美国和中国创业者的区别

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美国创业者被认为是全球最具创造性和最具创业者精神的群体。事实上，这里面确实有些真实的成分，但同时也有一些夸大。因此，在这篇文章中我将介绍中美两国创业者之间的区别，同时分析这些区别与如何成功之间的关联和可能性。我将分别分析文化、金融、经济、专业、社会因素对于成功的影响。

文化差异最重要

影响企业家地位的一个最重要的因素或许是他对于权威的态度。美国文化对于那些能够挑战现存规则的做事方法有着很强的包容性。事实上，美国文化不止是容忍，甚至鼓励这样做。

在中国的教育系统中，人们提倡尊敬权威和年纪大的人，而且这些人也不太能够接受被别人挑战。中国政府职位的考试系统强烈促进了墨守成规的风气，而不是勇于挑战。因此，美国更多的创业者敢于对现有的做事方法，包括产品和服务提出挑战。通常，美国的创业者不能够容忍现有的做事方法，他们更加敢作敢为，敢于为他们所期望的心愿去争取，勇于挑战他们的老板和那些更为年长的老者。他们能够积极地迎接挑战，即使一件事目前处在初级阶段，他们也勇于尝试。

对于一名美国创业者而言，上一次创业过程中的失败是件好事。事实上，不仅仅是好事，甚至是值得钦佩的经历。如果有些人在创业过程中失败过多次，在美国人眼中这个人是非常值得钦佩和羡慕的。当然，如果失败的次数过多，他们下次可能就很难获得投资了。

美国人都知道建立一家企业并不是一件容易事，并且大多数人都可能以失败告终，因此，他们钦佩那些一直尝试直至成功的人。亨利·福特（Henry Ford）在最终成立福特公司前失败了3次，史蒂夫·乔布斯（Steve Jobs）在最终引领苹果走向正确的道路前也失败过3次。

在中国以及大多数欧洲国家，创业者遭遇失败时往往会愁眉不展且面露不悦之色，大多数人也会瞧不起失败者。因此相比中国的创业者，美国创业者在成功之前往往有更多反复尝试的机会，即使大多数最后都以失败告终。但同时这也意味着他在创业上有更多的经验。与中国创业者相比，这可能有助于提升他们未来成功的机会。

美国人更喜欢接受挑战，那些没有接受过专业训练的创业者也很有可能在他所从未接触过的领域中开创一番事业，特别是在高科技和生物技术领域。

当然，如果你没有接受过专业训练，如生物科技，那么你在该领域中成功创业的机会就很渺茫。美国人往往赞同这样的观念，即门外汉也能够击败专业人士。

举例来说，假设现在美国有数百家初创企业正在从事与合成生物学相关的事业。即使需要非常巨大的知识量，但也有可能最后由一家资金量很小的公司完成。很多这类初创企业都可能是由那些完全没有接受过生物科技专业训练的人所创立的，也有一些人甚至没有接受过任何科学训练。这与中国的情况有很大差异，在中国，这类企业几乎不可能成功，因为在大众的观念中，他们根本不具备创立一家这类公司的专业知识。

再举一个例子，埃隆·马斯克（Elon Musk）在美国成立了SpaceX公司，这是第一家私人火箭公司，公司主要致力于以无可匹敌的低廉价格发射太空飞船，最终目标是在太空与地球之间搭建廉价的捷运快线。马斯克完全没有工程学或者航空科学的专业背景，事实上他的基础学位是商业，尽管他也有一个物理学学位。但是他却获得了投资，投资人支持他的原因是他们相信马斯克能够成为一个成功的创业家，即使他从未踏足过航空科学和探索的领域。

我们通常认为创业者应该是年轻人，刚出校门或是仍然在读的学生。但是美国的大多数创业者更加年长，他们拥有更加丰富的经验和更多人脉关系，因此也更容易获得资金。他们有知识和能力去辨别哪些想法确实可行。

中国人的退休年龄比美国人要早，但人们仍然期待早些退休而不是继续工作。在美国，大多数人希望退休之后仍然工作，许多年长者包括已经退休的人从一退休就开始成立自己的公司。

