

# Fired Groupon CEO Mason not solely to blame for poor performance, expert suggests

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Troubled online coupon giant Groupon fired its quirky founder and CEO Andrew Mason Thursday (Feb. 28) following another disappointing quarter, and University of Notre Dame Management Professor Timothy Judge says, "Clearly, Groupon's poor financial performance was the precipitating factor in Mason's downfall."

However, Judge, who specializes in management psychology, leadership personality and career and life success, says Mason's strange sense of humor and irreverent behavior didn't do him any favors.

"The degree to which leaders fit the images individuals have of them makes a difference," Judge says. "Leaders who display traits, appearances or behaviors at variance with [conventional wisdom](#) are often viewed warily and their performance scrutinized. After all, J.C. Penney CEO Ron Johnson, after badly missing earnings and sales projections, experiencing one of the worst quarterly losses in JCP history and retreating from his bold proclamation regarding sales and discount pricing, still has his job. As a former Apple executive with an MBA from Harvard, Johnson fits the mold. Mason, who has no previous corporate experience and a music degree, doesn't."

Mason isn't solely to blame for Groupon's poor performance, though, says Judge.

"I think it's quite possible that the real problem was that the company was overvalued at the time of its [initial public offering](#), which often

happens," Judge says. "And, investors and [board members](#) are kicking themselves, but much of the blame for that does not rest at Mason's feet."

Provided by University of Notre Dame

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