Participant 17 Interview Transcript

**Interviewer:** Again, are you OK with having this interview, participating in my research and being video and audio recorded?

**Participant 17:** Sure, that’s OK for me.

**Interviewer:** Let me familiarise you with my research. So, my research is about entrepreneurial success, and I specifically look at the role of luck and authenticity in the process of creating new ventures. Currently I’m in my third year of PhD, as you know, and I’m writing my second and third paper all together collecting data. We’re going to look at the extreme examples here of entrepreneurs and I am interviewing people like you, who are not entrepreneurs, because I want to see what non-entrepreneurs are thinking about extremely successful entrepreneurs. And by ‘extremely successful’ here I mean economically successful, so wealthy people, rather than any other meaning of success. Great. About the data protection measures I have undertaken, your name is not going to be mentioned, you’re not going to be affiliated with anything, so only for categorisation purposes, I will need some of your personal information like age, occupation, educational level and full name, if you can say that now.

**Participant 17:** OK. My occupation is student and part-time worker, qualification is bachelor’s degree. What was the other one?

**Interviewer:** Your age.

**Participant 17:** Age, yeah. I’m 22.

**Interviewer:** Great, so to begin our conversation can you tell me a bit about your personal and professional life? Anything that you’d like to share.

**Participant 17:** So, I’ll start with the personal one. I’m an international student, born and raised in Italy, moved out from Italy when I was just 19 and I’ve been in the UK ever since just with some occasional trips to the Netherlands to see my girlfriend and to Italy, as my family is in these two countries pretty much. So I will define myself as coming from very international background in a way. And my passions probably include general aviation, airplanes, anything that flies really, technology obviously, aerodynamics. That’s it for my personal life. In my, you said professional life, right? In my professional life, I’ve always been very orientated to my professional life since I was probably 14-15 or so. As in, if I want to do something, I want to do that something properly. I’m not saying I want to be the best at doing that but I want to be among the best, and that’s always going to be my mantra, since I was literally 14-15, which is why I ran as a school president, when I was 16, I won the elections, so I became school for my old high school and they still kind of remember me in a good way, which is great, I’d say, and that’s just for the high school period I’d say. Then when it came to applying for uni, I wasn’t really clear about what to do, I wanted to be a pilot, I wanted to do something with airplanes, generally speaking, because I love airplanes. I’m actually 2 kilometres away from the biggest airport right now, so, that’s a sign. Then I applied for unis, I knew the UK was probably the best country for Aeroplane engineering probably, other than the US, which was kind of off-hand by that time. I applied for uni, I got into all of my unis, where I wanted to go, and I ended up in Southampton as I knew It was going to be a nice place for me. After graduating I actually did my theme and changed three times, I went from BEng to Meng to integrated master’s, then I changed track, so I changed some modules, then I graduated with a BEng because I wanted to do an MSc, Master’s in Aerodynamics, instead of Engineering. Just because this all narrows down the possible roads I can take, so…we were 200 before in my course, now we’re 12, which kind of feels more elite in a way and I already got some PhD offers for the next year, so I’m very happy with that. And I’m the kind of guy that under the professional point of view doesn’t mind spending, you know, 18 hours in a lab, if there’s something going on, if there’s a task to do, or if there’s a deadline, as in. So I’d say that I kind of think that unfortunately, but I tend to prioritise my professional life, and I’ve always done that since I was very little, which is also why I’m thinking long-term as in I’m already thinking about where I want to be in the next 10 years, probably even more than that, which is kind of scary, given that I’m 22, but I’m fine with it, and that’s just part of me I guess.

**Interviewer:** That’s fantastic. Have you had any experience with entrepreneurship in the past?

**Participant 17:** I have, I actually won two months ago, the 100 big ideas competition from the uni. Essentially, I’ve always wanted to participate in that because I always thought that the environment at the future lab, the ideas accelerator at the uni is amazing, I really wanted to pop in there because I know that they’re nice people and they’re very motivated with what they do. So I came up with this idea, which essentially is taking my third year and work on a project and seeing and how this can be done on a very very wide scale. And the idea won one of the ten prizes in the engineering faculty, which I knew it was going to be very competitive environment. So, I’m very very pleased with that. Essentially, I thought of creating a company to commercialise on a wide scale what I did for my thesis, which would be a mess, which would be a nightmare, but It’d be very rewarding I guess, well it’s not for me I guess, it’s just the idea, you know.

