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Quench Your Own Thirst: Business Lessons Learned Over A Beer Or Two



Synopsis

Founder of The Boston Beer Company, brewer of Samuel Adams Boston Lager, and a key catalyst of the American craft beer revolution, Jim Koch offers his unique perspective when it comes to business, beer, and turning your passion into a successful company or career. In 1984, it looked like an unwinnable David and Goliath struggle: one guy against the mammoth American beer industry. When others scoffed at Jim Koch's plan to leave his consulting job and start a brewery that would challenge American palates, he chose a nineteenth-century family recipe and launched Samuel Adams. Now one of America's leading craft breweries, Samuel Adams has redefined the way Americans think about beer and helped spur a craft beer revolution. In *Quench Your Own Thirst*, Koch offers unprecedented insights into the whirlwind ride from scrappy start-up to thriving public company. His innovative business model and refreshingly frank stories offer counterintuitive lessons that you can apply to business and to life. Koch covers everything from finding your own Yoda to his theory on how a piece of string can teach you the most important lesson you'll ever learn about business. He also has surprising advice on sales, marketing, hiring, and company culture. Koch's anecdotes, quirky musings, and bits of wisdom go far beyond brewing. A fun, engaging guide for building a career or launching a successful business based on your passions, *Quench Your Own Thirst* is the key to the ultimate dream: being successful while doing what you love.

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Customer Reviews

"Quench Your Own Thirst is a frosty mug full of sound advice for turning passion into a great business." •Tony Hsieh, New York Times bestselling author of *Delivering Happiness* and CEO of Zappos.com, Inc."Always true to himself, the author's belief in Samuel Adams and the people around him is what makes his story and philosophy so genuine and endearing. Koch's down-to-earth personality, business advice, and passion are good models for those interested in making their own ways. " •Kirkus Reviews"Quench Your Own Thirst introduces an engaging, down-to-earth, fifth-generation brew master who also happens to be a savvy, creative, disciplined business mastermind. Jim Koch's story of how he built his beer company " and, incidentally, helped start a new industry in craft beer " serves candid, inspiring insights useful for entrepreneurs in any field. Koch's practical optimism sets the standard for how business success and personal happiness can be beautifully connected. " •Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Harvard Business School professor and best-selling author of *Confidence: How Winning Streaks and Losing Streaks Begin and End* and *MOVE: Putting America's Infrastructure Back in the Lead* "Jim Koch has opened a lot of doors for craft breweries like mine who have succeeded based on the premise of challenging the status quo. Every entrepreneur and aspiring entrepreneur will find useful and sage advice between the covers of *Quench Your Own Thirst* -- and Jim's personality, wisdom and sense of humor come through in his writing as crystal clear as a pint of Sam Adams Lager. " •Sam Calagione, President & Founder of Dogfish Head Craft Brewery"Like Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, Larry Ellison, and the other greats, Jim Koch's entrepreneurial journey is motivated by a deep commitment to making superb products and building a unique culture that reinforces innovation and risk-taking. This book tells a compelling story about how he did it. The lessons will be invaluable for anyone starting a business or building a career." •Bill Hambrecht, co-founder of Hambrecht & Quist and chairman of WR Hambrecht + Co "This is an engaging and well-written blend of stories from a beloved company's founding and sound guidance on surmounting common dilemmas faced in business and in life. " •Publishers Weekly"Anyone enjoying America's current Golden Age of Beer will be fascinated by Jim Koch's story of how it came to be. But this is really a book about the individual and team traits necessary to build any enterprise -- and about the paradoxical combination of hard-headed practicality, impractical dreaming, long-term vision, and minute-by-minute adaptability required for success. Jim Koch once called Samuel Adams beer 'America's classic lager.' He has written a classic American story of pluck, ingenuity, setbacks, and achievement, all in a tone of gently self-mocking humor. " •James Fallows, National Correspondent at *The Atlantic* "For me, Sam Adams was not only the best beer I've ever tasted but also the best investment I ever made. " •John Paulson, Founder of Paulson & Co."[Koch]

writes about building and running a company in a fun and folksy tone. He is also refreshingly candid about the hard battles and missteps along the way. Unlike many turgid, self-told business books, *Quench Your Own Thirst* goes down easy."â •Reuters

Jim Koch is the founder of The Boston Beer Company and brewer of Samuel Adams. He founded the company in 1984 using his great-great grandfather's recipe and set to the task of revolutionizing American beer. Samuel Adams Boston Lager has been an important catalyst in the American Craft Beer Revolution for more than thirty years, bringing full-flavored, award-winning beer to the American beer landscape. The Boston Beer Company has become one of the leading American craft breweries and now accounts for just over one percent of the U.S. beer market.

