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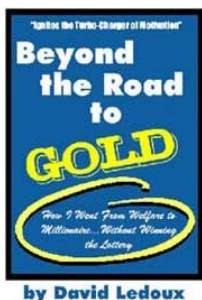
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## UPMG PRODUCT CATALOG

Here is a brief overview of our #1 best-selling products. If you have not already taken advantage of all of these money-making services, now is the time!!!

Below, you will find a small description of each. You will also find a link to gather more information on each product.



Beyond the Road to Gold Soft Cover Book- ***Discover How YOU Can Become A Millionaire Without Winning The Lottery!*** Get your hands on the true-life story of how a broke college dropout made a decision that would not only change his life, but thousands of others. This book will leave you inspired, as David's lessons will lead you to achieve successes you have never dreamed of.

No matter what your financial situation is, you will prosper from David Ledoux's teachings. His story is living proof of how the road to success and freedom isn't always a smooth path. Act now & grab a copy to ignite the turbo-charger in your life!

<http://www.ilovemlm.com/book/>

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE DETAILS.](#)

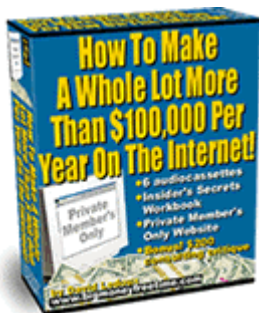


Ultimate MLM Blueprint For Massive Success – ***Discover the Jealously-guarded Blueprint That A 26 Year Old Used To Build a Downline of 25,147 People*** – Is your paycheck as large as you want it to be in Network Marketing? If you said no, then you need to get your hands on this! Conveniently available in a digital or vinyl album form, this Blueprint for MLM Success comes with REAL-LIFE success tactics and strategies to use in your MLM business today!

Learn from someone who has been where you are, and knows what you are going through. David's REAL-LIFE lessons will guide you to "get-over the hump" and take your business to the next level! Don't waste any more time, and money on anything else. This system has worked for thousands of people just like you. This program comes with an unconditional 62-day money back guarantee.

<http://www.ilovemlm.com>

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE DETAILS.](#)



How To Make A Whole Lot More Than \$100,000 Per Year On The Internet! – ***Uncover What A Former Disgruntled Office Clerk Used To Making A Killing On The Internet!*** – Have you ever wondered how so many people make so much money on the internet? Would you like to be free from a boss? Then you must grab this! Many programs promise the world, but this actually delivers! Learn how David Ledoux has built a Million Dollar Empire on the Internet with this system.

Inside you will find 6 audiotapes & a 150-page manual stocked full with REAL-LIFE money-making examples, strategies & workable methods to build a large six-figure income for yourself on the internet! This course will be rush shipped to your door-step so you can start making money right away! - <http://www.bigmoneyfreetime.com/>

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE DETAILS.](#)

**What Leading Voices Are Saying  
About David Ledoux's  
*Beyond the Road to Gold:  
How I Went From Welfare to Millionaire  
Without Winning the Lottery***

David Ledoux has proven that anyone can make money in network marketing. If you follow the concepts in this book you can reach any level of success you want in your MLM business — and quickly. It is a wonderful road map on how to make money in this industry.

**Jack M. Zufelt, world-class speaker and popular MLM trainer**  
**[www.thednaofmlmsuccess.com](http://www.thednaofmlmsuccess.com)**

“David has accomplished in a few years, what most people only wish for throughout their lives. He offers the map and the driving instructions to get behind the wheel and take the fast lane to personal fulfillment.”

**Dr. Denis Waitley, author “The Psychology of Winning”**

“David Ledoux is one of the most talented people I have ever met. His ability to solve problems, enjoy his days to the fullest and help others is a combination rarely found in one individual. After reading his book, I can now understand how he does it. You will not only be a better business person after reading it, you will be a better person.”

**Hilton Johnson, CEO, MLM University**

“Powerful stuff! David delivers tested, proven systems and information. Get it. Read it. Do it. Live it. Profit from it.”

**Marlon Sanders, CEO Higher Response Marketing**

“David Ledoux! The guy’s a marvel. Energetic, focused, a firestorm of good ideas and even better organizational and follow-up skills. This is one of the few guys writing about marketing whose advice is worth paying attention to. Don’t just skim this book. Tear into it and devour every money-making line. I know something about marketing myself, and I know this is a guy to pay attention to. Real close attention!”

**Dr. Jeffrey Lant, author of Money-Making Marketing**

“More than anything else, riveting this book will dispel the myth that the road to success is a straight, sleek, super highway.

It might include a number of dead ends... several drunken nights of forgetfulness, one or two days of shameful unethical behavior freezing your ass off waiting outdoors at 2am at a closed Canadian truck shop, recognizing and seizing opportunity when it enters your life (it always does) and several months of possibly disappointing returns, even when you’ve found the right opportunity!

But it will also rock-solid convince you that you CAN have everything in life you want if you’ll DECIDE what it is you want and go after it with the determination – even if it at times “mistaken” – that be denied.”

**Ted Ciuba, author “Mail Order in the Internet Age” [www.internetmarketinginterviews.com](http://www.internetmarketinginterviews.com)  
[www.instantinternetmarketing.com](http://www.instantinternetmarketing.com)**

“This man walks his talk. No rhetoric here. He’s made it, lost it and made it again and again and again. As he says, his best feature is, “seeing a pile of crap, visualizing its potential, then working my tail off to make it happen. “ And does he share those secrets? You betcha. 69 Strategies for Success, Money and Freedom share the spotlight to weave a tapestry of love as he humbly shows his vulnerability to the world. Ladies and gentlemen, run, don’t walk your fingers to David’s Web site to order this book. Make it your birthday all year round.”

**Raleigh Pinskey, [www.promoteyourself.com](http://www.promoteyourself.com), prosperity coach, speaker and author of *101 Ways to Promote Yourself, 101 Ways to Get on Talk Shows, 101 Ways to Write Foolproof Media Releases, 101 Ways to Sell Your Books and Info Products on the Internet, The Zen of Hype, Taking Charge of Your Success and The Power of Choice...***

“Since I don’t believe in coincidences, I can’t say that I found David by accident. I will say that it was my good fortune to have come across his first book “The Ultimate MLM Blueprint for Massive Success” and then to begin coaching with him and have my team do the same.

You see, David isn’t one of those MLM success story folks that sits on his assets and then makes his next million teaching out-dated material. No, the real value in working with David is his willingness and commitment to grow and learn and to have all of his “students” reach that massive success he writes about.

I highly recommend that you take the time to purchase, read and act on his book and then beg him to take you on as a coach for you and your team—as fast as you want that success you seek... and be sure to attend one of his Success, Money, Freedom bootcamps!”

**Sherry Zwick, Nikken Leader and MSI Coach**

“Touching, inspiring. David’s “Road to Gold” laid out clearly and unselfishly to empower us! Get a copy for all your downlines and uplines.”

**Ang Tiat Leong**  
**[www.mypfecthomebusiness.com](http://www.mypfecthomebusiness.com)**  
**[www.tipsofallsorts.com](http://www.tipsofallsorts.com)**

“David Ledoux... the Tony Robbins of Network Marketing! This book is a must read not only for newcomers to the MLM industry. It’s a motivational mix of hands-on success strategies, that work (!) and provides honest insights from his biography as an inspiration that is beyond just another “toolbox” manual.”

**Semmy Stumpp, MLM Consultant, international published book author**  
**Empowered Network Marketing**  
**[www.money4success.com](http://www.money4success.com)**

“I couldn’t sit it down.... I started reading your book before I went to bed and before I knew it, it was 1:30 in the morning and I finished reading the entire book. This is the most interesting, compelling and inspirational book I have read in a long time. Definitely required reading for anybody who wants to create a successful life for themselves.”

**Kevin Wilke, Founder and CEO**

**[www.PureNetProfits.com](http://www.PureNetProfits.com)**

“This book is awesome! It is forcing me to flush out any doubts and do whatever it takes to be successful. David Ledoux is a true master story-teller. It will have you wishing the book never ended!”

**David Pynn, Personal Coach & Diversified Income Specialist**

“David Ledoux’s trials and tribulations could make anyone’s seem small and insignificant. This book will lead you to fulfill your own goals and dreams with massive success!”

**Stephanie Carvalho, Diversified Income Specialist**

## **From the Author**

To my darling wife Falia. I'd still be eating KD if it wasn't for you. You are simply the best! I love you.

To my best friends Peter and Sheila. You believed in me when no one else did. I'm so glad you came along for the ride.

To Robin and Steven, you guys are awesome. Roland and Wendy, thanks for everything. Dallin, thanks for giving me the shot. Randy, thanks for paving the way in the 90s. Ken, thanks for teaching me about market share. The rusty Toyota made a great rocketship across Canada. Good luck in your new adventures.

Eric, I'm glad you found love in MLM. You broke the cardinal rule, don't date your downline. I'm so happy for you and Shelley. To Bob, thanks for teaching me in Tahiti that if you can do it, so can I. To Kalench, thanks for teaching me about level 10 belief. Hope the briefings in heaven are standing room only!

To Dexter, my hero in the biz. yagottadremebigdremes. To Brock, more Barnes than Elias. To Squig, thanks for the push. To Pynn and Steph, best wedding ever-word. Carter, thanks for the golf lessons, bring your visa next time. Don't-call-me- eff, thanks for showing me how not to treat people. To Paul, Renate, Doug, Elfie, John, Carol, Caroline, Big Rob, my pool is your pool! Peter, thanks for teaching me to snowboard. Chris and Steve, you guys are wizards. Siebolds, you guys are amazing teachers. Lyne and Germain, always grateful for the fax and the friendship. Peggy, stay tough and keep it moving. Dave and Myron, thanks for your vision.

Mark Hughes, grow your hair long again and say hi to John, thanks for the start. To Gil, poolpass2000ghgh, To Terry Hogan for teaching me the 4 keys to success. To Vinnie Mac for years of entertainment and teaching me to be an awesome promoter. To KT and Buddy, for waking me up with love. To Rou and Petu for giving me a sponsorship when I needed a bonus, Gus and Amalia for being so wonderful, to the 33k+ in the Do Team, you are the greatest team in the world, to the millions, and I do mean millions, of the industry's fans, don't ever let the dream stealers get you down!

David  
January 2002

## **Prologue: A Tale of Two Destinies**

It's July of 2000. Salt Lake City is sweltering in the summer temperatures, but inside the city's Convention Center there is a heat of an entirely different kind. Thousands of people pursuing their financial dreams have come together to celebrate their successes, and they are doing so with a frenzy.

Backstage, I'm pacing with electric nerves and surging adrenaline. It's a banner day and I'm dressed for it in my \$1600 custom Italian tuxedo, \$400 Florsheim shoes and \$300 custom French-cuffed shirt with gold cufflinks. I look at the Rolex on my wrist and see that we're just seconds away from the big moment.

I hear the public address system crank up. The crowd settles. I close my eyes to soak in the moment and, seconds later, hear the words for which I'd waited years.

"From Canada, new Diamonds and Million-Dollar Club Members, David and Falia Ledoux!!"

Falia and I float up the steps to the giant raised stage. As we step into the brilliant light, the roar from the crowd is deafening. At that point.....

Whoa. Let's stop right there.

Everyone knows that a good story doesn't give away the rewarding ending right at the outset. To make the big finale all the more dramatic, it is essential to give it perspective. After all, the greatest and most dramatic victories are those that are salvaged from defeat and desperation.

Believe me, I can give you desperation.

As a famous sportscaster used to say, let's go to the videotape and rewind it back about nine years or so. It's Christmas Eve 1991. We're not in warm Salt Lake City, but rather freezing cold Winnipeg, Manitoba. There are no bright lights and screaming crowds, just a few dim bulbs and maybe a screaming drunk or two outside on the sidewalk. And I didn't exactly have a Rolex, but it didn't much matter because time doesn't carry much meaning when you don't have anything to look forward to.

On that Christmas Eve, I was 23 years old, destitute and living from welfare check to welfare check in a dilapidated flophouse populated by alcoholics, new immigrants unable to find work and a whole subsection of society's unwashed and unwanted. I spent my days in their midst in my little 12 by 15 foot room.

There were signs of the holiday all around my building. Every telephone pole was cheerfully decorated with smiling Santas, glittering Christmas trees and decorative candles. Even though the minus-25 temperatures and the bitter winds froze the little hairs in your nostrils, people on the street were cheery as they did their last-minute shopping and rushed home to their families and their yuletide celebrations.

The warmth on the faces I saw on the street reminded me of Christmases past, bittersweet reminiscences of piles of gifts, punch bowls full of eggnog, mistletoe hanging over the doorway – all of the things I didn't have in my miserable little welfare-dependent existence.

It was Christmas, though, and I was determined to make the most of it. No box of Kraft macaroni-and-cheese for me on the holiday. No sir, I was going to do whatever I could to make this night at least a little bit special.

So, I threw on my threadbare jacket, more than a little too thin for the arctic weather, and pulled it around my skinny frame. Funny how the cold didn't bother me quite so much when I was a college athlete. A strict poverty diet and the resulting skin-and-bones condition makes you much more susceptible to sub-zero temps.

