

JADA M. DAVIS



**DON'T LET
YOUR
MOUTH
GET YOU IN
TROUBLE**

How to Get Out of Your Own Way and Execute

**This is an abbreviated version, with
a sneak peek of one chapter**

Don't Let Your Mouth Get You in Trouble

How to Get Out of Your Own
Way and Execute

Jada Davis

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To Mama,

Thank you for reminding me that my words
have power.

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PREFACE

Before we get started, let's manage expectations now through the words of Auntie Iyanla.

Disclaimer: "There's going to come a moment when you're not going to like me. You're going to be highly, highly pissed off with me, and you will want to fight me. I give you permission to do all of that. Cause in the end... I'm going to win." –Iyanla Vanzant.

I've always been told that there's a book inside of all of us, but I wasn't going to waste time writing a book until I was sure I had something to say. As my friend group's "tough love" voice of reason, I've given out my share of practical feedback and plenty of real-time business advice. My social media inbox is known to have random business and career questions from people I've never met but are seeking advice. I've discussed their vision, identified roadblocks and solutions for them, and then took the plan and made it happen. After witnessing the success and ideation to execution process of those that ran with my advice, I was proud, and I knew I could do more. I wanted to give this same advice and reasonable examples to as many people as possible. I knew that my unconventional upbringing and early exposure to the black business world were invaluable. Not to mention, my mama would sarcastically tell me when I challenged her, "You've always got something to say." After all of that, I had to write a book.

If you know anyone from my hometown of Memphis, TN, they may very likely be the biggest hustler in your circle.

I grew up in a suburban area of Memphis, enjoyed many extracurricular activities, and lived a common life. It wasn't until I was in my late 20s that I realized I had a drastically different childhood than many of my peers. I knew that some things were different, but there were very specific things that I was exposed to growing up that really shed light on how different (read as blessed) I truly was. As the product of serial entrepreneurs, I knew very early that multiple streams of income were a norm, or some may even say a requirement. By age 17, I had black millionaires and billionaires as mentors, and my entire world was engulfed with a common goal: build black wealth and enterprise. I volunteered at national business conferences in high school, and I learned very early that networking through service can lead to generational wealth (a motto I live by today). This was the best way to be upfront and personal with some of the most brilliant minds in the world. My mentor, George Fraser, taught me, "If you want to be where important and influential people are, you must go to them—because they are not coming to you." That's exactly what I did. I learned to ask, "How can I help and add value?" Instead of just expecting a hand-out.

My parents, Nedra & Futrell Redditt, raised my sister Camille and me to be black, bold, and brilliant young women, showing us what that looked like daily through their hard work and consistent grind. As a child, I dreaded the nights when we would be at the real estate office until the late hours of the night. I can recall being so upset that I was sitting in a cold conference room instead of my own bed. I was mad and ready to go.

Thinking back, let's add ungrateful as well. Like myself, my mama is very vocal. She didn't shy away from telling us exactly why we needed to appreciate them and understand the work they were putting in. We understood. Teenage Jada knew. She just didn't care at the time. What I couldn't avoid was the truth that our environments shape our perspectives and decisions. Entrepreneurship was inevitable. I had the unique opportunity to truly be ahead of my time. I've seen first-hand the "beauty and the beast" of owning your own business. My parents have owned a general contracting, mortgage, property management, and real estate company. As the first black RE/MAX franchise owners in the mid-south, they have gone on to drop the franchise, run their real estate company independently, and operate a real estate school, PRO Real Estate. My first job was the office assistant for Ready Team Realtors, where my parents paid a fair wage that was comparable to the other high school interns they recruited. As a 30-something-year-old, I can say I have never actually seen my mother work for anyone. She's been an entrepreneur my entire life and has done a damn good job at it.

One great unknown thought leader once said, "Some things cannot be taught." Some things are innate and deep within you. I've always known this, but it's been hard to explain or even answer questions like, "What motivates you?" or "Where do you get your drive?" As my relationship with my biological father, Tommy Davis, blossomed in adulthood, it has been confirmed that my ability to be a walking example of "get shit done" is ingrained. The grit, grind, and high frequency of

resourcefulness I have, are hereditary. He, too, has been an entrepreneur throughout his life and continues to encourage me to get everything my mama said I could have.

In addition to my immediate family, about 75% of my family members are entrepreneurs, either part-time or full-time. My village consists of business owners in various industries such as hair, beauty, construction, marketing, finance, childcare, healthcare, cleaning services, and more. It is of no surprise that I have become a serial entrepreneur as well, operating eCommerce and consulting businesses for over ten years. While I understand entrepreneurship is not for everyone, having multiple streams of income is. More importantly, there are gifts inside of all of us.

