.....	91
Legal and Financial Advisors.....	91
Business Plans.....	91
Longevity.....	93
Number of Employees.....	94
Employee Maintenance.....	94
Square Footage.....	95
Retail Price Point.....	96
Retail Markup.....	96
Financial Contributions to Business Opening.....	96
Underestimates.....	98
Finances.....	99
Time.....	101
Advertising.....	101
Affect on Personal Life.....	102
Summary: Business Planning.....	103

CHAPTER V. SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND

CONCLUSIONS.....	104
Summary of Sample.....	104
Discussion.....	105
Overall Findings.....	106
Personal Characteristics.....	106
Ambition.....	106
Positive Attitude.....	107
Discipline.....	108
Innovation.....	109
Risk Taking.....	110
Locus of Control.....	110
Self-Efficacy.....	111
Personal Characteristics and Success.....	113
Success.....	114
Social Recognition.....	114
Perceived Career Achievement.....	115
Perceived Financial Attainment.....	115
Personal Satisfaction.....	115
Social Status.....	116
Social Reputation.....	116
Summary: Success.....	117

Business Planning.....	117
Board of Advisors.....	119
Finances.....	119
Basic Assumptions of the Study.....	122
Limitations and Problems with the Study	122
Implications for Further Research.....	124
Conclusions.....	125
REFERENCES.....	126
APPENDICES.....	133
Appendix A. Information Sheet for Research Study.....	134
Appendix B. Questionnaire.....	138

LIST OF FIGURES

1. Billions of Dollars in eCommerce Sales.....	12
2. Percentage of respondents who had each plan.....	89
3. Percentage of Respondents who Underestimated these Aspects.....	98
4. Percentage of Advertising Techniques.....	102

LIST OF TABLES

1. Characterization of Business Structures.....	13
2. Inner Workings of a Business Plan.....	31
3. Current Age and Age upon opening in Percentages.....	62
4. Agreement to Personal Characteristics.....	64
5. Locus of Control Measure with Percentages of Respondents Answers.....	66
6. Ambition Measure with Percentages of Respondents Answers.....	67
7. Self-Efficacy Measure with Percentages of Respondents Answers.....	68
8. Positive Attitude Measure with Percentages of Respondents Answers.....	70
9. Discipline Measure with Percentages of Respondents Answers.....	71
10. Innovation Measure with Percentages of Respondents Answers.....	72
11. Risk Taking Measure with Percentages of Respondents Answers.....	74
12. Cross Tabulations between High and Low Success and Personal Characteristics.....	76
13. Agreement to Success Measure Among Respondents.....	78
14. Social Recognition Percentages of Answered Questions.....	79
15. Perceived Career Achievement Percentages of Answered Questions.....	80
16. Cross Tabulations of Perceived Career Achievement with How Apparel Entrepreneurs Measure success.....	81

17. Perceived Financial Attainment Percentages of Answered Questions.....	82
18. Personal Satisfaction Percentages of Answered Questions.....	84
19. Social Status Percentages of answered Questions.....	85
20. Social Reputation of answered Questions.....	86
21. Start up Plan and Advisors.....	90
22. Cross Tabulations of Business Planning with High and Low Success.....	93
23. Number of Employees.....	95
24. Initial Investment of Personal Finances.....	97
25. Total Initial Investment Amount.....	97
26. Underestimates in Business.....	99
27. Cross Tabulations of Financial Challenge with Following a Budget.....	100

I. INTRODUCTION

Presently, there is a growing body of research on entrepreneurship. Yet, there have been few studies done on the topic of entrepreneurship in the apparel industry. The main purpose of this study is to investigate personal characteristics, level of business planning, and success rates of apparel entrepreneurs.

Background and Setting

Entrepreneurs have been a source of discussion since the days of Aristotle. For more than 200 years, notable people have been advancing the idea of what entrepreneurship is. Throughout history, the definition of an entrepreneur has changed to fit the time period. However, as the economy changes, so does the entrepreneur (Praag, 1999). Economists, researchers, and scientists alike have changed the definition of entrepreneur as it seemed to fit the current situation.

Not only has the definition of entrepreneurship changed to fit both historical and economic situations, but there is no perfect definition of what an entrepreneur truly is. As explained by Peter Drucker (1985), the word entrepreneur originated from the French term meaning “between” and “to take”. With this translation in mind, an entrepreneur is one who risks success in order to capitalize on new endeavors by being the business between the supplier and the customer (Drucker, 1985). Risk has been identified as a characteristic defining an entrepreneur. As described through the definition, an

entrepreneur is “one who starts a business or other venture that promises economic gain but that also entails risks” (“Entrepreneur”, n.d.). Richardson (1994) considers an innovator a synonym for an entrepreneur. And the U.S. Small Business Administration defines an entrepreneur as one who “organizes and manages a business, assuming the risk for the sake of profit. An entrepreneur sees an opportunity, makes a plan, starts the business, manages the business and receives the profits” (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2007, pg 1).

As Lambing and Kuehl (2000) described, the most classic type of entrepreneur builds their business around a new product or idea from a fresh perspective. Other entrepreneurs open a business from an existing concept or buy and run an existing business (Lambing & Kuehl, 2000).

Personal characteristics of entrepreneurs have been researched and evaluated in relation to their success. Olson’s (2000) study suggested that risk-taking, control, and ambitions are traits that correlate to positive market entry. Therefore, entrepreneurs who have risk-taking, control, and ambition traits are more likely to open successful business ventures. Today, entrepreneurs take a calculated approach to their business in order to negate risks. The sacrifice of personal capital and time in a business makes entrepreneurs take more calculated risks than high risks (Brockhaus, 1987).

As Olson (2000) stated, another characteristic known to entrepreneurs is ambition- a trait relating to aspiration of pursuing ones business goals. Ambitious individuals have a competitive drive and higher self-standards. Because of their goal to

succeed, ambitious entrepreneurs evaluate and judge themselves on a much more difficult scale (Olson, 2000).

Success is a concept that can be defined in multiple ways, take on multiple meanings, and be measured many ways personally and in business. Achievement and accomplishment are part of the success measure which is opposite of failure. As Lau, Shaffer, and Au (2007) studied the success of Chinese entrepreneurs, the researchers were able to operationalize business success through measuring perception of finances, career achievement, social reputation and recognition, career satisfaction, financial attainment, demographic information, educational background, and personality traits. Important factors of entrepreneurial success include understanding personal characteristics of successful entrepreneurs including risk taking, self-efficacy, ambition, locus of control, and other various personal characteristics. Aside from personal characteristics, factors related to business structure such as a business plan, financial plan, entry and exit strategy, and educational background are also attributed to success.

Understanding what factors make entrepreneurs successful was only half of the research objective for this study. Applying the understanding to the apparel industry was the second half of the objective. The apparel industry has many outlying factors and a few including fast seasonality, a crowded market, and overseas trade. The apparel industry is driven by trends from the streets, celebrities, socialites, and history. It is one of the most fast paced industries with products constantly changing with the season of the year, trends being forecasted years in advance, and ever growing importance of being in style.

The fashion industry is filled with young and innovative entrepreneurs. The composition of the apparel industry ranges from design and production to retail, marketing, and distribution. Due to the fast paced nature of this industry, entrepreneurs within it need to be innovative and generate new and desirable styles. Successful professionals in the apparel industry must recognize trends and predict their customers' wants and needs. In 1999, retail sales in the U.S. amounted to \$3 trillion in which apparel and accessories totaled \$135 billion (Granger & Sterling, 2003). Due to the large amount of money spent on fashion yearly, there is a better chance for entrepreneurs to join the industry than if there was small or decreasing capital. The more money that is being spent increases the chances of financial success for apparel entrepreneurs. However, due to the constant influx of competition within the fashion industry, in order to maintain customer loyalty and brand recognition, apparel entrepreneurs need to be more efficient than those in other industries (Granger & Sterling, 2003).

Innovation is a key success factor in many entrepreneurial settings and is at the top of the list in regards to fashion. An entrepreneur in the apparel industry must stay in touch with their market, even if it means reinventing the business multiple times. Having knowledge of the industry, being updated on trends, and being innovative are extremely important in any apparel business (Granger & Sterling, 2003). The focus of this study was based on apparel designers and retailers since both groups are prominent sources of entrepreneurship in the apparel industry.

Gaps in Current Literature

There have been few studies conducted about the success or failure of apparel entrepreneurs. Presently, there is a growing body of research on factors that impact entrepreneurial success or failure. Studies include those on business structure and common myths (Brockhaus, 1987), entrepreneurial traits (Deamer & Earle, 2004), personality and characteristics (Olson, 2000), demographics and success factors (Merrett & Gruidl, 2000), and the stigma of failure in American Culture (Landier, 2004).

Although a significant amount of research concerning the apparel industry has been done, very few studies were found that address success, business planning, and personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneurs. With such limited research about entrepreneurship in the apparel industry, entrepreneurs may feel a bit at a loss of how to start and maintain a successful business. This research has identified success factors to aid the entrepreneur in his or her efforts to figure out the correct strategies for their business. This research will also add to the existing body of literature.

Problem Statement & Purpose of the Study

The above mentioned gap in the literature indicates a need for further studies focused on apparel entrepreneurs, their personal characteristics, and success rates. Personal characteristics and success rates have been explored in other industries, such as medical, food and service, and agriculture. Scales for personality characteristics and success rates from previously conducted research in these industries could be applied to the apparel industry for apparel entrepreneurs (Bandura, 1986; Kraut, Olson, Banaji,

Bruckman, Cohen, & Couper, 2004; Lau et al, 2007; Littunen, 2000; Merrett, 2000; Olson, 2000; Praag, 1999; Richardson, 1994). Therefore, the main purpose of this study was to investigate personal characteristics, level of business planning, and success rates of apparel entrepreneurs.

Significance of the Study

As highlighted earlier, researchers have investigated success and failure factors for entrepreneurs in general. This study is important because no found studies focused on characteristics that affect success or failure of apparel entrepreneurs. Through this study, the researcher was able to identify the realities that apparel entrepreneurs face and examine factors that affect their success or failure. By choosing this unique group of business owners, the researcher was able to contribute to an area less explored by researchers. This examination has helped to identify characteristics associated with successful apparel entrepreneurs. Thus, this study has contributed not only to academia but has provided useful information for future entrepreneurs interested in participating in the apparel industry.

Objectives and Research Questions

Specific objectives of this study include:

1. To identify personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneurs.
2. To determine how apparel entrepreneurs define success.
3. To identify success factors among apparel entrepreneurs.
4. To determine the most prominent characteristics among entrepreneurs who perceive themselves successful.

5. To identify overlooked business planning aspects that can cause success or failure.

These objectives will be met by answering the following research questions:

- RQ1. What are personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneurs?
- RQ2. Are certain personal characteristics predictors of entrepreneurial success?
- RQ3. What are the most prominent personal characteristics among apparel entrepreneurs that perceive themselves successful?
- RQ4. What aspects of business planning have entrepreneurs overlooked that may cause failure of the business?
- RQ5. Do apparel entrepreneurs have similar personal characteristics as entrepreneurs in other industries, made evident through past research?

Definitions of Terms

The following terms will be important concepts throughout this research study.

Entrepreneur - “one who starts a business or other venture that promises economic gain but that also entails risks”(“Entrepreneur”, n.d.).

Personal characteristics - traits that define an entrepreneur such as: risk taking, self-efficacy, discipline, ambition, attitude, locus of control, and demographics (Olson, 2000; Gehlhar, 2005).

Risk taking - the extent to which an entrepreneur gambles with decisions or assets (Brockhaus, 1987).

Self-efficacy - one’s perception of the ability to achieve a specific goal (Bandura, 1986; Krueger, 1998).

Ambition - possessing high personal standards, goal intentions, and determination to accomplish one's goals (Olson, 2000).

Discipline - focus, control, and order to be able to follow and maintain rules in order to maintain one's goals (Finkekstein, 2006).

Internal locus of control - the belief that one's actions depend on the individual's internal control (Olson, 2000).

Success - a measurement of achievement, ability, and satisfaction to the risk taker in an entrepreneurial setting; different for every entrepreneur (Headd, 2002; Goodman, 1994).

Success measurement - business achievement operationally measured through social recognition, social status, career satisfaction, and perceived career achievement (Lau et al., 2004)

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter contains a review of the literature in the areas of entrepreneurial development, success in an entrepreneurial setting, the apparel industry and entrepreneurs in the apparel industry, as well as survey analysis.

Business Definition

The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) and the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) define a business establishment as, “an economic unit, generally at a single physical location where business is conducted or where services or industrial operations are performed” (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1997, p.2). Under this broad definition, business may be conducted from an office, household residence, overseas, or virtually over the internet.

Business Types

Different business types exist to reach different markets. A business can be large or small and based from an outside location or within the home. Distinguishing different business types is important in deciding which type of business venture one will pursue. Based on the entrepreneur’s work ethic, personal ties (i.e. children), size, or type of business he or she may decide having a home based business or eBusiness as the best type. However, if the entrepreneur wants to have a large, multi-structured business throughout the world he or she may decide on a franchise.

Franchise. An investor can open a business of their own through a franchise. The investor (the franchisee) must agree to follow established operation procedures of the business franchisor including service or sales of merchandise. A franchise fee is a particular sum of money that is agreed upon by the franchisor and the franchisee. This fee indicates financial contribution to the business agreement (Granger & Sterling, 2003). Due to the increase in franchise potential, venture capitalists have taken advantage of recent franchise opportunities. This increase was relevant in 2005 when the market had an 11 percent increase and was considered the year for franchises (Wilson, 2006).

More people are recognizing franchising as a viable means to turn entrepreneurial dreams into reality. And franchising's influence is being felt far and wide. It's attracting jaded corporate employees ready to apply their business savvy and skills to their own businesses, as well as a generation of baby boomers who aren't quite ready to retire. Meanwhile, entrepreneurs are increasingly embracing franchising as a way to expand their existing businesses. All this translated to \$134.2 billion in sales during the past fiscal year for the 2006 Franchise 500® companies (Wilson, 2006, p.1).

Home-based business. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy (2006), small businesses are made up of fewer than 500 employees. Though classified as small, these businesses have a large impact on U.S. economy. There was an estimated 25.8 million businesses in 2006, of which 53% were small businesses including home-based businesses (Office of Advocacy, 2006; U.S. Small Business

Administration, 2007). Since home-based businesses make up roughly half of all U.S. businesses, they are a way for Americans to launch a venture at an entry-point into the business world, and be a source of economic activity (Beale, 2004). Advantages of home-based business include: ability to work while staying at home to watch their kids, not paying for business space, and being profitable while accomplishing daily household duties (Office of Advocacy, 2006). Home based businesses can include many industries, including service and construction sectors (Beale, 2004). However, the common thread is that the individual works from home instead of commuting to a corporate atmosphere. Small businesses, including home based businesses, are often predicted to have a large impact on the economy. Sixty to eighty percent of new jobs annually have been generated from small businesses over the past decade. Communication technologies level the playing field between large corporations and small businesses. Furthermore, this level playing field largely impacts economic growth (Small businesses will make big impacts, 2003).

eBusiness. Business enterprise has grown over the past few years in great part due to internet capabilities. Roth (2000) predicted the eBusiness trend as a future priority for those pursuing entrepreneurship. Through surveys and research, Roth (2000) found that 93 percent of businesses predicted changes in their current strategy due to eBusiness. Likewise, 70 percent of business owners projected an increase in eBusiness strategy within two years (Roth, 2000). Based on (Strategic eCommerce Solutions, 2008) research, from the years 2000 to 2002 revenue of online businesses almost doubled, from \$24.1 billion to \$47.8 billion. Roth (2000) also attempted to predict the future of

eBusiness more than seven years ago. Today, Roth's (2000) prediction seems true; eBusiness has grown. The number of internet users has jumped from 304 million people in the year 2000 to 1,319 million people in 2007 (Miniwatts Marketing Group, 2008). Retail revenues from e-business has also dramatically increased from \$24.1 billion in 2000 to \$130.3 billion in 2006. For a breakdown of yearly increase see Figure 1. Based on the 2006 U.S.Census report retail e-commerce has increased regardless of war, recession, terrorism, or climate (Strategic eCommerce Solutions, 2008). Venture capitalists have progressed from using the internet solely for communication by broadening their business capabilities to the internet. Many business owners have taken to retailing, via the internet by transforming their bricks and mortar business to eBusinesses (Granger & Sterling, 2003).

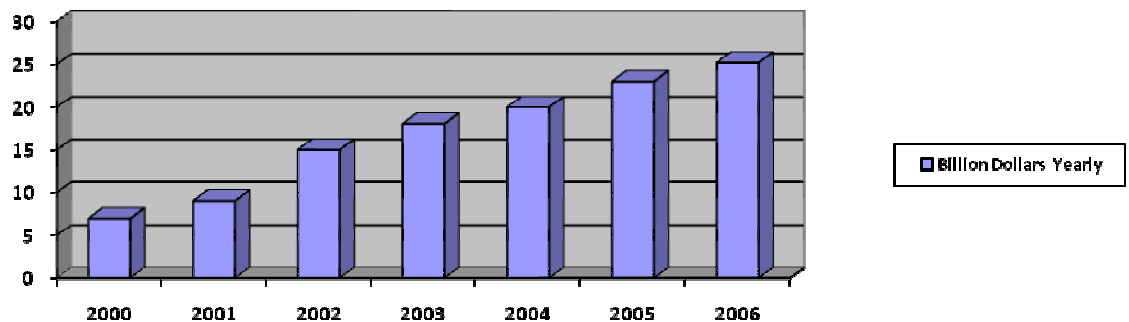


Figure 1. Billions of dollars in ecommerce sales

Note. Based on 2006 U.S. Census report (Strategic eCommerce Solutions, 2008).

Table 1
Characterization of Business Structures

Name	Definition	Advantages	Disadvantages
Sole Proprietorship	-Individual owner -Business is not a separate legal entity from owner	-Easy -Inexpensive -Owner controls business -Owner receives all profit -Easily exited	-Accountability -Personal funds tied up -Business life = lifespan of owner -Job insecurity = challenge of good employee retention
General Partnership	-Two or more business owners -Partners share profits, assets, and debts together	-Minimal cost -More owners = more available capital -Ownership and accountability dispersed -Profit shared -Ability for limited partners -Few governmental regulations	-Limitless liability among partners -Disagreements between -Death of partner dissolves business -Profits may not be enough for both partners to live off of -Transfer of ownership must be agreed upon by all owning parties
Limited Partnership	-One general partner and one or more partners with limited responsibilities -Limited partners have low risk and little decision making responsibilities	-Offers ability individual to run business and partners to help and provide capital	-Agreements can be complex -More legalities
Corporation	-Separate legal entity owned by many people called shareholders -Portions of business sold for ownership	-Limited liability for all parties -Ownership easily transferred - Greater capital accessibility	-Taxes are doubled -Rights of company can be lost by founders to other shareholders -Much more technicalities

Note. From *Fashion Entrepreneurship Retail Business Planning*, by M. Granger and T. Sterling, 2003, New York: Fairchild Publications, Inc, Copyright 2003.

Business Structure

In every business, there are legal issues concerning taxes, liability, control of business, funding, and general ownership. All business owners must establish the type of legal entity their business will operate under. This is to ensure that tax considerations are addressed and provides protection for shareholders that may be involved in the business. Understanding the type of business one is getting into is imperative because there are specific advantages and disadvantages to each form of business structure.

One of the first steps in making a business plan or deciding to open a business is to decide what business structure would best fit the owner(s) or partners lifestyle, and the business goals (See Table 1). As previously mentioned, there are advantages and disadvantages to each business structure option. Understanding these options and evaluating them with appropriate legal advice from an attorney and an accountant is the ideal way to choose the best option.

Entrepreneurs

Since the background of an entrepreneur is so diverse and the lifestyle takes imagination and initiative, some entrepreneurs choose to have different approaches to business that may better fit their lifestyle. Some take a concept and develop it into a business while others take an existing business and expand the model. The most common type of entrepreneur is the classic entrepreneur - one who develops a new product or new idea and builds business around it (Lambing & Kuehl, 2000). He or she opens a business with a fresh perspective.

