

Are you a teenager or in your early 20s? Do you have a great business idea? Perhaps you're already making headway towards starting your own business. But how do you get others to believe in you and your business idea? Here are some surefire ways that you can be taken seriously as a young entrepreneur:

1. Have a Plan. Having a plan means knowing where you want to be and what steps you are going to take to get there. If you can't communicate this to investors, vendors, distributors, employees, and so on, you will never be taken seriously.

2. Be Serious About Your Passion. It's inevitable that you are going to come across people who are going to try and talk you out of your idea—put your ear muffs on and stand your ground. Be proud of your idea, innovation, or business and be ready to showcase what you've done to get this far and what your plans are for the next step.

3. Find a Mentor

Many young entrepreneurs struggle to succeed because they don't have a mentor. Whether it's a former boss, someone in your business network, or family friend, find a mentor who has experience in your field and has walked in your shoes before. Not only can a mentor provide valuable advice, they can also give you access to contacts, resources, and events that you might not otherwise have access to.

4. Don't Be Flash with Cash!

One of the surest ways to show you are serious about your business idea is to demonstrate that you can manage your cash and keep it flowing. Look for ways to keep costs low. Consider working part-time when you launch your company; this will help you build your business with less risk and provide you with a steady cash flow from another source. Once you've established a base, then transition to full-time business ownership.

5. Need Financing? – Do Your Homework

Securing financing as a young entrepreneur can be particularly challenging. Without a credit history or career history, finding someone who will entrust their money to you isn't going to be easy. But with a solid business plan and commitment to success, investors are out there ready to take you seriously.

6. Look Like a Pro

It goes without saying, or does it? Try to look like you are serious about what you are doing. Whether you are meeting customers, potential partners, mentors or investors – clean up your act. No, you don't need to wear a suit all the time, but dress appropriately.

More Information

Young entrepreneurs can get more tips and practical guidance about starting a business in SBA's online course: [Young Entrepreneurs - An Essential guide to Starting Your Own Business](#). Also check out SBA's Young Entrepreneurs guide for resources and programs to get you started.

