

# bSMART

LINKING WOMEN TO LIVE SMART

## THE PATH REDEFINED: GETTING TO THE TOP ON YOUR OWN TERMS

Serial entrepreneur and author of *The Path Redefined: Getting to the Top on Your own Terms*, Lauren Maillian Bias co-founded an award-winning wine brand at age 19, making her the youngest self-made winery owner in the country. After the brand's acquisition in 2011, she founded a strategic marketing company, *Luxury Market Branding*, and co-founded *Gen Y Capital Partners*, an early stage venture firm focused on consumer facing technology companies. She has been recognized at The White House by the Kauffman Foundation as an *Empact100 Award* honoree for being a top entrepreneur under the age of 30. Lauren tells bSmart members what makes a great entrepreneur, the keys to successful marketing, how to create a meaningful network, and what she looks for when she invests in a millennial owned company.



IT'S ABOUT KNOWING WHAT TO DO WHEN OPPORTUNITIES  
COME - HOW TO REACT TO THEM AND HOW TO MAKE TIME  
AND SPACE FOR THEM.

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LAUREN MAILLIAN

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## R E D E F I N I N G   O U R   P A T H

### What are the steps for visualizing our path and **defining success**?

Earlier this year I wrote a book called **The Path Redefined: Getting to the Top on Your Own Terms**. It's important for all of us to *redefine our path* and to leverage what makes us unique. Oftentimes, what makes us unique is also what makes us insecure. There's a way to take what makes us unique, embrace it, and make it a part of our **narrative for success**.

What enables me to live the path redefined is to give myself moments of quiet - such as having a cup of tea, sitting in my room, lighting some candles and thinking about my lofty aspirations. It's the huge, lofty goals that motivate me and inspire me to reach for the stars day in and day out, through the highs and lows. I look at those huge aspirational goals that are, for some, beyond the realm of possibility. For me, I think anything is possible. And there's no reason anything can't be possible for you too.

WATCH LAUREN SHARE HOW YOU CAN REDEFINE YOUR PATH



Lauren Maillian Bias  
Author of 'The Path Redefined: Getting to the Top on Your Own Terms'

O U R   C H I L D R E N ,   A N D   T H E   P E O P L E   W E   S U R R O U N D  
O U R S E L V E S   W I T H ,   A R E   I N S P I R E D   B Y   W H A T   T H E Y   S E E   A N D  
K N O W .

### What does it mean to be **prepared for success**?

Being **prepared for success** means you care so much about who you are, what you represent and what you know, that you always want to be your best. It's about knowing what to do when opportunities come up - how to react to them, how to make time and space for them, and how to make sure you're effectively managing everything to get to your endgame. That endgame is different for all of us.

There's a simple question I ask myself every time a great opportunity presents itself, 'Is it worth it even if I fail?' Sometimes it doesn't matter if we fail or succeed. It's the experience itself that gives us so much leverage to broaden our networks and create relationships that may have otherwise not been possible. That is being prepared for success.

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## What are the **characteristics** of a successful entrepreneur?

People think you have to have a specific personality type to be an entrepreneur. While I agree, in general it really comes down to having humility, being resourceful, knowing how to surround yourself with the right people and how to quickly get the answers you need to move your company forward. Great entrepreneurs are not just resourceful - they're receptive. You have to be able to receive feedback - good, bad, ugly and indifferent. If nothing else, the feedback enables you as the entrepreneur to create a road map to be reactive to what you think may come in the future.

The **successful entrepreneur** is someone who also knows how to create teams and knows how to lift up their team members. Success is the result of our teams - the people we have around us, who support us and help us build our companies and careers. The really amazing entrepreneur is the one who praises everyone else around them, because they know that they would be nowhere without them.

THE GREAT ENTREPRENEUR KNOWS HOW TO  
COMMUNICATE, BUILD TEAMS, MANAGE BALANCE SHEETS,  
AND BUILDS THE BEST COMPANY THEY CAN AS A RESULT  
OF FEEDBACK.

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## What are the keys to success for the **first 5 years** of business?

You'll often hear seasoned entrepreneurs say it's important to fail fast and pivot. While that's important, it's also important to be incredibly nimble with your new business. I advise young entrepreneurs that they need to be prepared to create new ways to communicate with their consumer or communicate their vision *until they get it right*. You've got to be resilient, tenacious, and tireless in your ability to continuously push forward and reinvent until you get it right. The faster you discover how you can improve, the faster you'll be successful in the first one to five years.