There are few success stories of entrepreneurs that began their business without a plan, however there are always exceptions. One atypical success story is of Masaru Ibuka, a young Japanese inventor, who in 1945 along with seven others, used a bombed-out department store in Tokyo to launch their business. The problem: they did not have any idea of what the endeavor would be. For weeks, they tried to figure out what the business would be. Today, that bombed-out company is known as Sony Corporation (Collins, 1993). Upon hearing a success story like that of Sony Corporation, one may believe he or she does not need a plan either. Brockhaus (1987), “found that as many as 60 percent of entrepreneurs decide to start a business before they know what type of business they want to undertake” (p.4). But, starting a business without a plan is not always the most logical thing to do since an estimated 544,800 small businesses closed in 2005, and of that 39,201 were due to bankruptcies (Office of Advocacy, 2006). Having a business and financial plan, enough capital, and goal of the future venture is important in staying open, rather than opening a business on a whim in hopes of success.

History and Definitions

Entrepreneurship has been a source of discussion since the days of Aristotle; economists, researchers, and scientists alike have changed the definition of the word entrepreneur as it seemed to fit the current situation. In the early 18th century, a scientist named Richard Cantillon introduced the notion of an entrepreneur’s economic function among the working class. Later that century, economist Jean-Baptiste Say followed entrepreneurial views and introduced the idea of an administrative role among the entrepreneur. In the 20th century, Joseph Schumpeter defined an entrepreneur as an

innovator. Frank Knight distinguished the risk of an entrepreneur in which he used Cantillon's theory of entrepreneurship and proved entrepreneurs tolerate uncertainty (Praag, 1999). For more than 200 years, notable people have been making advances in the idea of what entrepreneurship is. Definitive definitions are derived for the time period but as Praag (1999) has made relevant, as the economy changes so does the entrepreneur. As explained by Peter Drucker (1985), the word entrepreneur originated from the French term meaning "between" and "to take". Understanding this translation, an entrepreneur risks success by being the business in between the supplier and the customer (Drucker, 1985). Likewise, relation of risk to the entrepreneur is made evident through the definition, "one who starts a business or other venture that promises economic gain but that also entails risks" ("Entrepreneur", n.d.).

Innovation is a key success factor in entrepreneurial practices. Without innovation, the venture will blend in with every other business. Timmons' (1989) description of an entrepreneur is correct from the aspect of building a business upon opportunity, but entrepreneurs can be those who buy existing businesses. Timmons' definition tends to examine the successful entrepreneur since the person is building something of value from nothing. Some businesses may be worth nothing in the end, but the owner can still be considered an entrepreneur. There are many ways to confuse the meaning of entrepreneur, and understanding the meaning may be complicated (Drucker, 1985).

Advantages and Disadvantages. Self-sufficiency, creativity, financial control, freedom, social networking, growth possibility, and ability to work within a desired industry are some advantages to becoming an entrepreneur. Self-sufficiency is one reason many people become entrepreneurs. Many owners of popular enterprise began their career with a goal of working for themselves. Paul Galvin of Motorola Inc., Soichiro Honda of Honda Motor Co., and Sam Walton of Wal-Mart Stores Inc. began their ventures with ambition to be self-sufficient, subsequently became household brand names throughout America (Collins, 1993). There are other advantages to entrepreneurship besides self-sufficiency. Often, those drawn to an entrepreneurial setting love a challenge and enjoy working in a setting where they can problem solve daily.

Financial control is another factor most entrepreneurs consider an advantage. While control of finances does not equate to full financial freedom and wealth, it does, mean the business owner is knowledgeable of the business finances and is able to make educated decisions based on this knowledge. In other work settings, an employee may not be knowledgeable or in control of the finances. Therefore, that employee may feel unstable in not knowing if his or her job will unexpectedly be omitted if finances are poor (Lambing & Kuehl, 2000).

There are always disadvantages along with any advantage in entrepreneurship. Many entrepreneurs sacrifice their own time, finances, family, and personal life. Most entrepreneurs work long hours to get their business started and to maintain the stability of the company. Often, entrepreneurs begin their business before starting a family or once their children are grown and out of the house. Traditionally, entrepreneur's age ranged

from 30 to 50 years old. However, entrepreneurs like Bill Gates, the founder of Microsoft, began his business at the age of 20 years old, disregarding traditional age roles. Ray Kroc, founder of McDonald's, was also out of the traditional range, since he opened his business at the age of 59 (Women's Business Center, 2008). Therefore, the age of entrepreneurs is undefined. There is an equally growing number of younger entrepreneurs as those in their retirement years.

There is a very small margin for error in entrepreneurship. Large corporations can survive through one bad business decision, but the same bad decision in a small business can be detrimental. Large businesses have so many different levels they are not as highly affected as those with only 50 employees and significantly less capital (Lambing & Kuehl, 2000). As the margin for error is small, the financial risks are large. Given that it takes a certain amount of personal financial risk to begin one's own business, if unsuccessful, the financial risk turns into a financial burden of lost money. Advantages and disadvantages go hand in hand with anything. Though there is some risk that may be considered a disadvantage to an entrepreneurial profession, one must understand this risk, try to prepare for it, and relate it to the success of their business.

Personal Characteristics

Characteristics attributed to entrepreneurs have been researched and evaluated in relation to their success. Olson (2000) studied such a relationship and suggested traits including risk-taking or risk tolerance, control, and ambitions correlated to the success of a business. Jeffrey Timmons (1989) described entrepreneurship as a creative act in which the individual builds something (a business) of worth out of virtually nothing. By seeking

out any opportunity, regardless of the resource, the individual creates a entrepreneurial vision. This vision involves dedication, commitment to lead others, and ability to take calculated risks in the pursuit of that dream (Timmons, 1989; Lambing & Kuehl, 2000).

While some believe there are identifying traits in a person from birth, others believe entrepreneurship can be a learned process. Deamer and Earle (2004) have conducted studies suggesting that personal traits alone are not what makes one an entrepreneur (Deamer & Earle, 2004). There are, however, specific traits within entrepreneurs that make them who they are. Because an entrepreneur will spend more than 40 hours per week working, the individual needs some type of passion and determination to go into work every day and further their business. Even if the entrepreneur has had past failed ventures, persistence is what takes an entrepreneur one step closer to their goal of success.

Risk taking. Brockhaus (1987) suggests that “J.S. Mill was one of the first economists to use the term “entrepreneur.” He considered direction, supervision, control, and risk taking to be the functions of an entrepreneur and appeared to feel that risk-bearing was the main feature distinguishing a manager from an entrepreneur” (p.1). This definition from the nineteenth century writer and economist focuses on traits of the entrepreneur - especially risk taking. Entrepreneurs are known to take risks because they put personal capital and time into a company with no guarantee for return. Though personal, the financial and time risks that the entrepreneurs take are not high, the risks are calculated (Brockhaus, 1987). Good entrepreneurs will take on a project with some risk of failure, if they can work to minimize that risk (Women’s Business Center, 2008)

Recognizing an opportunity, taking a risk, taking initiative by opening a business, and attempting to profit from it are a combination of entrepreneurial actions. Observation of both successful and unsuccessful entrepreneurs can be beneficial in understanding the attributes of becoming successful. Some of these traits exist within the individual and others need to be learned. The prospective entrepreneur must first understand himself or herself to evaluate successful traits (Granger & Sterling, 2003).

Ambition. Ambition is an entrepreneurial trait relating to the aspiration of pursuing one's business goals. Competitive drive and higher self-standards are goals for individuals with this trait. Entrepreneurs with this ambitious characteristic evaluate and judge themselves on a much more difficult scale because of their goal to succeed (Olson, 2000). Persistence, commitment, personal initiative, and a strong drive to achieve are characteristics related to ambition and associated with successful entrepreneurs (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2007).

Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is an individual's personal opinion of success, a perception of ability to execute and attain a goal. For the entrepreneur, self-efficacy is ability to achieve business goals. This perception of achievement aids in success of an employee (Bandura, 1986; Krueger, 1998). Tommy Hilfiger, a name associated with his internationally known brand of red white and blue patriotic inspired clothing line, started his business with \$150.00. Hilfiger's ability to dream big, market his brand, and utilize strong business skills led him to success (Gehlhar, 2005). As Krueger (1998) describes, high self-efficacy will in turn increase initiative and determination, and consequently lead to successful performance. Therefore, with Krueger's (1998) description of self-efficacy

in mind, Tommy Hilfiger's self-efficacy along with his other personal characteristics allowed him to reach his own goal of success. He has surpassed so many other designers due to his elevated self-efficacy.

Discipline. An entrepreneur is determined and motivated because a successful entrepreneur acts out of choice. He or she depends on his or her own actions and handles the consequences of their actions. Obedience, good work ethic, regulation, order, and control are synonymous with discipline, one of the personal characteristics of a successful entrepreneur. Since entrepreneurs have a business, maybe a family, and employees depending on their success, they tend to be very detail oriented, feel the need to achieve success, and some can be considered perfectionists to the point of obsession. And finally, entrepreneurs are creative. They have imagination which allows them to see past certain obstacles that might stop others (Lambing & Kuehl, 2000).

Since having a business plan and a financial plan aid in the success of opening and running a business, one needs the discipline to follow the plans to be sure the business stays on track. As Finkekstein (2006) describes, discipline is the ability to focus, have control, and have order so he or she may maintain their career goals. Discipline is about having restraint and staying focused on the plan so one can measure success defined by one's own business strategy. Discipline is about following the rules and goals one sets for oneself and not overreacting to market changes and altering the original strategy (Finkekstein, 2006).

Positive attitude. A good entrepreneur should have a positive attitude for their business. The SBA's program office lists multiple similarities among successful entrepreneurs, including personal initiative and strong drive to achieve, as well as many others that can be related to positive attitude of an entrepreneur (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2007). Success is what the business achieves, but the business owner needs to have the right attitude with the right goals in mind to accomplish the desired results. By accepting responsibility, the entrepreneur is able to be more successful and, upon success, gives credit to the appropriate people who worked towards the success. The ability for a business owner to maintain a positive attitude, be determined, and understand the inner workings of a business are important factors of success.

Locus of control. Locus of control is the belief that one's actions depend on the individual's internal control. Entrepreneurs holding a higher personal control accept responsibilities associated with their venture more willingly than individuals with a lower control (Olson, 2000). Littunen (2000) examined the characteristics of entrepreneurial personality and found by measuring dimensions including work ethic, pursuit of excellence, mastery, dominance, as well as other dimensions to describe achievement motivation and locus of control. This dimensional examination of traits within each personal characteristic was then re-measured over time, to see if the entrepreneur maintained the same characteristics. In the case of locus of control, the entrepreneur increased in the dimensions of work ethic, pursuit of excellence, mastery, and dominance, while the other dimensions decreased slightly (Littunen, 2000) Therefore, the researcher concluded, that if a business owner is in control himself or herself, they can be in control

of their business situations. The locus of control will make it easier to run the business and have a balanced flowing workplace.

Gender. The gender of the business owner is often thought to be a factor in the success of a business. Historically, men often have had advantages in opening their own business and maintaining it because of society's stereotypes imposed on women. Though these views have changed greatly over the past 50 years, there are still many obstacles for women to overcome due to gender bias. In the ten year span from 1987 to 1997, female owned enterprises in the United States increased 89%, employed almost 16 million people, and accounted for \$1.4 trillion in sales. Though Merrett and Gruidl (2000) have concluded, "female entrepreneurs are less successful than their male competitors" (Merrett & Gruidl, 2000, p. 426), their research shows that there has been vast progress in the success of female owned businesses. Recent research indicates that starting a business was originally the pursuit of men. However, many female entrepreneurs have dismissed the outdated thought that women cannot be successful business owners. Gender is now thought to be a factor unrelated to the success of an entrepreneur (Women's Business Center, 2008).

To say the least, within the last 20 years, growth of female and male owned business has been exceptional and businesses are expected to keep growing. Business skills, type of business, and location of a business are also key factors in measuring the success of a business (Merrett & Gruidl, 2000). Therefore, whether gender is currently a factor of success or merely a past factor of success, the growth of female entrepreneurs and help for them has increased.

Distinguishing Factors

Several factors which are key for successful entrepreneurs include innovation, market entry, sources of capital, and having a board of advisors; these are only some of the factors important to a business and its survival. Having a mentor within the industry can also prove beneficial. “Many entrepreneurs also had a role model to influence them early on and parents who were entrepreneurs two traits necessary for successful entrepreneurs are creativity and innovation” (Small Business Administration, 2007, p. 1)

Innovation. To be innovative is to possess the ability to be creative or individualistic; these same traits are considered benefits in owning a business (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2008). Innovation and determination are traits used by many Americans as a basis for opening a business - be it a new concept or an existing business. Beginning a new venture of one's own seems to be a popular idea. Annually, four percent of Americans are vigorously involved in trying to open their own business. More than two-thirds of those have other commitments and priorities to juggle as well (Lambing & Kuehl, 2000).

One does not have to be the originator of the business concept to be an entrepreneur. There are entrepreneurs that have an innovative new twist to a traditional concept which makes their business unique and stand out from others. Those that start a new business based on an existing concept are still entrepreneurs because they are assuming all financial risk and ownership. An example is the entrepreneur that opens a bookstore in a college town that already has one or more bookstores. The new bookstore might offer an added service to attract students as customers (Lambing & Kuehl, 2000).

One has to neither originate a new idea nor open a new business to be an entrepreneur. One who buys a business that has already been of service to the public and keeps the existing concept is still an entrepreneur. Purchasing an existing business requires the least innovation of the three approaches to becoming an entrepreneur mentioned. Though some innovation may be introduced by a new business owner, it may be minimal. Because an established business structure is already in place (Lambing & Kuehl, 2000).

Success

Success is a measurement of achievement, ability, and satisfaction to the risk taker in an entrepreneurial setting. Success is different for every entrepreneur and it can be measured through social recognition, social status, career satisfaction, and perceived career achievement (Headd, 2002; Goodman, 1994; Lau et al., 2007). Anyone can be an entrepreneur, but few become successful. Some entrepreneurs fail due to finances, lack of personnel, personal reasons, or social reasons. Other entrepreneurs are successful and maintain market stimulation and economic growth (Praag, 1999). Since the definition of an entrepreneur varies, it is likely that the concept of a “successful entrepreneur” might be confused. Rather than conceptually looking at a business as a success due to income, prestige, and how long it has been open, one must first know how to measure the success of an entrepreneur. Survival of a business is a key point to success; two-thirds of new businesses survive at least two years. The rate of business survival decreases to 44 percent at four years, but the industry which the business venture is part of is also important to its survival (Office of Advocacy, 2006).

Probably one of the least understood but most important traits to have is predictability in the business process. Every company has some processes: some are unmistakably distinct, others are implied. Finkekstein (2006) said, “Successful business leaders understand that being in business is about managing and responding to change. Companies that succeed embrace change and respond to challenges presented by the market, the competition or changes in general business conditions” (Finkekstein, 2006, p. 1). How the entrepreneur chooses to set up the process is important. By streamlining the business process, the company can improve productivity and minimize costs while generating equivalent or improved results. Successful businesses understand the need to constantly develop their business processes- to become more proficient and productive, and to respond to market changes faster while providing improved service to customers (Finkekstein, 2006).

Successful businesses tend to have certain qualities in common that aid in their success. Many successful entrepreneurs succeed only after they have failed several times. It has been stated that, “successful entrepreneurs don’t have failures. They have learning experiences” (Goodman, 1994, p.1). Successful entrepreneurs are able to view difficulty as opportunity in disguise. Even some of the most well known and successful entrepreneurs made an empire out of a failure. “Walt Disney went bankrupt three times before he made his first successful film. Henry Ford failed twice. They would never have been successful if they had given up easily” (Richardson, 1994, p.71). Hence, measurement of success is multifaceted and should be looked at on many levels, including the observation and perception of the entrepreneur. Tolerance for failure is

included in a set of similarities of successful entrepreneurs (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2007). Therefore, an entrepreneur must be able to fail initially in order to eventually succeed. Today, Walt Disney and Henry Ford are recognized as innovators throughout the world. Each has achieved high social status and social recognition for his business success.

Social recognition. As Lau et al., (2007) explained, success of entrepreneurs can be measured by a group of personal assessments with social recognition being one of them. Recognition from others or society is one way many entrepreneurs gauge the success of their business. Rather than objectively measuring success on the basis of income alone, understanding all aspects of entrepreneurial success is important. Recognition of the entrepreneur and his/her business has proven to be of success values from Lau et al (2007) studies.

Social status. An entrepreneur can have a certain standing or rank within society. A positive social status can increase success. The ability for an entrepreneur to measure their social status as good or bad directly relates to their success. The perception of the entrepreneur within society can be measured by statements including *My career gives me social status* and *As an employer I have a certain social status* (Lau et al., 2007) .

Perceived financial attainment. Finances are of great importance in operating any business. An entrepreneur should be able to gauge whether or not their business is financially successful, or at least financially stable. Normally, the entrepreneur should be the first to know of any problems with finances within their own business. So, an entrepreneur's perception of their financial achievement is part of the success

measurement. Financial perception can be based on if their business has earned more money than their friends business or than other businesses in their industry. Also, the words *rich* or *a lot of money* are used to prompt the entrepreneur to measure financial attainment (Lau et al., 2007).

Financial planning. Planning a business from beginning to end are important aspects to a successful business. Since finances are often overlooked and underestimated, having a financial plan of where each dollar is spent is beneficial. Having a strategy and sticking to it is key to the inner workings of a business. Complexity, however, is not key to a business plan's execution. Thinking the plan through is needed -even if only writing a one page business strategy. Along with the strategy of the business, one needs to plan the finances. Since financing is a large reason the majority of new ventures fail, it is important to make a financial roadmap and follow the budget as closely as possible. A financial plan reminds owners where and how to expend capital, and it allows progress or shortfalls to be measured. A focused financial plan is the cornerstone of an exceptional business plan (Finkekstein, 2006).

Social reputation. The reputation of the business and the business owner are important aspects in the measurement of success. If the entrepreneur feels he or she has a good reputation and is well known they have a higher social reputation measurement of themselves. If they are thought of as a well known person within their industry and known as an excellent business person their social reputation is high. The ability to measure one's own reputation within society is one more aspect of the Lau et al., (2007) success scale.

Perceived career achievement. The perception of an entrepreneur's business achievement and personal achievement is the last part to the whole success measurement of Lau et al., (2007). Perceived career achievement has been measured based on statements including, *I have a sense of achievement from my career, I have fulfilled my dreams from my career, and I have accomplished something valuable from my career* (Lau et al., 2007 p. 145)

Finally, part of being a successful entrepreneur is knowing when it is time to move on from the business. Having an exit strategy is important. Upon conceptualization of a business, one does not know the full perspective of a business. The venture could grow so fast that the business owner does not have the resources to cover such growth. Knowing when it is time to sell the business to a larger company or to exit while not losing capital is important. It is believed that growth ability as part of entry deterrence is important, but exit strategy is often overlooked because exit upon entry of a business is never optimum. This, however, is not true as Headd (2003) concluded through research, "contrary to what is commonly believed, not all closures are failures" (p. 58). A positive exit can occur when one exits a business and avoids fixed costs through having a profit-maximizing exit strategy. Creating the best possible way to not lose money is the best decision. If exiting a venture will allow one not to lose excess capital, it is the best choice. Every decision must be carefully evaluated (Headd, 2003).

Business Plan

A business plan is a document that provides direction for both operations and growth of a business, it is also a much needed for getting financing and managing operations (Granger & Sterling, 2003). Upon entry into a market, having a well thought out business plan is important to the general success of the business. There are many aspects to a business plan in which the entrepreneur should plan ahead of time including finances, risks, marketing, and exit, as well as many others. A business plan should include every portion of *Table 2* with thoroughness of each section highlighting reasons for the business and future plans. By writing a business plan, the entrepreneur is able to plan out each step they will take and plan ahead for any problems that may arise along the way. Each portion of this plan is beneficial to the entrepreneurship.

Table 2
Inner Workings of a Business Plan

Section	Definition
Executive Summary	Summary of business plan- generally 2 pages in length and written after completion of business plan.
Mission Statement	Concise, explanation of business's purpose - States business purpose, products/ services offered, and management philosophy.
Business Environment	National, local, and industry trends.
Marketing Plan	How the company will compete in the marketplace selling its product/ service. - Detailed description of products and services -Competition analysis -Pricing structure examination -Credit policy of company -Competitive advantage explanation -Target market profile -Site analysis -Promotional plan
Management Team	Hiring key employees to operate business
Financial Data	-Start up costs -Financing a business -Projected income statements -Projected cash flow -Break-even point
Legal Considerations	Business Structure, Finances, Ownership
Insurance Requirements	Health, Life, Disability, Workers Compensation, Vehicle, Liability, and Earnings insurance
Other Key Factors	Any additional information that does not have a place in the plan
Suppliers	Who will they be? Producers, wholesalers, or functional middlemen.
Risks	Controllable risks: insurable risks Uncontrollable risks: uninsurable risks, weather, price wars Develop a strategy for both types of risks
Assumptions/ Conclusions	State any assumptions made about the business Feasibility of business. What assumptions must hold true for your conclusion to hold true?