美国有这样一个趋势，越来越多的年长者和退休者开始喜欢锻炼，而中国很多年长的人缺乏这种爱好。相比之下，美国老人更有活力，他们有精力去成立一家新公司。因此，中美创业者之间的另一个差异在于，美国创业者中有许多人是年长甚至退休的人。

中美创业者之间还存在一个巨大差异。美国初创企业的创始人中有40%是外籍人口，而不是出生在美国本土的人。

这种差异源于美国开放的移民系统。移民更喜欢创建一家属于自己的公司。他们通常比土生土长的美国人更机敏、灵活和具有创业家精神。不仅在美国，在世界其他很多国家也是这样。SpaceX和Paypal的创始人埃隆·马斯克就出生在南非。

在中国移民非常少，因此中国无法从中获益。美国西海岸有很大一批来自于印度和中国的少数族群创业者，他们经营着高科技企业。而美国东海岸的很大一批创业者是西班牙人，这些创业者带来了庞大的家族网络，家族成员为创业提供了巨大的资金。由于这些创业者有着不同的文化、家庭和教育背景，因此他们为美国的创业环境带来了许多新观点。

最后，美国和中国还有一个巨大的不同，就是劳动法的不同。美国企业解雇员工非常容易，许多美国创业者都曾经被解雇过多次。事实上，一个美国创业者被解雇的次数比中国的创业者要多几倍，这使得他们更希望能够拥有一家属于自己的公司，即使最后他们的公司可能申请破产倒闭，但也不是被他人所解雇的。

总的来说，一个国家对雇员的保护越强，这片土地上愿意自己创立公司的人就会越少。这就是为什么欧洲的创业者非常少。随着中国劳动系统的改善，中国政府对员工的保护也越来越全面和完善，因此中国越来越像欧洲国家，可以预计，未来中国的创业者会越来越少。（本刊注：作者自己的观点，并没有一定的事实依据）

金融和经济环境相关

对于创业者来说，最大的问题是如何融资。在美国，有很多人在谈论创业投资，但绝大多数创业者仅仅是通过他们的信用卡、借债或者用他们的房产作抵押来获得资金。

因此，美国的绝大多数创业都是通过自我融资的方式来获得资金。中国的大部分创业者可能也是这样融资的，但他们的资金来自于家庭而不是创业者自身，因为在美国贷款要比在中国容易。

美国有非常发达的创业投资网络，但事实上，真正能够获得创业投资的初创企业并不多。但他们大多有机会获得天使投资。天使投资人是一些比较有钱的个人，但不属于专业的投资人，他们愿意帮助

创业家。他们不一定是创业者的家人或朋友。与中国的创业者相比，美国的创业者更容易从那些与他们无关也不认识的陌生人那里获得资金。美国破产法相对比较宽松，无论是个人还是企业进入破产程序都十分简单。但是申请破产多多少少会令人感到有些耻辱。不过，即使你已经破产你也有可能申请到信用卡，因此即使一个创业者已经宣布破产，但他还是有可能再开另一家公司，并获得更多的资金。

和中国创业者相比，美国创业者拥有破产经历的人数更多。这是因为美国社会有很高的容忍度，甚至鼓励失败，因为这样才能鼓励人们去尝试那些高风险的事情。

与此同时，美国也不断出现新的融资方式，最有名的是Kickstarter.com，这是一家对初创企业进行投资的网站。在Kickstarter网站上，初创企业可以找到少量的资金，潜在的小规模投资者可以投资少量的资金。Kickstarter网站是将资本募集程序民众化，给那些规模非常小的企业提供融资的平台。美国政府在法律法规上也放松了对融资的约束，为小型企业融资提供了更多便利。因此目前美国的创业者有很多机会可以从自己完全没有见过的人那里获得资金支持。

专业背景存差异

美国创业者和中国创业者的专业背景也有较大差异。大多数美国创业者都有过在大型私有企业工作的经历，接受过公司相关的高级培训，创业者可能更了解自己所处的领域，熟知该领域中的专业标准。中国的创业者来自于大型国企的很少，他们大多数人仅在小型的、私有企业中工作过，这意味着双方的工作经历完全不同。

