

“Just Do It” is the successful tagline of footwear giant Nike, as you know certainly.

Phil Knight, the daring spirit of Nike co-founder, is impressed in the early years of his company.

Here is what you discover in these blinks: the way of how Knight became great by reaching out to business people across the world to make his shoe business happen without preparation whatsoever.

You'll learn how he managed the creative misfits' team, stood his ground in two major lawsuits, and deal with a really infamous scandal – while at the same time he had one of the more powerful brands the world has ever seen.

Nike owes its success to a “crazy idea” and a trip around the world.

When it was 1962, Phil Knight was shy and a terrible salesperson that was fresh out of business school.

However, Phil wanted to import Japanese running shoes to the US and glanced at the Tiger brand produced by the Japanese company Onitsuka. So this failure didn't turn him away from his vision.

When he was at Stanford Business School, the idea has first emerged but his professors, classmates or even his father did not care about it too much.

But Phil didn't consider that. He traveled across the Pacific to sell his bold proposition to a room of a Japanese businessman.

What amazed Phil was that although he didn't have an expectation of being successful, the Onitsuka CEO saw it as perfect timing and asked him the name of the company with which he would work.

Phil, who was caught completely unprepared, said the name “Blue Ribbon.” Onitsuka agreed to send him 300 pairs of Tiger shoes to be sold on the trunk of Phil's car over the next several months.

After an agreement with Onitsuka, Phil traveled around the world and was inspired by what he saw and experienced.

Most of the cultures that he discovered had an impact on him later in life. For example, the Greek Acropolis has impressed Phil so much. He stood in front of the Temple of Nike, the goddess of victory, for hours on end.

Years later, Phil came across "The Knights" which is a play written by ancient Greek playwright Aristophanes. In this play, a new pair of shoes is gifted to the king by a warrior in the Temple of Nike.

When the former running coach of Phil Knight changed the early Tiger shoes, Blue Ribbon was taken into the game.

Bill Bowerman was a respectful, valuable, and inspired person for Phil Knight's life as many people have in their lives.

The confirmation of Bill was enough for Phil to pursue his dreams. Bill, in turn, was a genuine shoe dog.

A "shoe dog" represents a shoe-obsessed someone in the industry. Those people believe in the role of shoes in progressing safely to the future for both men and women.

Bill was interested in the relationship between small changes in footwear and its effect on the performance of his athletes so he became Phil's coach unofficial shoe guinea pig when he had run for him.

To do so and prove that shoes are an asset, not just a necessity, he would tear apart the shoes and then back together by using whatever materials he thought would make the shoes.

As a priority goal, he wanted to make the shoes as light as possible, which would later be a trademark of the Nike brand. His obsession with his goal even led to the use of codfish instead of leather when he made a lighter pair of shoes!

When Phil returned from Japan, he met with Bill to ask that he would partner with him at Blue Ribbon. Bill agreed and this led to a great deal of confidence in Phil. He began to believe that he could really do something with his "crazy idea". In fact, the cooperation was successful.

Timing again was important. When Blue Ribbon was in its infancy, the coaching career of Bill was on the rise such a pitch that he was even training future Olympics. Bill helped make the brand more exposure and helped Phil sell more pairs by changing Tiger shoes imported for Star Tiger.

Also, the Cortez, Bill's first modified shoe prototype, was sent to Onitsuka by Phil and he suggested the production of new, performance-tested shoes.

In this way, the company started to appear thanks to the help of Bill. However, the continued success of Blue Ribbon was in large part because of Phil's unusual, yet brilliant, employees.

The team of Blue Ribbon was shaped by the talented eccentrics who also made key decisions.

The growth of Blue Ribbon enabled Phil to build a trusting and trustworthy team.

However, there were no ordinary workers in Blue Ribbon. Instead, they were a bunch of brilliant misfits who formed a great team.

Their misfits provided work with together well. Also, no one thought he should stop so these allowed a member of each team to see past a coworker's quirks to the genius within.

All of the Blue Ribbon's employees believed in Phil and his vision. For instance, Jeff Johnson, the company's first full-time employee, worked with Bill Bowerman tirelessly to design innovative shoes.

The team-building weekend event called "Buttfaces", which would be held several times a year by Phil to keep the Blue Ribbon team strong.

In this activity, everyone could yell at each other before getting drunk to remember that no one was too important to be mocked. But, there is no one way to maintain morale for Phil. He also tried to involve his team the process of the company's decision-making.

As for daily work, Phil followed General Patton's words of wisdom: "Don't tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their results."

For instance, there was no description for Jeff Johnson how he did his job. Even, Jeff didn't experience hard time related countless letters with subjects ranging from advertising questions to poems and even jokes thanks to Phil.

When it came time for big decisions, Phil's employees weren't excluded. In 1971, the company made a decision about producing own shoes instead of selling Onitsuka. However, the brand of Blue Ribbon wasn't seen enough for this big move so it became necessary to change. Phil could choose a new brand himself but he preferred asking his employees their suggestions for names.

Surprisingly, Jeff Johnson had a dream about the name 'Nike' which impressed Phil so many years ago in the Temple of Nike. So, Phil continued with it.