Note. This table of a business plan is a conglomeration of learned information and textbooks. From Lambing, P. & Kuehl, C. (2000). *Entrepreneurship* (2nd ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Sources of Capital

As important as sticking to a financial plan is, getting the financing to back a business may be even more difficult. Access to capital through any stage in the lifecycle of a small business proves to be a continual problem because of heightened risk in investing. For most startups, personal funds of the business owner, family and friends constitute major sources of startup capital. “Wetzel reported that the number of firms financed by institutional venture capitalists is less than one thousand per year, and fewer than 50 percent of these are startups”(Brockhaus, 1987, p.4). Though risk is a trait for entrepreneurs, it is also a trait of business investment.

Investors are often skeptical and conservative with their investment of capital into a start-up business because there might be a much higher risk of losing money than in established businesses. Accurate, detailed, information is best to estimate costs and bring to potential investors (Granger & Sterling, 2003).

However, there are other alternatives for sources of capital. “Angels” are sophisticated individuals willing to invest in a business because they have been successful selling their own company and are willing to reinvest portions of their earnings into smaller companies. In 1999, it was estimated that there was \$70- \$80 billion in angel capital (Office of Advocacy, 2000). Though “angels” exist in the business world, it is still important to understand and stick to a financial roadmap and business plan based on resources available at the time.

Board of advisors. As previously mentioned, many entrepreneurs were influenced early on by role models (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2007). This influence, whether it be from a parent, a board of advisors or mentor can be beneficial. It is a wise decision to have a board of advisors to keep the original goals of the company on track. An entrepreneur can be well versed with many talents, but they cannot know everything. They need to search out a team of trusting advisors that specialize in the critical areas of the business venture. “Without exception, every successful business owner I've worked with has talked about how having trusted advisors is necessary for success” (Finkekstein, 2006, p.2). The purpose for a team of advisors is to keep the business owner on track. These advisors should ask crucial but necessary questions that hold the business owner accountable for their actions. This board of advisors can also help in networking the entrepreneur and getting the entrepreneur in touch with the right people when help is necessary. One of the most important factors in the success of an entrepreneur is a network of business acquaintances that can provide business assistance from finances to encouragement (Merrett & Gruidl, 2000).

Because an entrepreneur is not an expert in every business aspect, having a board of advisors helps lessen the risk of beginning a business. A good entrepreneurial personality is full of, “desire for new challenges and new knowledge often corresponds with a well-developed sense of where weaknesses lie” (Deamer & Earle, 2004, p.100). Meaning, the entrepreneur will be able to run a business successfully if they realize when they need outside help. In order to minimize future business problems, the entrepreneur should define business risks in the business plan. Therefore, by hiring a board of advisors

upon opening business, entrepreneurs lessen their risk of failure. They do not take extreme risks; the risks they take are calculated (Lambing & Kuehl, 2000). “Successful business owners aren't afraid to take calculated risks with clear outcomes in mind. Most owners who take risks do so because they recognize the need to change as the economic climates changes, and they understand it's disastrous not to embrace change” (Finkekstein, 2006, p.1).

Failure

As developing and following a financial plan and business plan aid in the success of a business, failure to have these documents and abide by them before launching a company is a pitfall for many unsuccessful entrepreneurs. By not having clear and concise goals and a plan to achieve these goals, business owners will find themselves spinning out of control until their lack of direction leads them to failure. By writing a business plan and financial plan, the entrepreneur should understand when positive cash flow should begin. In many cases, it takes two or more years to merely break even. Until the business reaches a breakeven point and begins retaining positive cash flow, there needs to be capital saved from the start up of the business or growth cannot be achieved and the business will fail quickly. Likewise, keeping track of all financial records is extremely important to monitor expenditures in the business. Inadequate book keeping is one more problem affecting the failure of a business (Tracy, 2005).

Developing and growing a business takes time and patience. If an entrepreneur expects too fast of a turnaround or a breakeven point within too short of a time period, expectations will be unmet. Failure of a venture is often is a result of impatience among

entrepreneurs. The rule of thumb in a new business is everything costs twice as much and takes three times as long to implement as anticipated (Tracy, 2005).

Finances have many sections contributing to failure rates of entrepreneurs. Contributing factors include when an entrepreneur spends too much, particularly in the early stages, and expends all their startup capital money before achieving profitability. And after spending too much, if they try to charge too much to make a lot of money in a short period of time, the entrepreneur is looking for trouble. Likewise, by taking action without thinking first, the entrepreneur acts impulsively and makes costly errors that eventually cause the business to fail (Tracy, 2005).

Factors contributing to the success of a business are often product quality, management skills, customer service, and sales. But, when any of these factors are done inadequately, consumers choose to go elsewhere. The business will eventually collapse if consumers continue to choose the competition because of poor product quality or service (Tracy, 2005).

Entrepreneurs have many important and difficult decisions to make daily. They must be familiar with current market trends and be timely upon making decisions. Delayed or improper decisions can hurt a business and its standing. Every single thing an entrepreneur does must be calculated and purposeful. When an entrepreneur does not recognize important trends, consumer preferences, or economic conditions failure is inevitable.

On the other hand, one must be able to distinguish between business failure and a positive exit. Just because the business closes does not necessarily mean the business was a failure, the owner may enjoy getting business up and running and selling while the business is making a profit (Headd, 2003). If the business was a failure, the owner may close or sell. The SBA estimated that in 2005 there were 671,800 new firms opened in the US and 544,800 closures. Among those closures, 39,201 were bankruptcies-meaning, not every closure was necessarily due to failure (Office of Advocacy, 2006). Being able to distinguish between business closure and business failure is important. Headd (2003) found past businesses that opened between 1989 – 1992 then closed between 1992-1996 maintained a 29.1 percent perception of business success among owners at closure. Therefore, just because a business closes, does not mean a business fails.

Apparel Industry

The apparel industry is driven by trends from the streets, celebrities, socialites, and history. It is one of the most fast paced industries with seasonality changes, trends being forecasted years in advance, lines for holiday and various seasons, and an ever growing importance of the consumer being *in style*. With trends in the business of fashion such as boutiques like ZARA and H&M where Fast fashion is a must, the apparel industry is showing great turn around on garments. The industry is no longer as infatuated with pristine quality in garments as it was just ten years ago. Keeping up with the trends is of the utmost importance. Zara boutique thrives from constant communication and constant reemergence of designs (Ferdows, Lewis, & Machica, 2004). The purpose of fast fashion boutiques is a quick turnaround on less expensive

clothing. From concept to creation the whole process takes days instead of weeks or months (Ferdows et al., 2004; Hayes & Jones, 2006).

Retail Lifecycle Changes

The apparel and retail industries are very complex. There are several major cycles that play an important role in the success of a product for the entrepreneur. The apparel industry, along with other industries in the retail section, operates based on the retail life cycle (RLC). The lifecycle consists of four stages; innovation, accelerated development, maturity, and decline. The first stage, innovation, has few competitors, exceptionally rapid sales growth, low profitability, and tends to last between three to five years. The growth of sales is rapid because the establishment is introducing something new. Thus, any sale is considered growth. The second stage, accelerated development, has an increased number of competitors, rapid growth, high profitability, and lasts between five and six years. Maturity, the third stage, includes many more direct competitors and a reasonable number of indirect competitors, profitability is decreasing to a moderate level and the time period for this level can last as long or as short of a time as the business allows itself. Finally the decline of a business is the last stage. There are moderate competitors, and many different competitors. This stage is characterized by slow or even negative sales, extremely low profitability, and this period can last as long as it takes for the business to recover and start anew, or close. The four RLC stages relate to any retail business and strongly affect the apparel industry (Fiorito & Greenwood, 1986). This can be difficult for entrepreneurs to handle if they are not properly prepared for such drastic change.

The RLC is not the only cycle the apparel industry encounters. Seasonal patterns, cyclical patterns, trend patterns and selling patterns occur throughout the industry as well. Cyclical patterns move the business of fashion pertaining to cash flow, sales and profits (Granger & Sterling, 2003). This swinging trend in the industry is also referred to the pendulum of fashion. Trends can change from one extreme to the next in the rotation of a pendulum. Styles, shapes, and colors all undergo these drastic changes measured by the pendulum swing. The point swinging from one point of exaggeration such as mini skirts to the opposite of ankle covering skirts, the pendulum shows its full range (Robinson, 1975).

The fashion industry includes any business connected with fashion goods or services: design, retailing, manufacturing, distribution, publishing, advertising, and consulting (Stone, 1990). Within these industries, apparel falls in categories such as Haute Couture-which is custom made garments or ready to wear – apparel in standard sized bought off the rack. Women’s ready-to- wear clothing falls within its own specific categories as well (Dickerson & Jarnow, 1997). There is high end, which is closer to couture in fabrication but is still not custom made, mid-priced clothing that is more affordable but not poor quality and now there is Fast Fashion which includes boutiques like ZARA and H&M.

Yet another part of its complexity, the apparel industry has a product lifecycle classified in terms of maturation. There are four phases of the lifecycle of the apparel industry which include: emerging, expanding, stable, and declining. The stage that

provides the most opportunity for entrepreneurial ventures is the emerging or new stage. The growth stage of a business is when there is a lower investment risk and increased customer base. This phase is also an entry level stage for entrepreneurs. At the point when business begins to level off and be considered mature, with a loyal customer base, the business would be in its stable stage. These companies have one of two directions they can go, into decline or regeneration of growth. This is a difficult stage to enter the entrepreneurial market. If in the stable stage the business did not regenerate, it reaches a declining stage in which cash flow is reduced and would not be a good choice for entrepreneurs to enter. This stage shows least demand for the product and the needs for the product to be reinvented or the business will fail.

To further complicate the process, fashion trends are always changing, sometimes it takes a long time for people to catch on to the trends and other times a trend seems like an instant success. Designers base their designs on fashion forecasts. These forecasts are delivered to the designers over a year in advance so the designer's collection can be in style for the next season (Jarnow, Guerreiro, & Judelle, 1987). Predictions are made from evaluating the current marketplace and history as well as looking to economic status, current events, and other news publications. It takes a lot of skill and good business sense to make accurate predictions and hope the customer will like the product.

The majority of production in the apparel industry is primarily based on the ready-to-wear industry. Fashion magazines and television publicize runway shows from fashion capitols of the world such as Milan, Paris, and New York. Though apparel is

found throughout the entire world, high fashion and new trends tend to be first found in these larger cities.

Apparel Entrepreneurs

The apparel industry is filled with young entrepreneurs from designers to patternmakers, boutique owners to stylists. Fashion is a market full of innovation. Professionals in the apparel industry recognize trends and predict their customer's wants and needs. As described by Granger & Sterling (2003), the retail industry is a three trillion dollar industry in which apparel and accessories sectors contribute over \$135 billion as of 1999. Based on the U.S. Census report, the amount of dollars spent in the apparel market growing yearly, entrepreneurs have found area within the industry to make profit (SeS, 2008). However, entrepreneurs in this industry need to be more efficient than in most industries to maintain customer loyalty and brand recognition (Granger & Sterling, 2003).

Innovation is one of the key success factors at the top of the list in the fashion industry. The SBA describes business innovation in two ways; inventing something, or creating something from an existing idea (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2007). An entrepreneur in the apparel industry must stay in touch with their market even if it means reinventing the business multiple times. Knowledge of the industry, trends, and professionals in the industry is extremely important (Granger & Sterling, 2003).

An apparel entrepreneur is under the same scrutiny as any other entrepreneur. The U.S. Census Bureau reported 165,054 clothing and clothing accessory firms being open in 2002, of those 68,766 were firms with paid employees. Also included in the report

were numbers of female owned apparel stores- 65,694 and male owned- 66,572 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002). Success is measured in society by finances but by the entrepreneur by attaining personal goals in the venture. The same traits apply for apparel entrepreneurs as do for any other entrepreneur except the factor of the fast pace of the apparel industry affects the motivation and decision making trait. An apparel entrepreneur must always be on their toes expecting every day to be different. An apparel entrepreneur must make decisions in ample time to be in control of their future. Decision making is an important factor of any entrepreneurs business, but in the fashion industry decisions are not always focused and narrow. Understanding future trends is significant and assists entrepreneurs; those who integrate new trends with fashion create a winning structure (Black, 2004).

Advantages such as being self-sufficient, having financial control, and opportunity still apply in the apparel industry as do they in other entrepreneurial settings. There is optimal opportunity to travel in the fashion industry as well as possibility of meeting many exciting people. Disadvantages do occur in the apparel industry as do they in many others. An entrepreneur expecting to start a business and become rich is a mistaken entrepreneur. There is no get rich quick plan in the apparel industry; a business needs time to develop and grow into its entity. There is very small margin for error and less people working for the entrepreneurs as well as less capital than larger corporations. Financial risk is one of the most important risks in this and any other entrepreneurial setting. For some, finances are not a problem but for most, those who fail will fail due to insufficient funding (Harris, 2005).

Challenges

Funding to open a business is often difficult, but entrepreneurs need to keep funding available to keep producing their product. Brian Le Gette, an entrepreneur who initially was part of a partnership in the company *180s*, experienced financing issues of a growing company first hand. The company developed an innovative ear warmer which sold on a home shopping television show. They sold out in five minutes and their popularity grew. Orders were coming in fast but they did not have the money for such fast turnaround. Production costs were costing them every incoming dollar. The company simply became popular and the owners were not financially ready for such fast pace financing issues. Even in businesses that people consider successful because they are selling their product fast does not mean the company is necessarily successful (Anderson, 2005).

Pitfalls in the apparel industry are everywhere. Lack of cash flow is a great expense to entrepreneurs, and it could cost them their business. Patternmakers, fabric, suppliers, and general resources needed in the apparel industry are often costs that correlate highly to failed ventures. These entrepreneurs do not even stay open for a whole year before running out of all capital. Start up costs for a young designer can be anywhere from \$500,000 to \$1 million because of business essentials of the start up. Since financing is an issue in every stage of the business, a solid financial plan is the only way to prepare (Harris, 2005).

Funding is not the only problem apparel entrepreneurs encounter; there are many problems in this industry entrepreneurs need to figure out. Three friends, involved in the music industry found out opening an apparel design house is not as easy as they thought it would be. The business RyanKenny is based in Atlanta, Georgia and produces high end men's apparel. RyanKenny began over a trip to Philadelphia and personal shopping for high end apparel. The business idea turned into a work in action. The three owners Kenny Burns, Derek Dudley, and Ryan Glover raised \$500,000 in personal finances to begin their business. Since coming up with financing seemed easier than most companies, RyanKenny could afford fabric and equipment with the pooled money of the three. RyanKenny did still have a problem. In the apparel industry, couture clothing is important and high end, so new designers of the RyanKenny label were not taken seriously in their market. The business had a rough start entering the apparel industry rather than funding their venture (Harris, 2005).

Young entrepreneurs in the apparel industry face difficult decisions every day that contribute to the success or failure of their business. The apparel industry is a significant portion of the trillions of dollars in retail yearly. With the high amount of money the retail business brings in, apparel entrepreneurs do have staying power and contribute to the amount calculated.

Seasonality. Changes in climate and holidays effect seasonality of the apparel industry. Designers have resorted from simple fall and spring collections by adding resort lines, holiday, summer, and accessory lines. This demand for extra collections such as resort and holiday lines is a fairly new occurrence due to the growing popularity in

fashion magazines, television, and websites. In 2003, Americans spent \$62 billion on luxury apparel, shoes and accessories. As fast as designers put a line out, consumers are willing to spend money on it. Even buyers are getting in on the design trends months before they ever used to by viewing pre season collections. Seasonality in the fashion industry is like that of none other, growing more and expected faster every year (Rozhon, 2004).

Seasonality in an apparel industry can affect an apparel entrepreneur with cash flow issues greatly. The fast pace and quick turnaround times may not be enough time for the new entrepreneurs to have enough accounts receivable to be able to purchase things like more fabric for the next season. A garment cannot sit on a shelf for too long because seasonality and trends change so quickly. If a designer cannot produce the garment quickly enough, the retailer will choose not to work with the designer anymore because slow turnaround is bad for business. Because the apparel industry is so fast paced, seasonality can destroy a business. The apparel industry has fashions forecasted years ahead of time to aid in the turnaround of a garment, clothes need to be in stores in enough time to sell and be able for the store to want their next season.

Apparel entrepreneurs need to work with the concept of their business, the season, and trends. They need to stay on track all the way to completion of the season just to turn around and start a new season over. Insiders to the apparel industry are ready for the trend to change as soon as their line is on stores. The look of last season has been forecasted to them, designed with the target market in mind, stressed over for months, manufactures, showed- in a showroom or on a runway, photographed and evaluated for

months. After looking at the same collection day after day a couple of months seems like an eternity and a designer and others in the business are ready for a change in trends (Horyn, 2005).

Manufacturing off Shore/ outsourcing. Over the past few years, domestic business has decreased because more and more businesses are outsourcing to foreign countries. China, Singapore, India, and other various regions of the world pose a threat to the domestic apparel industry. The availability of outsourcing to another country cuts costs significantly, and for many entrepreneurs it is a way to cut costs and stay afloat. The global market in apparel is constantly growing.

Manufacturing is not the only source of apparel entrepreneurship done overseas. Fatt (2001) researched Singapore's entrepreneurial facets and future markets and found Singapore is overcome by larger nations. Inability to export affects the U.S. and many other countries due to the mass amount of outsourcing (Fatt, 2001). In the business of fashion, the global economy is important for many reasons other than trend watching. Much of the apparel industry is overseas including manufacturing (Dickerson & Jarnow, 1997).

Survey Research

Survey research has been conducted for years in many different forms on many different subjects. Researchers focus specifically on types of surveys, how to make surveys, response rates of surveys, and other data collection methods. Since a fairly low number of respondents ever respond to an initial survey, about 50%, many researchers focus much time on increasing response rates. In an age of technology, researchers are

focusing on internet surveys, web based surveys, and the general aesthetic of a survey. Researcher, Christian (2003) focuses on visual layout of a survey in relation to other aspects of survey research.

Surveys are a way for researchers to collect data related to a specific topic and generalize findings to come up with understanding of a problem or issue. Many industries and subjects rely on research through surveys to understand their areas of strengths and weaknesses. In retail, surveys are often given in forms of internet or telephone questionnaires to let a store know what the customer thought of their service, cleanliness, and products. To further understand the apparel industry and entrepreneurs in it, research through surveying apparel entrepreneurs can shed some light on the current situation in the industry.

There are different surveys to choose from. One must take careful consideration in the type of questions they will be asking, who the survey subjects will be, and location and time schedules of those involved. Focusing on asking the right question in language directed to the respondent and allowing the respondent to make their decision from their own judgment is key in writing a good survey. Using everyday language that would be understood in conversation allows respondents to understand the questions being asked on a more personal level. Setting the survey up in a well flowing round of questions is also beneficial (Christian, 2003).

Surveys can be conducted over the phone, in person, sent through the mail and by internet. Challenges and opportunities arise from internet research, but no matter how many challenges arise from it, the advantages must be weighed to see if it is the right form of research for the specific survey (Kraut et al., 2004).

Opportunities

Researchers are presented with many opportunities because of the internet, yet many are unwilling to take advantage of them because of older methods. Online surveys are continually growing, although survey methodologists were not the first to hop on the internet survey bandwagon they are beginning to do a vast amount of research pertaining to web based surveys now (Dillman & Bowker, 2001). The cost of surveying individuals is greatly decreased if a survey can be electronically submitted. Many more subjects can be surveyed and data is much easier to store because it is electronically submitted to begin with. This eliminates steps in the evaluation process of normal surveys. The internet also decreases the cost of recruiting subjects today. Researchers do not need as much training to survey online as they used to need for other research methods (Kraut et al., 2004).

Computers are highly used as a significant part of a person's life. This is the information and technology age and people want to do things the quickest way possible. A good majority of the population pay bills online, orders things online, has email, and manages personal finances online. Since so many people spend the majority of their tasks on a computer, what better way to give a survey than online? Response rate is key in getting back good results, "using the internet for survey purposes among young people

may lead to higher response rates as compared to paper and pencil surveys” (Van Selm & Jankowski, 2006).

