

Dream Business

Inspiration Sleep

Many people want to start their own home-based business or small company in order to achieve financial independence, but finding the right idea is often challenging. Some budding entrepreneurs solve the problem in their sleep.

Thomas Edison is often mentioned as having dreamt up the solution for the light bulb, but his dream to solve the longstanding invention riddle was not literal. On the other hand, a number of entrepreneurs have claimed that they got the idea for their companies by actually dreaming them up.

Consider: Madam C.J. Walker, considered the wealthiest African-American woman in the early 1900's by the Guinness Book of World Records, stated that the formula for her company's products appeared in a dream.

And take the Glazed Honey Ham Company's eventual owner, Harry Hoenselaar; he invented a superior meat slicing machine and patented it in the 1940's. The design was based on detailed and vivid images that came to Hoenselaar while he slept. The equipment is used today by his company.

Lesson: At first glance, these examples may seem mysterious, but there is a logical explanation. Members of Walker's family were barbers, and she got her start in the beauty industry by selling hair care products for another company. A year later, she began experimenting with her own formulas. Walker reportedly had hair loss problems, which would have fueled her determination further to find a better solution.

Hoenselaar, a salesman for a meat company, was skilled at slicing meat and would often carve ham on a bone for customers who found the task difficult. Researcher Calvin Hall collected

and analyzed over 10,000 dreams from hundreds of people and determined that the themes in dreams often reflect the daily concerns of the dreamers. Although most people don't remember the content of their dreams, some individuals can, especially if they are good at remembering visual details while awake, and if their dreams were especially vivid.

Dream researchers have argued that there is little difference between knowledge gained while dreaming versus knowledge gained while awake, according to psychology textbook co-authors Don and Sandra Hockenberry.

Walker and Hoenselaar's dreams provided problem-solving answers to obstacles they encountered everyday and they used the information to launch successful companies. There are other cases of modern-day entrepreneurs who have started ventures based on specific dreams, but waiting for that kind of inspiration is impractical for most people interested in finding a business. Each person has to create their own game plan in order to uncover the right idea; a map geared to their personal circumstances.



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Glazed Honey Ham Company

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*Dee Adams is the author of **Finding Your Niche: Discover a Profitable Idea for a Business at Home—or Elsewhere***