It's also important to create a great culture. Most entrepreneurs aren't able to compensate their team anything close to what they would be making in the corporate world. There are some benefits and perks that the entrepreneur in the early stages can't possibly compete with. Truth be told, if the company is backed by a venture firm, no company is going to be able to give cushy salaries to the start up team. It's just not going to happen. You have to create a culture and make your employees feel a sense of ownership to want the best for your company as much as you do. You need to build incentives of ownership – of their job, their responsibilities and their results – and find a way to show them that they did a job well done

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AN ENTREPRENEUR NEEDS TO BE PREPARED TO CREATE  
NEW WAYS TO COMMUNICATE WITH THEIR CONSUMER  
UNTIL THEY GET IT RIGHT.

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#### What do you look for when you **invest** in a company?

When I invest in a company, I look for great entrepreneurs. Of course you have to believe in the company, the product they're building, and the service they want to provide - as well as the way they want to connect with their consumers. But you're investing in the individuals - the founding team. I'm often asked, 'If an entrepreneur fails, would you invest in them again?' My answer is: it depends on how they fail and how they communicate their failure. If an entrepreneur fails and they're graceful and communicative, and manage the process of winding down appropriately - I'd invest in them again every day of the week, because they handled the situation well.

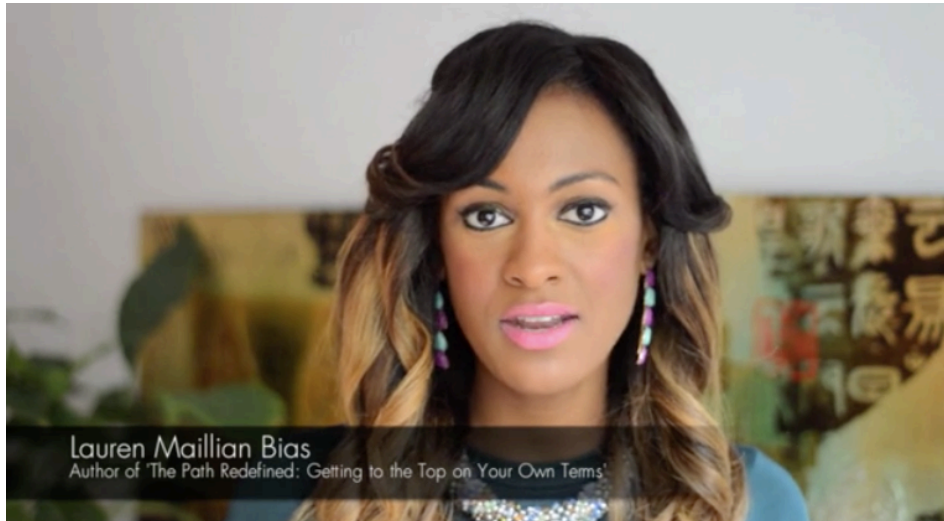
I look for people who are not just intelligent and hardworking, but who are honest, transparent and go beyond the call of duty to show that they understand the space, how they intend to operate, and their competition. The great entrepreneur (who I want to bet on and put my dollars behind) is the one who knows how to communicate, build teams, manage balance sheets and bottom lines, and builds the best company they can as a result of feedback.

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WATCH LAUREN SHARE WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A SUCCESSFUL  
ENTREPRENEUR



YOU HAVE TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO WORK YOUR PRODUCT  
INTO THEIR LIFE AND HOW YOUR PRODUCT OR SERVICE  
CAN CONTINUOUSLY MAKE THEIR LIFE BETTER.

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## What is the secret to creating a good brand identity and marketing strategy?

The key to **creating a wonderful brand-identity** and then creating your marketing strategy is to understand what your product means to your consumer - how you better their life and what inspires them to make a purchase. Making the first purchase is often the easy part - to get them to buy again and to drive consumer loyalty in what I like to call a price-obsessed market is far more difficult. You do that by understanding who your consumer is and talking to them in the way they need.

Some brands are lifestyle brands. When you have a lifestyle brand, you have to figure out far more than just how to talk to your consumer. You have to figure out how to work your product into their life and how your product or service can continuously make their life better. The keyword is continuously. You've got to figure out where they are. That can be physically where they are - where they're shopping or where they're living. It can be more abstractly where they are - on social media or listening to music. Find out what those lifestyle habits are for your consumer and make sure you're there as often as they need you.

