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5 Things Entrepreneurs Need From Their Cities

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Every city hopes to attract the next Facebook, Google, Instagram or Twitter. To lure such entrepreneurial startups, they follow the same route that city leaders of their grandparents' generation did -- cutting taxes, easing regulations, and in general trying to create a business-friendly climate. But what are entrepreneurs really looking for in a city?



At the second annual [Startup City: Miami](#), a conference that [The Atlantic](#), [The Knight Foundation](#) and the [Creative Class Group](#) recently held, a number of notable entrepreneurs addressed exactly that question. Their answers came down to five key things:

1. **A culture of yes.** Bureaucrats may believe that they are formalizing best practices and fairness, but too often they shoot themselves in the foot by instituting cumbersome processes that discourage startups and new companies from doing business in their cities. "No, you can't do

that." No, that's not how we do it." "No, that is not our process." New businesses add jobs, help neighborhoods, and expand the tax base. Cities need to train both their leadership and workforce to find their way to yes.

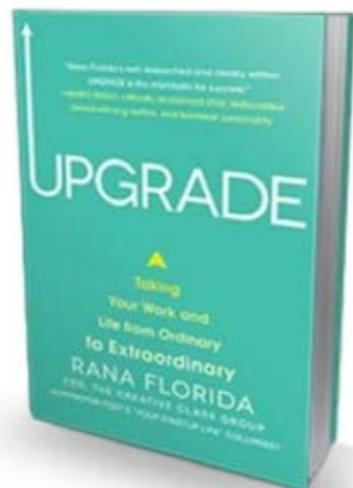
2. Talent. It's a simple concept. If you're going to launch a business you need a team of the best and brightest to help it succeed. Having access to a deep pool of skilled and ambitious workers is key.

3. Diversity. Entrepreneurs want to be able to draw on the talents of a diverse workforce with different perspectives, who can contribute new ideas and discover new things. They are looking for cities that are open and accepting of everyone, whether they are young, old, straight, gay, or of any racial background or national origin.

4. Amenities. Entrepreneurs value quality of place. They are bored with nerdistsans and suburban office parks surrounded by acres of parking lots. They are looking for vibrant downtowns, with walkability, access to restaurants, arts and culture, and green spaces where they can recharge and re-engage.

5. Transportation networks. Entrepreneurs are constantly on the move. They need access to the international airports, highways, and local transit that can keep them connected to their customers, suppliers, and backers--whether they are halfway around the world or just across town.

Rana Florida is the author of the best-selling book [Upgrade, Taking Your Work and Life from Ordinary to Extraordinary](#).



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