

UOW College Hong Kong / Community College of City University
Student English Enhancement Unit (SEE U)
Daily English Practice

Week 4

#117 Five Successful Teenage Businessmen— Richard Branson

Skills/ Objectives: Reading, Listening and Writing Skills

PART 1: Before you read...

Preparatory questions

Qt 1: Have you ever boarded a direct flight from Hong Kong to London, with an airline called Virgin Atlantic?

Qt 2: A magazine, a record label, an airline... or even an island off the Pacific: if you could own one of these, which one would it be?

Qt 3: Did you know there is indeed a man who has all of these, plus much, much more?

Vocabulary

- venture (noun): a new activity, usually in business, that involves risk or uncertainty
- dyslexia (noun): a condition affecting the brain that makes it difficult for someone to read and write
- hone (in on) (verb): to make something completely suitable for its purpose
- procrastinate (verb): to keep delaying something that must be done
- avid (adjective): extremely eager or interested

PART 2: Article for Reading

Meet Richard Branson, who, at age 16, left school to start a magazine. From that he would go on to build a conglomerate. Today, at age 68, Branson is still very much a colourful character sought after by international media. Now this is what he has for the lot of us. Lesson one: "Start small but think big."

Richard Branson's advice for young entrepreneurs

<https://www.virgin.com/entrepreneur/richard-bransons-advice-young-entrepreneurs>

For more about Branson, read his autobiography which he judiciously called *Losing My Virginity* (1998). From the book you will see that Branson's business acumen went deep: "I started when I was 10 years-old, growing Christmas trees. I worked out that, by the time I left

school, these trees would be fully grown and I'd be able to make lots of money and, therefore, retire at 18."

PART 3: Listening Comprehension

Watch the following short video clips to learn more about entrepreneurship while practicing your listening skills at the same time:

Richard Branson - Building the Virgin Empire

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j5Gp5qP0GFI>

15 Things you didn't know about Richard Branson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=21pbaM8nRfs>

Listen to Branson talk about his latest aspiration, commercial space travel.... Is he going too far, literally?

Virgin Galactic in space for the first time

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h8T9mVkGh3s>

PART 4: Writing Practice

Did you notice the nice description in the following sentence in the text posted in Part 1?

Richard started his career as a young entrepreneur with a simple idea so he's in the best position to offer advice.

"Being in a position to do something" means you are qualified to do it. You are qualified thanks to your status and the experience inherent in it. Another example of its use is as follows:

I am not in a position to reveal any of the details of the project at present.

Note the use of the negative, which stresses the lack of status and experience on the part of the speaker.

Can you write a sentence of your own using this expression "be (not) in a position to do something"? Send your writing to: **see.u@ccu.edu.hk**. Remember! Our **SEE U** teachers are always ready to give you feedback.