BIOGRAPHY & MEMOIR

# Screw It, Let's Do It

by Richard Branson

*Branson's nine plain life rules: just do it, have fun, be bold - and guard the downside while you leap.*

## BEST POINTS FROM THE BOOK

01 **Just do it: if you believe it can be done, start before you feel ready.**

His staff call him 'Dr Yes' because he finds reasons to act, not excuses. The fine print: have goals, prepare well, help each other - and never give up.

02 **Have fun, work hard, and money will come.**

That is the book's own line: fun is the fuel, not the prize. Grab your chances, keep a positive outlook, and when a venture stops being fun, fix it or move on.

03 **Be bold: calculate the risks and take them - but never gamble on what you cannot control.**

He launched Virgin Atlantic with a rented jumbo jet he could hand back if the airline flopped, so one failure could never sink him. Chase the dream, have no regrets, keep your word.

04 **Challenge yourself: aim high, try new things, always try.**

As a boy he learned to swim in days to prove his aunt wrong; as a dyslexic teenager he started a magazine to prove himself. Every stretch raises what you believe you can do next.

05 **Stand on your own feet: rely on yourself, but chase dreams while living in the real world.**

His mother raised him to decide and earn for himself. He later bought Virgin back from the stock market rather than give up his independence - self-reliance, working with others, beats waiting to be rescued.

06 **Live the moment: love life and live it to the full.**

Regrets weigh you down and hold you in the past, he says, and hard-won things are worth more than easy ones. Money is only a tool for making things happen - never the end itself.

07 **Value family and friends: put your family and your team first.**

When he needed £30,000 to buy The Manor studio, his aunt mortgaged her own house to help him. Be loyal, face problems head on, pick the right people, and reward their talent.

**08** **Have respect: treat everyone well, fight fair, and guard your good name.**

Respect is about how you treat everyone, not just people you want to impress. Your reputation is everything: if a deal would keep you awake at night, it is not worth doing.

**09** **Do some good: use success to change the world, even in a small way.**

The successful can reach almost anyone, so they carry a duty: do no harm, and always ask what you can do to help. He built that duty into Virgin Unite, the group's charitable arm, founded in 2002.

## THE BOOK, IN SHORT

This short book distills the life rules of Richard Branson, who built Virgin from a student magazine into a group of more than 400 companies - record labels, airlines, trains, phones, even spaceships. It is not a business textbook full of charts and systems. It is nine short chapters, each one a plain rule he actually lives by, told through stories from his deals, his adventures, and his family.

The rules, in his own order: Just Do It. Have Fun. Be Bold. Challenge Yourself. Stand on Your Own Feet. Live the Moment. Value Family and Friends. Have Respect. Do Some Good. The early rules are about momentum: say yes and start, enjoy the work, take the calculated risk, and keep stretching yourself - from learning to swim on a challenge as a boy, to record-breaking balloon flights and whole new industries as an adult.

The surprise is how careful the famous daredevil is. He started Virgin Atlantic with a rented jumbo jet he could return to Boeing if the airline failed, so the bet could never wipe him out. Years later, on his TV show The Rebel Billionaire, he praised the winner who took a guaranteed million dollars instead of gambling it on a coin toss. Bold, in this book, means calculated risks, no regrets, and keeping your word - never gambling on things you cannot control.

People sit at the center of the system. His family backed him when money was short - an aunt mortgaged her house so he could buy The Manor studio - and he repays that kind of loyalty by putting family and team first and rewarding talent. Respect gets its own chapter for a reason: arrested as a young man over a scheme to dodge tax on record sales, with his parents putting up their home to free him, he vowed to make money honestly or not at all.

The book ends by turning success outward: after pitching in to help refugees when Iraq invaded Kuwait, he concluded that people who have won owe the world a hand, and in 2002 he set up Virgin Unite to organize that giving. Quick, cheerful, and told in his own plain voice, the book has one job - to move a reader who keeps saying 'someday' to take the first step now.

## DO THIS WEEK

This week, pick one 'someday' item - the business idea, the application, the difficult call - and take its first real step within seven days: send the message, book the meeting, register the name. Before you leap, run his Be Bold check: write down the worst case and cap what you can lose, the way he capped the airline gamble with a plane he could return. Start before you feel ready; preparation happens on the way.

*By Richard Branson, first published 2006. Read it for a fast, upbeat push from one of the boldest founders alive - mindset first, tactics second.*