I never really put much thought into my family dynamics until I launched my podcast, Cup of Grind. While interviewing guests, I began to dig deeper into my own story. I would ask questions such as “What is your struggle story behind the success?” or “What four influential people would you have in your mogul Mt. Rushmore?” These types of questions made for some very interesting and even viral dialogue that brought things into perspective.

My mother would undeniably be in my “Mogul Mt. Rushmore.” Most of us can recall the recurring phrases that our mothers or elders said to us and many of which we will never forget. I would often replay her quotes when I must make life decisions, and they have yet to steer me wrong. You know you start feeling “old” when you begin

using those quotes on younger generations and your peers. That's exactly what has happened to me. I have found myself repeating these generational gems to make my point or provide a source of wisdom to those coming after me.

From what I remember, I was never a bad child, but my witty assertiveness created some friction. In true Capricorn fashion, I've always said what I meant and meant what I said. While this has served me well in the professional world, this didn't always go over well with my mama when I was growing up. As a result, she would never let me forget one of life's greatest lessons:

Don't Let Your Mouth Get You in Trouble.

What I took away from this lesson was that words have power. If you think you can, you can, and if you think you can't, then, well, you can't. It all starts with your mindset. The words you speak have the power to give you access to spaces you didn't know existed, but they also have the potential to delay or deny the same opportunities. The beautiful thing is that you are in full control. You just have to get out of your own way.

I have been blessed, or dare I say privileged, to be surrounded by successful entrepreneurs and business professionals my entire life. While I never put much thought into it, I am aware that this experience has shaped my perspective and how I navigate through life. I've learned that I can create my own lane, control my own destiny, and I can still show up being my authentic self in the process. I really value relationships. After all, can you

really grow a thriving business by yourself? I'm known as the "business bestie" in most of my friend groups, and I wear the title proudly. I think it's important to share the wealth of knowledge that I have with those around me. In this book, I will shed light on some of my unique experiences, share resources, and give real examples that can help someone else realize—if I can do it, you can do it.

I hope that the words of this book inspire you to do what is required to truly experience "livin' for a living." Or simply put, living a life you don't feel the need to escape.

See, mama, I'm not letting my mouth get me in trouble. This time—it's getting me paid.

INTRODUCTION

While I may have always known I wanted to be an entrepreneur, I haven't always known exactly what I wanted to do. Many times, I have been scrolling on social media, saw a really cool business, and thought to myself, "Why didn't I think of that?" I'm sure I'm not alone. Maybe you have a real fear of rejection or failure, which prevents you from making a business decision, a list of great ideas, but are not sure what to do with? Even as a current business owner, you may even feel stuck on how to move forward or pivot. Let's not forget the self-doubt of, "What if my business isn't good enough?"

By the end of this book, you will have a new perspective or mindset shift on moving past fear to get to the finish line of your goals. You'll have practical tools along the way to support your efforts of working smarter, not harder. I've included my preferred systems, apps, and tools that have helped me run more efficient businesses. With my recommendations, you will be equipped to implement and execute projects, business launches, and big ideas immediately. In addition to these tangible resources, you will have a new understanding of community because you are not alone. Entrepreneurship is not always easy, but if it is done right, it is so worth it. Many people have been stuck at a similar crossroad and have still come out on top. You can and will be next. It starts with the words you think and speak.

This book is not a one-size-fits-all manual, and it's not a promise that you will be successful if you do all the things

mentioned. What I can share is that this book is a reference to guide you on your journey through entrepreneurship. It is the first step to drive you from ideation to execution. The hard truths, success stories, challenges, and teaching moments shared from beginning to end will be a constant reminder that you are your only roadblock to success.

Are you ready to get out of your own way?

This is an excerpt that skips to a selected chapter.

DO MORE, TALK LESS

Have you ever seen someone talk themselves out of an opportunity? It happens more times than not. Entrepreneurship is not just about being a “boss.” It’s also about knowing when to be quiet and listen. Listening to your customers, things being said about your competition, and prioritizing listening to yourself is essential to your growth. If you’re not careful, you’ll find yourself in a situation where you overpromise and underdeliver. I show new and aspiring business owners how to get out of their own way to monetize their skills through automated, efficient, and profitable businesses. As a strategist and consultant, I serve clients by designing plans for them to achieve a specific business goal and provide professional services such as e-commerce setup, scheduling automation, and email marketing.

