So, you want to do a start-up?

Brett Fox - February 11, 2013

Jeroen Fonderie and I were interviewed recently by the popular podcast radio show theamphour about all things related to Touchstone Semiconductor. The interview was great fun, and it got me thinking about advice I would give someone interested in joining a startup like Touchstone. Here’s my top 5 list of things to expect:

1. **It won’t be like working for a large, established company.** Things moving at a lightning pace in a start-up, so buckle-up.

2. **Mistakes count a lot more. The enemy of all young companies is time.** You have nothing to sell when you delay those first product launches, so it heightens the importance of first-time success.

3. **Don’t expect to go home until you meet your commitments.** This relates to number two. Everyone needs to meet their commitments, so you work until the job gets done. In today’s world, you don’t need to be chained to your desk anymore, so you can work from home if needed. The key thing is getting the job done on schedule.

4. **Job description? There is no job description.** You can be doing anything on any day from cleaning up the break room to answering customer enquiries, to your normal job. The key thing is doing whatever is needed to help the company win.

5. **The highs are unbelievably high, and the lows can be unbelievably low.** There are no two ways around it, but a start-up is a wild roller coaster ride. When you are winning like Touchstone is, there is no better feeling. When things don’t go your way, and believe me, things don’t always go your way, your convictions and beliefs are put to the test.

OK, there you have it. My guide to what you can expect working at a start-up. Oh, and I have a bonus one that is critical to the success of any start-up:

6. **It’s cliché, but people are the most important resource, especially in a start-up.** You need world-class talent to win, and it’s even more true in a small company. There is no room, or money, to carry people. Every person needs to contribute at a very high level.

That’s all for now,

Brett