

# *"Doing business is not easy. Sometimes I am full of frustration"*

**Rens de Jong** is a radio & TV presenter, has his own company, and is a MC at events. He is known for his energy and humor. Doesn't he get tired of himself sometimes?



**Book to read?** AI Superpowers. Author Kai Fu Lee explains very clearly that we underestimate the innovative power of China. And how the Chinese are going to conquer the world in the field of artificial intelligence.

**Not-to-miss-movie?** Hands down: 'Gone with the wind', about the American Civil War. During my college days I had to watch many old movies. And this one really stuck with me. It is the most expensive film ever made! I was shot in Technicolor in 1939. Great special

effects, cameras on cranes and key player Clark Gable. My grandmother was a big fan...

**Favorite podcast:** Heavyweight. Completely in line with American storytelling tradition, the podcast host Jonathan Goldstein follows a (fallen) hero and helps them to recover. Ironic, funny, moving and incredibly fascinating!



**Favorite radio program:** In addition to all BNR Newsradio programs ... It's a Dutch show called '*Spijkers met koppen*'. From cabaret & music to light subjects. And all in all a very recognizable format with good hosts. Great program for the Saturday afternoon.

**Were you like that before?** Since I was about 11 years old, I have been making radio programs. First in my own children's room: a door on trestles and two record players with a mixer on it. Later, at the local broadcaster, I started to like presenting the news. And that has never let me go.

The interest in business and the economy came a little later, around the age of 15 I liked to talk about his investments with my father. Which shares did we have to buy, which ones to sell?

Then I got really interested. "Why is that one company doing very well, whilst the other is

falling over?" It is a question that has stuck with me ever since.

**Don't you get tired of yourself?** Ha! People sometimes ask me, "at home, are you also like this?" And then they probably mean my intensity and energy. Well, on stage you are 100% focussed. But I can relax as well. On the other hand, I am always working on whether I can do better, where I can improve myself? That's nice, but sometimes very tiring. So, sometimes I have to tell myself: "It's OK like this".

**What do you do for radio and TV?** Since 2000 I have been working for BNR Newsradio, a Dutch business station. For a number of years as deputy editor-in-chief, but mainly as a presenter. From the morning and evening rush hour, to programs such as "Doing Business with", "BNR Leadership" and a program around sustainability.



Nowadays, I concentrate on everything that has to do with the labor market. I have also been on television regularly, mainly around entrepreneurship and innovation.

**What is nice about being a MC?** The great thing about presenting live events is making a connection with the audience. The trick is to anticipate on their emotions, and keep thinking: "what questions would they like to ask?" My experience is in both customer meetings and events for internal employees. Sometimes with 1500 people, and regularly pretty intimate round table sessions.

I have a fairly broad orientation when it comes to the subjects I like. But there is a common thread: it often has to do with a market: from innovation, sustainability, entrepreneurship to human capital.

And do you know what is the fun thing? Although you often deal with serious topics, I always try to create a casual atmosphere. Bringing in some energy, speed and humor is important. That is why I am proud that I won the title "chairman of the year" a few years ago. Good to know: I have extensive experience in leading international conferences in English.

**What is underestimated in your work?** One of the nicest things about my profession is actually quite invisible. That is the preparation I put in. I love creating the format of the event. You often try to fascinate a few hundred people at the same time. How do you make an event that is not only felt in the head, but also in the heart and belly? That is why I like to think along with the organisers on a strategic level.

**When did you fail?** Well, when you have your own business, everyday you learn... From an early age I always wanted to try out new things, see if people wanted to buy it, whether it had value for them. And from my own experience I know that entrepreneurship is not always puppies and sunshine, you know. Together with Tom Vroemen I founded BuzzMaster in 2013. A company that changes the audience from





passive listeners to active participants during events. I am incredibly proud of the team of people who are ready for our customers every day to create beautiful events.

But as every entrepreneur knows, it's not always that easy. Sometimes things go wrong, things go differently than planned, and then you have to improvise, be flexible, support your people, be there for your customers. Yes, sometimes I am full of frustration. But hey, that is part of the job.

Anyway, I think that's why -during my interviews with entrepreneurs- I understand their stories better.

**Shall we contact you?** Most certainly! Do you want to know more? Or brainstorm about an event that you will soon be organizing? Give us a call!

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See you soon!