I went shopping with the \$30 I had left from that month's government check and made a little feast for myself. A little piece of turkey, roasted potatoes in a plastic deli container, a can of orange juice and, of course, the piece de resistance, a 26 ounce bottle of vodka.

After bringing my provisions home, putting the food in the building's communal fridge and stashing my bottle under the bed, I settled down for a long winter's nap. Let me explain something. Napping is very important to those living a welfare existence. Your energy levels are so low from a lack of carbohydrates, that you take great care to move slowly and not waste precious energy. Plus, as an added bonus, sleeping lets you forget about the pain, shame and loneliness. Dreaming can beat the hell out of reality when life turns grim.

I woke up around dinner time and fixed myself a pre-meal cocktail, thinking bitterly that this was my first-ever Christmas without a single present. Of course, to give and receive gifts, it's necessary for family and friends to know how to find you. My shame at my current state of affairs had led to a self-imposed exile and a complete disappearance from the circles in which I used to thrive.

Strolling into the building's kitchen to prepare my Christmas Eve dinner, my mind reeled when I opened the ancient refrigerator and saw my potatoes intact but my meager piece of turkey gone. Some bastard has stolen my Christmas turkey, such as it was. I screamed profanities into the hallway, but not a single door opened. The thief was probably napping after enjoying his snack.

My painfully growling stomach forced me back into the kitchen to forage for survival foods. No money would be in my pockets until the next welfare check arrived in three days. I managed to find some stale Wonder bread and some baloney that looked like it hailed from the Jurassic period. By trimming the crusted edges from the lunchmeat, I was able to make the world's most disgusting sandwich for my Christmas dinner, devouring it as I sat on the stained floor of that filthy kitchen.

The rest of the 26-ounce vodka bottle went down in record time and made the meal seem palatable. With a warm, alcohol-stoked belly, I ventured back out into the frigid night.

There may be no lonelier place than the streets of Winnipeg late at night on Christmas Eve. Moving on wobbly legs, I slumped into a snow bank at the edge of an empty parking lot. With the cold making my eyes tear up, I tried see through the blur to read the clock above the Bank of Montreal. It wasn't the cold that made my eyes water as I saw it was midnight. More tears made salty trails on my numb cheeks as I realized that it was December 25.

Merry Freakin' Christmas. Cold, drunk and utterly alone. Squarely facing the fact that I could die right now in this snow bank and no one would ever miss me. I closed my eyes and actually thought that dying wouldn't be so bad.

If someone had told me at that time that, nine years later, I would be receiving the wild applause of thousands of my peers in celebration of my professional successes, that I would be enjoying the lifestyle that comes with a million-dollar income, I would have slurred out some kind of derisive laughter. If I'd been told that these things would come my way without hitting the lottery, it would have been inconceivable.

But, my life is an example of how destinies are not predetermined, but shaped by our decisions and actions.

It's one heck of a story, and the best is yet to come.....



# **Chapter One**

## **Small Pond Syndrome: You're Never As Big As You Think You Are, or As You Can Be**

How could I have envisioned one day being in a drunken stupor in a lonely snowbank when, at one time, my life was soaring? Or, at least I thought it was.

The paper airplane was thrown from the third balcony in Convocation Hall. I watched it, transfixed. Time seemed to literally stand still.

That airplane soared straight up in the air, 20 or 30 feet towards the domed ceiling. As it dropped from the rafters, gravity made it accelerate at 9.8 meters per second. Its flight path was perfect. That little piece of paper, transformed from its original career path with a little thought, a little action and some courage flew the entire length of the enormous hall.

All 2200 kids watched its flight that day. I found it symbolic. From a flat little square to a sleek flying machine. Believe it or not, I saw that scrap paper-turned-great bird as an analogy for what my life would become.

I was 18, fresh off a 30-hour drive from my home town of Pinawa Manitoba to the big city of Toronto Ontario to attend university. It didn't take long for culture shock to set in. I grew up in a town of 1900 people and had more souls than that in the classroom auditorium for my first Psychology 100 class.

To say I was overwhelmed was an understatement. The professor was a tiny dot on a stage below. He introduced himself, welcomed us to Psyche 100. Then he spoke those ominous words that still echo in my memories.

"Students, look to your left, look to your right. Those people will not be here by the end of the year."

Maybe I wasn't used to the crowds, but it didn't affect my cockiness. Other students were intimidated by the professor's words. I scoffed, knowing I'd not only survive, but thrive. I was a straight A student, my graduating class president, an avid athlete, and Dungeon Master of my local Dungeon's and Dragons Club. Mr. Psyche Prof didn't know who he was messing with.

Being a big fish in a small pond is very dangerous, though, when you move into the ocean. Every kid on my floor in residence was smart. Some were genius level in the "gifted program". I never heard of such a thing. Growing up in a small town, there were only 45 kids in my grad class. I was always in the top three in everything.

It was one heck of a blow to my confidence to find so many kids brainier than me and with better educational backgrounds. My cockiness started going the way of an obscure semi-pro football player suddenly lining up to face the Green Bay Packers.

### **What Am I Doing Here?**

Over the course of first year I began to doubt that I belonged here. Breezing through high school had left me with terrible study habits. I began to feel the stress of constantly playing catch up. I had entered a pre-medicine program and the workload was horrendous.

My choice of medicine as a career track was not a matter of great foresight and textbook decision-making.

FLASHBACK: Our high school guidance counselor, looking at my straight A record, asked me what I planned to study at university.

Throughout this book, I'm going to share with you various approach that have helped me achieve success in life. This is the first of my "69 Strategies for Success, Money and Freedom."

Success Strategy #1  
"When Eating a Frog,  
Go Head First"

- Do your hardest tasks first each day.
- Give yourself a small reward for successful completion.
- Everyday, focus on no more than six key to-do's.

"Who makes the most money?" I asked.

"Doctors, dentists, lawyers and engineers," he said.

After careful thought of, oh, 10 seconds or so, I said, "Okay, I'll be a dentist."

And that was that. I was 17 years old, with pre-pubescent bad skin and cheesy mustache, totally focused on girls, hockey and playing Dungeons and Dragons with my friends. And in a two minute conversation my entire career, future and life was planned out.

It didn't take long for the folly of that decision to set in. I finished first year with an A in Psychology and a B in Biology, but with a C in Chemistry, a D in Physics and a D- in Calculus. I headed back to Pinawa that summer to regroup.

It would be tough enough to face one's father with those grades under any circumstances. Even worse, though, when dad had his own report card for comparison. He had been working on his Ph.D in Education that same year. He got 2 A+ and 3 A's. Bad enough to have to compare yourself to all of the brainiacs at the university, even worse when you're at the bottom of the grade ladder in your own home.

In retrospect, though, he was quite forgiving. I think most of the pressure to excel was self-created. That self-imposed pressure would haunt me for the next decade.

Success Strategy #2

The first 30 minutes are the key to a great day.

- Set your alarm clock three minutes earlier each day for 10 straight days.
- On the 10th day, get up immediately, go to bathroom, wash face, put on loose clothes, walk to kitchen, drink glass of water, grab keys.
- Get out of house within 3.5 minutes of alarm going off, walk briskly in random direction 9.5 minutes away from house. No running.
- Return via a different route. Continue this practice, changing paths each day. No music.
- Focus on your breathing and your waking thoughts for the day.
- This routine will clean your lymph system, your body's sewage system. Exercise is the key to flushing it out.
- Life is energy. This routine will improve your creative productivity by over 150 percent.

Obviously, with such brutal grades I wasn't accepted into the Fast Track Program for Dentistry. Therefore, I was facing the prospect of a four-year Bachelor of Science Degree, then applying to spend two years in the dentistry program. Was I really up to facing five more years of school? Was that what I wanted to do with my life?

That summer, I was transforming into Joe Adonis. I was 19, lean, tanned, with long blond hair down to my shoulders, an earring and two incredible jobs. I was a computer programmer at the nuclear plant and spending hours as a lifeguard at the local pool.

Whoa, wait a second. How does a struggling student with questionable career plans get a job as a computer programmer? Let me digress a bit and share a story that describes the strange twists life can take, and the need to be ready to respond to those changes.

Back when I was 14 years old, I had a trapline to make extra money. It was a bit of a bonding thing with my father. He was an avid hunter and outdoorsman. Every Saturday morning we'd dress as warm as possible to brave the 30-below temperatures of the prairie winter, drive 20 minutes to the middle of nowhere, then march five miles through the bush along a stream to check our traps.

Usually we caught squirrels and the odd weasel. It was sometimes pretty gruesome. While usually the animal would freeze to death in the trap, sometimes they would chew their leg off and escape. When my stomach wasn't churning and when I wasn't silently evaluating the morality of it all, I did get a unique perspective on life.

There was a dry creek bed on our line, with a log stretching over a little gully maybe five feet wide. I thought that would be an excellent place for a trap. That day we had two leg-hold traps with us. But we had no meat for bait.

We placed one trap directly on top of the log, then tied a piece of red bailer twine around the log, and let it hang down about two feet from the bottom of the gully. Directly below the twine we set the second trap.

My father took out the piece of newspaper that he kept in his parka pocket in case we got cold or wet and needed to light a fire. He rolled it up, and tied it around the dangling bailer twine.

"There," he said with a satisfied nod. "When the squirrel comes to read the sports pages, we'll get him."

With one trap set on top the log, a dangling piece of twine, a piece of newspaper and the second trap below, we considered our work finished. We trudged off through waist-deep snow back towards the car about 3 miles away.

The week following was your typical week in ninth grade. Hockey practice on Tuesday and Thursday, volleyball on Wednesday, lots of homework and trying to make time with cute girls in the hallways. And of course, Dungeons and Dragons on Friday night with the guys.

Saturday morning was particularly mild, and I was feeling lazy. My dad told me to pack the .22 rifle because with the mild weather, we might have to shoot a squirrel or two that hadn't frozen to death. But the .22 was heavy, and my little pellet gun was easier to carry. So I took it instead.

We did our usual march, following a tiny stream bed through the woods. Pickings were slim that day, no squirrels, no weasels. It was just a few weeks until Christmas, and as we trudged I pleaded my case to Dad about how great it would be if Santa brought me a new Commodore Vic-20 computer. Some of my friends had Apple II computers, but I wanted a Vic-20 because it had superior games.

I remember saying, "Wouldn't it be amazing if we caught something big so I could buy the computer instead?" Was it a psychic moment? Perhaps I'd actually turned clairvoyant for a brief moment there, because we no sooner rounded the bend in the stream near where we had set the two traps and newspaper than my Dad hissed, "Get down!"

I squatted in a snow bank, trying hard to spy what exactly had alarmed my father. "Something big is behind that log!" he whispered.

I looked to the little ravine with the log running across it. Where the newspaper should have been was just a dangling piece of twine. The chain that attached the trap was pulled tight, and behind a little stand of shrubs and a fallen log I could clearly make out the outline of a creature. It had a rounded head, with pointed ears with tufts of fur on them, and a definitely feline face. It was a wild lynx!

My dad looked at the meager weaponry I was carrying and nearly exploded, “I told you to bring the damn .22. I don’t think this pop gun has enough power to kill it!”

We didn’t know if it was securely trapped or not. We didn’t want it to get away. We crawled a little closer through the bush until we didn’t dare get any nearer.

“I’m going to shoot out its eyes, then club it,” my father said. “Find me a heavy stick the size of a bat.”

The gruesome scene running through my mind didn’t thrill me, but I scurried on my hands and knees to do as I was told. I found a piece of tree trunk from a fallen poplar or birch, about the size of a big pipe and brought it over for approval from my father.

Good as his word, my father shot out both eyes of the lynx with my pellet gun from 60 or 70 feet away, then charged it like a soldier storming a foxhole in the war. I saw his arm rise and fall two or three times, then it was over. With a nod of his head I rose from my crouch and scampered over to join him to survey our catch.

The dead lynx was about the size of a dog, covered in thick fur. My father bent over to get the traps off it.

“Look at this!” he exclaimed. He spread the hind legs. “Damn, that must have hurt!”

I could clearly see the lynx’s scrotum and penis caught in the jaws of the trap.

“He must have walked along the log to check out the newspaper, then literally sat in the trap! No wonder this little trap held him. David, no one catches a lynx in a zero-sized trap,” my father exclaimed.

I wasn’t exactly a hardened outdoorsman at that tender point in my life, and I looked down at the lynx with great sadness. I couldn’t stop thinking about this little innocent animal, minding his own business, sitting down on a log and then feeling steel teeth seizing onto his reproductive organs. I dwelled on the day or two of pain and fear the lynx felt, waiting for his eyes to be shot out and then to be clubbed to death by a man. I came close to crying in front of my dad, an unthinkable act.

**Success Strategy #3**  
**Wear A Heavy Elastic Band Around**  
**Your Right Wrist for One Week**

- Every time you have a negative thought, say “cancel, cancel” and snap the band. Within an hour, a welt will form.
- You’ll soon realize that your inner dialogue can “dis-empower” you.
- A key secret to success is harnessing our inner dialogue to support our growth efforts. You’ll work on this strategy the rest of your life.

Dad broke up my silent mourning thoughts. “Looks like you’ll get that computer now,” he said.

Mourning period was over. “What do you mean?”

“You’ll get a couple of hundred for this pelt. Help me reset the trap and we’ll get going.”

My father carried the lynx, and I carried my pellet gun, and we trudged our four-mile trail back to the car. I floated most of the way, so excited about getting a computer!