Problems. Though the internet allows many strides for ease and success in surveying many people, there are many cases online research is not the best way to go. There are problems with this type of research when very personal information comes up. While some may feel at ease not being face to face when telling personal information, others do not feel comfortable letting their very personal information be a part of a web based survey. Subjects such as medical records, finances, and personal history over step the bounds of ethics in online surveying (Kraut et al., 2004).

Other issues include knowing if the individual the researcher thinks he or she is surveying is answering the way they would face to face. Or if the individual is who they say they are, or if they are of legal age to consent to being a subject in the survey (Kraut, et al, 2004).

The best way to stay clear of problems in online research is to use basic ethical and moral values and not to ask overly sensitive survey questions in an online survey. Second. Test the questionnaire with a pilot group and a pretest to catch any errors before all members being surveyed see the same errors (Kraut, et al, 2004).

Email vs. mail. The high-speed turn around for email or internet surveys is also an advantage as well as the financial advantage. Internet surveys are less expensive than sending out mail surveys and more convenient. A larger population in almost any geographic region can be surveyed faster and easier online than by meeting the individuals, or telephoning. The surveyor has the ability for a specific number of surveys

to be done at the same time unlike conducting the surveys in person. Online surveys save on personal time, money and data input. Being able to reach a broad selection of people is not the only advantage, entering data online is convenient for respondents and the surveyor because everything is stored in an electronic file which eliminated data entry (Van Selm & Jankowski, 2006).

Lower response rates and slower response times are just a few of the outcomes of mail surveys compared to their email technology counterpart. Convenience is a large reason a vast number of researchers choose email surveys and has been found as effective as postal mail response rates if those being surveyed are adequately equipped with the computer technology needed. Opportunity, effectiveness, speed and cost are optimized by using email surveys (Zhang, 1999).

In conclusion, literature in the areas of entrepreneurial development, success in an entrepreneurial setting, the apparel industry, and entrepreneurs in the apparel industry, as well as survey analysis have been reviewed. Further research is needed in the areas of apparel entrepreneurship, personal characteristics, and success rates. Therefore, the following methodology chapter contains research objectives to further knowledge in these areas.

Research Questions

Literature on the topics of entrepreneurship, personal characteristics, success, and the apparel industry provides some insights into important variables that are useful in predicting, or at least analyzing, the relationship of apparel entrepreneurship and success. However, focused research is needed in order to understand the topics more thoroughly. To that end, the following research questions will be investigated in this study.

RQ1. What are personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneurs?

RQ2. Are certain personal characteristics predictors of entrepreneurial success?

RQ3. What are the most prominent personal characteristics among apparel entrepreneurs that perceive themselves successful?

RQ4. What aspects of business planning have entrepreneurs overlooked that may cause failure of the business?

RQ5. Do apparel entrepreneurs have similar personal characteristics as entrepreneurs in other industries, made evident through past research?

III. METHODOLOGY

There are varying amounts of knowledge pertaining to types of business owners, entrepreneurs, and their success rates (Brockhaus, 1987; Deamer & Earle, 2004; Drucker, 1985; Finkekstein, 2006; Goodman, 1994; Headd, 2006; & Timmons, 1989). Researchers have even studied success rates among entrepreneurs in relation to gender, location, finances or other various factors of business (Merrett & Gruidl, 2000; Finkekstein, 2006; & Office of Advocacy, 2000). The apparel industry has been of focus recently with businesses like ZARA and H&M implementing Fast Fashion supply chains and other various business techniques (Ferdows et al., 2004). But, the connections between the apparel industry, entrepreneurial success, and personal characteristics of business owners have yet to be examined.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this research was to investigate characteristics, level of business planning, and success rates of apparel entrepreneurs from a variety of careers and backgrounds within the apparel industry. In doing so, the researcher was able to explore whether apparel entrepreneurs have similar personal characteristics as entrepreneurs in other industries examined in previous studies (Brockhaus, 1987; Deamer & Earle, 2004; Finklestein, 2006; & Olson, 2000). This research used quantitative and qualitative data to determine any correlation between personal characteristics, business planning, and

success. Finally, through comparing personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneurs to other entrepreneurs, as well as, success of business, this study may provide a better understanding where research is minimal.

Specific objectives of this study include:

1. To identify personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneurs.
2. To determine if apparel entrepreneurs have the same personal characteristics as entrepreneurs in other industries.
3. To identify success factors associated with apparel entrepreneurs.
4. To determine failure factors among apparel entrepreneurs.
5. To identify the most prominent characteristics among entrepreneurs who perceive themselves successful.

These objectives were to be met by answering the subsequent research questions:

RQ1. What are personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneurs?

RQ2. Are certain personal characteristics predictors of entrepreneurial success?

RQ3. What are the most prominent personal characteristics among apparel entrepreneurs that perceive themselves successful?

RQ4. What aspects of business planning have entrepreneurs overlooked that may cause failure of the business?

RQ5. Do apparel entrepreneurs have similar personal characteristics as entrepreneurs in other industries, made evident through past research?

Selection of the Method

An internet survey was used to examine the research questions. A self-administered, electronic questionnaire was available to selected entrepreneurs in the apparel industry. A convenience sample of apparel entrepreneurs was used. The characteristics of those in this convenience sample included designers and retailers who owned a small business –less than 500 employees. They were located throughout the United States, from a variety of apparel careers, education levels, and backgrounds. The questionnaire was set up online so the entrepreneurs could access a website and input their answers on their own time schedule. Topics included in the questionnaire prompted respondents to evaluate their business, self, strategies, business history, and goals. Finally, upon submission of the survey by respondents, the researcher was able to collect and examine data in SPSS.

There still is need for further studies in the area of the relationships between apparel entrepreneurs, personal characteristics, and success rates. Through previous research, data collection, and data analysis, the researcher anticipated exploring whether apparel entrepreneurs have the same personal characteristics as entrepreneurs in other industries in relation to previous studies (Brockhaus, 1987; Deamer & Earle, 2004; Finklestein, 2006; & Olson, 2000). The personal characteristics evaluated in this study consisted of gender, risk-taking, locus of control, ambition, imagination, discipline, and self-efficacy (Merrett & Gruidl, 2000; Olson, 2000; Goodman, 1994; Bandura, 1986). Through surveying apparel entrepreneurs, the researcher intended to understand success as a basis of personal characteristics and business planning. Finally, the researcher

identified the personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneurs that determine their success or failure.

Development of Instrument

The instrument used consisted of a self-administered internet-based questionnaire which contained demographic items, items relating to personal characteristics, success variables, and items relating to business profile. The demographic questions asked include respondents' age, sex, location, and education level.

The internet-based questionnaire used in this instrument was administered using www.surveymonkey.com. SurveyMonkey is a web-based tool in which the researcher was able to provide specific questions to be answered by multiple respondents through a website. Respondents to the questionnaire were able to save the data to the researchers storage area within SurveyMonkey upon completion. The recorded responses could be accessed by the researcher from the website as needed.

The dependent variable of the study was success. This study used one part of the Lau et al., (2007) scale which was the most significant section to this research. The scales high reliability also made it a better choice to use. The success scale developed for this study consisted of six items that measured success (Lau et al., 2007). The construct was comprised of social reputation, social recognition, social status, perceived financial attainment, career satisfaction, and perceived career achievement.

A five-point Likert-type scale was used to measure each of the success variables within the Lau et al.,(2007) scale and within the scale for this study. In order to be sure the most accurate data was collected, a five-point, Likert-type scale anchored by 'strongly

agree' (1) and 'strongly disagree' (5), was used for each of the success statements. There were also some bipolar statements in each of the scales which had to be reverse coded.

The independent variables of this study included the personal characteristics, gender, education, and location. The personal characteristics measured were risk-taking, locus of control, ambition, imagination, discipline, and self-efficacy (Merrett & Gruidl, 2000; Olson, 2000; Goodman, 1994; Bandura, 1986). A combination of past research was used to create the personal characteristics measurement. The risk-taking, locus of control, and ambition sections were based on experimental research from Olson (2000). The self-efficacy portion of this questionnaire came from Bandura (1986) and Krueger & Brazeal (1994). Finally, the trade article by Goodman (1994) was selected for the aspects of imagination and discipline, although there was no reliability to the scale. Research conducted on success based on gender and location was also used as a sample for this study. Each test had a 90% to 95% in Chi Square statistical significance (Merrett & Gruidl, 2000). The researcher interpreted aspects of the article to create statements for the scale within this study. Level of education was asked for a better understanding of demographics of the sample. The personality scale in this study was not reliable due to the large number of scales combined for its creation.

Within the personal characteristics scale, locus of control was measured by five statements. Ambition was measured by three statements, self-efficacy had three statements, positive attitude was measured only by two statements, discipline had three statements, innovation had four statements, and risk taking was measured by five statements. In order to be sure the most accurate data was collected a five-point, Likert-

type scale anchored by 'strongly agree' (1) and 'strongly disagree' (5), was used for each of the characteristics within the personality section of the questionnaire and the success section. The scales were anchored by bipolar adjectives in order to guarantee that participants inferred the same meaning from the semantic differential instrument.

The first objective to this study was to identify the personal characteristics or business aspects that produce successful entrepreneurs. This means that the success of the entrepreneur would depend on their personal characteristics and their business planning. Hence, success was the dependant variable in the study and personal characteristics, demographics, and business planning were the independent variables.

In addition to the scales in the study, open ended and multiple choice questions were asked. These questions enabled respondents to give a more personal feedback in areas that the researcher may not have included in a scale. Since these questions were open-ended, they elicited a qualitative data response, and could not be analyzed the same way as that from the Likert-type scale questions.

Pretest

The purpose of the pretest was to assure the questionnaire would adequately reach the entrepreneur, was clearly understood, and effective. A small pretest was conducted on this study to ensure validity of the instrument. Experts in the apparel industry were used to evaluate the questionnaire. After pretesting, necessary changes were made to correct the questionnaire so it could be sent out to all entrepreneurs. Clarifications were made to questions that the pretest participants had problems understanding. Based on the feedback

of the pretest, questions were added for evaluation of aspects such as square footage, accessibility of the business, investment into the business, and number of investors.

Selection of Respondents

The sample for this study was a convenience sample comprised of small apparel business owners throughout the U.S. In order to show a better range of respondents, the researcher contacted participants from all regions of the United States. A list of entrepreneurs was derived from personal and professional contacts in the apparel industry, internet searches, industry websites, internship experiences, and keyword searches on several search engines. Key words such as fashion designers, apparel boutiques, and bridal boutiques were used in CitySearch and Google. Some contacts were willing to participate and produce other possible respondents. Respondents primarily consisted of apparel designers and retail boutique owners. Though this study did consist of a convenience sample, the contacts were from a broad geographical area and from many different areas within the apparel industry.

Collection of Data

Initially, 371 apparel entrepreneurs were contacted through the internet and asked to be part of this research study. After many undeliverable e-mails, a new group of contacts were made and a total of 394 e-mails were sent out. The researcher anticipated a response of 20 percent or 79 responses, however this did not happen. This study had a low response of 33 entrepreneurs resulting in an 8.375 percent response rate.

An initial email which outlined the study, purpose of the research, deadline date, and link to the survey was sent to each of the potential respondents. A hyperlink was

attached to the e-mail in which the apparel entrepreneur, upon accepting terms of the study, was prompted to click on and begin answering the questionnaire. By submitting the survey online, the entrepreneur was able to answer the questionnaire at his or her own convenience. Once submitted, the data was saved in an online database.

Each survey was anonymous and confidential; a number corresponding to completed surveys was given as an indicator for the researcher. This allowed the researcher to track the responses and keep completed surveys in order.

Four days after the initial contact, the researcher sent a reminder email containing the hyperlink and deadline. The reminder email expressed an understanding for the entrepreneurs' busy schedule and showed appreciation for assisting the researcher in this study. Each contact with the entrepreneur was personalized and the researcher tried to be sensitive to the entrepreneur's busy schedule. This method of contact should have ensured an increase in response rate. However, this method did not produce as high of a response as it should have. The low response could have been because of SPAM filters blocking the email or the length of the survey.

Method of Analysis

Analysis of the data began by coding all of the quantitative data and inputting it into SPSS, a statistical supportive package. Each question in SurveyMonkey was coded with a number relating to every possible answer or phrase. The codes for the personal characteristics and success scales were anchored by (1) 'strongly disagree' and (5) 'strongly agree'. The categories were also labeled in relation to the statement. For the success scale, the perceived career achievement statements were labeled PCA1, PCA2

and PCA3. Every statement within the scales was similarly categorized. For example, if the entrepreneur answers 'strongly disagree' (5) to "I always evaluate consequences before doing something important", the answer would be coded under the category of risk taking (RT1) with a value of (5). This means the entrepreneur is a high risk taker because they answered strongly disagree. Each question and statement were coded in a similar fashion.

Qualitative data was coded in a similar fashion to the quantitative. New codes were made for answer categories when an open ended question was asked or if the entrepreneur answered something in the "other" box of a question. Answers and statements were evaluated and coded by categories of similar answers.

Due to low reliability of the personal characteristics scale, the original plan to correlate success with personal characteristics could not happen. The process of analysis included a coding system for the answers and making new codes for answers in the "other" box. After completion of coding the answers, the results were analyzed in the statistical supportive package, SPSS. The data was analyzed through tabulating response and percentage of the entrepreneurs, frequencies, and descriptive statistics.

IV. DATA PRESENTATION AND RESULTS

The data in this chapter was obtained from online questionnaires completed by 33 apparel entrepreneurs. The findings were based on their answers to five-point Likert-type scales and open ended questions. Three main themes were addressed in the analysis: personal characteristics, success, and business planning.

Description of the Sample

A convenience sample was drawn from apparel entrepreneurs throughout the United States. Thirty-three of the 394 entrepreneurs responded to the online questionnaire which was anonymous and confidential. A response rate of only 8.375% was achieved for this study. Apparel entrepreneurs, within design and retail categories, were selected as the sample for the questionnaire.

Analysis of Demographics

Seven statements measured demographic characteristics for this research. Characteristics included current age, gender, age upon opening their business, ethnicity, education, and location of the business. A series of questions about the business format, type of business, main product or service of business, years the business has been open, number of current employees, square footage, and hours worked were asked to find

frequencies in the data. Questions about previous business ventures, business plans, evaluation of finances, and number of investors or outside personnel were also asked to measure frequencies between each business.

Gender, Age, and Ethnicity

A majority of the sample, 66.7% (22) were female and 33.3% (11) were male entrepreneurs. Age of respondents ranged from 18-66 years. The majority of entrepreneurs were in the age range of 26-29 years of age (18.8%) followed by 30-33 years of age (15.6%). For a breakdown of age ranges, see Table 3. The entrepreneur's age upon opening their business was also recorded. Four respondents were 21 years of age or younger, thirteen were from the ages 22 to 25, seven were ages 29 to 32, six were 43 years of age to 49 years, and three did not answer. For a breakdown of ages upon opening their current venture. see Table 3. Thirty of the respondents (90.9%) were Caucasian, two were African- American (6.1%) and one respondent was Indian (3.0%).

Table 3
Current Age and Age upon opening in Percentages

Current Age	Valid Percent	Open Age	Valid Percent
17		17	3.3
18-21	3.1	18-21	10
22-25	6.2	22-25	43.3
26-29	18.8	26-29	3.3
30-33	15.6	30-33	20
34-37	6.2	34-37	3.3
38-41	9.4	38-41	3.3
42-45	9.4	42-45	3.3
46-49	6.2	46-49	10
50-53	6.2	50-53	
54-57	3.1	54-57	
62-65	6.2	62-65	
66+	9.4	66+	

Note. Numbers in the table are percentages of respondents that gave the corresponding answer.

Education

All respondents but three (N=30) have completed some college or higher. The three that did not respond to the education question account for 10%. Eight (26.7%) of the respondents completed at least some college, 16 respondents completed a Bachelor's degree (53.3%), and three (10%) completed a Masters Degree.

Statistical Analysis

Data for this research was entered into SPSS 16.0 for Windows to determine frequencies, percentages, means, modes, reliability, and standard deviations of apparel entrepreneurs, personal characteristics, perceived success, and financial information.

Frequencies and percentages were summarized for the demographic and business questions.

Summary Statistics of Measures

Demographics were characterized through this process, as well as success of the entrepreneur, and their personal characteristics. The study also included research done on the business, the business plan, and the finances of the business. In the following section, the researcher described each of the scales and the resulting data. The original intent was to correlate personal characteristics to success; however due to low reliability among the personal characteristics scale, this objective could not be met. Resulting data from the study did find applicable frequencies among the group of entrepreneurs.

Personal Characteristics

RQ 1. What are personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneurs?

In response to research question one, ambition, discipline, positive attitude, innovation, and calculated risk taking were personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneurs. Table 4 shows the agreement among entrepreneurs to each of the personal characteristics. The description in Table 4 either shows that yes the respondents had the specific characteristic, no, they did not, or that there was no conclusive evidence. As noted in Table 4, the data showed that the majority of respondents had the ambition, discipline, positive attitude, innovation, and risk taking characteristics. There was no conclusive evidence that could say if the respondents had the locus of control and self-efficacy characteristics.

Table 4
Agreement to Personal Characteristics

Personal	Positive	Negative	Overall
Characteristic			
Locus of Control	No.	No.	No conclusive evidence
Ambition	Yes. More than 50% agreement for each statement.	No.	A mid level of respondents considered ambitious.(50% or more were in agreement).
Self-efficacy	No.	No.	No conclusive evidence.
Discipline	Yes. More than 80% agreement in 2 statements and 60% agreement in 1.	No.	A high level of discipline was found among respondents
Positive Attitude	Yes. More than 70% agreement for each statement.	No.	High positive attitude.
Innovation	Yes. 60- 90% agreement to 3 statements	No.	Highly Innovative.
Risk Taking	Yes. More than 50% take calculated risks, but are not extreme risk takers.	No. Not extreme risk takers, but most like some risk.	Calculated Risk Takers.

Note. Scales used to measure these personal characteristics had low reliability as a whole, but agreement was measured by frequencies to make this table.

Individual Measurements of Personal Characteristics

Personal characteristics were measured by a five-point Likert-type scale, which consisted of 25 statements to measure. Respondents could answer from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), for a maximum score of 125 and a minimum score of 25 for the entire scale. The scale consisted of seven constructs including locus of control, ambition, self-efficacy, positive attitude, discipline, innovation, and risk taking. After correcting for directionality in the questions, the personal characteristics were measured as individual sets. The following tables (Table 5 thru Table 11) include a summary of the responses to the measure of personal characteristics. Responses to the Personal Characteristics questions are abbreviated as follows: Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Neither (N), Agree (A), and Strongly Agree (SA). Due to a low reliability among the personal characteristics scale, each characteristic will be reported as frequencies and means.

Locus of control. Locus of Control was measured by five statements which had a mean of 16.9310 and the average response was 3.3862 meaning more respondents agreed than disagreed. However, Table 5 shows that a large number of responses were in the (N) Neither category. Since a response of (N) equals 3 the average response of 3.3862 could be misinterpreted with agreement. Inconsistency of the scale was reported with a statistical variance of 5.995. There was also a standard deviation of 2.44848. For the scale to be considered reliable, the Cronbach's Alpha should have been .70 or higher. Reliability for the scale was very low; Cronbach's Alpha was .272 for five items.

For the sample in this study, 58.1% of apparel entrepreneurs agreed with the statement *-I think, therefore I will* and (29%) disagreed with the statement that *they have total control over their own life*. A very large number (51.6%) agreed that *everything happens for a reason*, and 32.3% strongly agree with the same statement. Therefore, over 83.9% are in agreement to things happen for a reason rather than controlling their own destiny.

Table 5
Locus of Control Measure with Percentages of Respondents Answers

Locus of Control Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
In a stressful situation, I am always at ease.	3.4	31.0	37.9	20.7	6.9
I think, therefore I will.		6.5	25.8	58.1	9.7
I do not manage stress well.	9.7	48.4	19.4	19.4	3.2
I have total control over my life.	6.5	29	32.3	25.8	6.5
Everything happens for a reason.	6.5	6.5	3.2	51.6	32.3

Note. Numbers in the table are percentages of respondents that gave the corresponding answer.