总体来看，美国创业者所接受过的高级专业训练要比中国创业者多。

在美国大型企业中，个人升职与否纯粹由他的价值来决定，而不是由资历和关系来决定。因此美国创业者更容易相信别人，愿意聘请和雇佣那些与他们完全没有关系或是他们完全不认识的人。

由于这些背景，美国创业者比中国创业者具有更开放的雇佣理念。即使一个中国创业者来自于国有大企业，在那里接受了更多的专业训练，但由于他的专业背景，他很可能会缺乏一个开放的雇佣观念。

因此，美国创业者更可能会雇佣一些尽管他们不认识，但却具有更多相关经验和技能的员工。举例来说，有多少中国创业企业会聘请外籍人士担任公司的高管职位？然而在美国，初创企业聘请外籍人士担任公司高管是非常平常的事情，即使他们的英语可能说得并不好，但他们拥有丰富的相关专业背景和技能。

最后，我们探讨一个关于高技术含量和低技术含量的问题。我们发现，中美两国的初创企业绝大多数都处于技术含量较低的领域。大多数初创企业所做的事情可能就是开一家图片社或者快餐连锁店，而不是试图创立下一个谷歌。

尽管如此，美国仍然有许多高科技领域的初创企业。许多初创企业来自于学校，那里的教授利用他们所掌握的高科技知识成立一家公司，这些公司包含了所有的领域，例如工程、IT、生物科技。

美国政府最新通过的法案给予大学教授一些个人权利，允许他们在大学任职期间做一些发明。这一举措加速了美国高科技初创企业的诞生。因此，美国有许多创业者可能是或者曾经是大学的教授或研究人员。在这一领域有许多成功的案例，例如谷歌和雅虎。

最后，美国的专利权系统为初创企业的投资研发提供了强有力的保护，保护了他们的知识产权。因此，与中国创业者相比，美国创业者拥有更多的无形资产——专利。

政府"帮助"可能会害了创业者

在过去几年中，美国政府以及大学建立了许多孵化器来帮助创业者。这些孵化器能够为创业者提供廉价的办公室以及其他人可能很难接触到的、经验丰富的顾问。因此，不论过去、现在还是将来，美国创业者几乎都尝试过在孵化器里成长。

但是，并没有证据表明孵化器更容易帮助初创企业成功，反而甚至有可能因为创业太容易而害了创业者。

美国政府帮助创业者的记录并不是很好，但这并不影响美国政府和各州政府对初创企业的扶持和投资。尽管如此，美国政府往往并不擅长选择

好项目，资金往往进入了那些有政治联系的公司，而不是真正有发展潜力的公司。

这并不是说美国政府无法帮助初创企业。它仅仅意味着美国政府不应该试图去选择正确的初创企业。美国政府对初创企业帮助最多的地方在于间接帮助了私人和公共系统的前进，从而帮助了所有企业，而不是仅试图帮助几家特别的初创企业。

研究员们认为，美国政府对初创企业的鼓励政策有五个方面。首先，美国国防部的研究工作常常会外包给私营企业，这刺激了在研究供应链上的其他企业。这种做法能够将先进的知识散布给许多小型企业，而这些企业正是能够常常做出创新的企业。但是，这些初创企业的机会是由那些私营企业决定，而不是由政府做出。

其次，在美国国防部高等研究计划局（the Defense Advanced Research Programs Agency）的项目中，法律鼓励先进的、高科技的研究，并认可那些具有创新和革命性技术的企业。

第三，公开的信息法规。这是推动研发的直接力量，举例来说，美国国家卫生研究院（National Institutes of Health）向私营企业开放他们利用公共基金所做的研发项目时所取得的所有数据。这意味着美国创业者更有可能成为一个特殊领域的业余爱好者，因为他们可以依靠这些公开信息来弥补他们在这一专业领域所缺乏的专业训练。这些公开的信息甚至能够给予他们比在该领域中受过专业训练的专家或更多经验的专业人士以更多支持。

第四，劳动系统和法律允许劳动力的高流动性，因此也促进了有经验的雇员在各个公司间快速流动，这使得专业的知识和技能能够分布到美国经济的各个角落。

第五，强大的知识产权保护法可以保护那些自主研发新知识或产品的公司，它们的知识产权在一定时期内会受到保护，因此，它们在获得回报的同时，不必担心研究被抄袭或偷走。■

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"What is the Difference between American and Chinese Entrepreneurs?"