It took two hours for my Dad and I to skin the thing. Mom wasn’t thrilled about the idea of an animal corpse in her basement, but the garage was too darned cold. That night after dinner the doorbell rang, and a

stranger was there. The guy introduced himself, said he worked in Winnipeg but lived in Pinawa. He worked at the University of Manitoba in some natural resources department or something. Word had gotten around town about “Dave’s big catch” and he wanted to take the lynx carcass to the university to show his students and analyze.

We ended up getting \$300 for the fur, and I got my Commodore Vic-20 computer. That began a life-long love affair with learning and exploring and discovery. And mischief.

Success Strategy #4  
Drive Your Dream Car at Least Once a Month

- This creates positive pressure to produce.
- It creates “cognitive dissonance” between your current reality and your imagined reality.
- Make it a point to meet the top salesman at the dealership. Have him take your photo with your dream car. Remember to smell that “new car smell.” Our olfactory sense is one of purest and most intense physical senses.
- Create positive mental dialogue to support the mental vision of you driving the car -- because you deserve it.

## **Chapter Two**

### **The Adventures of the Clandestine Kid**

As I mentioned, I had a summer job at age 19 working for Atomic Energy of Canada. How did a long-haired, earringed youth flow so easily into such a high-tech job. Easy. I already knew a little something about their computer system.

When I was in high school, one of the most popular movies that summer was called War Games. It featured Matthew Broderick as an easy-going teenager who accidentally hacks into the military computer network and nearly starts World War III. Most people thought the movie was nothing but Hollywood fantasy.

There's a thin line between fantasy and reality.

A couple of local friends and I formed an informal association that we referred to as "The Outer Triangle". Basically, it was a private club for self-described smart kids with computers. In between firing off model rockets and playing Dungeons and Dragons, we would build computer systems.

Our little gang of early hackers got a special privilege through our computer club at school. Atomic Energy, as a public service, created a couple of small and extremely limited accounts for our high school on their mainframe computer. We had super restricted access and tight time limits. We had to log on to their system from an antiquated relic at school with a 300 baud modem, no monitor and only a wide-carriage printer read out. This thing was the Amish buggies of computers, as slow and antiquated as they come.

Frustrated at the limitations of the relic, we came up with a plan. Jens, the most brilliant programmer in our group, cobbled together a program on my Commodore. It was designed to go through the motions of logging into the Atomic Energy network, capture a username and password, then quickly exit as if a telephone company glitch accidentally broke the connection. We repeated this process for a half dozen of the kids in the school's computer class, capturing a prize collection of Atomic Energy entrance passwords.

Surfing through Atomic Energy of Canada's network became my late-night hobby. I studied the "bible" of hacking, a book called The Inner Circle. (from whence we derived our Outer Triangle group name). It was an extremely exhilarating time, cracking my way into a world of information from which mere mortals were banned. My hacking moniker became The Clandestine Kid.

This was in the early early days of home computers. Steve Jobs and Apple were the dominant players. Commodore had the best games, and everyone was beginning to talk about IBM "clones". But at Atomic Energy they had email, data networks to other cities, and games. Lots of games.

Basically I explored every nook and cranny of their system late at night from my basement. I played a lot of online games too. And then I found Athena.

Athena was a restricted part of their system that I could not access through my student account. It was like a closed door to a cat. I clawed at it. My curiosity was too much.

Referring to my handbook on hacking, I needed a better account with more power. So it was time for some 'social engineering'.

We didn't have email access on our student accounts. But we were given access to the games account. And the games account DID have email access! I modifying the username to something that seems ridiculous now, but it made perfect sense then. I called myself "Head of Plant Security."

Under that job title, I then sent an email to all the local users linked to that account, maybe 15 or 20 people in total. It read:

“ Dear AECL system user,

We are sorry to inform you that the network will be down this afternoon for maintenance. In order that we not lose your account, please hit reply with your username and password. If you wish to change your password, include your new one in the email.”

Head of Plant Security”

Ok, so I wasn’t skilled in computer espionage, but in my mind I was the James Bond of the Commodore computer set.

Something amazing happened from my amateurish approach, though. A woman named Judy fell for my little trick and gave me both her user name and password. Jackpot! Her account had far more privileges than our very limited student accounts.

But I still couldn’t get into Athena with it. I still didn’t know what Athena was exactly. But the desire to find out was mounting by the day.

At that point, I had what I thought was a stroke of genius. My programming skills were fairly pitiful, but I could turn to Jens for expert assistance. I got him to write a “demon dialer” program for me. It would dial every single number in the phone book until it found a computer modem that would answer. Then it would try every imaginable alphanumeric combination until it happened upon a correct password.

Essentially, this was like trying to dig out the Grand Canyon with a teaspoon.

I set it to work on ATHENA. Never mind that statistically it would have taken years to crack. The AECL computer hung up after 5 wrong tries. Then it had to dial back in. It didn’t matter, I had to see what was there.

I went off to school that day, with my Demon Dialer happily working away. I raced home at lunch to check how it was making out. Who knows, maybe it had already cracked it?

I watched with horror as the words popped up on my screen.

“WARNING! WARNING! A SECURITY BREACH IS IN PROGRESS. CONTACT YOUR SUPERVISOR IMMEDIATELY! AUTHORITIES HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED!”

Success Strategy #5  
Clothes Really Do Make the Man  
(and Woman)

- Invest in one expensive, high-quality outfit that makes you feel like a million bucks. Spare no expense!
- Buy it solely based on how you feel when wearing it. Do you feel confident, more powerful? Perfect.
- Wear it only when appropriate. (No bar hopping!) Look after it like the valuable resource it is.

Success Strategy #6  
Create a Wad That Would Choke a Horse

- Men -- no more wallet. Carry your money only in a money clip.
- Put a \$100 bill on the outside. If you’re temporarily cash short, fill the rest of the wad with singles.
- Never spend the \$100 (excepting dire emergencies). When the wad gets thin, focus your money-attracting energy on refilling it.
- Ladies -- adapt this strategy to fit your prosperity-attracting needs.

- Every single time you take the clip off to share some of your wad with someone else, you are moving energy around. Pay the person receiving your energy a compliment. Watch what happens.

Suddenly, my teenage fantasy world came crashing down around me. Reality hit me like a cold slap in the face. I was trying to hack into a government-owned nuclear research facility. Besides the felonious aspects of what I was doing, I had made myself into a national security threat. The War Games movie was real.

And I was sick about it.

### **UH-OH, Houston We Have A Problem....**

I knew things were bad when Jens got called down to the office in the mid-afternoon from Physics class. I watched the color drain from his face when I told him what the plant computer had said. I watched him nearly vomit when he got called out of class. He came back to class 40 minutes later. We huddled at the back of the Chem lab. He filled us in on the developments.

“You idiot!” he hissed at me. “That account you got from Judy – she’s the real head of AECL computer security! They know everything! She set that account up on purpose to burn you!”

Teenagers aren’t accustomed to being the objects of government sting operations. Guess who’s turn it was to turn green?

I skipped last period, sprinted the four blocks back home, dismantled my entire computer and hid it all in the basement closet. And waited for the knock on the door that would end my future.

When my folks got home from work that night, I wanted to tell them. I thought that if I spilled the beans and told them everything, my poor mother wouldn’t collapse when the cops came to drag me off in handcuffs.

#### **Success Strategy #7 You Never Get a Second Chance to Make a First Impression**

- **HANDSHAKE** -- Learn the proper way to shake a man’s and a lady’s hand. Study the firmness, duration, etc.
- **EYES** -- When shaking hands, look the person in their right eye. Silently pay them a compliment with your inner dialogue. That will give you a “twinkle” in your eye.
- **SMILE** -- Practice your smile in a mirror to make it natural and appealing. Get your teeth fixed if necessary.
- **NAMES** -- Use the person’s name three times in the opening greeting. (Bob, is it? Bob Smith? Bob, it’s a pleasure meeting you.)

I felt my bowels loosening every time I saw cop cars driving by my house – and, in my paranoid state of mind, I swore I was seeing them every 20 minutes. And the Bell Telephone van looked very conspicuous parked ten houses away down the street. “Oh god, they have a wire tap on! They’ve been watching me for weeks!”

I didn’t sleep a wink that night.

The next day at school, the computer class lost its privileges to access the Atomic Energy computer. Everyone blamed poor Jens. Somehow my name didn’t come up. And I knew it wouldn’t. The first rule of being a hacker is you don’t roll over on your buddies when you get pinched.



I remember thinking all morning, “Why haven’t the feds stormed the school yet with Uzis to take me in?”

Days passed. Nothing. Things went back to normal. I went back to playing a lot of hockey and D&D. And I began to forget all about it.

About a month later I was shoveling the driveway, and my buddy Paul dropped by. His father was a Ph.D in nuclear physics, a real cool eccentric guy. He had a photo of himself and Pierre Trudeau, the former Canadian Prime Minister, on a canoe trip. Old Pierre is chugging from a wine bottle. Paul’s dad once took us into the bowels of the nuclear plant to what they called the “pools”. Picture giant swimming pools filled with nuclear waste rods. He turned out the lights and it glowed an eerie green.

Paul showed me an AECL memo that he had scooped from his Dad’s desk. It talked about the security breach, hacking attacks, and protocol to protect computer security. I kept a photocopy of that memo for years as a reminder of my stupidity.

“Dude, you’re lucky” Paul said. “From what I hear they’ve basically dropped the investigation into the hacking. You know what I heard about Athena?”

“Nope.”

“I heard it was a top secret mainframe on the network where they kept the test data on that Soviet satellite that crashed last year, scattered all over the Arctic.”

“Shit, come on!”

“Truth man. That’s what I heard. You would’ve been in a cell, becoming some huge biker guy’s girlfriend for sure if you had cracked in.”

“I’m done man. The Clandestine Kid’s days are over.” Imagine my surprise when AECL offered me a summer job as a computer programmer 4 years later after my first year of college!

Success Strategy #8  
Never Let Your Gas Tank Drop Below a Quarter Full

- Being time-starved is an illusion.
- Being too busy driving to stop and fill up is a silly self-created pattern.
- This new discipline will ensure you never run out of gas -- another silly self-destructive pattern.
- Some of the most lucrative financial deals you’ll ever make will happen because you met a stranger at a gas station.

Success Strategy #9  
Self-Education is Mandatory

- The public school system and post-secondary system will teach you the essential skills and attitudes necessary to be part of the struggling middle class.
- If you want more out of life, it is up to you to track down the people, courses, and organizations that can teach you how money, the brain, energy and people really work.

## Chapter Three: Undisciplined but Opportunistic

That summer my father was away at grad school, and I just cut loose. Rather than banking my paychecks, I blew them on partying and girls. It truly was an amazing summer. I was finally old enough to go to the only bar in town, and I took advantage of it – again and again and again.

One of the most ironic discoveries that summer was hooking up with my old buddies from the “Outer Triangle”. I found out that I wasn’t the only one bombing in school. The two smartest guys in our little club, including Jens, were drowning. We were all getting our asses kicked. How could three genius level guys be getting such lousy grades? We had a summit meeting on the subject one night after several pitchers of Singapore Slings, coming to the conclusion that we were maladjusted eggheads with lousy study habits and poor work ethics.

Or was it that we were too smart and too cool for school? After the sixth drink or so, the differences blur.

We had all changed in some ways in just a year. Some of us had gained a few pounds. Some grew scraggly beards. One had started to go bald at 19. How had I changed? I had gained confidence in talking to girls.

I had been so shy and introverted through a lot of high school, chronically so. It’s tough to meet ladies when you’re looking at their shoes instead of their eyes. Suddenly, though, all of that had changed.

We were sitting in the Lakeview Tavern in Lac Du Bonnet on a Friday and the place was hopping. LDB, as we referred to it, was the town next door to ours. It was also, according to popular opinion, the place where the girls all smoked, drank and were way more ‘relaxed’ than the smart girls in my town.

Over a game of pool, I was swapping university war stories with some of the guys. When the topic moved towards the ladies, I made a gesture with my hand. “Got ya all beat there guys. It was a banner year!” I boasted.

At the table with us, there was a stocky little British guy who had been a rival of mine all through high school. My bragging about my luck with women immediately set him off. In his high-pitched, I’m-better-than-you-ragtag-colonists accent, he accused me of being full of it.

Rather than debate him, I took a deep breath and actually thought about how I might be able to jab back. Then, as God as my witness, this leggy, lovely lady walked up to our pool table circled with former computer nerds, and asked me to dance.

Really.

Here’s a little tip to never forget. When the heavens open up and throw an unexpected gift your way, you don’t hesitate to accept it gratefully. I cast away my shy self, gave this beauty a “hey baby” grin, tossed aside my pool cue, took her by the hand and strolled cock-of-the-walk style to the dance floor.

Looking over my shoulder and giving a wink to the lads left behind at the pool table was a moment of satisfaction topped only by the shocked look on my rival’s face. A standing ovation ensued.

### Success Strategy #10 Support Your Inner Dialogue with an Outer Dialogue

- Most music on the radio is negative with damaging word pictures. (Why are country singers always losing their dogs, their women and their trucks?)
- Create an audio tape of yourself, in your own voice, speaking your goals and positive affirmations.
- It takes 10 positive thoughts to neutralize a single negative one. How many negative, disempowering thoughts have you had today?