Really enjoyed reading this book. No nonsense business advice straight from the man himself. It was refreshing to read a story of a successful company that quality of the product was the most important concern. Sadly you don't see that often enough. It was a really easy read that felt as relaxed as if you were sitting have a beer with the man himself (sounds cheesy I know). Have a new appreciation for Sam Adams and a fresh perspective for my business. Planning on reading this one over and over again.

Fifteen years ago I featured Boston Beer in my book *Value-Creating Growth* as a prime example of a well-crafted strategic construct, also well executed. Now Jim is sharing the full arc of how to build a business. Boston Beer has had, of course, its downs and ups. '*Quench...*' Can serve as a primer for established enterprises that need to ratchet up their growth. And the lessons serve equally well to paint the journey a young company must transverse.

Easy to read book. The author is very open about problems and successes encountered in his business over the years. Great insight into running a business as well as simply learning about the Boston Brewing Company. I read this for a non-fiction business book club and it led to lively discussion and general enjoyment of the content.

This book was a very entertaining and insightful look into what is clearly a very creative and brilliant mind. Jim Koch has clearly thought a great deal about how to run a company, and his wisdom here is worth far more than the price I paid for the book. This isn't so much a how-to guide for starting a business or even a biography. Rather, the book reads as a series of anecdotes that progress

roughly from the beginning of the Boston Beer Company to the present day. Koch's writing style is extremely clear and, at times, quite lively and feisty. It is a short read - or at least it seemed that way since I couldn't put the book down. Not only that, I was so impressed with the business that Koch has built that I immediately went out and purchased shares of the company (which as of this writing are down significantly from the highs - and much cheaper than the big brewers). I mainly bought this book because I enjoy Sam Adams beer and was interested in what Koch had to say, but after reading Koch's stories I am even more of a fan.

As others have stated, Jim does a great job of explaining the how and why of what makes Sam Adams different. It was refreshing to hear someone else talk about many of the same concepts I've applied to my engineering teams over the years. Jim explains why it is so important to have a good idea, great people, focus on quality/safety, and work closely with customers. I've used similar techniques in high tech, and achieve similar results on a smaller scale.

This engaging read is an insightful book about lessons learned while growing a business from a two-person operation making cold calls at Boston bars to a billion-dollar, publicly-traded company. Instead of just recounting the Sam Adams story, the book is organized into about forty short chapters that each detail an anecdote from the history of Boston Beer Co., and the lessons that Jim learned from that moment. Many of the lessons are drawn from successful efforts, but there are also tough looks at some of the missteps and setbacks along the way. Jim's writing style is enjoyable and easy-to-read, and he comes across as someone who's legitimately passionate about his product and company. My biggest take-aways came from the sections on setting goals (unifying goals should be challenging, but feasible), the benefits of putting product quality first, and building lasting and powerful company values. There are glimpses into behind-the-scenes moments of the early days of craft beer that should tickle beer lovers, but for the most part the focus of the book is Jim's entrepreneurial journey.

Loved reading this book. I worked for Jim and the Boston Beer Company from 1987-1989 and the stories and business ideas he shared with me then appear here. I particularly like the String Theory and Better or Cheaper chapters. Jim started a revolution and did a startup long before startups were cool. You can learn so much from this book, and his stories. So take his advice, buy a six pack of the original Samuel Adams, pull up a stool and enjoy! Cheers, Jim

I am a fan of Mr. Koch's product and it was interesting to learn some of the behind the scenes trials and tribulations of getting the company up and running. My favorite part of the book was when he finally convinced his father that he was serious about opening a brewery, his dad gave him an old family recipe and said, "If you are going to brew beer, brew good beer."

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