Although there was a threat of lawsuits came from Onitsuka and the government, Nike resisted.

As many successful entrepreneurs know, fame and fortune always have obstacles and pitfalls.

Particularly, there were two significant lawsuits threatened to stop Phil Knight's career dead in its tracks.

First of all, a breach of contract is claimed when Blue Ribbon started to produce and distribute Nike shoes in 1973 and Onitsuka tried to litigate for costs.

Then, Blue Ribbon sued Onitsuka in the US for violating the contract as well as trademark infringement to defend itself. Blue Ribbon had a special contract to distribute Tiger's track and field line in America. Phil's informant from Onitsuka said that one of the managers of Onitsuka had planned a trip to America to find a new distributor.

In the light of this information, Phil focused on establishing the new company, Nike.

Ultimately, the case resulted in a positive decision for Blue Ribbon. According to the judge, the decision was based on companies being honest and in this case he concluded that Blue Ribbon was the most honest partner. Onitsuka was ordered to pay compensation.

For the first time, Phil and his work were faced with such a major threat. Secondly, the threat came from the government in 1977. According to them, Nike owed \$25 million.

Nike was accused violating the law called the American Selling Price in which certain types of shoes would sustain significantly higher customs duties and the problem began when Keds and Converse, Nike's competitors in America, came together to find out an obscure customs law.

However, Phil's belief in Nike's innocence was critical in his fight. This belief made it easier to continue in a stressful situation.

So Phil made the claim to be \$ 9 million, making a diplomatic gesture with the suggestion of a trusted counselor, even though he wanted the government to give up his claim altogether.

Phil could fight but his feelings directed him to this gesture. If he didn't give up the government's claim tooth and nail, his company could never reach something he needed most in his future, its goodwill.

The probability of staining of IPO the unique culture at Nike scared Phil Knight but its strong spirit continued.

Clearly, there were some obstacles for Phil while rising to the top so he tried so hard to continue.

So how did Nike grow to become the company it is today?

Phil didn't have certainty about the meaning of winning for him but he knew that losing was not for him.

The reasons for this were fear of disappointing his father partly and partly his belief in the fact that work should be playful and meaningful. As a result, he convinced about that he shouldn't have a passive life that just seemed to "slip" by.

Although taking Nike public solved financial problems, Phil abstained because he thought that his business should be playful and fun.

Shortly, Phil's work has been shaped by the motto "grow or die" which meant that all profits were put into the business to help to grow, except for the money they use to pay their modest salaries.

According to this financing strategy, banks, often refused him the large loans he claimed, were trustworthy for Phil but Japanese trading company Nissho supported Nike financially instead of the banks.

Finally, Phil had to take Nike public with an initial public offering because the government's lawsuit caused the \$25 million. However, he had still worries about IPO that would cost him control of the company and its unique code of ethics by transforming Nike into yet another corporate machine.

Fortunately, an innovative idea was put forward on how the company would design its structure to keep Nike in charge thanks to one of Phil's partners. Even today, the company is proud of its integrity, which includes many of its worldwide successes.

The ways of the factory to adhere to Nike's values: Improve factory working conditions and treat sponsored athletes well.

Since its origins, Nike has used the same integrity and energy that it has always sought from every employee of Phil while a company struggling against setbacks. This provided keeping customers loyal through thick and thin.

Currently, Nike is working for better labor standards for its factory workers. In the nineties, the company took part in the center of a detrimental report on the terrible working conditions of Asian sweatshops.

Many corporations rented a workspace in these factories but Nike the footwear company was the center of the story because Nike's name and recognition became an interest in the media. Thanks to the report's author, the media paid attention to the story.

The wages of factory workers were important for Nike and a lot of work was done to be increased, but this was stopped because a government official said that factory workers who earned more than doctors in one country would be bad for the economy.

Then, Phil and his team realized that they had to work harder despite that shameful expression.

It was a new way for the company finding a water-based bonding agent to fix the tops of the shoe to the soles of a shoe to improve factory conditions.

This was a great development because the most carcinogenic area in a shoe factory was the so-called rubber room and the toxins in the previous one were cut out 97 percent thanks to Nike's new bonding agent.

In fact, Nike shared the new glue with its competitors and enabled them to use it in their factories.

Many Nike-sponsored athletes have been Phil's personal friends because he acted as they are real people, not as the only vehicles for selling products. That is, Nike's honesty commitment did not stop at the factory gate.

For instance, every single Nike athlete wrote or called to offer condolences to Phil, when his son died in a scuba diving accident. In the following years, Phil made particularly one good friend: Tiger Woods.

To conclude, there are few global companies with a heart like Nike's heart.

Shoe Dog: A Memory by the Creator of NIKE by Phil Knight Book Review

The story of the shoe giant Nike came from humble beginnings and "crazy" ideas. The company's rising fame in the world is evidence for that if you believe in your ideas, think outside the box and continue to adhere to their values; you have no limit so you can accomplish everything.

Surround yourself with believers.

Starting a successful business requires you to be surrounded by people who believe in you and your ide, and; they're supposed to be together not just for money, but because they want you. Employees with real passion will be the most relevant team members for you and will remain committed to you even when things get tough.

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