How do I describe this female gift from the gods? It was the eighties, so naturally she had on skin-tight jeans that looked painted on. Her long hair had just enough of a hint of red to make you break a sweat. She had the body of an athlete, which she was. This competitive women's softball player and I were the only dancers on the floor, with every pair of eyes in the bar cast upon us.

After two songs we headed back to the table for a cocktail and so I could introduce her to my friends. Ok, I admit it. I wanted to rub it in the little Limey's face!

He was funny. He leaned over in his the-queen-will-one-day-knight-me tone, and hissed, "Well done lad. I don't know if you planned it that way, but if you didn't you've got 'orseshoes up your ahss!"

The lovely lady and I spent the rest of the night dancing and visiting. My buddies kept a guard on the pool table. At last call, as the bar was closing I stole a single kiss goodnight, got her phone number and promised to call.

Even now looking back, that evening stands out as a defining moment. The laws of physics were somehow bent. Social laws of the jungle were turned upside down. I always admired her courage to walk into a circle of guys to ask one of them to dance. And I have always been so glad that it was me. It did teach me that all the perfect planning in the world can't take fate into consideration, and that you need to capitalize on opportunities

It was late in the summer when I met her. We had a few dates, and the relationship had some potential. Unfortunately, she was staying in LDB, and I was heading back to Toronto for second year. I promised to call her.

That summer, as amazing and fun as it was, set a bad tone for the coming school year. Although I had partied a fair piece in first year, I came into second year believing that I wasn't smart enough for med school. Facing at least five more long years of boring school was a more daunting task than I could swallow.

Being a diligent student held no appeal for me. I made the weekends start on Wednesdays. I never went to class. Hell, I didn't even buy textbooks for most of my classes until late October.

The semester was like a four-month drunken binge and, as it neared its end, I was a little panicked. Hell, let's not sugarcoat it, my misspent ways had me freaking out. As the summer ended, I had promised my father that I would pull up my socks and make some grades happen. Instead I was playing four sports and cutting 90% of my classes. I had burned through all my money. And I had huge phone bills from calling that girl back in Lac Du Bonnet all the time.

The loans from the Bank of Dad had dried up. My student loans had barely covered tuition. I literally had no money to fly home for Thanksgiving holiday. After football practice I was asking my friends, "How can I make enough money to fly home for the break?" Another lesson learned – when you become desperate enough, you find a way to make things happen.

I picked up a copy of the college newspaper, The Varsity. And on the cover was a huge article about a contest at halftime during an upcoming varsity basketball game. There have been only 2 other times in my life when I have looked at a piece of paper and my intuition roared. It's hard to explain, but it's a very real phenomenon. It's as if I get a small glimpse of the future in a bright flash. I feel a pressure in my solar plexus, not like a punch, just a downward pressure. Maybe it's a psychic vision. Then again, maybe it's just gas from a chili dog.

When I saw that article, I had a feeling of certainty. I just knew I was meant to read it. The contest was called The Dash For Cash. At halftime, they were going to spread \$10,000 in fake \$1 bills all across the basketball court. They would draw 3 lucky contestants, and you'd have 1 minute to pick up as much cash as you could.

I knew I was going to win. And I knew I was going to scoop enough cash to fly home for Thanksgiving, see my family and hook back up with the girl from LDB.

**Success Strategy #11**  
**Create a “Compelling**  
**Reasons” Card**

- Take a piece of card stock about the size of a business card.
- On one side, write the three reasons you **MUST** be successful.
- On the other side, write three reasons you **WILL** be successful.
- Laminate it and carry it with you for the next 30 years, or until you fulfill all three reasons and need to create a new card.

When the universe gives you a glimpse of the future, it doesn't necessarily make it easy on you. I had 11 days until the contest. I channeled my creativity, my focus and my determination. I was going to make it simple on the universe to make me win.

Every Wednesday I met up with a small group of guys on my floor at residence and we would walk down to China Town for some late night nourishment. I hatched my master plan over beers and hot-and-sour-soup at midnight that night.

Actually, the beers played an important role. I had three of my friends help me carry out an unorthodox plan to increase my odds of winning this contest. We “borrowed” shopping carts from the nearby 24-hour grocery store. We went to two dozen university buildings in a four-block area, and filled the shopping carts with bundles of Varsity newspapers. And then we took our load back to my dorm room.

By three A.M. I had sequestered nearly every newspaper in sight. Thankfully the paper was free. And each newspaper contained one entry ballot for the Dash for Cash contest.

We had picked up just shy of 3000 papers in 3 hours. The university printed 50,000 papers with ballots. There was no way to get all of them. The UofT campus was enormous. My tiny dorm room was

stacked floor to ceiling with bundles of newspaper. I got a red pen, and started to work.

It took me eight days to complete 2400 ballots. I didn't go to class, choosing instead to pursue my new “occupation” around the cause. Friends would drop by and see how the project was coming. They always filled out a few ballots during their visits. On the last day to get your ballots in, my buddy Eddie and I marched down with a garbage bag full of ballots to the basketball arena and dropped them in the giant drum.

I felt a little deflated. The drum was enormous. Tens of thousands of ballots. I was filled with doubt. “What if I didn't win?”

Eddie, myself and a few buddies got tickets to the game the next night. The place was packed. The energy was electric. And I was sweating bullets.

Eddie convinced me to wear a giant football jersey that he borrowed from one of the 280-pound offensive lineman on the college varsity. The thing looked like a dress on me! We tucked it into my jeans, and with silver duct tape sealed the ends of the sleeves to my wrists. The neck hole was colossal. That was my stuffing strategy. I literally was wearing a giant net. Now all I had to do was get picked.

With five minutes left in the first half, they rolled the giant drum to the edge of the court. On a time out when the players were at their benches talking, they drew the names. The first two names called were not me. I surrendered,

**Success Strategy #12**  
**The World Seems the Same**  
**Through Your Eyes**

- Keep a Success Journal at least weekly.
- The changes in your inner dialogue happen slowly, you'll never notice.
- Record your fears and challenges. In five years, the things that scare you today will seem funny. But, without a record, you'll forget you ever had these fears.
- This is a major success secret. Treat it with respect and discipline. If you don't record your thoughts today, you won't know how far you've come.

defeated. My shoulders slumped, and a picture of being stuck in my tiny dorm room over the holidays filled my mind.

Suddenly, Eddie was shaking me, his eyes wide with amazement and he was screaming. “Dude you won! You won!”

People around me were going ballistic. I was numb, literally in shock! I leapt to my feet, and pumped both arms in the air. Eddie gave me a shove, pointed in the direction of the court, and yelled “Get down there! You won!”

I would love to say that I showed grace under pressure in those moments and looked like the suave, sophisticated college man I’d imagined myself to be. Instead, I found myself hurtling down toward the court as fast as physics would allow, forgetting for the moment that the actual basketball game was still being played.

We were up in the nosebleed seats, and I sprinted down the steep stairway to the plexiglass wall. The arena was actually a hockey rink modified for basketball. I climbed the six foot barrier, and perched on top of it. It looked like roughly a 15 to 20 foot drop down to the court level, plus I would have to clear the penalty box on the leap.

Success Strategy #13  
Scheduled Dream Building

- At least one day a month, your calendar should include a three-hour appointment with yourself to go dream building. Follow a different dream each month -- cars, houses, charities, travel, church, clothes -- whatever inspires you. Ever been on a yacht or private jet? You’ll never own it until you can first dream it.
- Schedule similar sessions with your spouse and family. Make it fun to expand your dreams. Do the same with your key employees and colleagues.
- Be spontaneous in your dream building. Master the art of the “Pull In”. If you’re driving along and see something that spurs your energy to be creative, stop what you’re doing and pull in to take a look, even if only for a minute.

It was just high enough to hurt like hell. I soared off the plexiglass and fell like a rock. I hit the hardwood, and rolled. I hadn’t realized that the referee had blown the game back into action. I leaped to my feet after two rolls, and sprinted across the width of the basketball court. It was, in retrospect, a comical sight – little me, with my arms pumping frantically in the air, surrounded by basketball players as tall as redwood trees.

When halftime arrived, I watched the volunteers spreading brightly colored fake \$1 bills all over the court. “Ten thousand doesn’t look like much,” I mused. “It’s spread so thin. This isn’t going to be as easy as I thought.”

Before the contest began, the organizers interviewed each contestant for a few seconds over the house public address system. When he got to me, the crowd cheered. I guess my graceful 20-foot drop to the hardwood floor and my lunatic crusade filling out 2,400 ballots had made me a fan favorite. After the interviews, we were positioned on the court, loud pounding rock music filled the stadium and the crowd went wild as they turned us loose.

The other two contestants were stooping and plucking the bills off the court with their hands. I instantly knew that I'd never make enough money to buy a plane ticket that way. The bills were spread far too thinly for that nonsense.

**Success Strategy #14**  
**Build a Team of**  
**Competent Money**  
**Advisors**

- Get to know your bank manager. Go to lunch.
- Do you have a good accountant?
- Do you have a good Certified Financial Planner?
- What else is missing from your team?

I sprinted ten steps, then flung myself head first onto the hardwood court, with my arms spread wide. My football jersey slid over the polished wax floor. My arms acted like scoops. After I slid to a stop, I stuffed handfuls of bills into the front of my shirt. I was oblivious to the pain of the 20-foot drop, the friction burns on my elbows, and the impact of my body hitting the floor.

After five or six of those swan dives, I began to look fatter and fatter as paper stuffed the front of my enormous football jersey.

It was the fastest 60 seconds of my life, but I made the most of them. I forgot about the writing cramps, my hands stained with printer's ink, the paper cuts, the sleepless eight nights preparing for the contest without any guarantees of winning. I just had a feeling, I knew I was destined to win.

I don't remember how much the other two contestants made that night. I know it was nowhere near my final total. As the contest coordinators gradually extracted the fake bills from my jersey and counted, the announcer interviewed me again, shaking his head and laughing at my

wackiness. Then the head counter gave him the total.

"Three hundred and twenty seven dollars – we've got a winner!!!"

I was going home for the holidays, my mind newly filled with important lessons about recognizing and seizing opportunities.

**Success Strategy #15**  
**Leaders are Readers**

- Read 11 pages per night before bed.
- Read 15 books, minimum, per year.
- Keep books in your bathroom, bed stand, office and briefcase -- use downtime to read.
- "Force feed" your subconscious, and see how it affects your conscious mind.

## Chapter Four

### Meanwhile, Back at the Ranch...

What could be the worst thing that could happen when I flew home? Well, you know the old saying that you can never go home again? Actually you can. There's just no guarantee that anyone will be there to meet you.

I never phoned anyone to tell them I was coming home for Thanksgiving (which, by the way, is in October in Canada). My folks knew I was broke and couldn't make it back for the 4-day weekend. I wanted it to be a surprise. It was a surprise, alright.

They went out of town, about 300 miles away at my cousin's. Luckily, a friend of mine from high school was nice enough to pick me up and drive me back to our home. Although the sight before my eyes when I got there wasn't exactly something out of a Norman Rockwell painting.

There were two prone bodies lying on my front lawn. Every light in the house was on. I could feel the bass from the stereo pounding even out on the driveway. I could see the silhouettes of dozens of teenagers wrecking the place. My little brothers were having a freakin' house party!

I waded through blitzed kids, all screaming and dancing and fought my way with my suitcase back to my old room. I barged in to find a couple of tenth graders having a make-out session. The guy got all tough, scowled and hissed at me to get the hell out of my own room!

He realized soon that he spoke before his eyes and brain were fully engaged. Before he could pull back his poorly-chosen words, I'd grabbed him by the collar and unceremoniously tossed him out of my home, sweet home. His little chickypoo quietly smiled at me and followed him out.

I grabbed the phone, and called up the hottie from Lac Du Bonnet. Maybe she could turn this fiasco into a positive. No such luck. No answer. Seeking outlets for my energy, I swam upstream through a hallway of pimply guys and girls with enough makeup to put Madonna to shame, looking for my little brother Robin. I found him.

#### Success Strategy #17 You Are What You Eat

- Building a higher quality of life requires energy.
- Being overweight is a manifestation of imbalance in your life, self-image, inner dialogue and certain belief systems.
- Learn to identify self-limiting behaviors associated with eating patterns that don't serve your purposes. (Does eating this whole cake because I feel bad help me or harm me?)

Robin had been about 4 foot nothing when I had left for college, and now he was about 5 foot nothing. He had grown an obnoxiously long bleached blond perm – looking some wannabe member from Bon Jovi or Poison or another of those lookalike 80's groups. He had the earring, the car, the clothes, and the attitude. At seventeen, he was already making 15 grand a year teaching Tae Kwon Do to elementary kids.

While I had been away at school, I heard he had earned his black belt. No biggie. I could take him in a fight a year ago, the color of the string he used to hold up his pyjamas wouldn't matter. We began to get into it in the kitchen almost immediately.

I roared my disapproval about trashing the parents place when they were away. He roared back with a witty, "Screw you!"

#### Success Strategy #16 Make Your Bed Each Morning

- This creates a moment of discipline in your life.
- It makes sliding into bed at the end of the day more of a pleasure.
- It reduces the clutter factor in your life. An unmade bed creates a stress on the eye and, thus, on the subconscious.