Ambition. This study concluded that ambition had a mean of 10.5862 out of a total possible number of 15. An average of 3.5287 was recorded, meaning a high number of the entrepreneurs could be considered ambitious. In response to the research question, ambition is among personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneurs. Inconsistency was

reported with a variance of 3.823, and a standard deviation of 1.95516 within its three items that made the measure. Within this measure, reliability among the three ambition statements was .216, also very low.

Table 6
Ambition Measure with Percentages of Respondents Answers

Ambition	SD	D	N	A	SA
I must be the best at everything I do.	6.9	24.1	17.2	41.4	10.3
I can do anything.		16.1	25.8	38.7	19.4
I am very competitive.		12.9	16.1	48.4	22.6

Note. Numbers in the table are percentages of respondents that gave the corresponding answer.

This study concluded that in each case more than 50% of the entrepreneurs were very ambitious. When stating their agreement to the statement *I must be the best at everything I do*, 41.4% of entrepreneurs agreed to the statement, and another 10.3% strongly agreed. Similarly, more than 50% of respondents were in agreement to the statement *I can do anything*; 38.7% agreed and 19.4% strongly agreed. The highest level of agreement came from the statement *I am very competitive*, where 48.4% agreed to the statement and 22.6% strongly agreed.

Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy of apparel entrepreneurs had a mean of 8.7097 with the highest number able to be 15. The average was 2.9032 therefore there was an average of neither disagreement nor agreement. In response to the research question, there was no conclusive evidence to the self-efficacy characteristics. Therefore, self-efficacy could not be considered a prominent characteristic among apparel entrepreneurs.

Though there was not a substantial amount of agreement to the self-efficacy scale, many of the entrepreneurs (71%) did not agree with the statement *I often fall short of my goals*. Though there was not a high self-efficacy among apparel entrepreneurs, they also did not believe they would necessarily fall short of their goals often. There was a small variance of 2.946, and a standard deviation of 1.71646. The reliability among self-efficacy was only .373.

Table 7
Self-Efficacy Measure with Percentages of Respondents Answers

Self- Efficacy	SD	D	N	A	SA
I excel in everything I do.		29.0	35.5	35.5	
I have goals which I always achieve.		29.0	29.0	35.5	6.5
I often fall short of my goals.		71.0	16.1	9.7	3.2

Note. Numbers in the table are percentages of respondents that gave the corresponding answer.

In response to the statement *I have goals which I always achieve*, 35.5% responded in agreement and 6.5% strongly agreed to the statement. Though the amount of entrepreneurs that agreed with the statement did not equal half, the remaining

entrepreneurs did not necessarily disagree with the statement. Twenty-nine percent of entrepreneurs were in disagreement with the statement and another 29% were neutral in their opinion. Therefore, the strongest response came from an agreement category.

A reverse coded statement was made to solidify the entrepreneurs' opinion of self-efficacy. To the statement *I often fall short of my goals*, 71% of entrepreneurs were in disagreement. Only 16.1% were neutral to the statement, 9.7% agreed to falling short of their goals and 3.2% strongly agreed to the statement. Twenty-nine percent of entrepreneurs believed they do not necessarily always achieve their goals. However, only 12.9% believed they *fall short of their goals*. To the statement *I excel in everything I do*, 35.5% of entrepreneurs agreed, 29% disagreed, and 35.5% reported they neither agreed nor disagreed to the statement. When weighing agreement to disagreement on the construct, 6.5% more entrepreneurs were in agreement. There was more self-efficacy among respondents. However the percentages are much less than all other personal characteristics.

Positive Attitude. Positive attitude of apparel entrepreneurs had a mean of 7.6452 meaning there was an average of 3.8226. The mean and average show agreeability among entrepreneurs having a positive attitude. In response to the research question, positive attitude is among the personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneurs. With both statements that measured positive attitude, there was more than 70% of respondents in agreement to having a positive attitude. There was a small variance of 2.303, and a standard deviation of 1.51764. The reliability was .527 Cronbach's Alpha.

Table 8
Positive Attitude Measure with Percentages of Respondents Answers

Positive Attitude	SD	D	N	A	SA
The glass is half full.		9.7	16.1	51.6	22.6
I always think the best case scenario.		16.1	9.7	54.8	19.4

Note. Numbers in the table are percentages of respondents that gave the corresponding answer.

Having a positive attitude can allow the entrepreneur to complete goals towards their success. In response to the statement *The glass is half full*, 51.6% agreed and 22.6% of entrepreneurs strongly agreed. Only 9.7% disagreed to this statement and 16.1% were neutral. This agreement level shows that more than 70% have a positive attitude based on the statements, *The glass is half full*. Entrepreneurs responded to the statement, *I always think the best case scenario*, with 54.8% in agreement and 19.4% that strongly agreed. On the other hand, there was 16.1% that disagreed to the statement and 9.7% were neutral in their response. Therefore, in both instances, more than 70% were in agreement and subsequently had a positive attitude.

Discipline. The discipline measurement among apparel entrepreneurs had a mean of 11.333 with the average response being 3.7776. With an average almost at four, there was more agreement to the statements about discipline than not. Therefore, in response to the research question, discipline can be considered a personal characteristic of apparel entrepreneurs.

The statements within the measurement show that there was agreement of more than 80% that the entrepreneurs were focused and reliable, therefore disciplined. There was a variance of 3.333, and a standard deviation of 1.82574. Among the three items in the scale, reliability was very low with a Cronbach's Alpha of only .293.

Table 9
Discipline Measure with Percentages of Respondents Answers

Discipline	SD	D	N	A	SA
I am extremely focused.		6.5	12.9	41.9	38.7
Any friend will tell you that I am most reliable.		6.5	9.7	64.5	19.4
I am always late.	30.0	30.0	20.0	13.3	6.7

Note. Numbers in the table are percentages of respondents that gave the corresponding answer.

In response to the statement *I am extremely focused*, 41.9% of entrepreneurs agreed and 38.7% strongly agreed. Only 6.5% disagreed to being extremely focused and 12.9% were neutral. *Any friend will tell you that I am most reliable* was the second statement in which 64.5% of respondents agreed and 19.4% strongly agreed to. Therefore, 83.9% of entrepreneurs in the study appear to be disciplined. With high dependability among most entrepreneurs, it is not surprising 60% of the same group were in disagreement to always being late. There were 30% that strongly disagreed and 30% that disagreed to the statement *I am always late*, another 20% were neutral, 13.3% agreed that they are always late and 6.7% strongly agreed to always being late.

Table 10
Innovation Measure with Percentages of Respondents Answers

Innovation	SD	D	N	A	SA
I have a very active imagination.		6.5	22.6	58.1	12.9
I follow trends closely.	6.5	32.3	19.4	38.7	3.2
I see past obstacles to possibilities.			6.5	80.6	12.9
I start new trends.		12.9	22.6	51.6	12.9

Note. Numbers in the table are percentages of respondents that gave the corresponding answer.

Innovation. Innovation among apparel entrepreneurs had a mean of 14.8387 resulting in a high average of 3.70945. This meant that more entrepreneurs believed they were innovative than not. In response to the research question, innovation is among the personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneurs. More than 90% of entrepreneurs thought they could *see past obstacles to possibilities* and more than 70% believe they *have a very active imagination*. Again, more entrepreneurs were considered to have the innovative personal characteristic than those that did not. There was a low standard deviation of 1.73391, and a variance of 3.006. Reliability was low with a Cronbach's Alpha of only .379.

In response to the statement, *I have a very active imagination*, 58.1% of entrepreneurs agreed and 12.9% strongly agreed. Only 6.5% were in disagreement and 22.6% were neutral to *having a very active imagination*. To the statement *I see past*

obstacles to possibilities, an astonishing 80.6% agreed and 12.9% strongly agreed. Only 6.5% were neutral to the statement, therefore, none of the entrepreneurs felt they were stopped when they run into an obstacle which is favorable to an innovative group. In response to the statement *I follow trends closely*, 38.7% were in agreement and 3.2% strongly agreed to the statement. Also, 19.4% were neutral, 32.3% disagreed, and 6.5% strongly disagreed. Interestingly enough, 12.9% strongly agreed and 51.6% agreed to the statement *I start new trends* where 22.6% were neutral and only 12.9% disagreed to the statement.

Risk Taking. The risk taking measure of apparel entrepreneurs had a mean of 17.2333, there was an average of 3.447% meaning more respondents in agreement than not. The variation of answers was higher than most of the other personal characteristics with a standard deviation of 5.78156, and a variance of 3.426. The reliability of the risk taking measure came back as .018 Cronbach's Alpha. In response to the statement, *I like to take calculated risks*, 61.3% agreed and 3.2% strongly agreed to the statement. Only 9.7% responded that they *do not like risk at all*.

In response to the statement *I always evaluate the consequences before doing something important*, 60% agreed, 6.7% strongly agreed, and only 20% disagreed. The ability to evaluate a risk is important and obviously high in many entrepreneurs since 66.7% said they *always evaluate the consequences to their actions*. In response to the statement, *I am always overly careful in every decision*, slightly more than half (51.6%) did not feel that they were overly careful, though 25.8% were in agreement to being overly careful.

Table 11
Risk Taking Measure with Percentages of Respondents Answers

Risk Taking	SD	D	N	A	SA
I always evaluate the consequences before doing something important.		20.0	13.3	60.0	6.7
I am always overly careful in every decision.	3.2	48.4	22.6	16.1	9.7
I am the most adventurous person I know.	3.2	48.4	32.3	6.5	9.7
I like to take calculated risks.	3.2	22.6	9.7	61.3	3.2
I do not like risk at all.	19.4	48.4	22.6	9.7	

Note. Numbers in the table are percentages of respondents that gave the corresponding answer.

Success

RQ2. Are certain personal characteristics predictors of entrepreneurial success?

Due to low reliability in the personal characteristics scales, the second research question could not be answered. No statistical correlations were made between success and personal characteristics.

RQ3. What are the most prominent personal characteristics among apparel entrepreneurs that perceive themselves successful?

Cross tabulations of high and low perceived success with high and low personal characteristics were conducted. The median split method was used to create high and low groups for each scale. For a breakdown of personal characteristics of high and low success, see Table 12.

As seen in Table 12, there was a greater number of low success respondents than high success. From the high success respondents, three respondents had high ambition, seven had high discipline, five had high positive attitude, four had high risk taking, three had high imagination, five had high locus of control, and five had high self efficacy. In response to research question three, positive attitude, imagination, and self-efficacy were the most prominent characteristics among those that perceived themselves successful. This was determined by the number within the high success category. Discipline had the highest concentrated amount of answers within high success.

Table 12
Cross Tabulation between High and Low Success and Personal Characteristics

		Low Success	High Success
Ambition	Low	13	4
	High	6	3
Discipline	Low	1	
	High	18	7
Positive Attitude	Low	7	3
	High	12	5
Risk Taking	Low	8	3
	High	11	4
Imagination	Low	10	5
	High	9	3
Locus of Control	Low	5	2
	High	14	5
Self-Efficacy	Low	10	3
	High	9	5

Success was measured by 18 items on a five-point, Likert-type scale. There was a maximum score of 90 and a minimum score of 18. The measure indicated five success factors abbreviated as follows: Social Recognition (SR), Perceived Career Achievement (PCA), Perceived Financial Attainment (PFA), Personal Satisfaction (PS), Social Status (SS), and Social Reputation (SR) (Lau et. al, 2007). For a breakdown of each factor, see Tables 13 thru 20. As noted in Table 13, most of the entrepreneurs from this study should be successful based on the success measurement. Qualitative data, collected through open ended questions, was also used to measure success for this study.

Entrepreneurs were asked to tell how they thought success was measured. Responses of how the entrepreneur measured success included: 30% said it is how much money a business makes, 33.3% said through personal satisfaction, 10% believe it is the time a business is open, 10% believe customer satisfaction is how to measure success, 10% said all of the reasons are a way to measure success, 3.3% believe the time a business is open, personal satisfaction and others opinion of the business is the best way to measure success, and 3.3% believe a combination of money the business makes and time the business has been open is the best way to measure success. When asking if the entrepreneur had encountered a point they had felt successful in their business, 86.2% responded yes and 13.8% felt they have yet to become successful.

Table 13
Agreement to Success Measurement Among Respondents

Success Measure	Positive	Negative	Overall
Social Recognition	Yes. More than 80% of respondents had good social recognition	No.	80% or more had good social recognition.
Perceived Career Achievement (PCA)	Yes. More than 90% agreed to a good PCA	No.	PCA among respondents was highly agreed upon.
Perceived Financial Attainment	Yes. Statements pertaining to present day finances had agreement of entrepreneurs at 60% or more	Yes. One statement shows 30% will have trouble surviving due to finances.	Present day, the entrepreneurs felt financially successful. However, 30% felt their financial future was negative, which could cause failure.
Personal Satisfaction	Yes. More than 60% are satisfied.	No.	The majority of entrepreneurs were satisfied with themselves as an entrepreneur and their business.
Social Status (SS)	Yes. More than 50% believe they have a certain social status as an entrepreneur.	Yes. 59.4% did not agree nor disagree to society's views of entrepreneur's social status.	There was a positive perception of their own SS. However, entrepreneurs do not believe society holds them to as high of a social status.
Social Reputation	Yes. 100% in agreement to good reputation	No.	More than 50% in all cases have good reputation.

Note. Scale used for this measurement was reliable and showed success among entrepreneurs.

Social recognition. Social Recognition among apparel entrepreneurs had a mean of 11.8438 and an average of 3.94793 meaning they mostly agreed. The majority of entrepreneurs thought they were socially recognized in their career. The variance of answers was 3.297, and standard deviation was 1.81587. The measure had a Cronbach's Alpha of .614 for reliability which was much better than the entire personal characteristics scale and close to reliable.

Table 14
Social Recognition Percentages of Answered Questions

Social Recognition	SD	D	N	A	SA
My career has been recognized by others.		3.1	12.5	50.0	34.4
I am well known in my area of business.		3.1	6.2	62.5	28.1
I am not well known in my industry.	6.2	46.9	28.1	15.6	3.1

On the basis of being recognized, entrepreneurs answered that 50% agreed and 34.4% strongly agreed to the statement, *my career has been recognized by others*. This means that 84.4% were in total agreement as a majority of *entrepreneurs are recognized within their community*. From the statement, *I am well known in my area of business*, 62.5% agreed and 28.1% strongly agreed to the statement. However, more entrepreneurs responded to being less recognized in the reverse coded statement, *I am not well known in my industry*, than those that disagreed to the statement, *I am well known in my area of business*. To the statement, *I am not well known in my industry* 15.6 agreed and 3.1% strongly agreed to not being well known.

Perceived career achievement. Apparel entrepreneurs responded to the PCA scale with an average of 4.33, meaning most agreed to the PCA items. In more than 90% of responses, there was a sense of accomplishment and achievement within their career. There was an extremely low variance of .002 since most of the respondents had the same agreement level to PCA. There was also a standard deviation of 1.54919. Cronbach's Alpha came back as a .739 when testing the reliability of the scale. Therefore, the PCA scale was considered reliable.

Table 15
Perceived Career Achievement Percentages of Answered Questions

Perceived Career Achievement	SD	D	N	A	SA
I have accomplished something valuable from my career.		3.1	3.1	43.8	50.0
I am satisfied with my career.		3.2		61.3	35.5
I have a sense of achievement in my career.			3.1	59.4	37.5

Note. Numbers in the table are percentages of respondents that gave the corresponding answer.

The perceived career achievement was measured by three statements: *I have accomplished something valuable from my career, I am satisfied with my career, and I have a sense of achievement in my career.* In response to each of these statements, more than 90% of entrepreneurs were in agreement with each of the statements. Also, 93.8%

agreed to having *accomplished something valuable from their career*, 96.8% were satisfied with their career, and 96.9% had a sense of achievement in their career.

Table 16
Cross tabulations of Perceived Career Achievement with how Apparel Entrepreneurs Measure Success

		Perceived Career Achievement	
		Low PCA	High PCA
Measurement of Success	Amount of money you make		8
	Personal satisfaction		10
	Time in business		3
	Customer satisfaction		3
	Money and time its open	1	
	All of the above	1	3

Cross tabulations were done based on the apparel entrepreneurs perceived career achievement with how they measure success. Eight of the respondents with high PCA measured success based on the amount of money the business made, 10 measured it based on personal satisfaction, three based it on the amount of time the business had been

open, and 3 on customer satisfaction. One low PCA respondent measured success based on time the business had been open and amount of money the business made. One low PCA respondent and three high PCA respondents measured success based on all of the above.

Perceived financial attainment. Apparel entrepreneurs had an average of 3.4731 and a mean of 10.4194, meaning there was more agreement than disagreement to having perceived financial attainment (PFA). More than 60% of entrepreneurs believed their business was financially stable and financially successful at the time of the study, but more than 30% also believed they would need more finances for the business to survive. Although the business was stable, for it to remain in business, entrepreneurs PFA of their future was not as high as their present PFA. The PFA variance of 2.652, and had a standard deviation of 1.62838. Reliability among the scale was low at .365 Cronbach's Alpha, therefore the PFA was not reliable.

Table 17
Perceived Financial Attainment Percentages of Answered Questions

Perceived Financial Attainment	SD	D	N	A	SA
I have a financially successful business.		3.1	25.0	56.2	15.6
My business is financially stable.		3.1	31.2	62.5	3.1
My business needs more finances to survive	9.7	22.6	32.3	29.0	6.5

Note. Numbers in the table are percentages of respondents that gave the corresponding answer.

The perceived financial attainment construct was measured by three statements: *I have a financially successful business*, *My business is financially stable*, and *My business needs more finances to survive*. The third statement was reverse coded and 22.6% disagreed and 9.7% strongly disagreed to the statement, 35.5% felt they need more finances for their business to survive. For the other statements, 65.6% *felt their business is financially stable* and only 3.1% disagreed to being financially stable. Of those surveyed, 71.8% felt *they have a financially successful*. In response to *My business needs more finances to survive* entrepreneurs had high agreeability, though in the statement *My business is financially stable*, there was also high agreeability.

Personal satisfaction. The Personal Satisfaction (PS) scale had a mean of 11.4000 and an average of 3.8 which shows agreement among respondents to personal satisfaction items. Most responses were in agreement with being satisfied with themselves and their business. More than 87% of respondents believe they are a successful entrepreneur, but only 62.5% would consider their business successful. There was a variance of 2.524, and a standard deviation of 1.58875. Reliability of the Personal Satisfaction scale was .668 Cronbach's Alpha which means the scale was close to reliable at .70.

Table 18
Personal Satisfaction Percentages of Answered Questions

Personal Satisfaction	SD	D	N	A	SA
I am a successful entrepreneur.			12.5	68.8	18.8
I consider my business successful.		6.2	31.2	59.4	3.1
My business is not yet successful.	16.7	56.7	23.3		3.3

Note. Numbers in the table are percentages of respondents that gave the corresponding answer.

Statements such as: *I am a successful entrepreneur*, *I consider my business successful*, and *My business is not yet successful* were used to measure success based on personal satisfaction of the entrepreneur. Also, 97.6% felt they were a successful entrepreneur, another 62.5% considered their business successful, and 73.4% disagreed to the reverse coded statement that their business is not yet successful.

Social status. Social status among apparel entrepreneurs had a mean of 10.4375 and an average of 3.4791, within the Neither category. There was a variance of 4.448, and a standard deviation of 2.10893. Cronbach's Alpha within the social status scale was .717, meaning the measurement was reliable.

Table 19
Social Status Percentages of Answered Questions

Social Status	SD	D	N	A	SA
As an employer, I have a certain social status.	3.1	6.2	25.0	53.1	12.5
Entrepreneurs have a certain social status.	3.1	3.1	34.4	43.8	15.6
Our society holds entrepreneurs to a higher social status.		18.8	59.4	12.5	9.4

Note. Numbers in the table are percentages of respondents that gave the corresponding answer.

Upholding a certain social status is something that could be a success factor among entrepreneurs. Three statements were given for entrepreneurs to rate their agreement on; *I have a certain social status*, *Entrepreneurs have a certain social status*, and *Our society holds entrepreneurs to a higher social status*. In all cases except social status based on society, the entrepreneurs were in high agreement that they have a certain social status. However, on the basis of *society holding entrepreneurs to a higher social status*, 59.4% were neutral and only 21.9% were in agreement.

Social Reputation. Social Reputation of the entrepreneur and his or her business was measured as a part of success. The mean was 10.7812 and an average of 3.5938. The scale had a variance of .757 as inconsistency within the scale. The social reputation scale was close to reliable with a Cronbach's Alpha at .614. There was 100% agreement with the statement *I have a good reputation in the business field*.