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American entrepreneurs are widely held to be the most creative and entrepreneurial in the world. As always, there's both some truth in this, and some exaggeration. So in this article I am going to look at the differences between American and American entrepreneurs and to see how those differences are linked with the likelihood of success. I am going to evaluate how cultural, financial, economic, professional and social factors impact the success of each.

Cultural Differences are the Most Important

Probably the deepest factor affecting entrepreneurship is one's attitude towards authority. In the US, the culture is tolerant of challenge of existing ways of doing things. In fact, not just tolerant, even encouraging.

In China the education system promotes respect for authority and for older people and is intolerant of being challenged. Moreover the Chinese system of exams for government positions strongly promotes the memorization of existing rules versus challenging them.

So in the US more entrepreneurs challenge existing ways of doing things including existing products and services. They are generally much more likely to be intolerant of existing ways of doing things, much more aggressive in their desire to challenge their elders and bosses and much more likely to actively promote change, even when it might be very unpopular.

In the US, it is ok for an entrepreneur to have failed in a previous startup. In fact, it is not just ok, it is even admired. If someone has failed with several startups, a common response is admiration for such a person. Of course, if they have failed too many times then they might not get any investment next time.

But Americans know that it is difficult to do a startup, and that most will fail, and they admire someone who is prepared to try until they succeed. Henry Ford failed in 3 companies before he finally started Ford. Steve Jobs also failed in 3 companies before he finally got Apple right.

In China, as in most European countries, failure is frowned upon and even looked down on. So an American entrepreneur is much more likely than a Chinese entrepreneur to have started one or more companies before his previous company, most or all of which have been failures. But that means he is much more likely to be more experienced in doing startups. That might well increase his future chance of success compared to a Chinese entrepreneur.

In the US, became of the attitude favoring challengers, it is much more likely that an entrepreneur is not trained in the particular area in which he is starting a company. This is even the case if it's in something specialized like high-tech or biotech.

Of course if you have no training in, say, biotech it's harder to do a biotech startup. Yet in the US, popular culture applauds the idea of an amateur beating the professionals at their own game.

For example there are now hundreds of startups in the US pursuing ideas in synthetic biology. It can be done on a small budget even though it requires a huge amount of knowledge. But many of these startups are being launched by people who have no biotech training at all and in some cases, not even any science training. That is very different to China where such types of startups are not possible since popular culture would see them as not having the right knowledge to be able to start.

For example; in the US, Elon Musk, who started off the company SpaceX which is the first private company to put a vehicle into low-earth orbit, has no training at all in engineering or space science. In fact his basic degree was in business although he also did a degree in physics. Yet he was able to get the investment to support his startup since he is recognized as being a successful entrepreneur, even though it's not in the area of space science and exploration.

We tend of think of entrepreneurs as being usually younger people, often straight out of school or even in school. Yet in the US, most entrepreneurs are older. That's because they have more experience and more contacts. Also it's easier for them to raise money as well as more likely for them to have the experience to know which ideas are more likely to work.

In China the retirement age is younger than in the US, but people are expected to retire and not work again. In the US, most people are expected to work once they retire and many older people, including retired people, start companies once they retire.

In the US there is a growing tendency for older and retired people to exercise a lot and to be fitter than older people in China. So they often have more energy as result which they can use to start a new company. So another difference between Chinese and US entrepreneurs as that American entrepreneurs are much more likely to be older or even "retired".

There's another huge difference between Chinese and American entrepreneurs. In the US, 40% of the founders of startup companies are foreigners, not born in America.