**Interviewer:** Great and how do you see that working out in the future? Do you see the idea being developed on a wider scale?

**Participant 17:** It might be developed because there’s literally an incredibly big market that’s never been developed for that with some really big numbers as well. I don’t know if it’s going to be myself developing it or myself helping whoever is going to do it. That’s almost certainly not coming from me in the next five years at least. As in, I want to finish with a PhD and let’s see what happens. I don’t mind the idea; I know it requires quite a lot of effort. I know that a lot of people tend to say, OK I’m not going to do 9-5 job, so I decided to do it 24/7 job. So, that’s something that I also think at some point because I know myself. It’s just about time, yes.

**Interviewer:** Great. Now before we begin, let’s pin down a definition of an entrepreneur as someone who sets up a business or multiple businesses in the hopes of profits, and taking on financial risk. What do you think about this definition?

**Participant 17:** I think it’s totally fair, I think it really makes sense. Probably that’s a bit of an underestimate of the challenges that can go with them being entrepreneurs, because I mean my father used to be and I know there are some kind of big challenges and they very much depend on where you are, so taxes, having to deal with local governments, regulations, all of that stuff, they require people that are highly trained for that. You can do it by yourself but at some point, you’re going to need someone to be happy with that. So that’s definitely something to take into account. But obviously if you have a nice idea, and yeah, the definition makes sense, totally.

**Interviewer:** OK, great. Now let’s go on to explore your views about extremely successful entrepreneurs. As I mentioned in the beginning, by extremely successful I mean financially successful, or having earned a lot of money through entrepreneurial activity. So what or who crosses your mind when you think about an extremely successful entrepreneur?

**Participant 17:** I’m an engineer, so I have to go with this – Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, Mark Zuckerberg and all of the guys over there on the top, you know? As human beings having achieved what very very successful entrepreneurs would be The other thing that really crosses my mind is that there’s not necessarily something positive, that’s not necessarily something that should be seen by the majority of people as ethically successful. I’ll try to explain myself better although this can be very very tricky. When you reach a certain level with everything and that comes much from personal experience, you’re not going to achieve something without going outside the boundaries somehow, some way. I think that everyone does it at some point, being a lecturer, being an undergrad student, you’ll do it at some point and when you’re thinking of that much net worth, that much money, that much risk involved with that, I think that at some point, there’s going to be something that all of them made that if we knew that it’d be like: OK you’re…why are you terrible person, which is kind of why I don’t tend to have too positive idea of this kind of highly popular figures. Although I know that they’re at the top of the iceberg and everything, which makes sense, but yeah, that’s just my opinion, I guess.

**Interviewer:** And can you describe what’s your view of those people, how do you see them, what kind of characteristics they exhibit, what makes them who they are.

**Participant 17:** So I think that, I have to go with time, so when people had their ideas, the idea being Facebook or Tesla or whatever, Amazon as well, I think that these people had this brilliant idea back then, and the idea was great, there’s nothing to say about it, it’s brilliant, if you have that kind of idea, you have to go and push with it. So, kudos to you. I think that things at some point just became too big for them, and not just for them, for pretty much everyone that reaches a threshold and a certain peak, let’s say. When the ethics must be considered more than the money itself, that’s why I tend not to have too positive idea of these highly ranked personalities. I’m not saying that they’re all like that because obviously they’re not, I know many entrepreneurs that are literally running businesses just for charities. I actually have some names of people that do that. But I will not describe fears like Elon Musk or Jeff Bezos or anyone to be 100% positive as they are sometimes perceived by the majority of people that maybe don’t know their stories and maybe don’t know what they’re being involved in. I think for example what comes into mind, Elon Musk once said that he’s going to like he had to sell PayPal for 180 million If I’m not wrong, 40 million to put into SpaceX and 60 million to put into Tesla and he had to borrow money from friends pay for his rent. There I was like… bro what are you doing, why? I can understand you are passionate for what you do and you’re running your businesses, so you are responsible for that, but you also have to think about your peace of mind. And If your peace of mind doesn’t allow you live peacefully and buy a house after you made 100 millions, bro, what’s going to do it, you know? Just my opinion, but yeah.