Table 20
Social Reputation Percentages of Answered Questions

Social Reputation	SD	D	N	A	SA
I have a good reputation in the business field.				37.5	62.5
I am not well known to my industry.	3.1	15.6	28.1	46.9	6.2
I am known to succeed.	9.4	40.6	28.1	21.9	

Note. Numbers in the table are percentages of respondents that gave the corresponding answer.

Similar to social recognition, social reputation speaks to how well known an entrepreneur is in their industry and the type of reputation they have as a business. An amazing 100% of the entrepreneurs felt that *they had a good reputation in the business*. But, 53.1% *felt that they are not well known in the business*, so they may feel they have a good reputation among those that know them but are not well known to those that have never been to their business. Ironically, only 21.9% *believed they were known to succeed*. The social reputation scale was fairly reliable at .614 Cronbach's Alpha.

Business Information

Demographic information about specific aspects of the businesses was asked and recorded, as well as the personal information about the entrepreneur.

Location of the business. Eleven respondents (34.4%) were from Alabama, four (12.5%) were from Florida, three (9.4%) were from California, two (6.2%) were from Washington as well as two from Texas and two from Georgia, and one entrepreneur each

responded from Colorado, Missouri, and Washington, D.C. (3.1% each). Six of the respondents did not answer the question.

Accessibility. Accessibility of the business was also measured in frequency of the entrepreneur's answers. When asked where the business was located, 54.5% (18) answered "In an easily accessible area (visible from highway or main road)". Seven (21.2%) had businesses that were somewhat easy to find but may be passed, three (9.1%) were home based businesses three (9.1%) were internet businesses, and two (6.1%) responded that their location was difficult to find.

Format and Structure. The most frequent response to the business format was 66.7% whom owned a storefront business, 12.1% owned a home based business, 9.1% had internet business, and 6.1% responded to owning a wholesale business. Among the format of the business, the structure of the business was most frequently (43.8%) a Sole Proprietorship, 28.1% owned a business in a Corporation, 15.6% owned a Limited Partnership, and 12.5% owned a Partnership.

Retail category. Eighteen point eight percent (18.8 %) of the respondents had a business that was specific to women's clothing, 12.5% owned a business in men's clothing, 9.4% focused in accessories, another 9.4% had an apparel and accessories business, and 40.6% owned a business in the "other" or "specialized" category which included responses such as "costumes and high end clothing of all types", "plus sized apparel", "Custom Printing", and "made to order swimwear".

Start type. The majority, 71% began a new business from a new idea. Five (16.1%) bought an existing business, two (6.5%) inherited a family business, and two (6.5%) opened a new business based on an existing idea.

Aspects of the Business

RQ4. *What aspects of business planning have entrepreneurs overlooked that may cause failure of the business?*

In response to the fourth research question, various aspects of business planning and financial planning have been overlooked by many apparel entrepreneurs. The overlooked aspects were business planning, financial planning, employee maintenance, time (hours worked in the venture and time it would take to start having cash flow) , sizing within the industry (size variations between clothing brands and size of the consumer), and taxes (planning to pay taxes). There was an emphasis in the lack of financial planning. More than the planning aspects, low success entrepreneurs have overlooked having a board of advisors, financial advisors, and lawyers. The following sections on the business plan are descriptions of the business plan, underestimated aspects of business, and planning of apparel entrepreneurs.

Table 21 is a breakdown of entrepreneurs that utilized outside professional help, such as financial advisors, mentors, and lawyers, upon start up. Figure 2 shows the percentage of respondents who did or did not have each plan. When asked if the entrepreneurs had a board of advisors, 23.3% said no and 76.7% responded yes.

When evaluating a business and the entrepreneur, experience is often important. More often than not, an entrepreneur's first business fails and subsequent businesses are

the successful ones. In the case of this research, only 23.3% have owned a business prior to their current venture and 76.7% have never owned a prior business. Among the 23.3% who owned a business prior to this venture, only 6.1% are still open. This means seven entrepreneurs owned a business and only two of those businesses are still open. With less than a 70% success rate, the current business could be the “unsuccessful” venture for many of these entrepreneurs.

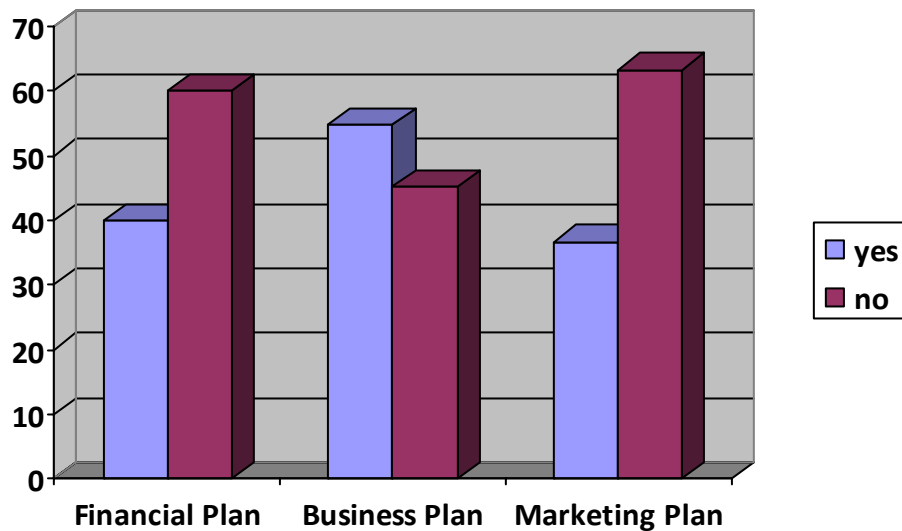


Figure 2. *Percentage of respondents who had each plan.*

Table 21
Start up Plan and Advisors

	Yes	No
Financial Advisors	26.7	73.3
Lawyers	43.3	56.7
Employees	50.0	50.0
Mentor(s)	46.7	53.3
-in apparel industry	36.8	63.2
Business Plan	54.8	45.2
Financial Plan	40	60
Exit Strategy	13.3	86.7
Marketing Plan	36.7	63.3
Trend Forecast	24.1	75.9

Note. Numbers in the table are a percentage of the answers that respondents gave to statements.

Board of Advisors

Though an entrepreneur can be multi-talented and business savvy, a Board of Advisors is an essential piece to a healthy and successful business. They aid in keeping the business on track with the business and financial plan. In this study, when asked if the entrepreneurs had a board of advisors, 23.3% said no and 76.7% responded yes.

Legal and financial advisors. There are advantages and disadvantages to each business structure option. As mentioned in the review of literature, understanding each option and measuring choices with the correct legal and accounting advice is most beneficial for the entrepreneur. Therefore, the researcher evaluated how many of the entrepreneurs actually planned out their business with this advice. Surprisingly, more than half (56.7%) of entrepreneurs said they did not have lawyers upon opening their business, and an even larger number (73.3%) did not have financial advisors.

Business Plans

For this research, the types of business planning options that were investigated included the start up plan, business plan, other advisors, and an exit strategy. Upon opening their business, 46.7% of entrepreneurs had a mentor and 36.8% of the mentors were in the apparel industry. Surprisingly, only 54.8% of entrepreneurs had a written business plan upon opening their business. Almost half, 45.2%, did not have a business plan. Of those that said yes to having a business plan, 45.8% actually re-evaluated the plan and 50% have not re-evaluated their business plan since opening. When asked how often they re-evaluated their business plan, 46.4% said monthly, 21.4% said every 2-3 months, and 14.3% re-evaluated their business plan every 2 or more years.

Only 40% of entrepreneurs had a financial plan and only 13.3% had an exit strategy to the business. Having a fund for marketing the business is another vital part of being successful. For this study, 36.7% of respondents had a marketing plan. Only 24.1% of entrepreneurs indicated having trend forecasts for their business.

For a breakdown of high success and low success in relation to business planning, see Table 22. Success was based on the median of the success scale measurement. A division of high and low success was based on numbers above the median for high and below the median for low success. Fifteen entrepreneurs with low success answered no to having financial advisors and four said yes. Eleven low success respondents had a financial plan and eight did not have one. Two low success respondents had a board of advisors and 17 did not. Eleven of the low success respondents had a business plan and eight of them did not. Eleven had a mentor and eight did not. Ten did not have lawyers upon opening their business, and nine did not have a marketing plan.

Table 22
Cross Tabulations of Business Planning with High and Low Success

		Low Success	High Success
Financial Advisors	Yes	4	2
	No	15	6
Financial Plan	Yes	11	8
	No	8	
Board of Advisors	Yes	2	
	No	17	9
Business Plan	Yes	11	4
	No	8	4
Mentor	Yes	11	2
	No	8	6
Lawyers	Yes	9	1
	No	10	7
Marketing Plan	Yes	10	
	No	9	8

Longevity. Five businesses have been open for one year or less, eleven have been open from 4-8 years, three have been open from 11-20 years, three have been open 21-28 years and three have been open more than 30 years. Eight of the respondents did not answer this question.

Number of employees. The amount of employees ranged from interns as needed to 50 employees. Nineteen respondents had less than ten employees, five responded to having 10 to 15 employees, one responded to having 21 employees, one had 50 employees, and three used interns as needed or did not respond. See Table 23 for a breakdown of employees. Four respondents did not answer this question.

Employee maintenance. A small business is considered to have less than 500 employees. This research found that 72.4% of the surveyed apparel entrepreneurs had 10 or fewer employees. Since most of the businesses (72.4%) operate with less than 10 employees, and the remaining businesses (27.6%) still had less than 50 employees, understanding challenges with employees was evaluated. Five (17.2%) responded that maintaining employees was extremely challenging for them, 34.5% said it was challenging, 6.9% said maintaining employees was neither challenging nor extremely easy, 9 did not answer, and the remaining 17.2% of respondents said maintaining employees was easy. More than half of the entrepreneurs (51.7%) had maintaining employees as a challenge of theirs.

Table 23
Number of Employees

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	4	10.5	13.8	13.8
2	4	10.5	13.8	27.6
3	2	5.3	6.9	34.5
4	4	10.5	13.8	48.3
5	2	5.3	6.9	55.2
6	1	2.6	3.4	58.6
7	2	5.3	6.9	65.5
10	2	5.3	6.9	72.4
12	1	2.6	3.4	75.9
13	1	2.6	3.4	79.3
15	1	2.6	3.4	82.8
21	1	2.6	3.4	86.2
50	1	2.6	3.4	89.6
Other	3	7.9	10.3	100

Square footage. Years of business and number of employees were not the only thing that measured the size of the business. Square footage of the selling or workspace was asked in the survey. Entrepreneurs responded with answers ranging from 200 square feet to 12,000 square feet.

The size of the actual work area was a question asked to the respondents. Six (19.4%) respondents chose not to answer or answered zero because they have an internet based business. Three (9.7%) have 200-500 square feet of workspace. Three (9.7%) have 700- 800 square feet, 6.5% responded with 1,000-1,200 square feet of workspace, 13% responded 1,600-1,800 square feet, 19.4% ranged between 2,000 and 6,000 square feet,

9.7% worked in 5,000 to 7,500 square feet and 6.4% ranged from 12,000 to 14,000 square feet of workspace. Therefore, the majority (45.4%) of respondents (disregarding the 15.8% that did not answer) own businesses with 1,000 to 6,000 square feet of workspace.

Retail price point. Entrepreneurs were asked to rate the price level of their business based on the price of the clothing in their industry. Eleven (36.7%) responded as having a high price level, 43.3% had a moderate price level, 6.7% described the price of their clothing as a mix of moderate and budget, 10% were budget priced clothing, and one (3.3%) did not answer.

Retail markup. Initial mark-up of merchandise varied from business to business, and sometimes within the business depending on the item sold. Four (13.8%) respondents use a keystone markup or 50% markup from the wholesale cost, 10.3% ranged from 55% to 65% markup, 10.3% responded to using a 70% to 80% markup, and 13.8% respondents use a 100% markup.

Financial contributions to business opening. Entrepreneurs were asked about the initial financial contribution in order to start their business. Many of the business owners had help to finance their ventures. Table 24 is a breakdown of personal investment into the business. About 3.1% of the business owners utilized credit card advances, 3.1% went to business lenders, 6.2% received bank loans. Initial investors also included parents (46.9%), other family members (28.1%), and friends (15.6%). Initial investment in each business ranged from \$1,000 to \$1 million, as well as some that did not answer. See Table 25 for a breakdown of initial dollars invested.

Table 24

Initial Investment of Personal Finances

<i>% own money invested</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Valid percent</i>	<i>Cumulative percent</i>
0/ No answer	13	41.9	41.9
15	1	3.2	45.2
25	1	3.2	48.4
Less than half	1	3.2	51.6
50	3	9.7	61.3
75	1	3.2	64.5
80	2	6.5	71
95	1	3.2	74.2
100	8	25.8	100

Table 25

Total Initial Investment Amount

<i>Investment in \$</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Cumulative Percent</i>
NA/ No answer	8	27.6	27.6
1,000	2	6.9	34.5
2,000-\$5,000	2	6.9	41.4
10,000-15,000	3	10.3	51.7
20,000-25,000	2	6.9	58.6
30,000-40,000	3	10.3	69.0
50,000	2	6.9	75.9
95,000	1	3.4	79.3
150,000	2	6.9	86.2
200,000	2	6.9	93.1
250,000	1	3.4	96.6
1 million	1	3.4	100

Underestimates

Ironically enough, when asked what the entrepreneurs underestimated upon opening the business 40.7% responded that finances were the number one thing they underestimated with 11.1% underestimated finances and time. Also, when asked to rate if finances were a challenge on a 1-5 scale of extremely challenging to not challenging at all, 27.6% rated finances as extremely challenging and 62.1% rated finances as challenging. The top three underestimated aspects can be found in Figure 3. For a breakdown of items apparel entrepreneurs underestimated upon opening their business see Table 26.

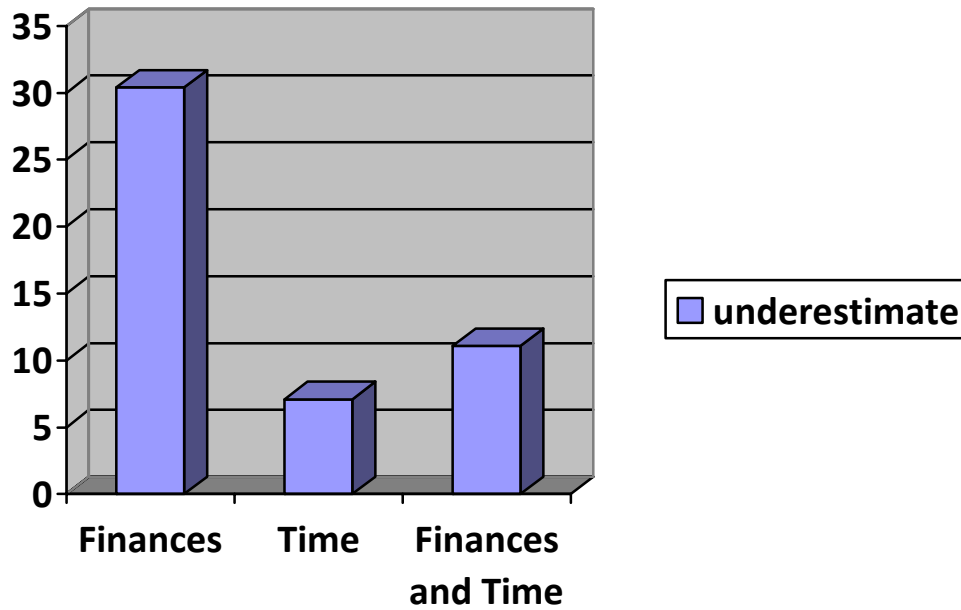


Figure 3. *Percentage of respondents who underestimated these aspects.*

Table 26
Underestimates in Business

Underestimate	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No Answer	1	3.7	3.7
Finances	11	40.7	44.4
Time	2	7.4	51.9
Finances and Time	3	11.1	59.3
Finances and Size of Clothing	1	3.7	70.4
Taxes	1	3.7	74.1
Purchasing	1	3.7	77.8
Manufacturing Minimums	1	3.7	81.5
Beginning Business	1	3.7	85.2
U.S. Market	1	3.7	88.9
Employees	1	3.7	92.6
No answer/ Nothing	1	3.7	96.3
Everything	1	3.7	100

Finances. As previously discussed, having a plan of finances and where every dollar goes is important to a smooth running business. Finances were the number one underestimated reason among 40.7% of entrepreneurs. Another 11.1% said finances and time is what they underestimated, and 3.7% underestimated finances and sizing of the clothing market.

Table 27 is a breakdown of entrepreneurs who followed a budget, somewhat followed a budget, or did not have a budget to follow. Cross tabulations consisted of how challenging the entrepreneurs ranked finances. Extremely challenging, Challenging, Neither, Not Challenging, and Extremely Easy were the possible ranks. Zero respondents said finances were extremely easy therefore it is not present in the table. The most prominent category was ranking finances as challenging (16 responses), eight respondents ranked finances extremely challenging, one ranked N/A, and one ranked finances not challenging. Crosswise in Table 27, three entrepreneurs had a budget and followed it, 15 only somewhat followed their budget, three did not have a budget, and one said they did not have a budget nor did they need one.

Table 27
Cross Tabulations of Financial Challenge with Following a Budget

		<u>FINANCES</u>				Total
		EXTREME CHALLENGE	CHALLENGE	N/A	NOT CHALLENGING	
<u>BUDGET</u>	YES. And I Follow It.	1	1	1	0	3
	Yes. Somewhat Follow It.	5	10	0	0	15
	NO. I Do Not Have One.	0	2	0	1	3
	No. But I Want One	1	3	0	0	4
	No. I Have No Need For One.	1	0	0	0	1
	Total	8	16	1	1	26

Time. Time was the second thing entrepreneurs said they underestimated upon opening their business. The amount of time an entrepreneur invests in his or her business can be remarkable. With many entrepreneurs working more than 40 hours a week (64.5% work 40-60 hours weekly), and still others working more than 60 hours (16.1% work 61-80 hours, and 6.5% spend more than 80 hours a week), they may have underestimated the time they would spend in their business.

Advertising. Advertising for a business is important to a business being successful. Respondents used a majority of advertising techniques from internet ads, e-mails, mail outs, or radio advertisements. Assumptions are made that every entrepreneur used word of mouth advertising because it is free, though some only used word of mouth for their advertising technique. Figure 4 includes techniques for advertising.

Advertising a business in the right way can benefit a business financially, as well as the reputation of the business- which is a measurement of success. Assumptions were made that the apparel entrepreneurs all had word of mouth as one type of advertising, which is out of their control. The opinion of their customers could be one of the most important aspects to the success of the business, having happy customer's means having loyal customers, and loyal customers keep a business going.

The research shows that internet, radio, news paper and other print ads, and television are all types of advertising the entrepreneurs participate in with the largest percentage using print ads. The largest amount (27.6%) of entrepreneurs participate in the previously mentioned types of advertising on a monthly or bi-weekly basis, meaning that 12 to 24 times a year their business is advertised.

Frequency of advertising was also measured where 13.8% did not respond, 17.2% said they advertise daily, 17.2% responded to weekly advertising or 3 times monthly, 27.6% advertise once or twice a month, 3.4% advertise quarterly, 6.9% advertise seasonally, and 13.8% advertise occasionally or once or twice a year.

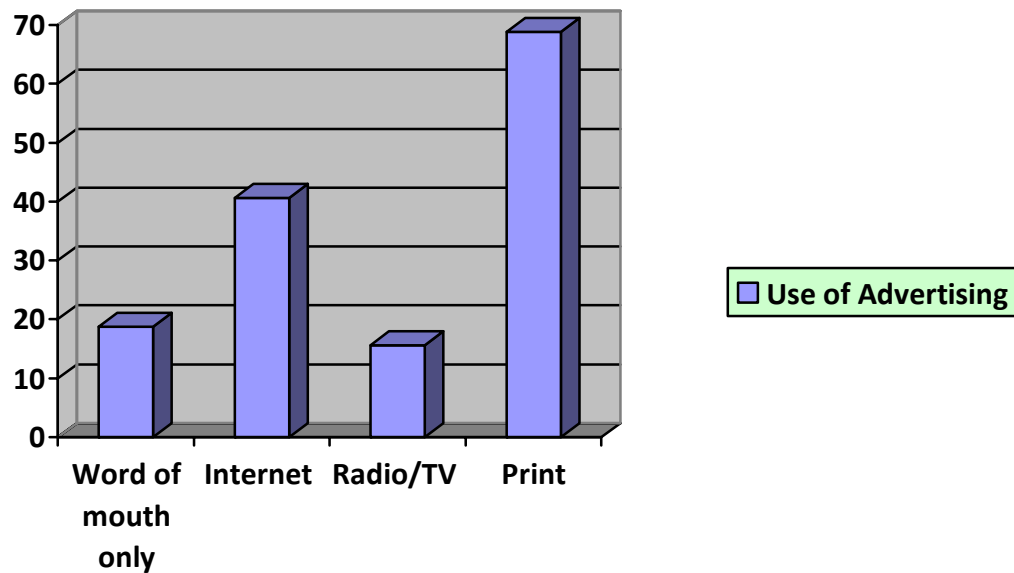


Figure 4. *Percentage of advertising techniques*

Note. Numbers are percentages of 'Yes' response to each advertising technique.