Remember the brand I told you I launched after a break-up? Let me explain a little more. Launching GrindMatch back in 2015 was an exciting time but required a lot of work. GrindMatch started as a motivational apparel line and brand that encouraged millennials to fuel their purpose through passion and get to the finish line despite life’s challenges. The name came from the thought of like-minded individuals matching my grind. Before it was a business, it was just an idea. I needed some motivation, so I put inspirational phrases on a shirt. I knew that I wanted this to be an apparel line, but I wasn’t exactly sure beyond that. Like many of my ideas, I launch them and allow them to grow and develop as opportunities present themselves. As I began to be a walking billboard of my

brand, many started to take notice. I would wear my apparel some days to work, especially if there were an artist performing in the studio that day. I knew it was likely that I would take a picture with the artist. This was a great way to cross-promote the artists' new music and my developing apparel line when the picture was posted on social media. Inquiries about my "Do More, Talk Less" shirt started coming into the comments on my posts, and order requests were sent to my email. So I reached out to one of my favorite famous friends, Harrison Crite. Harrison is a celebrity stylist and content creator extraordinaire. He developed my very first GrindMatch logo, which is still my favorite to date. I did my research on apparel and contacted my good friend Kelvin Woods, who owns a printing business in Memphis, The Tee Shirt Lab. He immediately got some of my designs printed and shipped to my apartment in Dallas. It pays to know good people that can make things happen. These people matched my grind.

As much research as I did, I hadn't quite thought about inventory and storage, so my apartment had to work. I looked on YouTube, asked other business owners, audited other apparel websites, and googled articles about starting a t-shirt brand. When I first started out, I had a basic website and handled all the order fulfillment by myself. I did what needed to be done like most solopreneurs, but I was ready to work smarter. After two years, I realized that I didn't want order delays or bottlenecks in the customer experience to be contingent upon me being home to ship the orders, so I looked into dropshipping.

Can somebody say, GAME CHANGER!

Dropshipping was a solution I did not know I needed. Shopify describes dropshipping as “a retail fulfillment method where a store doesn’t keep the products it sells in stock. Instead, when a store sells a product using the dropshipping model, it purchases the item from a third party and has it shipped directly to the customer. As a result, the seller doesn’t have to handle the product directly.” Once Tom Joyner announced his upcoming retirement, I had to make plans for my future. I was unsure of what work would look like for me in the coming months, and I didn’t know where I would be living. It was time for me to transition to dropshipping. I can appreciate everything I learned while fulfilling the orders myself, but I am grateful to experience the same thriving business without the burden of inventory and the freedom to sell from anywhere in the world.

What’s important to note is that I took the first step. I executed. Many people with great ideas die with those ideas. Others are perfectionists, failing to execute until the “perfect” time. Perfectionism is a form of procrastination, which hinders growth and stunts activation. Then there are the rest of you that spend so much time talking about what you’re going to do that you neglect to do the work.

That project or business idea in your head is going to be amazing, even if the logo is not exactly how you originally envisioned it. How many times are you going to rebrand a business that you haven’t even launched? Did you know that you can still start selling your products with a less-

than-perfect website? I get it. We want what we want when we want it and how we want it. I'm not opposed to this in some cases, but don't get so caught in the aesthetics that you fail to execute.

Grind Match apparel was about fueling your purpose through your passion. This sounds good, but I had to have the vision first. Your vision is unique and specific to you. It may be a grand and super elaborate idea that does not make sense to anyone you tell. It may also give you some direction but is ultimately a mental picture of the idea you have of your goals and aspirations. When I dreamt of GrindMatch, it was a recognizable brand that inspires others as a movement. When I say movement, I mean like a way of life. The tagline, Shut Up Keep Grinding[®], was later trademarked as people began to use it in their daily conversations, social media posts, and any time they wanted to make it known that they were not giving up. This was my vision coming to fruition.

I remember when Tarekia Dentley came to me with her business idea, Don't Make Me Vegan. She lives a vegan lifestyle and wanted to share her amazing meals with others after receiving several requests to do so. She didn't know where to begin but knew she wanted to start her own business. After our initial strategy session, I realized how overwhelming all the forms, documents, systems, and setup could be to a person with no prior business knowledge. With her start-up checklist in hand and professional contacts established, we went step-by-step through the mental data dump notes. This way, we were able to focus on one task at a time instead of the entire

giant puzzle. Tarekia was dedicated but honest about her challenges and areas where she felt inadequately prepared. I always appreciate people that are honest when they do not know a thing but are willing to learn. Your ability to be coachable in the business world will take you very far. Tarekia has since expanded her business to meal prepping and educating communities on healthy lifestyle choices with the food people already have at home.