The US has a very open immigration system. Immigrants are on average much more likely to start companies. They are usually much more agile, flexible and entrepreneurial than native-born people. This is not just true of the US but any country. Elon Musk, the founder of SpaceX and Paypal, was actually born in South Africa.

In China there is very little immigration so China does not benefit from this factor. So American entrepreneurs are much more likely to be foreigners. On the West Coast of the US a sizeable minority of entrepreneurs of high-tech companies are either Indians or Chinese. On the East Coast of the US, a huge number of entrepreneurs are Hispanic. These entrepreneurs bring with them extended family networks which help them to raise the investment for their companies. They also bring new ideas based on their different cultural, family, professional and educational backgrounds.

Finally there is another huge difference between China and the US, namely labor laws. In the US it's very easy for companies to fire employees.

Many US entrepreneurs are people who have been fired many times and who have decided that they would prefer to have their own company where they can't get fired, even though they can fail as a company.

Generally the greater the protection there is for employees in a particular country, the less people start their own companies. That's why in Europe there are very few entrepreneurs. As the Chinese labor system moves towards greater protection for employees, thus becoming more like

the European countries, we can expect proportionately fewer Chinese to become entrepreneurs. As it is, an American entrepreneur is much more likely that a Chinese entrepreneur to have been fired, maybe several times.

But the Financial and Economic Environment Matters Too

The big issue for an entrepreneur is how to get funding for his company. In the US there is a lot talked about venture capital. But the vast majority of entrepreneurs get their funding simply by using their credit cards and running up large bills, and by taking out second mortgages on their houses.

So the vast majority of entrepreneurs in the US are self-funded In China this is probably similar but in this case the money is much more likely to come from family rather than from the entrepreneur himself since credit is much easier to get in the US than China.

In the US there are well developed venture capital networks, but actually it is pretty rare for a startup to get venture capital. But it is much more likely that they will get capital from a so-called angel network. These are networks of people who are not professional investors but just private individuals with some money but not great wealth who simply want to be help entrepreneurs. These are not family or friends. American entrepreneurs are much more likely than Chinese entrepreneurs to get money from people who are unrelated to them and who don't know them.

In the US bankruptcy laws are pretty lax. It's quite easy to go into bankruptcy either personally or professionally. There is little stigma attached to going bankrupt. Even if you are bankrupt it is possible to get a credit card. So even if an entrepreneur has gone bankrupt, it's still possible for him or her to start another company and raise more capital.

So American entrepreneurs are much more likely to have been bankrupt than a Chinese entrepreneur. That's because the US is very tolerant and even encourages failure since this encourages people to try things that are very risky.

And in the US there are new ways emerging to raise capital for startups. The most famous is Kickstarter.com, a website for crowdsourcing investments in startups.

On Kickstarter, startups can look for small amounts of capital and potential small investors can invest small amounts. This democratizes the capital raising process and allows even the smallest companies with no contacts to raise capital.

The US government has also relaxed the rules of raising capital to make it easier for small companies to raise capital without the usual bureaucratic obstacles that are met when raising larger investments. So these days an entrepreneur in the US is much more likely to have raised capital from a total stranger who they will never meet in their life.

So Does Professional Background

There are major differences in the professional background of US and Chinese entrepreneurs. An American entrepreneur is much more likely than a Chinese entrepreneur to have worked a large private company.

In China very few entrepreneurs have come from a State-owned enterprise and most have backgrounds in small private companies. That means they have totally different experiences.

The US entrepreneur is much more likely to have had extensive advanced training in a large US corporation. He is much more likely to be familiar with and knowledgeable about professional standards in his particular professional area. Overall the US entrepreneur is more likely to have received advanced professional training than a Chinese entrepreneur.

Another professional difference. In a large US corporation, the focus is on promoting people purely on the basis of merit versus promoting on the basis of seniority or relationships. So the American entrepreneur is much more likely to hire and recruit people who are unrelated to him and who he doesn't know at all.