Affect on personal life. Finances and business plans are not the only part of a business. A business can affect an entrepreneur's personal life, family life, and freedom. Only 12.9% of respondents work less than 40 hours on an average weekly basis, 64.5% work 40-60 hours weekly, 16.1% work 61-80 hours, and 6.5% spend more than 80 hours a week working in their venture. With the amount of time many of the entrepreneurs work, the researcher wanted to know if their family life was affected and in which way. A

majority (67.9%), of the business owners responded that their family life is positively affected by the business, 14.3% said their business does not affect their family life at all, and 17.9% believe their business negatively affects their family life.

Summary: Business Planning

In conclusion, planning every aspect of a business is a crucial part of being a successful entrepreneur. If the entrepreneur has the business plan, financial plan, and a board of advisors, he or she is only partially on their way to success. By planning each aspect of the business, they should not underestimate important issues such as finances and time within the business. And, by having a mentor and board of advisors, the entrepreneur is more likely not to underestimate these things.

RQ5. Do apparel entrepreneurs have similar personal characteristics as entrepreneurs in other industries, made evident through past research?

Since the data on personal characteristics has already been stated in context to research question one, this research question will be addressed in the following chapter.

V. SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary of Sample

The purpose of this research was to explore the connection between an entrepreneur's personal characteristics, business planning, and the success of their business. This study profiled subjects in terms of demographics (age, ethnicity, business location, education, and gender), business type, personality type, and ideal of success. The sample consisted of 33 (22 female and 11 male) respondents from apparel design and retail categories.

Each of the 33 entrepreneurs responded to the internet-based questionnaire through SurveyMonkey. The questionnaire was made up of four sections including personal characteristics, two success sections, and a business planning section. The questionnaire consisted of four parts: the Business section (demographics, type of business, main product of service, business structure, investors in the business, etc.), two sections pertaining to Success, and a section on Personality Type. The questionnaire consisted of a success section and a personality section measured by a five point Likert-type scale. The scales were modified from past research (Lau et al., 2007; Merrett & Gruidl, 2000; Olson, 2000; Goodman, 1994; Bandura, 1986). General questions were also asked about the planning of the business, finances of the business, board of advisors, and time spent working in the business. These questions were evaluated by frequencies.

The instrument was used to collect qualitative and quantitative data within each of the sections in the survey. SPSS 16.0 software was used for data analysis of the responses.

Entrepreneurs within the study were primarily between the ages of 26-33 years and have had their current business had been open for the last four to five years. Upon opening their business, the majority (42.4%) were within the age of 21-25 years. The majority of entrepreneurs were Caucasian females located within the Southeast and had a Masters Degree or higher education.

Discussion

This research supports the concept that specific personal characteristics are prominent among entrepreneurs. Since the only found research on personal characteristics was from other industries, this study focused on entrepreneurs in the apparel industry. This research explored personal characteristics among apparel entrepreneurs and whether entrepreneurs in other industries have similar personal characteristics.

This study also supports the concept that a business owner should first start with a business plan. Overall findings were suggestive that success is not necessarily based on the characteristics of the entrepreneur, but that success is based on the planning behind the business.

Overall Findings

Upon review of the themes of success of apparel entrepreneurs a few overall findings emerged. Personal characteristics that were prominent in apparel entrepreneurs were identified. Other findings were aspects the entrepreneur underestimated, importance of business planning, having a board of advisors, and financial planning.

Personal Characteristics

RQ5. Do apparel entrepreneurs have similar personal characteristics as entrepreneurs in other industries, made evident through past research?

In response to research question number five, apparel entrepreneurs do have similar personal characteristics as those in other industries. Prominent characteristics among apparel entrepreneurs were evaluated through research question one. The characteristics included ambition, positive attitude, discipline, innovation, and calculated risk taking. In contrast of research conducted by Bandura (1986), Krueger (1998), and Olson (2000), on entrepreneurs in other industries, apparel entrepreneurs did not have high self-efficacy or locus of control.

Ambition. At more than 50%, there was a high level of agreement to the ambition characteristic among apparel entrepreneurs. In response to having high personal standards, goal intentions, and determination to accomplish ones goals, this study found that apparel entrepreneurs were similar to those in other industries (Olson, 2000). Seeking to be the best, being competitive, and having a sense of accomplishment were all pieces of the ambition characteristic that this study recognized. These findings support Olson's (2000) research on personal characteristics in an entrepreneurial setting. Having

ambition is important to accomplish entrepreneurial goals of opening and maintaining a business. Entrepreneurs with a high ambition characteristic evaluate and judge themselves on a much more difficult scale because of their goal to succeed (Olson, 2000). Likewise, the Small Business Administration (SBA) characterized successful entrepreneurs as having persistence, commitment, personal initiative, and a strong drive to achieve (Small Business Administration, 2007). Therefore, this study found that ambition was among personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneurs and was similar to those in other industries based on past research (Olson, 2000; Small Business Administration, 2007).

Positive attitude. The SBA's program office lists multiple similarities of successful entrepreneurs, including personal initiative, self-confidence, and strong drive to achieve, as well as many others that can be related to positive attitude of an entrepreneur (Small Business Administration, 2007). Findings for this study show a high positive attitude among apparel entrepreneurs. In response to research question one, positive attitude is among apparel entrepreneur's personal characteristics. This positive attitude characteristic could be because an entrepreneur needs to sell their business to others. They need to advertise themselves in every possible situation and they need to believe in what they are selling. If the entrepreneur has a positive attitude about their product they can more adequately sell the product to their customer. If the entrepreneur has a poor attitude, customers may hesitate to spend their money on something the designer or boutique owner does not even believe in.

Since the majority of apparel entrepreneurs had a high level of agreement to positive attitude, this study supports the SBA's (2007) statement about positive attitude. In response to research question five, positive attitude was found to be present among personal characteristics in the apparel industry and in other industries.

Discipline. Findings from this study show that discipline was a prominent characteristic among apparel entrepreneurs and those in other industries. A characteristic such as discipline allows the entrepreneur to follow and maintain their rules in order to maintain their goals. Discipline was a prominent personal characteristic among apparel entrepreneurs and those in other industries, thus supporting Finkekstein's (2006) article. Being a disciplined entrepreneur means they are focused and in control, a positive characteristic for one who owns their own business and needs to be their own boss. Two aspects of discipline were focus and control. An entrepreneur's ability to maintain their goals by following and upholding rules is part of discipline (Finkekstein, 2006). Therefore, ability to be reliable focused, and on time are aspects of discipline in which entrepreneurs in this study were measured by.

Discipline is probably a characteristic among entrepreneurs because of the lifestyle they live. An entrepreneur must be focused and task oriented because the success of their business is ultimately their responsibility. If the entrepreneur does not have order within their business, it could lead to chaos. In an industry where timing is everything, apparel entrepreneurs need to be disciplined in their work to complete projects in a timely manner. If there is no discipline, the designer or boutique owner may fall behind on a specific trend or style and, in turn, lose money.

Innovation. Findings from this study concluded that apparel entrepreneurs are similar to those in other industries with regards to innovation. Apparel entrepreneurs were found to be highly innovative. Whether opening a new business or buying an existing business from another, innovation is a characteristic revered among entrepreneurs. The ability to see something where others see nothing and to see past obstacles where many would stop are great aspects to innovation. Imagination helps innovation. Being in the business of fashion, it is important to follow trends closely and even more important to set trends. Findings from this research show that a nearly equal amount of entrepreneurs followed trends closely as those that did not follow trends. But a much larger number said *they start new trends*. The ability to start trends rather than just following them is a strong innovative characteristic.

These findings on innovation support the SBA's list of characteristics among entrepreneurs. The SBA's webpage included a statement that "two traits necessary for successful entrepreneurs are creativity and innovation" (U.S. Small Business Administration, 2007, p.2). Though no correlation with success was made for apparel entrepreneurs, findings did show that apparel entrepreneurs were creative and innovative. Innovation within the apparel industry is very important because designers need to come up with new styles every season. Being innovative is a way the designer keeps their customer and a way a boutique owner shows off the current trends. Proven by this study, apparel entrepreneurs are not laggards. They do not follow trends. They invent new styles. They start new trends.

Risk taking. Findings show that apparel entrepreneurs take risks at a calculated level. There was a spread of entrepreneurs that like to take high risks and those that did not like to take risks at all. For the most part, respondents were calculated risk takers, those that would take some risk but not to either extreme.

The risk taking tendency once noted among many entrepreneurs has been redefined as a personal characteristic among entrepreneurs where they do not take enormous risk in finance, business, or time; rather, they take calculated risks (Brockhaus, 1997). This agreement of risk taking proves Brockhaus (1997) correct in the interpretation that entrepreneurs are not high risk takers, but they do take risks in general, most likely taking calculated risks. Though they evaluate the consequences, many feel they are not overly careful.

Locus of control. Locus of control is one's actions in relation to the individual's internal control. Entrepreneurs holding a higher personal control accept responsibilities associated with their venture more willingly than individuals with a lower control (Olson, 2000). If a business owner perceives that he or she is in control of their self, they can be in control of their business situations thus making it easier to run their business and have a balanced flowing workplace. However, from the sample in this study, there was not any conclusive evidence that apparel entrepreneurs possessed a high locus of control.

Although the mean of the answers within locus of control statements showed agreement, upon review of the responses, a large number of answers were in the neither category. Since the majority of the statements showed neither agreement nor disagreement, locus of control was not considered a prominent personal characteristic in

apparel entrepreneurs. These findings were opposite of Olson's (2000) theory on locus of control. Therefore in response to research question one and five, locus of control was not a personal characteristic of apparel entrepreneurs, and not similar to those in other industries.

Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is one's perception of their ability to attain a goal. If the individual has specific business goals, then their self-efficacy is their perception of his or her ability to achieve that goal (Bandura, 1986; Krueger, 1998). Findings for this study showed that apparel entrepreneurs did not have a high self-efficacy. In response to research question one, there was no conclusive evidence that apparel entrepreneurs had high self-efficacy.

Although apparel entrepreneurs did not have high self-efficacy, the majority of entrepreneurs did not agree with the statement, *I often fall short of my goals*. The ability to excel to attain a goal is important in self-efficacy. Although apparel entrepreneurs felt they did not always attain their goals, they did not feel they fell short of them often. The findings for this study did not support Bandura's (1986) and Krueger's (1998) theory of self-efficacy. The findings also help answer research question five. Although entrepreneurs in other industries had high self-efficacy, apparel entrepreneurs did not. Furthermore, this research could not support Krueger's (1998) research, which indicated that high self-efficacy will in turn increase initiative and determination, thus consequently successful performance.

As a summary, in response to research question five, the personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneur were similar to those in other industries. Finklestein (2006), described entrepreneurs as having calculated risk taking, discipline and positive attitude personal characteristics. The same characteristics were also among those of apparel entrepreneurs. Apparel entrepreneurs had innovation, similarly to Goodman's (1994) article which related imagination or innovation to entrepreneurs. Although locus of control was a characteristic in other industries it was not in the apparel industry. Ambition was a characteristic of apparel entrepreneurs and those in other industries (Olson, 2000). Self efficacy was also not included in the personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneur, though it was a characteristic of other entrepreneurs. Therefore, self-efficacy and locus of control were the only characteristics that entrepreneurs in other industries had and apparel entrepreneurs did not have (Kruger & Brazeal, 1994; Bandura, 1986).

Finally, in response to the fifth research question of whether apparel entrepreneurs had similar characteristics as those in other industries, the answer is yes. Based on information from the SBA, similarities among successful entrepreneurs include persistence, commitment, personal initiative, and a strong drive to achieve as a few of the ambitious similarities (Small Business Administration, 2007). As this research shows, more than half of the entrepreneurs from this research do have strong personal characteristics related to success.

Personal Characteristics and Success

Research question one was included in the above discussion. Therefore, the following information is a discussion of the next relevant research question to personal characteristics.

RQ3. What are the most prominent personal characteristics among apparel entrepreneurs that perceive themselves successful?

Findings of this study show that discipline was the most prominent characteristic within high success. This finding was also supported in the answers for research questions one and five. Discipline has been found to be a prominent personal characteristic among apparel entrepreneurs, entrepreneurs in other industries, and among those in apparel who perceive themselves successful.

The next most prominent characteristics were positive attitude, imagination, and self-efficacy. Though on an individual scale, self-efficacy was not prominent in apparel entrepreneurs. Those that had high perception of success did have high self efficacy. This could mean that only the most successful entrepreneurs have high self-efficacy. Those that were less successful may be lacking self-efficacy as a personal characteristic. Therefore, this connection between high success and high self-efficacy was in support of Bandura (1986) and Krueger's (1998) theory. If the individual had specific business goals, then their self-efficacy was their perception of his or her ability to achieve that goal (Bandura, 1986; Krueger, 1998). The ability for high success entrepreneurs to achieve their goal through self-efficacy may be the division point of success and failure of apparel entrepreneurs.

Positive attitude and innovation are important personal characteristics for apparel entrepreneurs to have because of the industry and type of business they are in. Findings support that innovation and positive attitude relate highly to perception of success. If one has a positive attitude, they should have a high perception of success. If one had a negative attitude, it would be difficult for them to have a good perception of his or her success.

Success

Success among apparel entrepreneurs was measured by social recognition, perceived career achievement, perceived financial attainment, personal satisfaction, social status, and social reputation. Each area within success had a high agreeability among entrepreneurs. However, perceived financial attainment showed that entrepreneurs perceived themselves financially stable at the time, but they felt they would not be financially stable in the future.

Social recognition. Recognition within a social community is important in the success of an entrepreneur. Findings support research on social recognition as a factor of success by Lau et al.,(2007). Support of this research was because 90.6% of entrepreneurs within this study agreed that being well known in their area the business was a factor of success. The idea of social recognition was further supported by open ended questions on success. Qualitative data from this study also supports past research on social recognition as a success factor. Therefore, on the basis of social recognition, a majority of entrepreneurs rank high in social recognition.

Perceived career achievement. Perception of success and the achievements made in a career are also important to the success of a business. Therefore, there was an overwhelmingly high satisfaction in their career and the entrepreneurs ranked very high in perceived career achievement.

Perceived financial attainment. At the time of the survey, respondents reported that they had a perceived financial attainment (PFA). This supports past research that if the entrepreneur perceives their business as financially stable, they are more likely to be successful. However, in response to *My business needs more finances to survive*, apparel entrepreneurs had low PFA. Reasons why apparel entrepreneurs had high current PFA, but lower PFA when looking into the future could be numerous reasons. The current economic situation could worry the respondent. Though financially successful at the current point, they could feel stress about the state of the economy, rising prices, or uncertainty of upcoming bills or projects. Respondents may have agreed to both statements because they felt that they are currently stable. However for their business to operate in the future, they feel they need more finances to stay open and competitive. Or, they may see some financial road blocks or a reason that the current finances may not last into the future. Being financially stable is critical to the success of a business.

Personal satisfaction. Success of a business is also measured by personal satisfaction of the business's success. Findings of this study prove that the majority of entrepreneurs have personal satisfaction in the success of their business. Apparel entrepreneurs were also satisfied with themselves as entrepreneurs. However, there was a 25% difference among those who were satisfied with themselves as a business owner, but

not necessarily satisfied with the success of their business. This lower perception of business success could be due to any other aspect of success such as finances, social status, or social recognition. It also could mean that the entrepreneur was satisfied with himself or herself as a business owner, but he or she just did not find the business as successful as they imagined.

Social status. Individually, the entrepreneurs ranked themselves with a high social status. But, many disagreed with the statement that society holds them to the same social status as they hold themselves. Though entrepreneurs feel with all of the hard work they do, they personally have a high social status. However, they feel that society does not always see entrepreneurs with as high of social status as they see themselves. Based on responses, society does not hold apparel entrepreneurs to high social rankings unless they are a very successful entrepreneur, well known in the community, or with great wealth.

Social reputation. Unlike research conducted by Lau et al., (2007), social reputation had mixed responses. There was 100% agreement to the statement *I have a good reputation in the business field*. Such a strong response of agreement to the statement about social reputation would mean that apparel entrepreneurs are successful based on their social reputation. However, more than 50% believe they are not well known in the apparel industry. On the basis of reputation and if they are not well known, this could decrease perception of their entrepreneurial success. Another interesting factor was that more than 50% answered negatively to the statement *I am known to succeed*, and another 28.1% answered neither agree nor disagree to the statement. On the basis of

social reputation, these answers do not support the study conducted by Lau et al., (2007), nor do they prove that apparel entrepreneurs are successful based on their social reputation. The reason behind these findings could be that they have had a failed business in the past, or that they are just beginning a new business. Though most of the entrepreneurs felt they were successful and have achieved career success, they may feel their reputation is not as well known as they would like.

Summary: Success

For the most part, entrepreneurs felt that they are successful based on the measurement of Social Recognition, Perceived Career Achievement, Perceived Financial Attainment, Social Status and Personal Satisfaction. The Social Reputation part of the scale did not have as high agreement as the rest. Therefore, based on personal characteristics and success, discipline, positive attitude, imagination, and self-efficacy were the most prominent personal characteristics of apparel entrepreneurs who perceived themselves successful.

Business Planning

RQ4. *What aspects of business planning have entrepreneurs overlooked that may cause failure of the business?*

Throughout this research, success has been measured in relation to personal characteristics, however a reoccurring theme of lack of business planning was prominent among apparel entrepreneurs. Part of the success scale consisted of perceived financial attainment, but many of the entrepreneurs did not have a financial plan upon opening their business. An even larger majority responded that finances were the number one

think they underestimated upon opening their business. And finally, many did not have a board of advisors, including financial advisors.

In response to the fourth research question, various aspects of business planning and financial planning have been overlooked by many apparel entrepreneurs. The overlooked aspects were business planning, financial planning, employee maintenance, time, sizing within the industry, and taxes. There was an emphasis in the lack of financial planning. More than the planning aspects, low success entrepreneurs have overlooked having a board of advisors, financial advisors, and lawyers. The following sections on the business plan are descriptions of the business plan, underestimated aspects of business, and planning of apparel entrepreneurs.

Having a business plan and financial plan are beneficial to entrepreneurs upon opening a business so the business can survive and work successfully the way it was planned to. Planning the exit of the business is also an important detail. The entrepreneur should plan if they are successful would they consider selling their business for a profit, or if unsuccessful how they would liquidate their assets within the business before closing. Possibly, the entrepreneurs that were apparel designers were those that received the trend forecast since they are the ones designing the apparel for the trends of each season. However, it is critical that the entrepreneurs in retail have knowledge of the trends for the sake of products selling within their business. Planning ahead and having an idea of what the business would and should run like is important to staying open.

Therefore, one could assume those having trouble with finances and the challenges of money within their business may have known a little more if they would

have written a financial plan and followed it closely. As noted in Figures 2 and 3, the amount of those that did not have a business plan and financial plan were similar to those that had problems with underestimating finances and time.

Board of advisors. Seventeen of the low success entrepreneurs did not have a board of advisors. This very large amount of respondents could be in the low success category because of their lack of business planning. As stated, “without exception, every successful business owner I've worked with has talked to about how having trusted advisors is necessary for success” (Finkekstein, 2006, p.2). Based on Finkekstein’s, (2006) statement, the entrepreneurs without a board of advisors will not be successful.

