

5 Soft Skills You Need to Succeed at Crowdfunding

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May, 2019

Published on Indiegogo: <https://entrepreneur.indiegogo.com/education/article/5-soft-skills-you-need-to-succeed-at-crowdfunding/>



The life of an entrepreneur is full of technical challenges. Depending on the type of product you're trying to develop, you may spend your days solving engineering problems, troubleshooting electrical issues, or manipulating computer hardware. In the midst of this work, it can be easy to forget how important soft skills are to the ultimate success of your business goals.

Crowdfunding in particular requires a wide range of skills that aren't as technical as you might imagine. Instead, many of the skills needed are related to social and emotional intelligence. If you plan to launch and manage a crowdfunding campaign as part of your business strategy, then it's time to put aside technical know-how for a moment and reacquaint yourself with your soft skills.

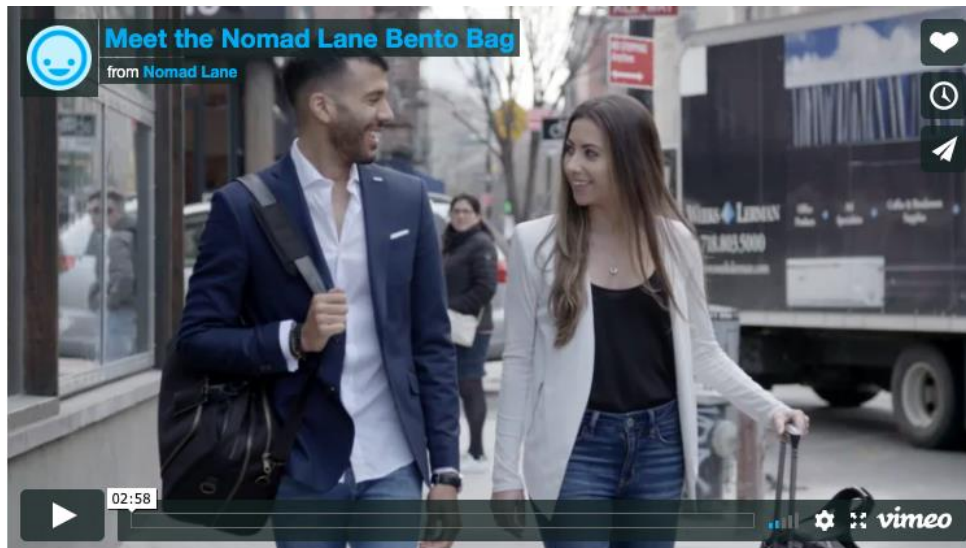
Here are the five most important soft skills needed for a successful crowdfunding campaign:

1. Storytelling Skills

To get people excited about your new product, you have to do more than list the product specs. A lot more. It helps to have high-quality pictures and lively descriptions, but what really piques the interest of potential backers are details about the story behind the product. Where did the initial idea come from? How and why was the product made? And, most importantly, who was it made by?

Telling this story is not easy, even for natural storytellers. It requires a high level of authenticity and a willingness to engage with your audience on a personal level. If you need inspiration for beefing up your storytelling skills, start by checking out past successful campaigns on Indiegogo.

For example, check out the campaign for the e-bike [MATE X](#), which features a quality photo of the founders and an inspiring description of their passion for the product. Also, check out the campaign for [Bento Bag](#), specifically noting the level of personal information shared in the campaign video. “If you watch the campaign video,” a co-founder of Bento Bag told Indiegogo, “you’re basically getting our life story.”



2. Teamwork

Crowdfunding requires a team effort. A secret to success is to surround yourself with people who are more knowledgeable than you are in specific domains. Even if you’re a solo entrepreneur, your crowdfunding journey will likely require working with consultants, marketers, advertisers, as well as Indiegogo staff and our partners.

How can you be a good team player if it’s not within your natural skillset? Career experts often suggest that teamwork starts with being an engaged listener. “Sometimes we focus too much on what actions we should take rather than how we make people feel,” says a career coach at [Forbes](#). “If you listen well, the path to becoming a better co-worker and team player reveals itself.”

It’s equally crucial to let others help you. “Helping others is important,” according to Forbes. “However, allowing others to help you is just as important. By opening up to your colleagues, you can be more authentic, more approachable and benefit from their wisdom.”

If you are naturally a team player, you’re in luck. At Indiegogo, [we’ve found](#) that the most successful campaigns are run by teams, not by single people. According to Slava Rubin, one of

the co-founders of Indiegogo, we've also found that, in crowdfunding, "backers really become part of the team, and they want to feel it."

3. Self-Motivation

Many of the soft skills required to succeed at crowdfunding are also essential to entrepreneurship in general. Self-motivation is an obvious example. Entrepreneurs practically define self-motivation.

If you have a positive attitude, if you take initiative without supervision, and if you define yourself by goal-oriented behavior, then you are a self-motivated person. Congrats. This one's a gimme.

The important point here is to take all of your natural self-motivation and apply it to the full lifecycle of your crowdfunding campaign. From the moment you start [preparing to create](#) a campaign to the time you're [shipping a product](#) and looking into [post-campaign activities](#), it's important to hold onto your positive, goal-oriented attitude.

There is one caveat. Self-motivated entrepreneurs are known for [setting extremely ambitious goals](#). And this can get you in trouble when it comes time to set your funding goal. As a general rule, the goal you set for your crowdfunding campaign should be realistic. Indiegogo's [Help Center](#) stresses this point: "Setting a realistic goal will help you increase credibility as it demonstrates that you've carefully considered the costs of bringing your idea to life."

4. Flexibility

Crowdfunding doesn't always go according to plan. Maybe you set an unrealistic goal for your campaign. Or maybe you raised way more money than you planned and now you're trying to figure out how to possibly fulfill so many orders. In either case, you'll need to be flexible to make sure you can ultimately call your campaign a success.

In practice, flexibility in crowdfunding means, for example:

- Working longer hours than you had planned
- Handling customer support when no one else on your team is available
- Editing or removing [backer perks](#)
- Finding alternate packaging or shipping options
- Admitting when mistakes have been made, and seeking help when necessary

Even if everything goes according to plan, you'll need to adapt to uncertainty. Also, you'll need to remain open to learning new things—including other soft skills listed here.

5. Resourcefulness

Resourcefulness is [defined](#) as “the ability to find quick and clever ways to overcome difficulties.” By this definition, crowdfunding is an exercise in resourcefulness. While there are other ways to seek funding for a project, crowdfunding is the “quick and clever” workaround to traditional funding channels.

Entrepreneurs with the best experience crowdfunding are often the most resourceful. For example, this could mean bending rules, applying unrelated experience to a new problem, or assertively asking for what’s needed to make the campaign a success.

For example, resourcefulness makes a big difference when reaching out to the press. Tim Metz, the founder of the productivity app Saent, realized that mainstream publishers didn’t effectively attract backers to his crowdfunding campaign. So he started reaching out to [niche press](#) and bloggers. When a publication—even a small one—aligned with the type of product he had created, the sales numbers really started to take off.

Reaching out to press is just one small component of crowdfunding. You should also be prepared to get resourceful with flash sales, add-on perks, packaging, shipping, post-campaign strategies, and many other aspects of your campaign.

Fortunately, Indiegogo has assembled many of the resources you will need to manage a successful crowdfunding campaign. Check out our [Experts Directory](#) for help with [creative services](#), [legal and financial services](#), [packaging and fulfillment](#), and more.

Not sure how to begin raising money with crowdfunding? [Get started by downloading our Crowdfunding Field Guide.](#)