When procrastination shows up for many people, it looks like always saying what you will do but not doing anything. Some people make a website, engage their closest friends to support, tell social media to “stay tuned,” and three years later, they haven’t launched a thing. I am a firm believer that we all have the right to change our minds, but that’s not the issue. The real problem is that you are consistently inconsistent. If you fail to follow through in other aspects of your life, naturally, you’ll do the same in business. For example, in your personal life, you may have said you want to live a healthier lifestyle, but you haven’t changed your diet and haven’t been to a gym in months. Maybe you set an annual financial goal but haven’t met the benchmarks because you still eat out five days a week. Or perhaps, you haven’t followed up with the manager or colleague at work that said to keep in touch when they could be a great mentor for you. These are just a few of the things we think are no big deal, but how you do one thing is how you do everything. The good news is you don’t have to continue making—or not making—those choices.

What if I told you that you can execute that BIG IDEA as it is right now and clean it up later? I don't mean neglecting to handle your business affairs. That's non-negotiable. What I mean is that you should do it ugly. You can hire a graphic designer when you make some money. You've allowed the fear of rejection and failure to prevent you from launching the passion project you've been thinking about forever. You do it ugly because your creativity will be born from your courage. Creativity is evolutionary. You can change along the way. Think about brands such as Microsoft, Apple, Instagram, and YouTube. Their logos, color palettes, and fonts have changed many times since conception, and no one has batted an eye. Creativity is not your issue, execution is.

I started a travel business, The Global Intent, in 2015 after a mutual friend introduced me to my mentor Roslyn Parker. Roslyn is a seasoned travel and business consultant with expertise in the volunteer travel industry. The philanthropist in me was intrigued about an industry that combined my love of traveling the world and serving the community. The Global Intent is an exclusive travel group specializing in global voluntourism from the Black millennial perspective. We define voluntourism as an integrated combination of intentional tourism, the genuine impulse to help, and wanderlust to experience cultures abroad. While we are open to various countries, destinations are favorable towards locations that comprise the African diaspora. When the inaugural trip to Nicaragua was announced, I promoted it on my personal Facebook page, shared travel details via email, and accepted payments via CashApp or PayPal. Those

that had an interest in the trip provided me with their email address before I was finished planning everything out. I remember sending the details to over 200 people, but less than 20 people ultimately booked. By the time we returned from Nicaragua and posted pictures of our amazing adventure, the same people who provided their email addresses, yet did not respond, were some of the same ones asking, “How did you find out about this trip to Nicaragua?”

I put the idea out there, but some people did not take me seriously. Guess what? I focused on my vision and did it anyway. Since then, I've led groups to Colombia, Ghana, South Africa, Tanzania, and I'm planning to go to many more places in the near future. Now, the booking site is more robust and detailed, I have a business account to accept payments securely, and I have a marketing budget to promote our trips year-round.

There will be times when you have to literally shut up and keep grinding to make things happen for yourself. This means you will have to get into your zone of genius and silence the noise. Part of this means knowing what to share with people and what not to share with people. I understand from a marketing perspective that mentioning or teasing what you're working on can be beneficial in the long run, but that comes with strategy. Do not get distracted by the attention you get from your “announcement” that you fail to implement and execute.

When I was in my stuck-up teenage years, my mama would make sure I remembered who the parents were. On any given day, I would hear, “Don't let your mouth

get you in trouble.” I can admit it, I did have a smart mouth growing up, but as I have matured, I can see this phrase has various meanings. When interacting with my parents, it was mainly about respect, but when applied to everyday life, we must be equally mindful. Speak life into your own situation, and don’t allow fear to create negative conversations. In the movie *American Gangster*, Denzel Washington said, “The loudest one in the room is the weakest one in the room.” I’ve found this theory to be true in most cases. You don’t have to announce everything, and it is okay to unplug while you focus. Sometimes God wants you to experience silence so you can hear from Him.

You can define it however you see fit in your life, but the most important thing is that you do the work to get out of your own way. Some say don’t talk about it, be about it. I simply say, do more, talk less. Are you ready to get out of your own way for real this time? If so, it’s time to get your ideas out of your head and on paper. In the back of the book, you’ll find access to my *Mental Data Dump Worksheet*. This worksheet includes four steps to follow for organizing your ideas, strategizing, and executing an efficient plan. You can use the spaces provided to release the many ideas that are cluttering your brain, identify potential partners, and document various ways to monetize your ideas.