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IT'S THE HUGE, LOFTY GOALS THAT MOTIVATE AND  
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## S POTLIGHT ON LAUREN MAILLIAN BIAS

**Neighborhood:** Upper East Side

**Occupation:** Brand Architect, Marketer, Investor, Advisor and Author

**Women I Admire:** My mother

**Dream Mentor:** Richard Branson

**Look of the Season:** Lots of color and fun jewelry!

**Ultimate Accessory:** Great watch and a statement necklace

**Favorite Store:** High — Bergdorfs, low — Top Shop

**Go-to Outfit:** Jeans, a white tank and a black blazer

**Must-have Shoes:** Jimmy Choo (anything except kitten heels)

**Favorite Nail Polish:** Kennebunk Port (red) by OPI

**Can't Live Without Product:** My MacBook Pro

**Salon Recommendation:** Have fun and go Ombré!

**Signature Scent:** Azure Lime by Tom Ford

**Beauty Essential:** Neutrogena deep cleaning facial wash

**Cocktail of Choice:** Eastern Standard

**Best Date:** Is when it all feels so familiar and fun! Romantic with some mental stimulation!

**Travel Destination:** Turks and Caicos whenever I can.

**Current Craving:** Adventure

**Best Advice:** Never change who you are for anyone.

**Favorite Quote:** 'As we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.' —  
Marianne Williamson

**De-Stress Technique:** Accupuncture and lots of sleep.

**Latest Gadget:** My iPhone 6

**On My Playlist:** Robin Schulz remix of Waves by Chris Brown and T.I.

**Favorite App:** VSCO Cam

**University:** Fashion Institute of Technology, a State University of New York

**Graduation Year:** 2007

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## R E D E F I N I N G S U C C E S S

### Why is it important to create a personal or professional network?

People work with (and turn to first) the people they know, respect, and trust. This is no longer the age of people getting hired or the job interview just because their resume says they're qualified. Yes that absolutely helps, but where is a CEO turning when they need a new division head? They're turning to someone in their network who they can trust with the early access to the opportunity and who they also know is qualified.

It's how I've been able to create what I like to call a life that's truly serendipitous by design. It's serendipitous by design because my colleagues are my friends and my friends are my colleagues and it's a trusted circle of people who aren't just experts in their field, but people I admire, trust and have long-standing personal relationships.

There's a saying, 'Show me your friends and I'll show you your future.' It's so true. I make it a point to surround myself with real, genuine people who are true to their word and great at what they do. My biggest tip for networking is to be genuine because social climbing is a) obvious, b) tacky, and c) going to get you nowhere. I make it a point to try to connect genuinely with everyone I meet. If I don't, I consider it a connection that wasn't meant for me.

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THE FIRST STEP IN REINVENTING YOURSELF IS TO FIGURE  
OUT WHERE ON EARTH YOU WANT TO GO.

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#### What is the first step in **reinventing yourself**?

The first step in reinventing yourself is to figure out where on earth you want to go. That's not an easy thing to do and it's not something we can always do by ourselves. If I'm in a challenging or discouraging time, I surround myself with people who have a **vision for my life**. Surround yourself with people who can help you see your path more clearly and envision you going further than you think you could ever go.

The next step is to write down your plan – create a narrative that's a combination of who you are and what you've done (both professionally and personally) - about where it is you want to go, how you want to be known and what you want to accomplish. Then start talking about yourself as *the person you want to be* - not the person you are today who doesn't know if she can be that person tomorrow.

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WATCH LAUREN SHARE HOW SHE REINVENTED HER LIFE



IT'S SERENDIPITOUS BY DESIGN BECAUSE MY COLLEAGUES  
ARE MY FRIENDS AND MY FRIENDS ARE MY COLLEAGUES.

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**How do you **balance** your many roles as an investor, entrepreneur, board member, and single mother?**

There's no way that I, with all of the different hats I wear, can achieve balance. I try to be transparent with everyone around me about what I have on my plate and what my priorities are. I don't consider sharing my priorities to be selfish - I consider it to be necessary.

You have to set boundaries so people can work within the framework you've given them. People can take from you only as much as you allow them. I try to be realistic with my time constraints, my availability and my varying responsibilities – especially when I'm under pressure. I've found that this transparency results in people giving very reasonable and realistic requests for my time. The more you can create a transparent atmosphere, the more realistic people's request will be and in turn, you will feel more successful.

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IT'S ABOUT LEVERAGING YOUR UNIQUENESS.

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**How can your two beautiful children, Jayden Christopher and Chloe Giselle be smart like you?**

I love this question! Our children, and the people we surround ourselves with, are inspired by what they see and know. My children only know what they've seen - a hardworking, single mom who is dedicated to them and to providing the best for them – whether it be resources, education, experience, travel, friends or enrichment. These things are what have made me successful and they're what I know will make my children successful.

It's an honor for me to know that my children are well-rounded and confident in themselves at five and seven years old. People ask me what they want to be when they grow up. If you ask them, they'll tell you, 'I want to run my mom's company!' I don't think anyone's ever met children so excited to have a conference call. Their version of dress-up is getting ready to go to the airport and going on a multi-city tour, not forgetting their laptop, iPads and chargers. That's what they see mommy do and that's what they aspire to do. I have no doubt in my mind that they're going to be smart and they are going to be courageous.

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