That was it. Enough lip from little brother! The linoleum became the squared circle, we were back in junior high, and the wrestling began. My plan was the same as always, headlock, hip flip, sit on his chest, slap him around. But something went wrong. Terribly wrong.

He squirmed out of the headlock. With all that frizzy permed hair, I couldn't get a decent grip. He pushed back. And that's when things got fuzzy. I remember seeing his pantleg near my face. In slow motion, with time nearly standing still, I thought to myself, "That's odd. There's no way his leg should be able to go that high."

The next thing I remember I was lying on the floor, looking up. The little punk had dropped a big axe kick, straight up with the leg and straight down, clipping my temple and nearly breaking my collar bone! I went down like a sack of coffee beans off a truck. Thankfully he didn't break my shoulder. I think my leather UofT Football jacket saved me.

If you've ever seen any old Bruce Lee kung fu movies, you know the scene where Bruce turns wild-eyed and crazy, leaping straight up in the air while screaming his banshee howl of doom – the precursor to the kick that destroys his opponent's internal organs. Robin had that same look. I didn't like it.

At that point, I decided talking might work much better than fighting. From the floor I commented, "Nice job. I don't remember that one."

"Axe kick. Good to see you. Didn't know you'd be here."

"Surprise. Ouch."

"Are you gonna chill and party with us or do I have to scrap you?"

Tough call. Party with a room full of drunken teenage girls who might be impressed with a college guy wearing a leather letter jacket, or continue to fight my bloodthirsty Bon Jovi-lookalike sibling.

I may not have been making great decisions at that point in my life, but, hey, I wasn't an idiot.

#### **Another Aerosmith Lost Weekend.**

I remember years ago an interview with Steven Tyler from Aerosmith, reflecting on what age and maturity had brought him. He frequently used the phrase "lost weekends" to describe the partying and substance abuse he'd done for years. There are, he said, huge gaps in his memory, encompassing months or years, for which he has no recollection.

I was no Steven Tyler, but I had a few "lost weekends" during my college years. That Thanksgiving weekend was one of them.

I never did hook up with my lady friend from LDB. She had told me just a week before that she'd be around. I had hinted at maybe a surprise was in store for her. But she never returned any of the calls I made to her. That was until the Sunday night when I was getting ready to head for the airport.

At the time, I was new enough in the world of dating to have never heard of a "Dear John" letter, but I soon experienced the cold shock of a "Dear David" phone call. My girl had met a nice local guy who ran the zamboni at the hockey rink. She liked me, she thought I was great, and she was really sorry. A story that's been repeated millions of times throughout history, but it was my first.

#### **Success Strategy #18 The Art of Listening**

- People like to be asked questions to which they already know the answers.
- To build listening rapport, don't just be thinking about what you're going to say next. Get involved in the dialogue.
- If you're stuck for conversation, ask them about Family, Occupation, Recreation, and Mission in Life (FORM).
- Attempt to discern the shade of eye color of the person speaking. (Not just blue, but aqua with a hint of raspberry). This will sharpen your attentiveness.



Looking back, we had only two dates, maybe a dozen long phone calls. It's not like we were seriously in love. And I was a thousand miles away. It did bring the perfect closure, though, to a completely screwed-up weekend. All those hours spent filling out ballots, just so I could come home to stay drunk for three days. I could have done that back in my dorm room..

**Success Strategy #19**  
**Life Moves in One of Two Directions**

- Imagined Reality vs. Current Reality
- Whichever picture is stronger in the mind, the body follows.
- Destructive habits and negative self-talk will attempt to derail movement toward the Imagined Reality. (You don't deserve a new car. The old one isn't all that rusty. Stop dreaming about it, you'll never have it.)
- This works for both Good and Bad pictures. If you imagine a negative outcome, and worry about it and focus on it, you'll move in that direction.

I headed back to school. I had less than two months to get my act together, get serious and pull some decent grades. I knew I was facing an uphill battle. I had already blown off the first six weeks of the semester and my classes didn't motivate me. Greek Mythology, Statistics, Advanced Chemistry, Toxicology. All crap. I was hating it, but I had promised my folks I would do my best.

By late November, I had nearly turned it around. My F's were D's and C's, and I was getting into a routine. Not having a nickel for partying helped my focus..

They released our final exam dates, and that's when things began to get shaky. My last exam was Advanced Chemistry on December 23<sup>rd</sup>. It was going to be tough to get a flight home for Christmas. Flying home on the 24<sup>th</sup>, falling on a weekday when half the world would be traveling, would cost a fortune.

I began to dig into my books. I had two weeks to relearn half a semester of Statistics, Greek Mythology, Chemistry and it wasn't going particularly well. And then we got the news.

Air Canada is our national carrier. They went on strike at the beginning of December. Even if they fixed the strike in time, there was no way I could afford to fly home. Tickets were well over \$1000, and the backlog from the strike was making things worse. I was looking at Christmas holidays stuck in my little jail cell of a dorm room. The pressure to get my grades up, combined with this gloomy picture of spending Christmas alone, began to wear me down.

I couldn't sleep. I couldn't focus. Calls home to Mom for a miracle cure didn't work. My first exam was Genetics. I had studied my butt off. I thought I had a handle on it. Should be no problem. But I was wrong.

The exam kicked my butt. I failed it for sure. Crestfallen, I limped back to my dorm room. I was facing three more exams in four days, then a couple of days off and then the Chem exam on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. I began to crack.

When faced with despair, irrational though often takes command. With less than \$30 in my pocket, wearing a pair of sneakers, blue jeans, a t-shirt and my UofT leather jacket, I began to walk. I walked out of my dorm, and up Bloor Street to the subway. I took the subway to the end of the line at Yonge Street., and walked up top. I stood at the exit to the station, and stuck out my thumb.

**Thir-Thir-Thir-Thirty Below....**

It very rarely snows in late December in Toronto. It's a white Christmas maybe every third year. That year it was cool, but no snow. At least, in the city.

It took quite a while to get the right rides to get north of the city. Hitchhiking in urban Toronto is not a common occurrence. But by early evening I was in the middle of nowhere and heading north. I had made it nearly to Sudbury by 2 am, and the gas station where I had grabbed a coffee was closing.

Success Strategy #20  
Your Seven-step Check

- When going out in public, to a meeting or important social event, do a seven-step check in the mirror just before. Men, check all of these areas:

Shoes -- Shined and tied  
Fly -- zipped  
Shirt -- tucked  
Tie -- straight  
Teeth -- no broccoli bits  
Breath -- no "X-Files" breath  
Hair -- no Alfalfa-like rooster tails

- Ladies, create a suitable pre-check system for yourselves and never fail to follow it completely.

It was dark. There were snowbanks 3-4 feet high. It was at least minus twenty, probably more. My leather jacket was stiff as a plank. My toes were numb inside my sneakers. I stood in near pitch black darkness on the side of the highway near the driveway to the roadside gas station. This was the Trans-Canada highway, the main artery crossing the entire highway. Surely it was just a matter of time before I got a ride?

Within 40 minutes, no one had stopped. The volume of cars was very low, and I'm sure the fact that I was nearly invisible in the dark hurt my chances. I was getting tired of jumping from foot to foot. At least the horrible pain in my hands and toes had stopped. I was getting a little sleepy. I sat down on the snowbank to rest for a minute. Big mistake.

That's the insidiousness of freezing to death. I thought about the squirrels I caught on my trapline. I'm sure it hurt like hell initially. Then things would go numb, and they'd get tired and fall asleep – a sleep from which they would never awaken. Suddenly, a wave of shame and remorse fell over me at the thought of killing innocent animals so that I could have a computer to play video games.

The guilt trip took on a momentum of its own. I remember thinking about how bad it would look to my parents for me to fail school. I was this smart kid, straight A's, honor roll, played all the sports. School should have been a breeze.

My butt was frozen solid from sitting on the snowbank. My hands and feet had long since lost their feeling. And I was rapidly losing consciousness. If Hollywood was making a movie of my life, this would be the moment when the sad violin playing would be reaching its crescendo. I smiled for a second.

Imagine the look on the gas jockey's face in the morning when he sees a dave-sicle on the driveway.

And then the darkness suddenly gave way to an incredibly bright light. The world got all shimmery. I heard a roar in my ears and my body felt like it was vibrating. The thought crossed through my mind, is this what the afterlife is like?

Nope. It was a big semi-truck pulling into the station. All thoughts of heaven behind me, I jumped up from the snowbank in my half-frozen state and lurched toward the truck like a drunken tinman, begging at the top of my lungs for a ride.

The trucker had been low on fuel. And he had just happened to pull into that station in the hopes of filling up.

He could see I was in a bad way. Maybe the tears rolling down my cheeks and freezing almost immediately was a giveaway. That son-of-a-gun was heading to the west coast. He let me ride with him the 1200 miles to Winnipeg. He never stopped talking the entire way. I wish I could remember his name. He probably had no idea that he literally saved my life.

Success Strategy #21  
Business Cards That Work

- People are reluctant to throw out business cards with someone's picture on it. Put your smiling mug on it!
- Invest in quality. They are a reflection of you.
- Include all contact info -- website, voice mail, e-mail, fax, postal mail.
- Use both sides -- on the reverse side, cite benefits to the prospect. Give them a reason to call you.
- Everyone benefits from having business cards, no matter what your current occupation.

## Chapter Five: Facing Facts and Changing Directions

I was smelling a little ripe. Two days on the road, cooped up in a truck cab listening to Willie Nelson will do that to you. I headed over to the campus of the University of Manitoba, where I knew I could find a square meal and a shower.

I found a few buddies from high school, all deep in the study mode for exams. They took turns sneaking me into the cafeteria to hang out and eat with them. I slept on the floor for a few days. It's amazing how far you can stretch 20 bucks when you absolutely have to. I pretty much zoned out for a few days, doing very little thinking but doing a masterful job of staring into space.

Taking stock of my situation was not a pleasant task. I had flunked out of college. I wasn't going to med school. I had no money. And I was probably going to have to face my parents sooner or later. Now what?

That weekend, the campus was celebrating the end of exams with a giant party. Maybe a little festivity would help me forget about school. And it was a good party! There's something about Winnipeg chicks that makes them different from girls in the rest of the country. They just like to have a good time. I'm guessing it's because winter is seven months long.

I was in a plastic children's wading pool with a bunch of half-soused college girls chugging margaritas when I spied a familiar hairo. There was no mistaking that giant bleached blond perm.

"Hey kung-fu!" It was my brother Robin.

He looked at me through the eyes of a guy who's had five pitchers of beer or so. You could see confusion, analysis, then faint recognition. "Dude" he slurred. "What are you doing here?"

I filled him in on the debacle since I had seen him at Thanksgiving. He was in town with a few buddies crashing a few parties. I asked him for ideas on how to deal with the parents. He shrugged.

"Face the music, dude."

He offered me a ride home to Pinawa with his crew. We left Winnipeg around 3 a.m. and headed back. We rolled into Pinawa at 5 a.m. It was too early to go home. My father wouldn't deal with my bad news well in the best of circumstances. Being awakened before dawn by a bunch of drunken kids wouldn't help the environment any.

### Success Strategy #22 The Power of a Handwritten Note

- No one writes letters anymore.
- Sending "thank you" and congratulatory notes will instantly separate you from the crowd.
- People love to be praised and appreciated.
- This is an important secret. Using this strategy will elevate you in peoples' minds in a dramatic way.

The sun wouldn't be up for a few more hours. Under the cover of winter's darkness, we drove around the small town looking for mischief. At heart I'm basically a nice person. Not everyone in that car could make that same claim. Some of these guys had a mean streak to begin with, and a dozen beers just magnified it. Every five minutes one of them would yell, "Stop the car!" They'd pile out, stagger up to a snowman, and knock its head off.

There must have been much talk around Pinawa the next day about the rash of snowman decapitations. It was many years later that I ran into a girl from Pinawa. She told me a story about being out of bed early one morning, and she could have sworn she saw a gang of ruffians attacking a snowman across the street at 5 a.m.

We dropped nearly everyone off at 6 a.m. and headed back to our house with Robin and one of his buddies. We had all

pretty much sobered up, and were hungry.

My mom was a nurse, and was already up drinking her tea before going to work. Robin said hi, and the three of us sat at the island counter in the kitchen eating bowls of Captain Crunch and Honeycomb. Robin made some small talk with my mom, who offered to make us some toast.

My mom looked directly at me, then at Robin's friend, and said "Good morning" to both of us. She didn't recognize me!

Then it dawned on me. The last time she had seen me I had long blond hair down to my shoulders. Hair like that isn't allowed on rookie football players. The lineman had pinned me down and had shaved my head back in September. I had kept it short ever since.

Robin and his buddy were snickering when they realized it too. They were smiling at me between mouths of breakfast cereal. Mom was chitchatting with Robin about where he had been, when she looked at me again. This time I held her eyes in a stare. I could see when the light of recognition turned on.

In her delightful British accent she exclaimed, "Oh! It's you! What are you doing here?"

Robin and his buddy couldn't hold their laughs in any more, and I joined them in a chuckle. "I'm home early" was all that I said.

Mothers aren't easy to fool, and I think she understood my status immediately "We'll have to talk to your father when he gets up," she said. Mom always knew how to diffuse an explosive situation.