**Interviewer:** Great. What do you especially like about these people if anything?

**Participant 17:** I like that they take risks that most people would never do. I like that they are somehow very competent in their field as in. I don’t identify their field as their own, as in I don’t associate Elon Musk with technology or with anything that has to do with, you know, rockets, cars, or anything. I identify them to be successful in how to reach that level of control over what they’re doing. Because I think that’s most about control, the money itself or the task, as in I don’t think that Jeff Bezos doesn’t even know how many stores or storage boxes he has. I just think that he knows how to control what’s going on and that’s the kind of thing that, as I guy that likes controlling things, I think theirs is remarkable, yeah. So, kudos to them for that. And obviously, having to trust the right people at the right time, as you’re going to be their boss. So, if you’re controlling someone’s job, someone’s work, you need to be able to trust people. They clearly trusted the right people at the right time. Another example for example is the Mercedes Formula 1 driver. He’s not only the team leader but he’s also the owner of the team for like 40%, him and his wife. They are part of the fund that owns the team. And that’s crazy because they are taking care of the team that they own, without having any sort of experience in motor sport. So they don’t know anything about Aerodynamics parts, or don’t know how to deal with an engine failure, they have no idea of how tyres work, which is all stuff that engineers know. Nevertheless, they can take care of those engineers, saying hello, I trust you, do your stuff. And they can get that kind of environment inside their company that does look at this is going to be successful. That’s tough, I expect that a lot.

**Interviewer:** Great. And you mentioned risk, how do you see the role of risk here. What do you mean by risk?

**Participant 17:**  Risk as in not knowing whether what you do is legal. Not knowing whether what you do has actually been done already and you’re crossing some borders. Taking financial risks as in you don’t know if you’re going to be able to secure your employees position for the next years. Not knowing if you are going to see people coming into your office just to get all of your paperwork and sue you for whatever reason. That can also be a possibility. Obviously, you don’t have to assume that those people are doing it for bad purposes. Everyone is inexperienced at first, so there’s countless risks I’d say. Even balancing family and activities and, you know, company style. That’s why I guess most of these people are divorced… because it becomes very difficult.

**Interviewer:** So, you mentioned that you dislike them because of not paying enough attention to society probably. This is what you meant probably, spending their money in the wrong way. But is there anything else that you disagree with about them or dislike about them?

**Participant 17:** It’s not only about society but it’s also companies in general, as in you might be worth 200 billion, that’s all good for you. You’re never going to spend all of those money your lifetime. You’re never going to need all of those money in your lifetime. And if I had all of these money, I’d probably suicide like straight away because that’s just…why…that’s not for me, and that’s on themselves. When it comes to their companies, and for example giving minimum wage to employees, or treating employees with better, as in both financially and under literally a human point of view because for example here in Italy we had a lot of services of newspapers and TV shows had I think how Amazon is no longer a company, it’s like slavery for most of the employees and their conditions are terrible. Like I literally saw one of these services a few days ago, where Amazon was actually saying that they didn’t receive as many items as one of the entrepreneurs sent them, so they were like, okay, you say that we owe you 80,000, you say that we don’t owe you anything, let’s just say ok, we owe you 30,000 and that’s it. That’s just one of the examples because I think that at some point, when you have such big companies, it just becomes part of something that is kind of wrong in the origin, you know? It wasn’t meant to be that way, the idea was not meant to be that way, but I would personally not sleep at night knowing that I am worth 200 billion and my employees are making 1000 euros per month, so that’d just make me feel shit to be honest. Independently of the task, responsibility or literally everything, so yeah.

