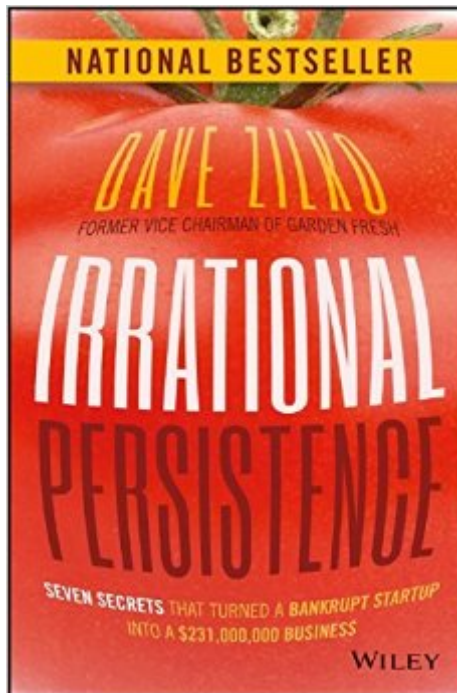


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# Irrational Persistence: Seven Secrets That Turned A Bankrupt Startup Into A \$231,000,000 Business



## Synopsis

A modern-day Detroit success story that fuels the entrepreneurial fire *Irrational Persistence* tells the story of Garden Fresh Gourmet, and how two entrepreneurs turned a million-dollar debt to a 100-million-dollar annual revenue. Woody Allen famously said that 80 percent of success is just showing up; but any entrepreneur can tell you that it's the other 20 percent that's key. The founders of Garden Fresh took that old saying to heart, building so many strategic advantages into their products and business that their 'sales' team didn't have to do any selling—they simply had to show up. In this book, you'll find out what kind of legwork goes into building a mega-success product, and the strategies, methods, and just plain stubbornness that helped two guys from Detroit build a market leader. Garden Fresh Gourmet is now the number-one fresh salsa in the US, shipping over a million units every week to Costco, Walmart, Whole Foods, and other national chains—and it all began with two middle-aged guys with negative funds and plenty of ideas. This book shares their journey, insight, and passion to help you build a better business and take it to the top. Learn how two entrepreneurs went from major debt to major revenue Discover the key characteristics of a product that sells itself Consider why selling out might not be the ultimate goal Track a journey of 'irrational persistence' from rags to riches Garden Fresh Gourmet is an inspiration beyond the journey—the way you run things at the top matters, too. *Irrational Persistence* shows you how to make the tough decisions, live with the sacrifices, and prioritize your values as you build your brand and just keep on going.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 192 pages

Publisher: Wiley; 1 edition (April 4, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1119240085

ISBN-13: 978-1119240082

Product Dimensions: 6.3 x 0.8 x 9.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars— See all reviews— (16 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #174,479 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #88 in Books > Business & Money > Industries > Restaurant & Food #237 in Books > Business & Money > Marketing & Sales > Customer Service #274 in Books > Business & Money > Industries > Hospitality, Travel & Tourism

## Customer Reviews

This is definitely one of the best books for someone thinking of starting a business. The "four stars" is not a negative in any way. I like the book very much. However, the title is "irrational persistence" and that is a strong theme throughout. I dropped a star just as a balance--because sometimes persistence not only seems irrational (as it did for Dave Zilko, financing his Garden Fresh salsa business with \$2500 he charged on his girlfriend's credit card--and then persisted in business for years when he was \$400,000 in debt with no likelihood of ever getting it back.) Sometimes this kind of persistence can not only be "Irrational" it can also be "Foolish". In Zilko's case, he had a good idea and he had a talent for marketing and selling and he had the luck to meet and team up with a great and very compatible partner. That's a lot of danger points along the way to success (BIG success that included selling the business after over a decade to Whole Foods for ....)A book like this can be very inspiring. I also really liked how Zilko didn't make it sound easy (at all). Nor did he take all the credit--he had a lot of support, both financially and emotionally, from his girlfriend and his father. The importance of a supportive network for an entrepreneur cannot be overstressed and I respected his humility in emphasizing their importance here. He gives a good overview of the struggles, the challenges, of starting your own business. He goes into some strategies for overcoming problems and giving yourself the best chance of success.

There are few things common to many successful companies. The founders worked hard, several moon shots were taken and most of them failed, and some succeeded. It could be the mighty Microsoft or the tiny coffee shop on the strip mall. Behind every successful companies there are too many sleepless nights, stress, headaches, fear, excitement, a sorry face borrowing money from your family and inability to pay back. You might have to work in a dark basement with no heat because you cannot afford a decent place. Worst of all, you might have to drive 27 hours to a customer's place because you cannot afford a plain ticket. Many of them happened to the author of the book as well. This book takes it to extreme level. Here you have two unrelated and unknown middle aged men with families, both bankrupt to the bone, working separately and both abject failures from a perspective of a person with a comfy job. Yet both have a passion for the product they are working on, an aim for perfection, with no guarantees of success. Somewhere along the way they meet become partners and grow the company to over 100 million dollars in ten years. A small snippet from the book : "I was in my mid-thirties, with a wife and a young son. Well-educated but still paying off my student loans. Hundreds of dollars in debt with a company that had never made money..... I was selling life insurance at night to make ends meet, all the while spending my

days breaking eggs in the morning and putting whole cloves of garlic in salad dressing bottles in the afternoon and operating a forklift in the most miserable weather imaginable"CONS : At the end of every chapter, they have a page of business advice. They are all needless. The story is the message - More powerful than the vague advice.

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