Christmas that year was such a relief. It felt so good not to have to pretend anymore. I never told my folks how I made it home. They would have freaked about the hitchhiking. Since I only had the clothes on my back, I had to borrow some of Robin's heavy-metal wardrobe.

Talking to my dad about flunking out of school turned out to be a revelation. I was so distraught, and he could see that the pressure was unbearable for me. I finally realized that I was never expected to go to medical school. He really didn't care what degree I had. All he cared about was that I was happy and healthy. All of that stupid pressure had been self-created. I had been miserable for so long for nothing.

A couple of days after New Year's, it came time to make a decision. What was I going to do now?

I had one of the most adult conversations I had ever had with my parents. I came to the realization that everything I owned in the world was back in my tiny dorm room at college. I was starting from scratch and faced the reality that I was going to have to get a job. Mom and Dad bought me a bus ticket back to Toronto, and dropped me off at the terminal. My mom hugged me and said everything was going to be just fine. My dad shook my hand, and told me to make him proud. I climbed onto the bus, and began the 38-hour ride during which I would contemplate my blank slate of a future.

### **Dust Off That Resume**

Back at campus, my friends on my floor at the residence hall were quite concerned about me. My disappearing act had launched a betting pool as to whether I'd ever make it back. Most of them weren't overly sympathetic to my situation. They had their own grades to worry about.

#### **Success Strategy #23 There's A Gold Mine in Your Database**

- One of your greatest assets is your database.
- Invest in taking care of it, nurturing it, growing it.
- Birthday cards, monthly phone calls, personal notes add to its value.
- The old adage, "It's Not What You Know, It's Who You Know" has great significance. You will never make it to the top by yourself.

I moved some old pizza boxes off my Commodore 64 which I had brought along to college. I found the giant old six-inch floppy disk with my resume on it. It was the same one that had worked in getting me the computer programming and lifeguard jobs the previous summer. I updated it, and my colossal daisy wheel printer began grinding out a resume on the tractor-fed paper.

As it was printing, I decided to clean up my room a bit. Actually, to say the room needed tidying was a vast understatement. Piles of clothing (I'd never learned how to do my own laundry) sat on the floor amidst empty pizza boxes and cases of beer. Six-month old layers of filth covered the debris.

Something caught my eye as I was filling a garbage bag. It was white and red. I picked it up and turned it over. It was a business card. My mind flashed back four months earlier to a moment that seemed insignificant at the time, but now took on an entirely new meaning.

I had been in an elevator in downtown Toronto in the autumn of 1987 when a woman said hello to me. She was an attractive fortyish lady, well dressed, carrying a briefcase and wearing this huge bizarre button on her blouse that said "Lose Weight Now, Ask Me How!". She smiled at me. Sheepishly I looked down at the ground and said "Hi".

She said, "You look like a sharp young man. Do you keep your eyes open for business opportunities?"

I looked around, wondering who she could possibly be addressing. Here I was, 19, with long blond hair down to my shoulders and an earring, wearing sneakers, a Metallica t-shirt and a leather athletic jacket. Feeling very self-conscious, I must have nodded. I certainly didn't look or feel like junior executive material.

She smiled and gave me a business card. She mentioned something about looking for sharp people to expand her marketing company, and told me to call her. She got off the elevator, leaving me standing there like a statue, still clutching that little card in my lobster grip.

In red ink on a plain white card it said:

Make \$300 - \$800 per month part-time  
Make \$2400 - \$5600 per month full-time  
1-416-555-1212

After rediscovering the card, I popped it in my pocket, and thought about it all day. I couldn't sleep, and tossed and turned in my tiny dorm room all night. Even though I was five months late, I called the number the next morning. I hoped the job was still available.

I was in luck. The lady told me that she was interviewing people this coming Wednesday evening at a hotel across town. I told her to book me for an interview. I spent the day typing up a resume. Under "Job Experience" I had computer programmer, lifeguard and pizza cook. I put on my only shirt and tie that I had with me at school. Dressing for success was disconcerting. My college pizza-and-beer diet had added about 10 pounds around my beltline, and my shirt barely fit.

The interview was for 7:30 pm and I was determined to be early. I told a friend where the interview was, and he pulled out his subway map. "Man, that's a long way dude! You have to take two trains and two buses to get there, all at rush hour. It will take you at least two hours."

#### Success Strategy #24 Clean Out Your Closet

- To acquire new clothes, room must be made for them. Harness the Law of the Vacuum
- Donate anything you haven't worn in eight months to charity. Donate anything that doesn't fit, or is not suitable for someone with your energy. Say goodbye to those moth-eaten T-shirts and paint-stained pants.
- The Law of the Vacuum works in any room in house or office. Before the new can move in, the old must move out.

I had never spent that much time in public transit during the frigid month of January. My toes were freezing in my dress shoes. My legs were freezing in my dress pants. I stuffed my hands deep into the pockets of my U of T jacket. The trip seemed to take forever, but I finally got near to the hotel. I walked the last two blocks from the bus stop.

My glasses were all fogged as I walked into the brightly lit lobby of the hotel. I looked at the board near the door for which meeting room the lady had told me. I checked myself in a mirrored column, and nervously went to the meeting room.

At first I thought I was at the wrong room. Dozens of people in suits were lined up at a sign-in table. I was a little dismayed. Was everyone here applying for the same job? I waited my turn, and a smiling lady asked me to sign-in. "Are you a guest or a distributor?" she asked.

**Success Strategy #25**  
**Play Bill Gates For a Day**

- Once per month, with your spouse or master-mind group, play "Zillionaire for a Day"
- Create the largest list possible of how you would use a limitless pile of money.
- After you have bought every toy and material object your heart desires, then what?
- Focus your creative mind on massive, world-changing causes. What would you build, create or initiate with your billions?

"Guest, I guess." I replied.

"Who invited you?" she asked.

I had forgotten the lady's name! Terror shot through me! I stammered, "I can't remember her name. She's blonde. She gave me this card. I think her name is Danielle", I sounded so nervous!

"Oh, you mean Dana. She's here, but with a guest. We'll look after you."

The sign-in lady called over another lady, who took me into the brightly-lit meeting room. It was packed with about 100 people, all well dressed and smiling. A big boom box was blaring some dance music, people were even sort of dancing in the aisles! The lady brought me right to the front row, and seated me next to a gentleman there. She smiled and said she'd go get Dana.

This was the strangest job interview I could have imagined. There was a surreal quality to it. A table near the podium at the front was piled high with cans and plastic bottles, and a big banner with the same slogan as Dana had on her button hung on the wall at the front. I noticed that many of the men and women either wore the same button as Dana had, or a different one that said, "Ask Me

About Phase II".

At about 7:28, Dana came charging up to me, grinning from ear to ear. She shook my hand with a solid, pumping grip and told me how excited she was that I came. She had me put my binder on my chair and, holding my hand, pulled me over to the table piled high with bottles and cans. She pointed quickly to four or five different containers and quickly told me about each product. Within 90 seconds I got the gist of what was going on. This was a line of herbal weight loss products and they were looking for salesmen. She grabbed a few brochures and a magazine from the table, shoved them into my hand and quickly sat me down as the music was turned off. She said she would talk to me after the meeting.

A nervous man in his mid-twenties asked how everyone was doing. I jumped a little as the crowd, in unison, yelled out "GREAT!" He welcomed the guests, and gave a short

**Success Strategy #26**  
**Who Has Your Phone Number?**

- The telephone is an intrusive device.
- It creates momentary stress when it rings, possibly more stress if you answer it.
- It is there to serve you, not the other way around.
- Millionaires rarely answer their own phone.

introduction to the first presenter, a housewife from some unfamiliar town. He sat down and she came up to the applause of the crowd.

She was smartly dressed, and a little nervous. Over the course of 25 minutes she spoke briefly about the benefits of each of the cans on the table, and then started to talk a bit about the company that made the weight loss products. She held up a big photo of the founder. I'm sure the people in the back couldn't see a thing on the photo, but I was in the front row and could see clearly. The owner had long hair! Really long, shoulder length and he was young! He started the company at age 21! And now he was a multi-millionaire! Now I was paying attention.

Success Strategy #27  
What To Do Just Before Falling Asleep

- As you are drifting off, the part of your brain that screws up your goals and projects with pre-programmed limiting beliefs is temporarily deactivated.
- Focus on assigning your subconscious a productive task just before falling asleep. Give it a challenge. (How do I afford a cruise with my wife this winter? How can I double my income next year?)
- Repeat the question to yourself five to 10 times until it sticks in your memory bank. Watch how many
- “coincidences” pop up the next day!
- Never give your subconscious a disempowering question before falling asleep. (Why am I so broke and screwed up?)
- Research the Reticular Activating System for more understanding of this powerful force within your own mind.

People took turns standing up and saying how much weight they had lost, and how great they felt on the products. One guy held up a pair of pants that would have fit an elephant and said he lost one hundred pounds in 11 months! Another muscular body-builder guy said he had used the products to gain 10 lbs of muscle and lose 12 pounds of fat.

After the stories the woman at the podium introduced the next presenter. She spoke of financial setbacks and how getting into this business was a way for him to pay back creditors. In just six years, he and his wife had become the number 2 income earners in the country and were completely out of debt. With several thousand dollars in student loans myself, I could really identify with him! He strode to the front of the room to thunderous applause!

He was the picture of confidence. Expensive suit, brilliant red tie, shoes shined, hair groomed. He scanned the room with a silent smile, and then thanked everyone for their applause. He held me spell-bound for the next twenty-five minutes as he talked about the home-based business industry, and how average people with above average ambition were achieving extraordinary incomes with the business. He drew circles on the board representing how people could make significant sums of money. Something clicked in my mind. I GOT IT! I mean I REALLY GOT IT! I instantly saw how I was going to be rich beyond my wildest dreams!

He brought people up to tell their stories, and to share with the crowd how their lives had changed since they had joined the organization. There were men, ladies, couples, all shapes, sizes and ages. One guy was a male model who had made \$17,000 in 9 months. Another was a housewife and truckdriver who had made \$40,000 last year. A young guy, just 20 years old had made \$1100 in his fourth month. And I knew right then and there that I was seeing my future.



The sharp-dressed man ended the meeting with some rousing words, and the music came back on. Dana fought her way through the crowd and grabbed me by the hand and led me right to the front of the room to meet the speaker!

His eyes twinkled and he smiled as he met me. Dana introduced him as her husband John. Wow, what a dynamic couple! I nervously shook his hand. He asked me one question. “Well, what do you think?” I stammered, and my mind raced. “Looks pretty good” was the best I could come up with.

“Great!” he exclaimed. “Welcome to the team!” He shook my hand again, excused himself, and linked up with another crowd of people, leaving me alone with Dana.

We sat down and pulled our chairs together. She pulled out some forms and asked me if I wanted to get started. I knew there was a small charge of about \$70, but I only had enough money for the subway and I didn’t even own a credit card. I mumbled something about leaving my checkbook at home. Unfazed, she smiled and booked a time on Thursday for me to go to her office to sign up. I shook her hand, and got up to leave. Then she did something that I’ll always remember.

She looked me right in the eye, and said, “I believe in you. I have this funny feeling that you’re really serious about this. I never do this normally but here, take this and you can pay me Thursday.” She gave me the white box that had been sitting under her chair.

“It’s your starter kit. Bring it Thursday with you.”

It was nearly ten o’clock when I got to the bus stop, still clutching my brochures and white box. By midnight when I had returned to my little dorm room I had read everything at least three times. I ripped open the can of white powder that was included in my box, and tried to mix up a shake. I had no milk. I knocked on the door of the guy whose room was next to mine. He didn’t have any milk, but he had beer. I mixed up a concoction of the diet powder and a Molson’s Canadian. It may have been one of the nastiest concoctions ever invented, but I swallowed it down.

I stayed up until 3:00 am re-reading the starter kit. I filled out my application as best I could. The manual said to make a list of everyone I knew. I started on my list and got around 150 names. I doubt if 10 of them were over 20 years old.

I still wonder if Dana was surprised to see me show up on time that Thursday. I had a check for her for the kit, gave her my application, and starting pummeling her with questions. We talked for nearly two hours that afternoon. She told me what to tell my friends on the list, and she helped me to add a few dozen more names to my list with what she called “memory joggers”. We went through the yellow pages thinking of job categories and who I knew that did each job.

Success Strategy #28  
Pay Yourself First

- Take 10% from every single piece of income that enters your life and put it in the bank. Start right now and make no exceptions. This is to be invested only, not spent.
- Your discipline in doing this is the difference between being miserable at age 65 or kicking back in style.

I asked her what she did to find people. She showed me three tools. The flyer, the card, and the button. The flyer was a photocopy of a 300 pound woman in spandex shorts riding a life cycle. Hand written across the photo was “Doctor Recommended Herbal Diet. 9 Volunteers Needed to Lose Weight. Call 1-416-555-1212”. Dana told me she rolled up a hundred a day and handed them out at rush hour near the subway station. She showed me the business card that she had given me in the elevator. She put several hundred a week on parked cars, left them at payphones, and handed them out in droves. And finally, the

button. Ah, the dreaded button! Even today, 14 years later I remember how self-conscious I felt wearing that button. In a recurring nightmare a 500 pound gorilla pummels me to death in the subway for wearing that button.

But Dana swore it got results, and would make me a stronger person for wearing it.