**Interviewer:** Does your explanation apply to all extremely successful entrepreneurs?

**Participant 17:** No, obviously not, because I don’t know them all but of the ones that we are discussing that are not strictly related to tech, so I know that in tech, we just have very high, be it Netflix, Google, Apple, whatever. Because obviously if you’re there coding for someone in tech, taking care of the design or something else in tech, wages are higher, obviously. But for like low-skilled jobs for companies such as Amazon or even SpaceX, even Tesla, that really applies to that. But not to all of them because I have some examples actually here in Italy, there’s a guy called, I don’t remember the name, who is a very successful entrepreneur, like he’s a billionaire obviously and he has built, for example, he used to have his factories on a very ancient village in Italy, which was almost destroyed. Instead of taking all of those money for himself, he just decided to restore the whole village to get all people from his company to move there, to open schools for his employees, to open, there isn’t even a hospital, I think. So, that’s great, that’s what they should do, that’s amazing, so that definitely doesn’t apply to everyone but I’d say that kind of applies to the majority of them in some part of the world, being the US, being China, being Russia.

**Interviewer:** So, what differentiates the people from your example and people who fail to obtain huge amounts of money in entrepreneurship?

**Participant 17:** So, timing, for sure. The quality of the idea is definitely one because if you just start from scratch, from zero, literally with your parents investing and you better have your idea successful, you know. Otherwise, it just doesn’t make sense. Sorry, this is off topic. But have you seen the TV series Dragon’s Den on BBC?

**Interviewer:** Yes, I have.

**Participant 17:** I watch that a lot, really a lot. So yeah, having your idea, having people that you know. I think people that know what they’re doing, like the Dragon’s Den for example, say you have this business, I can give you this amount of money, obviously I want this in return, so timing, qualities, and yeah, people that you’re surrounded with, yes.

**Interviewer:** Great. Now let’s hear your thoughts on what stands behind extreme success. I understand this next question may be a bit difficult to answer with certainty, but I’d still like to get your thoughts on it. So, what to your understanding, knowledge or opinion made the people from your example’s success possible to that extreme? What stands behind their success?

**Participant 17:** For the tech guys, I’d say something that they were not able to fully control, fully understand, fully appreciate but that occurred at the right time for them, as in right now social media is people’s life. Like I cannot imagine my life without social media, not because I work on them but because I just used them for personal purposes. And obviously that’s not something that Zuckerberg or whoever decided. I actually met WhatsApp founder at some point in my life. That’s not something that they were able to control, that’s something that they exploit in their time, that you feel somehow you cannot control it, so luck has to be the first one. Politics has to be the second one, because when you’re too get involved with people, you need to understand how taxes work, you have to understand where to pay the least taxes, you have to understand how to hire people, who to hire, where from, you know. There’s some politics involved with it and there’s actually some politics involved with pretty much everything, I guess. But at that level, you need to be very good at their politics they’re carrying on with. These two I say, you know.

**Interviewer:** Great, so how do you think luck comes about?

**Participant 17:** It comes about, as again, you cannot control factors and some factors that will always be dependent to luck. That’s for everything and the higher the post, the more these occur, I think. And the higher the post I don’t mean necessarily money-wise. I also think idea-wise because for example I’m kind of sure that Instagram had other social medias to fight against and if we now have Instagram instead of something else, there has to be some luck at some point, there has to be for example for TikTok, saying OK, the government is banning this in these countries, so you can no longer use that so obviously you’re having your goals down. That’s just blindly luck, that’s just blindly luck and obviously the politics involved with it. Same for electric cars. I don’t think that electric cars would have been this successful if people, you know, didn’t start to pay attention to environmental issues, I mean highly in the last 5 years. They’re not even the solution to the problem but that’s another story. So that’s it. If there were no people saying OK, hello, the environment is not well, we need to take care of that, it would have been nowhere near what it is right now. Although they started in 2010, I think, so luck.

