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Small business owners are busier than most people on earth, and that's why Your Biz is here. For seasoned business owners and budding entrepreneurs alike, we'll tackle it all - health care, franchising, taxes, the latest gadgets and even how to balance work and life. Yes, it's possible, even when you're your own boss.



Primary author [Eve Tahmincioglu](#) has been covering small business and entrepreneurship for more than a decade. She regularly writes about small business issues for the New York Times and BusinessWeek's SmallBiz magazine. She also writes [the Your Career column](#) for MSNBC.com. She is the author of "From the Sandbox to the Corner Office."

MARTINIS AND THE ENTREPRENEUR

Martinis and the entrepreneur

Posted: Tuesday, January 22, 2008 3:32 AM by Eve

Tahmincioglu

Filed Under: [Customer service](#), [Vendors/suppliers](#), [Health care](#), [Work/life balance](#), [Entrepreneurship](#)

Many moons ago when I was working for a daily newspaper there was a columnist there who would always write his best columns after a three or four martini lunch.

Many of us in the newsroom would say, after reading a particularly witty column, "He must have really tied one on at lunch."

And, at a fashion publication I wrote for, one of the big time editors there would keep a bottle of whisky in his top drawer, "just in case."

I never found out what he meant by just in case. I figured there were probably a lot of just in cases in his day.

Alas, behavior like that is a thing of the past with only about 7 percent of American workers saying they drink during the workday, according to a University of Buffalo study.

But should entrepreneurs abstain? Can't they do what ever they want? They are their own bosses after all.



BusinessWire

Can a glass of wine, or dry martini help you be more productive, or more relaxed when it comes to business deals?

Don't get excited. I haven't found any research yet that says a bit of alcohol makes you a better businessperson, or a better anything frankly. On the flip side, there isn't a lot of research that points to a lack of entrepreneurial success if you drink either.

So what is an entrepreneur, who is also fond of libations, to do?

Most experts say stay away.

During business lunches, don't drink unless your clients want to partake as well, says [Robin Jay](#), a Las Vegas career coach and author of "The Art of the Business Lunch."

If you don't like to drink but know you'll be taking out a client who's a boozer, Jay recommends you go to the restaurant before hand and tell the wait staff that when you ask for a vodka and tonic you want them to give you a club soda with a lime. That way, you don't make the client feel uncomfortable while you're teetotalling.

What about honesty being the best policy?

Jay likens it to lying when someone asks you if their butt looks too big in a pair of pants.

But what's wrong with one drink if you're nervous and want to relax, especially if you're meeting with that big client?

"Alcohol makes you sloppy," Jay says.

Sometimes sloppy is a great business strategy.

I came across a blog written by [an Internet entrepreneur](#) in Amsterdam who makes a case for being hung-over when you go into negotiations.

"I found myself in a bar, in Monaco, together with my business partners and a lawyer. We were slowly getting drunk. Since we were planning to sell our company for millions the next day I asked the lawyer if we shouldn't try to stay sober to avoid a hangover. He replied that the best way to go into a negotiation is with a hangover."

His theory: The unpleasant physical effects following the heavy use of alcohol actually work to your advantage during a tough negotiation. Seemingly uninterested you will be slouched in your chair, responding slowly and talking softly and looking generally unhappy with whatever the other party proposes."

Might be something to this strategy.

So, back to that University of Buffalo report. Guess who is most likely to be drinking during work hours? Single men, including managers, salespeople, restaurant workers and ... people in the media.

What's your take? Do you drink up during lunch?

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When doing business, you should keep a clear head. Sometimes when we drink too much, many things look like a good deal that may not look so good the morning after. Any lawyer that goes into a negotiation with a hangover when he is dealing with my life, my money, and my business will be looking for another client very soon.

[Judi Moreo, Author, You Are More Than Enough, Las Vegas, Nevada](#) (Sent Tuesday, January 22, 2008 3:24 PM)

Entrepreneurs should be able to do whatever they want because they are their own bosses, and drinking is a personal choice.....but.....they reap what they sow! To be effective and sharp, drinking and/or drugs are out. To gain respect and new clients and keep established ones, any kind of mental impairment will cost you!

Better, in my opinion, to spend your time reading management and self-help literature that will expand your mind and help you grow your business.

50 years being an entrepreneur taught me to look for the best ways to become successful and avoid those things that would bring me down. GAGO

Ruth J Campshure (Sent Tuesday, January 22, 2008 3:58 PM)

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if they don't drink driving cars or airplanes nor use dangerous machines (nor seat in front of an ICBM control panel...) a small amount of alcohol could help neurons to work in a more creative way (but it's not a scientific theory, of course... :)

however, this is not the main argument of my comment

maybe, you may think I've drunked half dozens Martinis... but I'm doing a an "unique in the world" and "never done before" thing:

start a "NEW.SPACE" company raising the funds to do that selling ad spaces on eBay!!!

if you want to know more about this crazy (but not impossible) idea read the (temporary) home page of my New.Space Agency:

<http://www.newspaceagency.com/>

or watch my NewSpaceAgency's eBay (current) auction:

<http://cgi.ebay.com/ebaymotors/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?ViewItem&sspageName=ADME%3AL%3ALCA%3AIT%3A31&viewitem=&item=280194182637>

[Gaetano Marano - Italy](#) (Sent Tuesday, January 22, 2008 7:48 PM)

You bring up a good point. I have indulged in a drink or two at lunch before but definitely keep it to that. More than that, and I make sure it's happy hour. :)

[Rebecca](#) (Sent Friday, January 25, 2008 11:24 AM)

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