

Montessori and Entrepreneurship

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The founders of Google contribute their success to their Montessori beginnings. (It doesn't hurt that they also went to Stanford.) But what is it about their Montessori beginnings that so impacted their lives that they credit the Montessori experience for their phenomenal success?

We can pick five things out of the extensive list of Montessori benefits that can herald such accomplishment. First, dealing with the fear of failure. The fear of failure alone stops many from taking the first steps of success. Montessori children learn that making mistakes is not fatal or final but that it is a part of the learning process. And you pick yourself up and start all over again. No red exes, no frowny faces, no "poor" grades but the opportunity to try again and again if necessary. (Interestingly, the 3M Company created a multi-million dollar product line from a failure of glue that didn't stick – Post-it Notes.)

The second entrepreneurial success skill that emerges from a Montessori education is the ability to finish what you start. There are no "F's" to take and move on. You camp where the learning happens until the learning happens. There are no penalties for taking time to learn. Then you learn it and you learn it well. Mastery, rather than passing, is a skill set to be learned. You not only finish but you learn to finish well.

The third benefit is a sense of confidence which is largely built on these first two. Whether you are a fast and furious learner or a steady as she goes learner your continued success builds a sense of confidence that permeates your life.

The fourth benefit of this education is the development of initiative – to try new things, to try them on your own, to try them with friends but nevertheless to try. Initiative is not waiting for someone to always tell you the next step or give you permission to move but to see the next step, to see a new step or to see a whole new way and to adventure out. Having dealt with the fear of failure, taking initiative is not nearly as scary (or boring) as doing nothing.

The fifth entrepreneurial benefit is independence. Independence does not mean just doing what you want (which is how teenagers look at it) but the ability to be "self-governed" – doing what is best without anybody having to tell you.

Independence is a maturity factor that when started young leads to all kind of success.

Will your Montessori child have the astronomical financial success as the Google founders? Maybe. Possibly. But maybe more importantly they will have developed these skills that will give their life a sense of direction, of control, of purpose, of contentment, challenge, satisfaction and even happiness which is a tremendous return on your investment in Montessori and its entrepreneurial benefits.