

THE POWER GRADIENT

Inspiring Future Entrepreneurs

Napier Partnership Limited

Napier is an award-winning B2B technology PR and marketing agency that uses deep market insight to design and implement creative campaigns, which drive clients' commercial success. The agency offers a complete portfolio of PR and marketing services, helping clients in markets such as Electronics, IT and Industrial Technology

www.napierb2b.com

Key Takeaways

Competitive Roots

A sporting upbringing built resilience, accountability, and the mindset to keep going after setbacks.

Early Hustle

Hands-on experiences before business ownership laid the foundation for entrepreneurial thinking.

Surviving Storms

Facing the dot-com crash head on forged long term resilience and belief in better days ahead.

Growth

Calculated risk-taking is essential for faster growth and long term success.

Daily Discipline

Consistency and execution matter far more than single big decisions or flashy wins.



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Meet Mike Maynard

Welcome to this week's edition of The Power Gradient. In this issue, I'm excited to share the inspiring story of Mike Maynard, Managing Director of Napier, an award-winning B2B technology PR and marketing agency. Napier works with ambitious companies across Electronics, IT, and Industrial Technology markets, using deep sector insight to design and execute creative PR and marketing campaigns that drive measurable commercial success. Mike's story is one of persistence, learning through challenge, and steadily building a business in an industry that demands both technical understanding and strategic creativity. His journey reflects the reality of entrepreneurship rarely glamorous, often demanding, but deeply rewarding for those who stay the course.

The Path to Professional Engineering

Mike’s working life began similarly to many British children of his generation delivering newspapers. While modest, that first role brought early signs to the difference responsibility and reliability make in the work place. His first “real” job came later as an electronics design engineer at Marconi, a role that immersed him in complex problem-solving and precision thinking. This technical foundation didn’t just shape his early career; it influenced how he later approached leadership and decision making. Engineering taught Mike to break problems down, test assumptions, and understand that strong outcomes are built on solid fundamental principles, translated into running and growing a business.

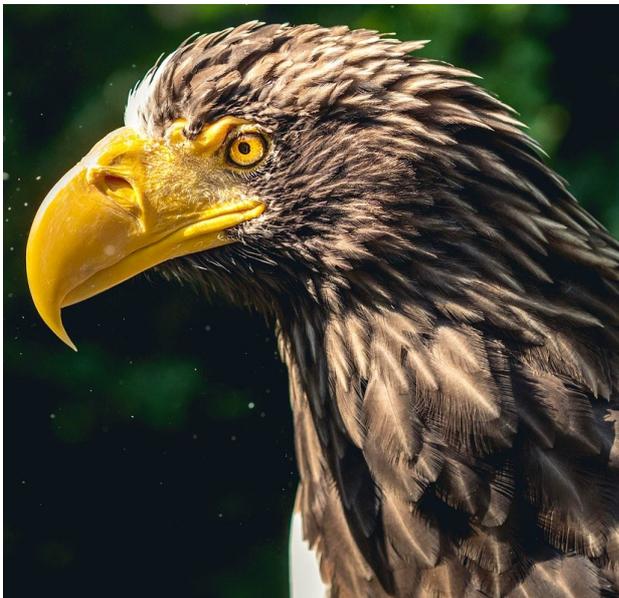
Sport & Perspective

Raised by parents who were both successful athletes had a profound influence on Mike’s outlook. Sport instilled competitiveness, but more importantly, it fostered a strong sense of personal responsibility. From a young age, he learned that success wasn’t something handed to you, you had to work for it, fix things yourself, and own the outcomes. Sport delivered an equally valuable lesson: losing. Experiencing defeat early in life builds emotional resilience. While losses are painful, they teach perspective and perseverance qualities that become critical in entrepreneurship, where setbacks are inevitable and recovery defines long-term success.



Early & Defining Crises

While at university, Mike joined a team of roadies responsible for sound, lighting, and live events. The team had to generate profit to reinvest in equipment, offering him a practical experience in cash flow, teamwork, and accountability. Years later, these lessons proved invaluable when he acquired Napier just weeks before the dot-com crash hit. The timing couldn’t have been worse. With uncertainty everywhere and the business under serious threat, walking away wasn’t an option. Mike was deeply invested, both financially and emotionally, and that commitment forced resilience. Surviving that period reinforced a lasting belief: however bleak things feel, better days do come even if they arrive much later than hoped.



The Reality of Entrepreneurship

Looking back, Mike is candid about what he’d change in his approach. He would’ve focused on taking more risks early on, resulting in a different outcome: slower growth than necessary. His advice is clear: be brave, but don’t be reckless. Over time, he’s learned that moments which feel catastrophic, losing a major client or a key employee often fade in significance when viewed in hindsight. What truly defines success is what happens daily. Entrepreneurship is largely a grind, requiring consistency, emotional control, and the ability to show up even when motivation dips. As Mike succinctly puts it, ideas are easy, execution is difficult. Progress is rarely glamorous, but it’s built through discipline, persistence, and a refusal to quit.