The American entrepreneur is much more likely to have open hiring than a Chinese entrepreneur because of this professional background. Even if a Chinese entrepreneur comes from a State-owned enterprise where there might have been more professional training, this founder is much less likely to have an open hiring mentality because of his professional background.

So the American entrepreneur is more likely to hire people who he does not know at all but who are more likely to have more relevant experience and skills. For example, how many Chinese startups hire foreigners in junior positions? In the US it is very common for startups to hire foreigners; even their language skills are not good, providing they have highly relevant background and skills.

Finally we have the issue of high-tech versus low-tech. In both countries we have to recognize that most startups are low-tech, even in the US. Most startups are actually starting things like graphics shops or fast-food franchises rather than trying to start the next Google.

However in the US there are many more high-tech startups. Many startups come from universities where professors use their high-tech knowledge to start companies in all areas including science, engineering, IT and biotech.

This movement has accelerated because the US government has now passed new rules that give university professors some personal rights to discoveries they have made while in university employment; before they had no such rights. So in the US, entrepreneurs are much more likely to be or have been university professors and researchers. And in the vast majority of such cases, they will start up a high-tech company such as Google or Yahoo.

Finally the US patent system provides strong protection to startups that invest in research and can protect their intellectual property using patents. So in the US entrepreneurs are much more likely than Chinese startups to have one or more patents.

Government "Help" Can Harm Entrepreneurs Too

In the US over the past few years, the US and State governments and the universities have established numerous incubators to help entrepreneurs. The idea is that they can provide a supportive environment to help new startups with cheap offices and experienced advisers who they would otherwise not have access to. So it's likely that in the US it's much more likely for an American entrepreneur to be in an incubator or have started his company previously in an incubator even if he isn't in it now.

But there doesn't appear to be much evidence that incubators help a startup succeed. It might even hurt by making it too easy for a startup.

In the US the government record in helping entrepreneurs has not been good. That's not became the US and State governments have not spent huge amounts of money on startups; to the contrary. However in the US at least the record is that governments are usually terrible at picking the right companies and that often the money goes to startups that have political connections rather than to companies that are truly promising.

That doesn't mean that governments can't help startups. It just means they shouldn't try to choose the right startups because they will usually be wrong. Where the US government has

been very helpful to startups is indirectly by helping the private and public systems move in ways that are generally helpful to all startups rather than trying to help particular startups.

It's generally thought by researchers into startups in the US that the most useful policies by US governments have been the following:

- Research by the Department of Defense which is usually contracted out to private companies; this stimulates other companies in the research supply chain thus spreading out advanced knowledge to smaller companies where innovations are usually made. But the choice of these startups is made by other private companies, not the government.
- In particular the programs by DARPA – the Defense Advanced Research Programs Agency – which by law directs it to stimulate very advanced research, and which provides grants to companies which have innovative and often revolutionary technologies and approaches.
- Open information laws – which direct agencies that conduct research e.g. the National Institutes of Health, to allow private companies open access to all the research data they generated in conducting their research programs using public funds. This means that US entrepreneurs are much more likely to be amateurs in specialized fields because they can rely on this open sharing of information to compensate for their lack of specialized training in this area and even to give them an advantage over professionals that have been trained in this area and have long experience in it.
- Labor systems and laws – that allow high labor mobility thus promoting fast movement of skilled employees between different companies thus spreading specialized knowledge and skills throughout the US economy.
- Strong intellectual property laws – which reassure companies that the knowledge they have developed with their investments, will be protected for a period of time so that they can have confidence that they can be rewarded for taking risks and that their research cannot be copied or stolen

Dr. E. Ted Prince, the Founder and CEO of the Perth Leadership Institute, located in Florida in the US has also been CEO of several other companies, both public and private. He is the author of 'The Three Financial Styles of Very Successful Leaders (McGraw-Hill, 2005) and numerous other publications in this area. He is a frequent speaker at industry conferences. He works with large corporations globally on leadership development programs and coaches senior executives and teams in the area of financial leadership. He has held the position of Visiting Professor at the University of Florida in the US in its Graduate Business School and also at the Shanghai University of Finance and Economics in China.