**Interviewer:** And you also mention the quality of the idea in the previous question, as something that differentiates very successful entrepreneurs. So how would you assess if an idea is of good quality. What do you mean by ‘good quality idea’?

**Participant 17:** So, I think there are some parameters for that. The first is obviously having the idea that nobody had before, and that the idea is appropriate for your time. For example, having the idea to create microchip that controls whether you’ve had a vaccine, as a Swedish uni did a few days ago. For the time being, it’s bad, because there’s a lot of people saying ‘Hello, this is 5G and Bill Gates is trying to control our bodies.’ So, the idea itself is actually great, because you don’t have to carry an NHS pass or a green pass, but for this period of time, this is not appropriate. So that idea is never going to succeed, because you have that kind of people saying OK, that’s not the correct time. Yeah, pretty much.

**Interviewer:** And you briefly touched upon the role of control in several of your answers. So, to what extent do you think the entrepreneurs from your examples were in control over their success?

**Participant 17:** From a legal perspective, they are the ones that always have to lead the contracts, sort of the, all of the agreements, all of the stats, all of the possibilities and they make a final decision based on as much data as they have. And most importantly, they must be able to understand those data. As in you can’t present regulations to someone who has no idea about regulations, but that person is able to read a document and say OK, there’s something wrong here. That’s a big degree of control and those people needed to have, at least in the beginning, now obviously may have someone else taking care of that part, but at the beginning at least they have to be really competent, not just one aspect of the business foundation, so not just in the idea, but mostly for all of the aspects that’s concerned to the idea, so legal stuff, politics, logistics, the idea itself, so if you’re competent in technology, being able to get the technology and make it work, and make sure that your idea is carried out in the best way, so you use that part instead of the other, to that coding, instead of the other, control-freaks, I guess. So I like them for that.

**Interviewer:** And what do you think is beyond their control?

**Participant 17:** Nice question. At the beginning I’d say, so I know that most of the big companies are now very successful ones but they were not founded by one person. It was always more than one, so that kind of goes beyond control. If that doesn’t go beyond your control at first, that means that you made it I think but the guys that are doing your company in the first time, that cannot be always under their control, I guess. And right now, I’d say taking care too much of the image of the company that they created, so Mark Zuckerberg for example, there was a survey I think in the US that most people Facebook and Instagram made society worse. I somewhat think that as well, to some extent, not completely. But yeah, you are no longer in charge or fully in charge for your company’s image, which can be a mess. For example when Apple started to… when Apple stopped to develop the products Steve Jobs made, I know it was totally out of the mess and confusion, as in phones haven’t changed much in 10 years now, all of their additions are tiny additions to the previous phone and I don’t think that the original founder would agree with that. For as incredible you can present that to the audience, it’s not even, it’s no longer about your control, it’s about the control of the market, I guess.

**Interviewer:** Great, we’re about halfway through the interview and I think it’s going great so far. How’s it going for you?

**Participant 17:** Great, please stop me if I say something irrelevant, or if I talk too long.

**Interviewer:** No, it’s good that you elaborate on your answers. It’s all I need to understand your opinions and views. So, the next question is important for me to fully capture your thoughts on extreme entrepreneurial success. What is the people’s from your example contribution to our society? So, what have they contributed?

