

## Interview Assessment #4

**Name of Professional:** Tom Ellingson

**Profession/Title:** Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder

**Business/Company Name:** Fandeavor

**Date of Interview:** October 7, 2016

My fourth interview was conducted with Tom Ellingson. He is the Chief Executive Officer of Fandeavor which is a company that makes it easier to book one's ticket, hotel, airfare, ground transportation, and activities all from one website. Throughout the interview, I aimed to find out how he got started in his business, problems/successes he has had, and any potential tips he may have for me. I must take in as much knowledge as possible and learn from his experiences to set myself up for the future.

Throughout the interview, he gave me a variety of new information about entrepreneurship that will be important for me as I am going to start a business. He expressed that one must have an entrepreneurial mindset in order to succeed. There must be passion and a will to be better than the best. This is important for me as I must make sure that what I choose to pursue in the future will be something that I love to do. Also, I learned that missions for the business can change over time. For example, at first, I may believe that my company is meant to be a place where people can go to unlock new experiences, yet later, it could be a place where people learn/acquire something completely different. With this, I must learn to adapt to the consumer's needs. My business must be altered based on the customer's necessities or else I will have no one that will purchase my product.

From the majority of my interviews so far, I have heard two recurring themes: hire the right people (have the right business partner) and take importance on perfecting customer service. With having the best partner and right team members, anything is possible. It is important to work with people who are similar to myself and have a drive and fire in their heart pushing themselves to the limits. As seen in mostly all very successful companies, they are led by a strong group of people. It takes more than one person to bring a business to success. Secondly, great customer service is ideal. When people are treated properly, they want to come back and possibly buy the product one is selling. This will be exciting for me as I will be able to go out and advertise my business and make sure that I am appealing to the customer. I must learn to present myself in a way that will convince them to follow my beliefs, or in this case, my company.

One thing I learned that was unexpected was the true challenge of having a small team. I will be faced with this in the future as I will have one other partner in the business with me. With a small team, there are more responsibilities, and therefore, more work to be put into the business. I will need to learn to manage each person's responsibilities and see who fits best in each position. This will be important so that the skillset of each person is being fully utilized while also putting the business in the most ideal position for success.