That night in my dorm residence I called a meeting and did a short presentation to the 40 guys I lived with. I was green as grass and wearing my big button. My classic opening line was, “Guys, we are going to be rich!” I bookended that with my closing line, “Guys, I plan to buy a Porsche at the end of the year!”

My rookie sales outing was an outright disaster. Their reactions varied from horror to outright mockery. Some of them laughed at me. One guy was particularly cruel. Richard (I will remember this jerk forever) swore that if I made enough money doing network marketing to buy a Porsche that he would do a head-first swan dive out the third floor window. A small clump of second-year pharmacy students said the products I was selling were illegal and that I would go to jail. Another small clump of commerce students said I was involved in a pyramid scheme. They also mentioned the jail thing. I retreated red-faced to my room and began to smash the place in rage.

A knock on the door 10 minutes later found me on the brink of tears. Three of my friends were there, and I let them in. All three played sports and, to my surprise, they started to ask me questions about the product.

I didn’t have a clue about the ingredients in the stuff, so I let them read the label of my only can of product. I mixed up a shake (with milk this time) for them to try. When I told them the story of the bodybuilder who had gained ten pounds, they were ready to buy. I said I’d get some for them tomorrow if they gave me the money. They asked the price.

Here I was, a professional salesman, and I didn’t even know the price of my products. I pulled out a price list and tried to figure out the intricacies of retail pricing, wholesale pricing, taxes and shipping. They left with a brochure each, and I had over \$100 in orders. I swore to myself that I would never, ever let anyone mock me again about my business.

I took the subway an hour downtown the next day to pick up product from Dana. I don’t know who was prouder, her or me. I made \$27 on the orders, and gave her \$20 of it to get me some of those fat-lady fliers and business cards with my phone number on it. I knew that if my dorm mates were going to be jerks about my new occupation, that I was going to have to market products to strangers.

My rent was paid at the dorm for three more months, as was my meal plan at the school. I was determined to make enough money in 90 days to be able to afford rent on a new place by April. I went to work.

Everyday for the next three months I stood at the corner of Yonge and Bloor in Toronto handing out fat-lady fliers and business cards in the middle of winter. I wore my button everywhere. I cut out paper letters and stuck them on my third-floor dorm window facing the street. “WANTED: 8 PEOPLE TO LOSE WEIGHT, DOCTOR RECOMMENDED HERBAL DIET. CALL DAVID 416-555-1212”. Every night at midnight I would put business cards on parked cars up and down Spadina Avenue in downtown Toronto. And the phone started to ring.

I went to every single meeting by subway, two hours each way every week. I started to have guests from all the fliers I had been distributing, and I soon had a few customers. After a month or so I started to give

**Success Strategy #29**  
**Take a Yearly Vacation**  
**With a Zero Budget**

- Open a savings account right now with ATM card access for deposits only, no withdrawals. And no checking privileges either!
- Every Friday, take a \$20 bill from your money clip. Stick in it a deposit envelope and put it in this account. Do this every week without fail.
- Take the \$1080 you’ve accumulated each year and treat yourself to a special “Freedom Anniversary” holiday.

my 30-second commercial at the meetings. I started to make \$20 here, and \$40 there. And in my second month, I sponsored three people as wholesale buyers and made \$200 that month.

**Success Strategy #30**  
**The Magic of Fresh Flowers**

- Attention men: Ladies love it when you bring home flowers to be thoughtful instead of apologizing for having done something stupid.
- Women: Men love flowers too, especially when it means the start of a romantic evening.
- Single? Brighten up your space. Treat yourself.
- Flowers are one of life's small treats with no agenda other than to be magnificent.

In March, a big event was scheduled to take place. The owner of the company was coming to town for a huge regional training. They expected over 500 people! Mark, the long-haired president and a nice-gray haired Vice President of Marketing named Jim wowed the crowd. Jim, in fact, overshadowed his charismatic boss and completely mesmerized the audience.. He was the best public speaker I had ever heard. He told story after story, and at one point asked for people to come up to tell their business testimonials.

I felt dizzy and outside my body as I jumped up and strode confidently to the stage. I was sixth or seventh in line, but there was a buzzing in my ears and I couldn't hear the others. I think it was because my heart was pounding so loudly! I got on stage with that nice gray-haired VP and he shook my hand. My voice trembled as I told the crowd that my name was David, I was 19 and a former lifeguard and student. And in the last 60 days I had made nearly \$400!

The crowd roared its approval, my face turned beet-red and I quickly scurried off to my chair. The people sitting in my row patted me on the back, and gave me the thumbs up sign. I couldn't

believe I had found the courage to speak to 500 people! I couldn't get the grin off my face. This was a seminal moment in my life.

The regional event finished with a bang as my sponsors, John and Dana, were recognized by the company president for their contributions and hard work. They gave a short speech, and the day ended with loud pumping music and a fired-up crowd! Chairs were moved into little circles and a lot of paperwork was being done. I had one guest and she signed up for a kit that very moment.

About thirty minutes after the event finished, Dana found me. I introduced her to my new distributor who was getting ready to leave. Dana gave her a business card, spoke highly of me and said I was a rising star. After my guest left she led me by the hand to the front of the room, where she introduced me to the company president. Mark grinned and pumped my hand. He joked that "us long-haired young guys have to stick together" and he introduced me to Jim, the gray-haired Vice President. I respectfully shook his hand again and told him he was the best speaker I had ever heard. He graciously accepted my praise, then grew stern. He looked me straight in the eye and said, "I see a lot of potential in you. You're going to have to work harder on yourself than any other aspect of the business. You must strive to become a millionaire. Not for the money, but of who you will become in the process."

To this day, I clearly remember that moment. Those profound words made an impact on me. It was many years later that I found out that this kindly silver-haired man was the legendary business philosopher Jim Rohn, one of the greatest public speakers of all time. I have repeated those words to literally hundreds of thousands of home-based business enthusiasts over the last decade, because they are a mantra of truth in this industry

Jim, Mark, John and Dana made a huge impact on my life. They started me on the most exciting path I could imagine. They were my earliest teachers on the path to success, money and freedom. That path was interrupted by my own youthful impatience. I grew

**Success Strategy #31**  
**Harness the Power of**  
**Catching 40 Winks**

- Our bodies have a natural low-energy cycle in early afternoon.
- Find a way of shutting down and grabbing a 12-minute power nap right after lunch.
- Nearly a quarter of the world's population understands the power of the siesta. If the Western world ever appreciates its dramatic impact on productivity, watch out!

tired of standing in the snow, handing out cards. My perpetually empty wallet led me to move on and take a job a few months later. My life would have been very different if I hadn't left the weight-loss company.

#### Success Strategy #32

##### How to Doodle to Stimulate the Subconscious

- When you're on hold on the phone, or just doodling on a pad of paper, use the opportunity to focus your amazing subconscious.
- Write tiny power phrases or achievements on the pad. Example: "I can. I will. I must.", or "me ceo, me ceo".
- Caution: Don't let this sheet fall into the hands of your dream-stealers, particularly the person who's promotion you're after.

#### Success Strategy #33

##### When in Doubt, Throw it Out

- The purpose of life is not to accumulate junk.
- Clutter creates stress. Stress blocks energy.

## Chapter Six

### Welcome to Ambush!

My time was nearly up in residence. I didn't have enough money to cover my meal plan and room and board. My little weight loss business was taking longer than I thought to grow, and I was putting a lot of profits back into cards and flyers. The calendar was my enemy and I was getting desperate.

It's amazing how the universe works. It's when your prospects seem their most bleak that a tiny keyhole of sunlight breaks through the clouds and offers new hope. My ray of light came one April evening when I was watching hockey in the dorm's common room and pondering my limited options. A snippet of a nearby conversation caught my attention.

"I'm looking to hire a guy to run my store."

There is something in the human subconscious that defies explanation. There were at least twenty guys in the common room, talking and shouting at the TV where a hockey game was blasting, and somehow my ears screened out all the noise and picked up a 10-word statement that would totally change my life.

The guy who made the comment was named Elias. He was what you might call a genetic specimen. He was a true mesomorph, heavily muscled, a football coach's dream. Elias was a jock and never apologized about it. He was a year behind me in school and was one of the heaviest partiers on the floor. Next to me, of course. And like me, he was not pursuing a path toward academic greatness.

I gave him a nod and a grunt, like guys do. This is the male species' non-verbal way saying, "I want to talk to you." I shuffled my chair over to where he was holding court with two or three other freshman.

"What store?" I asked, cutting to the chase.

"I'm thinking about opening a paintball store. I think it's got potential."

People who haven't played paintball don't know what they're missing. Imagine dressing in green cammies and running through the bush for a day chasing your friends and shooting them in the butt with little balls of water-soluble paint. It is an amazing team sport and an excellent outlet for stress and aggression.

Elias had begun playing paintball while still in high school, and started a business with three other partners before college. He was making several grand every weekend running the paintball field. He always had cash and drove a yellow Camaro. I was struggling to make \$20 a week selling weight loss powder and taking the subway everywhere. You do the math. Somehow, selling weight loss powder was quickly losing its luster.

I asked Elias if he had a location picked out for the store. He nodded and said he was going there in the morning. He offered to let me ride with him and check it out.

It didn't look like much, just a hole in the wall in a strip mall in the west end of Toronto. There was a translation company to the right, and a cake store to the left. The basement was an unfinished dungeon. I was excited by the potential.

I guess that's part of my genetic make-up. Seeing a pile of crap, visualizing its potential, then working my tail off to make it happen. This little store was my first chance to make that happen.

#### Success Strategy #34 The Key to Charity is Not to be One

- Read "Richest Man in Babylon".
- If you can't give away one of the ten dollars in your pocket, you'll never give \$100,000 of your million.
- You are so fortunate to live where you do, instead of in a mud hut eating crows' feet for dinner, or in a war-torn dictatorship. What will you do with this amazing opportunity to make a difference?

I started my negotiations with Elias. “Think you can make any money doing this?” I asked.

“Yup.”

“What would your store manager do?”

“Everything.”

“How much?”

“Three hundred per week, cash.”

I had never made more than 6 bucks an hour at any job in my life. This was \$7.50 per hour assuming a 40-hour workweek. (For all neophyte members of the working class reading this, that is always mistake #1. NEVER assume a 40-hour working week.)

“I’m in under one condition.”

“What?”

“I get to live in the basement.”

“Done.”

As business negotiations go, it wasn’t exactly Hewlett-Packard buying Compaq, but it worked for me.

We shook, laughed, and starting unloading a few boxes out of the back of the Camaro. Elias offered to let me work as a referee at the paintball field the coming weekend to make some extra money.

We were on the road by 5:30 am. This was a new experience. I had seen 5:30 on the alarm clock, I had heard of 5:30, but I had never been actually awake at that time. My hair hurt. It was awful. I believed in waking up naturally, when my body was finished sleeping. Not good.

Success Strategy #35  
The Electronic Income Reducer

- There is an inverse correlation between watching TV and making money.
- Use your VCR/DVR to reduce time wasted on commercials and make quality TV fit your schedule.
- Beware of poverty mentality and programming that doesn’t support your goals.
- Never watch TV within two hours of going to sleep.

We grabbed coffees, and jumped into a huge brown van, loaded to the max with aluminum paintball rifles, goggles, masks, camouflaged jumpsuits, and tons of paintballs. We drove north 90 minutes to the farm they were renting to serve as a playing field.

There were a couple of cars already parked in the field near an old farm building. I saw a dilapidated house with no doors or glass windows, some sandbag bunkers, and a giant old barn on the property. There was lots and lots of bush.

Elias introduced me around to some of the regulars as one of the refs. He gave me a camouflage suit to wear, some goggles, a red vest and an airhorn. Within an hour the farm was a beehive of activity, with close to 80 guys getting suited up.

I spent the morning playing referee. Basically I had to make sure everyone wore his goggles at all times, and I started and ended the games with my airhorn. It was fun to watch. The rookie players (who the

**Success Strategy #36  
The Demon Called Debt**

- The original meaning of the word “mortgage” was “until death.”
- People work harder to service their debts than to build a better life for themselves.
- Practice self-control and delayed gratification. Wait two days before making a purchase, so that rational replaces emotional.

regulars called “cheesedicks”) would play army man like they had seen on TV. They’d crawl on their bellies from a quarter mile away, oblivious to the 150-foot range of a paintball. Or they thought they were invulnerable like Rambo, charging into bunkers only to emerge covered in dripping paint. It was hilarious.

Elias explained at the breaks why his field was special. Most paintball fields were 100% bush. Guys would hide, and rarely do much shooting. Games were often an hour long and the action was minimal. But with houses and barns and bunkers in the open, there were constant dramatic firefights. There was an enormous volume of paint being shot at walls, rocks and buildings.

The profit was in the paint. Buy the balls at two cents each, sell them for 20 cents. They had set up a huge target range. The weekend warriors loved the sound of a paintball clanging off a tin pie plate. Elias called it the sound of money.

One of the referee’s jobs was to cook lunch for 80 guys. I fired up the gas barbeque stored in the small barn, and burnt up about 200 chicken wieners. After 4 hours of running in the fresh air, the guys were ravenous. Crispy little tubes of mushed up chicken beaks and skins were just perfect. Wash it down with two or three cokes, and back into the action. Around 4 pm, we called the general session quits.

