

3 mindset shifts that will help you deal with rejection as a business owner

By [Ben Bierman](#), issued by [Business Partners Limited](#)

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Did you know that J.K. Rowling, world-renowned author of the Harry Potter series was rejected 12 times before a publisher agreed to publish her work? Or that Steven Spielberg was rejected several times by the University of Southern California before being successfully admitted as a cinematic arts student?

“ The most important factor is not how the rejection itself is handled as much as it's about how you choose to respond to that rejection ”

As an entrepreneur, rejection is an inevitability, not a possibility. The sooner you accept and embrace that reality, the bigger the strides you'll make as a business owner. In fact, with some mindful introspection and a change in perspective, rejection can become a stepping stone to success. You can start by making these three mindset shifts:

Change the way you think about failure

Many aspiring entrepreneurs are afraid of the 'big, bad F-word' – failure. In fact, the only thing that separates entrepreneurs from everyday people lies in the distinction between action and inaction. Entrepreneurs act despite their fear of failure, while others are commonly immobilised by it.

The best way you can handle rejection as a small business owner is to change how you view failure. Think about it this way – a failure only becomes a failure when you don't learn from it.

After being rejected, analyse the 'why'. Look at what you could have done differently, how you can approach the problem from another direction, what you can do to equip yourself with the skills to go back with a better, more optimised proposal. These lessons will become a firm foundation on which you can build hands-on experience and as an entrepreneur; first-hand experience will be your greatest teacher.

Reframe your idea of humility

Hearing the word, 'no' can pack a mean punch in terms of its ability to deflate your ego and hit you with an unwelcome reality check. In these humbling moments, however, you should resist the urge to use rejection to fuel low self-confidence.

Contrary to popular belief, being humble is not about putting yourself down or beating yourself up. As one author wrote, being humble is about being 'right sized' or being able to acknowledge that you are neither less than nor superior to your peers in the business world. You simply have strengths and weaknesses, and rejection can help you identify what these are. Being humble is also about being teachable – acknowledging that you can learn a lot from drawing on the perspectives, insights and experiences of others.

World-renowned author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen Covey, put it this way: “A humble person is more concerned about what is right than about being right, about acting on good ideas than having the ideas, about embracing new truth than defending outdated position, about building the team than exalting self, about recognising contribution than being recognised for making it.”



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Let go of things that are beyond your control

The most successful entrepreneurs are people who take the time to reflect on why they were rejected and what they need to change to avoid being rejected in future. However, they also have an acute awareness of the factors that are beyond their control and are therefore able to resist the urge to spend valuable time and mental resources on grappling with these aspects.

For example, if you were rejected by a prospective client because your small business is still in its infancy, you have no control over the fact that the client values experience over any other factor, but you can focus on other ways to prove your credibility and worth.

The most important factor is not how the rejection itself is handled as much as it's about how you choose to respond to that rejection – your response could be destructive or constructive. With wisdom, a healthy dose of grit, determination and an eagerness to learn and grow, facing rejection can be an extremely useful step in a better direction.

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