A board of advisors helps lessen the risk in beginning a business venture on one’s own without being knowledgeable in all fields required. A good entrepreneurial personality is full of, “desire for new challenges and new knowledge often corresponds with a well-developed sense of where weaknesses lie” (Deamer & Earle, 2004, p.100). Meaning, the entrepreneur will be able to run a business successfully if they realize when they need outside help. Having a mentor, especially one in the apparel industry, could also be beneficial if the entrepreneur had any problems or questions about the business. A large majority of low success apparel entrepreneurs did not have a mentor. A mentor could be one more aspect of their business that could make them a high success entrepreneur.

Finances. Upon opening the business, an entrepreneur should have intimate knowledge and plans, of each expense that would be encountered, plus a portion set aside for unanticipated expenses. Financially planning a business before opening could be

helpful in the success of the business. Planning it could help the entrepreneur to not underestimate a large number of expenses.

Initial investment in each business ranged from \$1,000 to \$1 million. Since many of the business owners that did not invest the full 100% of their own money into the business, outside investors such as parents, business lenders, banks, other family members, friends, and credit card advances were the main source of investment in the business. Lack of financial planning or adequate funds could have been a large aspect to the PFA scale. The initial investment into a business is often very large. If the entrepreneur underestimated the amount of finances the business would need at startup, they could have financial problems throughout the life of their business. Furthermore, if the entrepreneur did not have a financial plan, budget, or financial advisor, the lack of startup money could make them have a very low perception of their financial attainment.

This study found that 15 of the low success apparel entrepreneurs did not have a financial advisor. Since finances were the largest aspect of business that was overlooked and underestimated, having a financial advisor could lessen the chance of failure. However, since most of the low success entrepreneurs did not have financial advisors they could have put themselves in a bad position for having a successful business.

As previously discussed, one portion of the success scale was perceived financial attainment. Though many of the entrepreneurs perceived themselves financially successful at the time, a large decrease in PFA occurred with the statement about future of financial success. Based on the responses that lack financial advisors, the future of

their financial success could be better if they got the right help in the aspects of business they lack in especially finances.

Having financial advisors could increase success of the business based on the perceived financial attainment. But, financial advisors are not the only aspect that could increase PFA. Having and following a financial plan and a budget could also increase success based on PFA. Findings show that eight of the low success respondents did not have a financial plan. An even larger majority responded that finances were the number one thing they underestimated upon opening their business. With so many problems based on finances, lack of planning finances, lack of following a budget, and lack of financial advisors it is not shocking that finances were the biggest underestimated aspect within the apparel businesses.

As asked in research question four, (*What aspects of business planning have entrepreneurs overlooked that may cause failure of the business?*), the researcher found that the main aspect that could be potentially fatal to a business was finances. Often, the entrepreneurs who did not have a financial plan, a complete business plan, nor a board of advisors were the same entrepreneurs who had trouble with finances in their business. These low success entrepreneurs could be within the low success category because of their lack of planning and lack of advisors. Pre-planning by means of a complete business plan could have helped the entrepreneurs understand the time and finances it would take to run the business. Therefore, having a well thought out financial plan is imperative, and something most entrepreneurs in the study did not do.

In conclusion, planning every aspect of a business is a crucial part of being a successful entrepreneur. If the entrepreneur has the business plan, financial plan, and a board of advisors, he or she is only partially on their way to success. By planning each aspect such as finances and time within the business, they should not underestimate such important details. And, by having a mentor and board of advisors, the entrepreneurs is more likely not to underestimate these details.

Basic Assumptions of the Study

Since the study focused on apparel entrepreneurs and their personal characteristics, assumptions are made that the entrepreneur will be the one filling out the web based questionnaire. The researcher also assumed that the entrepreneur was honest about the current situation of the business whether it is currently good or bad.

Limitations and Problems with the Study

The original plan for this study was to be able to make a correlation between business success and on the personal characteristics of the entrepreneur. Since there was no measurement found that used all of the personal characteristics thought to be those of a successful entrepreneur (risk-taking, ambition, locus of control, determination, self-efficacy, gender, imagination, discipline, and positive attitude), the researcher used multiple scales to create one personal characteristics section. In doing so, the problem of low reliability came about. Therefore, the researcher resorted to showing frequencies and descriptive statistics rather than making a statistical correlation.

This study was an exploratory study of personal characteristics, success, and business procedures among apparel entrepreneurs. A convenience sample was used for

data collection. Thus, findings are not representative of the entire population and cannot be generalized to the larger population of apparel entrepreneurs. The apparel entrepreneurs were selected from a list of contacts from the researcher. Using personal industry contacts did not increase the response rate. The idea that personal contact would be more likely to respond to the researcher may be misleading and needs to be explored further.

Limitations of the study include the inability to have personal interviews with each participant, the possibility of misinterpreting questions, and a response rate of 8.37%. Personal opinions of the respondents' own success were also a limitation to the research. Characteristics might also differ from reality. Since a web based questionnaire is administered, subjects can interpret questions differently than intended.

Another limitation to the study was timing of the survey. The researcher specifically sent the survey out after New York Fashion Week 2007, but did not realize many of the entrepreneurs would be traveling to Europe for fashion events shortly after New York Fashion Week. Thus, timing of the survey could have influenced the low response rate.

Along with timing of when the survey was sent, the actual time it took entrepreneurs to complete the survey was a deterrent to many upon opening the survey. Many of the entrepreneurs in Auburn, Al knew the researcher and personally commented about the length of the survey as a reason he or she would not complete it.

Another limitation included success of a business. Many of the business were closed since the time of initial contact with the researcher, resulting in many returned e-mails, and a low response rate.

The final limitation to the study was trust. Some did not know the researcher personally and expressed feelings of worry about sharing their personal business information with a complete stranger. Though the researcher conducted an anonymous survey, which was approved by Auburn University, many of the entrepreneurs were too concerned about sharing their business information to fill out the survey.

Implications for Further Research

This study was an exploratory investigation of a small group of apparel entrepreneurs. In no way is it a representative sample of the entire US apparel industry. Ideally, future research could be conducted with the whole population of apparel entrepreneurs.

With respect to the personal characteristics scale, a reliable and valid measure needs to be developed and used in future studies. Findings from this study show that self-efficacy was not a prominent personal characteristic among apparel entrepreneurs, but it was a prominent characteristic among high success entrepreneurs. Based on these findings, self-efficacy may be the division point for success of apparel entrepreneurs. Future research could determine whether self-efficacy is the determining factor of success in apparel entrepreneurs.

Finally, an internet based survey proved to be unsuccessful resulting in an extremely low response rate. A different method of survey would be beneficial to future

research. Due to the fact that it is extremely easy to delete an email without reading and the increased rate of SPAM within most people's e-mail, the chances of having a high response rate are low. Past studies (Zhang, 2000) show a much higher response rate with an internet based survey with 80% of their usable responses from the web-based survey. The response rate in this study was significantly lower, due in part to timing, business closings, and increased amount of SPAM filters today more so than when Zhang's study was conducted.

Conclusions

This research found that apparel entrepreneurs had high agreement to discipline, positive attitude, innovation, calculated risk taking, and ambition personal characteristics. Of those who perceived themselves successful discipline was the most prominent personal characteristic. Aspects of business planning were also found to be of importance in the success or failure of a business. Finances were the most underestimated aspect of business, and upon low success entrepreneurs they were the most under planned aspects. Therefore, to be a successful apparel entrepreneur one should be disciplined, innovative, and ambitious, as well as have an extremely well thought out business plan, financial plan, and a board of advisors with a financial advisor and mentor upon starting their business.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INFORMATION SHEET FOR RESEARCH STUDY ENTITLED SUCCESS OF
APPAREL ENTREPRENEURS

INFORMATION SHEET
for Research Study Entitled
---Success of Apparel Entrepreneurs---

You are invited to participate in a research study that investigate relationships between personal traits, entrepreneurs and the apparel industry. This study is being conducted by Amanda Vallone, under the supervision of Dr. Karla Simmons. We hope to learn the relationships between the entrepreneurs in the apparel industry and factors of entrepreneurial success. You were selected as a possible participant because you are an entrepreneur in the apparel industry.

If you decide to participate, we will e-mail you a website which contains a survey. We would appreciate your cooperation and participation in this survey in which you will answering the questions based on your experience and feelings about the apparel industry and business as a whole. This survey only needs to be filled out once and should not take a long time, though, you are able to save your answers and come back to your stopping point.

Procedures included in this survey should be virtually risk and pain free. Analysis of data will be done by myself the researcher and overseen by my thesis committee but no personal information will be given out. The purpose of this survey is not to cause discomfort of any kind but, to understand apparel entrepreneurs and the apparel industry.

Your participation in this survey is greatly appreciated; it will allow research of apparel entrepreneurs to be related to past studies of entrepreneurship. Hopefully, this understanding and knowledge will shed light to other entrepreneurs and investors in the industry. This is a research project, though there are projected outcomes, the research may not show what is anticipated.

Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous. Information collected through your participation may be used to complete the research paper, published in a professional journal, and/or presented at a professional meeting, etc. As a participants you may withdraw from participation at any time, without penalty, however, after the participants have provided anonymous information they will be unable to withdraw their data after participation since there will be no way to identify individual information.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University or The College of Human Sciences, Consumer Affairs.

APPENDIX B
QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for your participation in this research of apparel entrepreneurs. This survey is a portion of research conducted by Amanda Vallone, a graduate Student of Auburn University. SurveyMonkey is the official resource and location of the survey.

By participating as a volunteer in this survey you are accepting the terms and conditions of this research. You can drop out of this study at any time. Please note, all information will be kept strictly confidential. This questionnaire is meant to collect data about apparel entrepreneurs and the apparel industry. In no way will any sensitive information be reproduced or misused.

Thank you for your time and participation in this survey.

Amanda Vallone

INFORMATION SHEET
for Research Study Entitled
---Success of Apparel Entrepreneurs---

You are invited to participate in a research study that investigates relationships between entrepreneurs personal traits and the apparel industry. This study is being conducted by Amanda Vallone, under the supervision of Dr. Karla Simmons. After searching apparel websites and magazines, as well as talking with friends, personal contacts through jobs and internships, a list of apparel entrepreneurs from throughout the United States was comprised. You were selected as a possible participant because you are an entrepreneur in the apparel industry. Since you were one of the entrepreneurs from this search your participation is greatly appreciated. The purpose of this survey is to understand apparel entrepreneurs and their success in the apparel industry. We hope to learn the relationships between the entrepreneurs in the apparel industry and factors of entrepreneurial success

If you decide to participate, you can select the link, included in the e-mail that will bring you directly to the survey on SurveyMonkey. This survey will have questions about your experience and feelings about the apparel industry, business demographics, and your business as a whole, but it is anonymous for your protection. This survey only needs to be filled out once and should take less than 30 minutes, though you are able to save your answers and come back to your stopping point. Analysis of data will be done by myself, the researcher, and overseen by my Master's thesis committee.

Your participation in this survey may help us relate apparel entrepreneurs to past studies of entrepreneurship. Hopefully, this understanding and knowledge will assist other entrepreneurs and investors in the industry. This is a research project. Though there are projected outcomes, the research may not show what is anticipated.

Any personal information obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous and confidential outside of the research process. Information collected through your participation may be used to complete the research paper, published in a professional journal, and/or presented at a professional meeting. If so, no information will be published or presented that can identify your business. As a participant, you may decide not to complete the survey or decline the invitation by e-mailing me at pauszam@auburn.edu. You can decide not to participate at any time without penalty, however, if you have already submitted your survey to SurveyMonkey, there is no way of me knowing which survey is yours because of anonymity.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University or the College of Human Sciences, Department of Consumer Affairs. If you have any questions, we invite you to ask them now. If you have questions later, Amanda Vallone, 386-747-4004, pauszam@auburn.edu will be happy to answer them.

For more information regarding your rights as a research participant you may contact the Auburn University Office of Human Subjects Research or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334)-844-5966 or e-mail at hsubjec@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

HAVING READ THE INFORMATION ABOVE, YOU MUST DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF YOU DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE, THE DATA YOU PROVIDE WILL SERVE AS YOUR AGREEMENT TO DO SO. PLEASE CLICK THE NEXT BUTTON IN THIS SURVEY TO CONTINUE. THIS LETTER IS YOURS TO KEEP.

The Auburn University
Institutional Review Board
has approved this document for use
from 10/3/07 to 10/2/08.
Protocol #07-181 EP0710

Please tell me about your business by selecting or filling in the answer that best pertains to you.

1. Gender:

- Male
- Female

2. Ethnicity:

- Caucasian
- African-American
- Hispanic

Other (please specify)

3. Age (in years)

- 18-21
- 22-25
- 26-29
- 30-33
- 34-37
- 38-41
- 42-45
- 46-49
- 50-53
- 54-57
- 58-61
- 62-65
- 66+

4. What was your age upon opening this venture? (age in years)

5. What city and state is your business located?

6. What type of business format do you own?

Home based business

Storefront

Internet business

Other (please specify)

7. Where is your business located?

In an easily accessible area(visible from highway or main road).

Somewhat easy to find, but may be passed by.

Difficult to find.

Home based business.

Internet based business.

8. What type of business do you own?

Retail Boutique

Design

Other (please specify)

9. Main product/ service:

10. What is your business structure?

- Partnership.
- Sole proprietorship.
- General partnership.
- Limited partnership
- Corporation.

11. How many months or years has this business been open? (please specify)

12. How many employees work at this establishment?

13. What is the square footage of the selling/ work space?

14. How did you begin your business?

- I came up with a new idea and started a business from it.
- I bought an existing business.
- I inherited a family business.

Other (please specify)

15. On average, how many hours per week do you, personally work in this venture?

- Less than 40 hours / week.
- 40-60 hours / week.
- 61-80 hours / week.
- More than 81 hours / week.

16. How many man hours are worked weekly by other employees?

- Zero. I am the only one who works here.
- Less than 20 hours / week.
- 21-40 hours / week.
- 41-60 hours / week.
- 61-80 hours / week.
- More than 81 hours / week.

17. Do you have a board of advisors?

- Yes.
- No.

18. If you answered 'Yes' to the previous question, who holds positions on this board?
(i.e. lawyer, bank, payroll consultant, tax advisor)

19. What was the initial investment planned on to start your venture?

20. Who were your initial investors (check all that apply).

- Who were your initial investors (check all that apply). Yourself.
- Parents.
- Other family members.(i.e. aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents)
- Friends.

Other (please specify)

21. How many initial investors financially contributed to this venture?

22. What percentage of your own money did you invest upon starting this venture?

23. Do you currently have a written budget/ financial plan?

- Yes. And I follow it closely.
- Yes. But I do not follow it.
- No. But I have an idea of my budget.
- No. And I do not follow any budget guidelines.

24. What type of advertising do you do?

25. How often do you advertise and where?

26. How much do you spend on advertising annually?

27. What is your initial markup? (if applicable)

28. What is your price level?

- High
- Moderate
- Budget

Other (please specify)

29. Please give an example of price level (i.e. the price of a shirt, Jacket, and/or pair of pants).

30. Upon opening the business what factors did you underestimate? (i.e. finances, workload, employees) please explain.

31. Do you use any type of outside trend forecasting?

- Yes, I use a trend forecasting source in order to design/ buy for the upcoming season.
- Yes. I have used trend forecasting, but not always.
- No, I do not use an outside source for trend forecasting in order to buy or design for upcoming seasons.

Other (please specify)

32. What type of trend forecasting sources do you use?

Please continue by selecting the answer that best pertains to you, or by filling in the answers as necessary.

EXAMPLE: What are your favorite vacation spots? (List al that apply)

ANSWER: New York, Paris, the beach, and Germany

1. Upon start up, did you have (check all that apply)

- financial advisors
- lawyers
- employees
- mentor(s)
- a business plan
- a financial plan
- an exit strategy
- a marketing plan

2. Do you feel success in a business is measured by:

- How much money the business makes
- How long it has been in business
- Personal satisfaction
- What others think of the business.

Other (please specify)

3. Please indicate the level of challenges in your business

	Extremely Challenging	Challenging	Not Applicable	Not Challenging	Extremely Easy
Maintaining Positive Cash Flow	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintaining Employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify)

4. Why do you believe you have the previously mentioned challenges?

5. Did you write a business plan?

- Yes
- No

6. Do you follow your written business plan?

- Yes, I follow my business plan closely
- I try to follow my business plan, but sometimes stray away.
- No. I never follow my business plan.

7. Have you re-evaluated your written business plan?

- Yes
- No

8. Do you have a budget you follow?

- Yes, and I follow it precisely
- Yes, and I somewhat follow it
- No.
- No. but I feel I should use one
- No, I have no need for a budget

9. How much of your budget is spent on overhead and operating expenses?

- less than 20%
- 21-40%
- 41-60%
- 61-80%
- more than 81%

10. How often do you re-evaluate your business and its opportunities?

- Monthly
- every 2-3 months
- 4-8 months
- 9-12
- 1-2 years
- more than every 2 years apart

This section is meant for you to give your opinion about the statements. Please answer as honestly as possible by selecting the answer that most strongly correlates with your feeling about the statement. There is no correct answer.

1. Please select an answer that most strongly correlates to your feelings of each statement about your business.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have a good reputation in the business field.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My career has been recognized by others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As an employer, I have a certain social status.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have accomplished something valuable from my career.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am satisfied with my career.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am well known in my area of business.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entrepreneurs have certain social status.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a sense of achievement in my career.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am a successful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
entrepreneur.					
I have achieved many career goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am not well known in my industry.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am known to succeed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a financially successful business.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I consider my business successful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My business is financially stable.		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our society holds entrepreneurs to a higher social status.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My business is not yet successful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My business needs more finances to survive.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

This section is to understand more about the personality of entrepreneurs. Please answer as honestly as possible by selecting the answer that most strongly correlates with your feeling about the statement. There is no correct answer.

1. Please select the answer that most correlates to your opinion about each statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
In a stressful situation I am always at ease.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I must be the best at everything I do.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I always evaluate consequences before doing something important.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a very active imagination.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am extremely focused.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I excel in everything I do.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am always overly careful in every decision.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am the most adventurous person I know.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I follow trends closely.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have goals which I always achieve.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The glass is half full.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can do anything.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I see past	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
obstacles to possibilities.					
I often fall short of achieving my goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am very competitive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I start new trends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any friend will tell you I am most reliable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am always late.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I always think the best case scenario.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think, therefore I will.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not manage stress well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I like to take calculated risks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I do not like risk at all.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have total control over my life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Everything happens for a reason.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Have you ever owned a business prior to this one?

Yes.

No.

3. If yes, is it still open?

Yes.

No.

4. What type of business was/ is it?

5. How many businesses have you owned prior to your current venture?

Zero.

1

2

3

4

5

6 or more

6. What was the most difficult part of starting your own business?

- Finances
- Industry background
- Finding vendors
- Suppliers
- Managing career while opening business
- Customers

Other (please specify)

7. Why?

8. What is your education level?

- Did not graduate High School
- High School Diploma
- GED
- Some College
- Associates Degree
- Bachelors Degree
- Masters Degree
- Doctorate

9. If you attended college level or trade school what was major area of study.

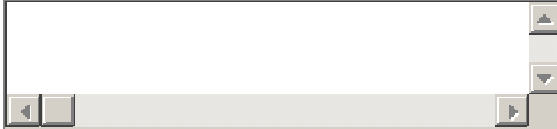
10. Do you have a mentor?

- Yes
- No

11. If yes, is he/she in the apparel industry?

- Yes
- No

12. Did you come across anything in particular you couldn't read in a book or find on the internet on how to do something in your business (i.e., stock merchandise in a store, set up a business plan, floor plan, get a loan)?



13. Has there been a point that you felt that you have made a success of your business?

- Yes
- No

14. When and why?

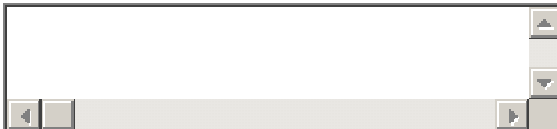


15. Do you still feel this way? Please explain.

16. Does your business affect your family life?

- Yes, positively.
- Yes, negatively.
- No, my family life is not affected at all.
- I do not have a family.

17. What are your current business goals?



18. How often do you re-evaluate your goals?

19. In your opinion, what is the most important aspect of managing a business?

20. Please Rank on a scale of 1 to 10 the importance of how your work will affect you. (1 being most important- 10 being lowest of importance)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Opportunity to be creative	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Time and schedule freedom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working from home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lots of contact with people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working alone and little contact with people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Part-time as opposed to full-time commitment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being my own boss	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
High income potential	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Immediate income	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steady income	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>