**Participant 17:** So, positively and negatively, for all of the examples, I’m going to go in that case, for example for tech, or Facebook, Instagram, Apple, Google and so on, they definitely contributed making the society closer, making the world closer, making the information go faster, you know, all of that stuff. And that’s probably 10% positive. I think that in their way, the remaining 90% is negative, as they made the world angry, more prone to hate, more prone to seeing some kind of news and already making your opinion without thinking twice, making your opinion straight away. I’m not going to mention fake news because that’s just beyond the scope, I guess, but yeah, also that. We can even link that to the pandemic, Italy for example has 75% of no-vaccine in terms of caring units, and they are just 10% of the population. And for them being all of these people have been reading stuff on the internet. So obviously the stuff that they read is without any basis, it’s completely wrong, and you don’t have to be a scientist to get that it’s wrong, that’s it. These people don’t agree with that because they have information in front of them but they don’t have the possibilities to understand that information. And I think here’s to blame not only the people but also the companies that allow them to do so. Same for Tesla for example, yeah, they created a very nice product, created a very fast car, propably, from my point of view, they created the idea that you can have fast cars even when petrol is going to be gone, so that’s a great idea for me. On the other side, the lithium is not going to be the solution to solve the fuel problems, there’s not enough lithium on this planet to achieve what they would like to achieve, which is OK for the time being but it kind of eluded people that they found a solution to replace normal cars, which is not true essentially. On the other hand, SpaceX made something achievable, like achieved something that…hell, it’s great. I mean… they’re using their own overhead. NASA tried to do it a couple of years ago and they failed miserably. They used very clever engineering to make it and they did it.

**Interviewer:** If you could change their contributions, what would you like to see happening more?

**Participant 17:** For specific cases, so first, I would like to see them taking care of the bad part of their contribution, of their ‘work’, let’s say, company-wise. For Tesla this can be mixture of all of the electricity that cars absorbed for the power, is actually powered from renewable sources, which they can do because they know how long and how much a car is consuming and they can track all of that. But it doesn’t seem to be the point of the business, so they can definitely do that. For all of the fake news on the internet, I think that companies can and actually must get rid of them. But obviously that’s good from an ethical point of view, that doesn’t go well with the business part of it. As in, if you publish something, and you know that is totally incorrect, but that post gets thousands or millions or whatever of views, your company is going to have a profit from it, so it’d be amazing if those companies were brave enough to say OK, we don’t care about these profits, it’s not going to cost us anything because we still have a margin to operate, let’s make it ethical, let’s make sure that we don’t damage any part of the population, or ideas or anything like that, you know. Although there is still going to be bad things in the world.

**Interviewer:** And what are your thoughts on money being an indicator as to how much someone has contributed to our society? So, for example, the richer someone is, they more they have contributed and the less money someone has from entrepreneurial activity, the less they have contributed.

**Participant 17:** I don’t think it’s an indicator at all. I really don’t think so. Indicators should not be money-wise. So they shouldn’t be remembered or not remembered for my network, I should be remembered for my ideas, my actions, and yes OK, most of the times actions go along with money and they are strictly related but the real contribution is then, thinking of our either the tangible ones, jobs, people doing the jobs, doing their 9-5, their passion and trying to make the world a better place that way, or research contributions, I’d say. So, people’s spending their lives in labs or doing research as we’re doing, just to hope that, you know, this will be better for mankind in the next whatever years, if there is going to be mankind in the next whatever years. So, I really don’t think that money is an indicator for contribution to the human being as in the species. It may be an indicator for the comfort of the human being that we can agree on, because most of these people created something that is a comfort. I think an electric car that goes faster and recharges and is more silent than the petrol one is another point of comfort. Creating a faster car that goes faster than Sir Frank Williams, or Ferrari or whatever, is a great contribution but again it’s a comfort, it’s something that you just doing to people to have something else. The real contributions are to invent antibiotics, understanding the physics of a plane flying at high altitude. Those are the contributions that are not often rewarded with money, and actually almost never, and are more important than the ones which are measured by money. This is all very left-wing. Sorry.

**Interviewer:** The next question may sound a bit controversial, but you already mentioned your thoughts on luck, so I’m just going to elaborate a bit more on that. So, some people would hold the very extreme to say that entrepreneurs were only lucky to be that extremely successful and they don’t deserve their profits. What would you say to those people?

