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HAMILTON BRADSHAW
Investing in people with passion

Passion, dedication and an idea that works are key for young entrepreneurs

Ask James



James Caan

Dear James

I'M 17, and have done extensive research on start-ups and entrepreneurship. I have decided to take action, and am in the process of coming up with ideas. How do I ensure I am taken seriously by large businesses that notice I am young and inexperienced?
Finn Baseley

age, as long as you have the two key ingredients to entrepreneurship – passion and dedication – you're already halfway there. All the very best for the future!

■ For more expert advice, follow James on www.linkedin.com/influencer/jamescaan

IT'S always great to hear from young entrepreneurs who have made the difficult decision to start a business. Your obvious drive and passion reminds me of when I started out at a young age. Be sure to establish whether your idea is good enough to make a splash in your chosen market. You need to focus on what makes your product or service a cut above the rest, what is your unique selling point – what are you going to bring to the table? Once you've decided, do your research. Gain feedback from people outside your family and friends – this is the only way to get to know whether your business has potential and could be profitable. Before you start challenging the big guys, I'd recommend you visit the Government's start-up loans website www.gov.uk/start-up-loans, which can help with funding, development, mentoring and general business advice. I founded the scheme for people like you, and believe it could be hugely beneficial. Finally, remember that despite your