

# 10 THINGS I... WOULD ADVISE ANY WOULD-BE ENTREPRENEUR

BY **JASON MACE**, THE MAN BEHIND GALA TENTS.

Fourteen years ago, Rotherham-born Jason Mace set up Gala Tent, which has become one of the largest manufacturers of marquees and gazebos in the UK. He revolutionised the marquee market by introducing to the UK the idea of buying rather than hiring marquees, making them affordable for the first time and creating a trend towards entertaining in the back garden or patio.

## 1 TAKE ACTION

You can have the best idea in the world but if you don't put it into action it will stay an idea.

## 2 TRUST YOURSELF

Have trust that you are smart and delete fear or doubt: these are the enemy! Trust in your own ability as you are the same as any other person; if they can do it, so can you. I have no education and was expelled from every school I attended (even the nursery). I left school barely being able to spell my name. However, this didn't stop me wanting to be successful. I just realised school wasn't for me, but business is. If I needed to know anything I asked someone who knew and if I needed to study a subject I bought a book with all the information I needed.

## 3 LOOK AT THINGS DIFFERENTLY

See a way of making something different or original and make it happen. When I

set up Gala Tent and said I was going to sell marquees rather than hire them everyone said it wouldn't work, even my close family. But I was convinced it would and it did. Today we sell over 10,000 marquees a year along with over 90,000 accessories.

## 4 WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER

Put systems in place to do the hard work for you as systems are the difference between making a good company and making a great company. You will not expand without operational systems and your business may become a colander for financial loss. Worst of all you will become a busy fool.

## 5 THINK BIG...

Even when you are small! Visualise being the best at what you do and make it happen.

## 6 DELETE THE PHRASE 'I CAN'T'

This is an embedded negative command to the brain. Replace it with I CAN or I MUST.

## 7 DON'T BE AFRAID TO MAKE DECISIONS

Just try to make more good ones than bad, and believe in what you decide. If you do make a bad decision then look at the situation as a learning curve and take the experience from it.

## 8 BE DEFENSIVE

Work hard to defend your business as there is always someone studying you who will try to take a piece of what you have developed. Protect with patents and copyright and be ready to counterattack. Know your enemies and peers and study them harder!

## 9 DON'T LOSE YOUR SENSE OF HUMOUR

Add some fun in some way to your business. Whether it be in person, over the phone, by video or social media, share a joke with your staff because, let's face it, nobody wants to work for a miserable so and so.

## 10 GIVE BACK

I didn't realise this until later in my career, but giving back to your community is really rewarding and this can work for you and your company. So get involved, attend and sponsor events and I'm sure you will see a return for your efforts.