**Participant 17:** So, they were not only extremely lucky, they were not, because you don’t reach those level just with luck. You don’t reach those level only with professionality either, so you have to have luck. You have to be again in the right place at the right time, which is actually the reason why I agree with that statement and I think that those people do not deserve that much money, Like those amounts of money, which are totally unjustified, as in your idea might be the best in the world, you might be able to, I don’t know, cure cancer for as important as it might be, it’s your idea. But then at some point your idea is no longer your idea, it’s taken over by some other people that are helping you to do that, Yes, you might be the number one of a big company, you might be the creator of that big company, you might be a billionaire, but there’s a point where your billions are no longer earned from you because you only have 24 hours a day. There is no way that you are taking from this part to the whatever part, from 2 billions to 100 billions in two years just because of your own merit. There has to be someone else involved in the process and without them you will not be able to get there. So, I agree with that statement, I agree that there has to be some kind of, I’m not saying control because it’s not about control, but there has to be some level after which it’s no longer your merit, it’s someone else’s merit, you have the merit to get there then at some point it’s no longer your merit. And when it comes into money range, I don’t think there’s a money range for that, as in there’s just a point in a company or an entrepreneur that say okay, that’s it for me, I’m done, I don’t need any help. So yeah, I don’t think that people with 200 billion euros or whatever deserve more than 10% of that, so that’s my idea.

**Interviewer:** And do you think they should be entitled to keep all their money?

**Participant 17:** It depends on the government side, so I don’t know, from my strictly political views, I’d say no, and I’d say no because they are selfish, we are all selfish, we’re all trying to get to our personal best point but I think that there has to be a point, where your personal best point and the society best point have to come together at some point, so you can keep your money as long as that’s an example of other people to excel and succeed and make sure that you get there, to say that OK I was rejected from this high school, I was rejected from this college, I am now rich. That can be a nice inspirational story but on the other side, when society, at least in the western world has some issues with everything and in other countries they’ve even more issues, what’s the point, like what’s the point of you owning that much. OK, you’re giving back as much as you want, fine, like Bill Gates is doing it, fine, actually he’s being accused of vaccines and stuff, so that’s crazy, that’s amazing. But I don’t think that…no I don’t think so, they shouldn’t be entitled of that just because it’s not fair for society.

**Interviewer:** And apart from being in the right place at the right time, what do you think is luck’s role in our lives generally?

**Participant 17:** No, it’s very important. It’s crazily important. Some people like to say: ‘make your own luck’, like create your own luck, I agree with that partially. But it’s extremely important, I think. Like you cannot control some factors, I’ll give you a very quick example. When I sent the email to Julia for applying for the role that I have right now, that role wasn’t even advertised anywhere, like there wasn’t such role but I sent my CV, I had my experience and I worked for SUSU for six months, I worked for a magazine and it’s been a year now, or more than a year, so I kind of had the profile that they were looking for and they kind of knew it because I was in your profile as well, so I call that luck because I know that they were not looking for anyone, I saw that the pages were on stand-by essentially, so I was like OK, let’s try, let’s send them a very nice email with all of my details, CV, what I did, who I am and so on. Worst case scenario, they’re just going to say no, and I’ve spent one afternoon sending an email and that’s it. Luck said they were not looking for anyone but they were interested, took some time. I call that luck, I really call that luck, in the same way that I got into my Master’s, in the same way that I’m going to do my thesis. I mean in my thesis I design the biggest turbulent flow generator in the UK, which is a huge thing. I was lucky to be in the right uni, at the right time with the right professor, with the right money, with the right interest to do that. I didn’t even know what that was before. I call that luck. Obviously you have to spend a lot of time taking care of that but I call that luck. I don’t like taking merits for things in general. Generally speaking I’m not proud of anything that I’ve done.

**Interviewer:** Well, that’s great. I really appreciate your willingness to express your thoughts and views on this, and you’re helping me understand, which is the most important things of this interview and this research in general. So one last question – is there anything else that you would like to share about entrepreneurial success and I didn’t ask?

**Participant 17:** No, I think it’s OK, I estimated these people, I know that these people skilled, qualified and passionate in what they do, because I saw that in the Future Worlds lab that we have at the uni, I saw that from examples that I was able to get in touch with, in my high school. So, it’s OK, I appreciate these people, but I cannot appreciate these people for more than there is a point. So there has to be a threshold where my appreciation drops.

**Interviewer:** Great, thank you so much. I’m going to stop the recording now.