Elias grabbed the megaphone. “Okay listen up cheesedicks. Last game of the day. We’re going to put the refs and the War Dogs into the house. That’s about 15 of us. The other 60 of you will try to take the house. If you’re shot, go into the neutral zone for three minutes, then you can come back out. When you run out of paint, your day is over. You have four minutes to load up, then we’ll start.”

It’s brilliant when you think about it. The 60 guys sprinted to the kiosk where we sold paint. They literally spent every nickel they were carrying to load up on ammo. They were motivated. They were determined to take the house.

The War Dogs were the resident competitive team. They played in tournaments and challenge matches around the province. Elias was their captain. Elias’s business partners played, and there were several tough looking dudes as well. Their equipment was much more potent than the rental guns everyone else was using.

It was my first game and my adrenaline was buzzing. Elias stuck me at a window and told me to shoot anything that moved. The 60 customers were about 150 yards away, behind trees, bunkers, the old jeep, in holes, everywhere. War Dogs were on the first and second floor, stationed at every door and window in the old farmhouse.

One of the refs yelled to the mob, “You cheesedicks ready?”

They roared back with male primal aggression.

“Okay come and take us!”

It was bedlam. Some of the rookies dropped to their bellies and started crawling. Some dove for cover. And about 25 guys starting sprinting in the open, screaming and firing at the house as fast as they could!

I could hear one of the War Dogs yelling at us in the house to wait until they were within 20 feet and then let them have it. It made sense. Why arch in shots at the distance limit and scare them off at 100 feet when we could let them run right in and pick them off?

The trouble with that logic is that not everyone was running at the same speed. A forty-something guy with a 30-pound spare tire hanging over his belt moves much more slowly than a well-muscled 20-year-old factory worker. Their frontal assault line began to break down around fifty feet out.

From my window on the first floor I had my pick of about a dozen targets. As paintballs began to splatter around the window sill, and zing over my head and smack against the rear wall, I felt my heart beating like a drum in my chest. When I could hear the other War Dogs blasting away in the house, I began to fire at the nearest charging target.

My first-ever paintball screamed at 240 feet per second towards some blue-collar Joe. I watched it splatter on impact on the guy's crotch. He stumbled and went down, yelping and rolling on the field holding his groin. "Sorry!" I yelled.

There was no time for sympathy. Their human wave was being decimated by our steady sniper fire, but the sheer volume of numbers made it impossible to get them all. Some were hugging the exterior wall of the house, sticking their guns into any window or door available. Some had made it to the treeline at the side of the house, creating suppressing fire for their teammates and keeping us glued inside. War without fear of death or maiming...it was amazing!

Suddenly I saw a gun barrel poking through my window. It fired six inches from my head, the loud "thurrrp!" of expanding CO2 gas sending the tiny pellet zooming past my ear. I yelled, startled and momentarily deafened. I dropped to the floor of the old farmhouse, lying on my back with my paintball rifle pointed directly at the window.

#### Success Strategy #38 The British Had the Right Idea

- Take a 20-minute "afternoon tea" around 3:30 each day.
- Recharge the creative battery, compensating for the low energy cycle.
- Beware sugary processed flour foods (sorry donut makers) and power up on fruit and high fiber foods.

Some guy stuck his head directly through the window! He was checking to see if it was clear to climb through. I let him know it wasn't.

Like an old pro, I sent a three-shot burst directly into his facemask. I saw it go crimson with paint, the impact sending him reeling backwards. I heard him yelp, then raise his hands yelling "I'm out! I'm hit! Damn it, I'm out!" He headed for the zone to sit out for 3 minutes.

Every so often a War Dog would get tagged. It was a war of attrition. If this went on much longer, they would take us out.

Suddenly someone came flying through the door into my room. I whirled, ready to blast. Elias yelled, "Whoa Ledoux, it's me. Come on, follow me!"

Elias and I sprinted through the east end of the house, the pop-pop-pop of paintballs splattering on the walls behind us. I followed him out of the back door, behind the house and into the tree line. We crouched,

#### Success Strategy #37 How to Make Your Boss Love You

- Find out what keeps your boss awake at night with worry.
- Develop strategies to eliminate that worry.
- To add value to an organization, think "internal entrepreneur".
- Demonstrate those characteristics frequently.
- Remember -- there is a worldwide shortage of common sense.



keeping low and moving quickly behind the lines of bunkers in front of the house. Not a single soul had seen us.

Success Strategy #39  
You Gotta Have Fun-Fun-Fun!

- Check your calendar for the next 30 days. How many scheduled “fun days” do you have?
- Creativity comes from the “inner child” in all of us. Playing stimulates creativity.
- How can you get creative? What did you love as a child, but haven’t done in years?
- Go out tobogganing, building sand castles, hang-gliding, writing poetry, or taking painting classes. The more you encourage your creative self, the more your productivity will show it.

Within 90 seconds we were twenty yards directly behind enemy lines. I could clearly see a half dozen refs and War Dogs holding the second floor of the house. It was impossible for the 15 or so rookies who had stormed the first level to get up the narrow stairwell. If Elias hadn’t pulled me out when he did, I would have been gator bait for sure.

Elias motioned for me to move to my right about 10 yards. I could see about 30 or so paint-drenched rookies sitting in the neutral zone, laughing and smiling, some smoking, some drinking cokes while they watched the final moments of the game.

There were a dozen rookies in the house, and maybe two dozen in the bunkers in front of the house. They were sitting ducks.

Success Strategy #40  
Children Are Generally Far Too Busy

- Most children have far too much going on in their lives.
- Children need 50% more sleep and 90% more free play time than adults.
- When children have overloaded schedules, and lives with too much fatigue and not enough fun, that creates massive stress on parents.

Elias and I tore through their ranks like a tornado. They didn’t know what hit them. Between us we had a dozen kills before the rest turned tail and ran towards the house in confusion. The remaining War Dogs on the second level, no longer under the pressure of suppressing fire, mowed down the rest of the cheesedicks.

Elias pulled out the airhorn and blew a long, game-ending blast. Guys staggered out of the house, exhausted, and exhilarated. Gallons of pure adrenaline were burned that day.

Everyone gathered in the neutral zone, swapping stories, bragging about their kills, and lying through their teeth. All you could see were grown men grinning like little kids.

The refs and a few War Dogs stuck around until dark, cleaning the equipment and tearing down. We got back into the old brown van to take the equipment back to the store. My adrenaline buzz had worn off and I was exhausted. Elias and I laughed on the ride back, reliving some of the moments on the day. When I was unloading the van, I lifted up an old military ammo container. Elias took that out of my hands.

“What’s that?” I asked.

“The cashbox.”

“How’d we do?”

“We?”

I smiled. Elias lifted the lid of the old metal box. I whistled through my teeth. I had never seen so much cash in my 19 years on the planet.

“About 6 grand. Not a bad day.”

Elias counted out fifty bucks and handed it to me. Ref’s pay.

A very difficult conversation began in my brain. “Let me get this straight. I got to have fun for 8 hours, and I made more cash than in a week of handing out flyers in the snow?”

I mentally quit my little herb-selling multi-level business on the spot. This was a short-sighted mistake on my part, and one of the lessons readers should take from this book. I didn’t understand the difference between being an employee and being an owner. I didn’t understand leverage or residual income. I wanted money now. It never occurred to me that the secret was in owning the metal box. John and Dana owned their own metal box. Elias owned his metal box. But I was willing to work for just a handout from the box.

**Success Strategy #41  
All Millionaires Have Them**

- Libraries
- Self-made millionaires are consummate students.
- Buy a \$50 bookcase and get serious about building a library. Invest in it monthly.

The secret to a successful life is in understanding the importance of owning your own metal box. It took me years to learn that lesson.

It was an amazing summer, though. Life consisted of paintball every weekend and hanging out talking paintball at the store every day. It never really occurred to me that I was working seven days a week. It was fun. Hard work, but fun. Elias was raking in thousands per week, and I was making \$350 and sleeping on a couch in the basement.

Yet, to me, this seemed like a good deal.

Cracks in the fun machine began to appear when he brought on a new partner in the store in late summer. The new guy had a drapery installing business, loved paintball and had a few grand to invest in the store. I felt passed over. I had hoped that my hard work would be recognized and rewarded with some equity.

I began to quietly grumble to Elias’s partners in the field on the weekends. They were silent partners, and they were feeling like they weren’t seeing their share. They confronted Elias one day in late fall. It was getting colder, and the size of the games was shrinking.

Two weeks before Halloween, Elias approached me with an offer. He had grown tired of the complaining from his partners regarding the field and he wanted to concentrate on the store. He offered to sell me the van and his half of the field business for 20 grand. I had saved nearly \$2,000 in eight months. Now what?

**Success Strategy #42  
Shy? Get Over It!**

- Shy is a four-letter word if you want to be a success. It costs you dearly in relationships, business and missed opportunities in life.
- Being shy is a fake behavior, a self-created label. Babies aren’t born shy. We run mini-programs in our own minds to create shyness.
- Join Toastmasters in the next 72 hours. Look it up in the Yellow Pages.

I phoned my Dad late one night. I brought him up to speed on everything, and somehow worked up the courage to ask him for a loan. After nearly an hour of persuasion ranging from cajoling to browbeating to outright shameless begging, he finally relented and said he would lend me seven grand. I borrowed three grand by maxing out my two visa cards. That gave me \$12,000 of the \$20,000 I needed.

I went to Elias and he did some quick math with me. He pointed out that we were averaging nearly \$4,000 in profit every weekend from the field. As a half owner, that’s nearly \$2,000 per week that I could use to repay him. Elias acted like he was deep in thought, then relented. He smiled, shook my hand, took my twelve thousand and said I could pay him

the rest spread over 90 days. I don't remember if I signed anything or not. I was just too excited. I actually owned my own business!

Unfortunately, after that initial adrenaline rush, it was all downhill. Elias's ex-partners in the field weren't pleased. They created constant stress for me over accounting irregularities, the store and every facet of the business. My life was completely out of control. The paintball lifestyle was very much an extension of the college lifestyle. There was pizza and beer – lots of beer – all of the time.

Here's a tip to keep in mind – being around lots of cash in an alcohol-fueled business is generally a big mistake.

Actually, there were quite a few mistakes in play here. Most importantly, I had made a huge error in buying the paintball field. My partners in the field were a major pain in the ass. They began to demand more and more of each week's revenues. They thought I should be working for free. Elias had been taking a "field management bonus" all year off the top. He ran the whole show, and I guess he pretty much intimidated the partners when he owned it. Now that I was in charge, they ganged up on me. Without Elias around to tell them to like it or lump it with the share he handed them, I was under constant stress and my cash flow was dramatically cut.

My second enormous mistake was in promising Elias that I would pay that balloon loan of eight grand in 90 days. As winter approached, our games shrank. The cash cow which had been giving off thousands of dollars every weekend in the summer was rapidly dying. It never occurred to me to check into the historic cash flow and seasonality of the business.

Success Strategy #43  
I'm " -- Self-Created Labels

- Play the I'm "\_\_\_\_\_" game. List everything both positive and negative that fits in the blank, including ethnic background, occupation, personality traits, etc.
- Which labels were given to you by your parents? By your teachers? By co-workers?
- Which labels no longer serve you? Will you give yourself permission to drop obsolete labels and adopt new ones, such as "I'm financially free" or "I'm happy".

The third mistake was putting all my eggs in the one basket. The week after I bought the field, Elias moved me out of the store where I had been squatting, rent-free. He then took my store manager job and gave it to his new partner's little brother. Goodbye weekly paycheck, hello overhead.

Desperate, I loaded my belongings into the old brown field van, and found a tiny little apartment on the third floor of a house in a horrible neighborhood in the Lansdowne and Bloor area of Toronto. Crack heads and hookers were my neighbors. It was impossible to find a safe place to park the van. Life in the armpit of the city cost me \$600 per month.

By November, less than a month after I had bought the field, I was in deep shit. I was behind on my payments on the loan from my dad, Visa was screaming, I was behind on the loan to Elias, and the cash flow had dwindled to nearly nothing. One of the guys who played at my field had a business providing Santa Clauses to the shopping malls around the city. I persuaded him to give me a tryout. At 135 pounds, I was

North America's most unlikely Santa, but a few pillows took care of that.

I was the Santa that year at the Yorkdale Mall, one of the biggest in the city. They paid me ten bucks an hour to let little kids sit on my lap and take pictures with me. It was a tiring job. It's amazing how many kids are afraid of Santa. More often than not, I had screaming babies crying at the top of the lungs, terrified of jolly old Saint Nick.

One night, I gave one of the cute girls who played my elf at Santa's Village a ride home in the van. The old van was acting up, literally screaming so loud at each stoplight that I couldn't make conversation with the elf. It was also stalling and coughing a lot.

At that time, there was a Christmas time safe-driving program called RIDE. Basically the cops barricade streets and stop all traffic to catch drunk drivers. And of course, the one night when I had a cute elf in the van we got stopped. The cop looked at me very closely, without a trace of a smile. "Licence and registration please."

I was still dressed up in my Santa gear. The cop made me pull off my hat and beard to match my photo on my licence. "Have you been drinking, son?" the cop asked.

"No sir. Just coming from work at the mall. This here's my elf, and I play Santa."

"Sir, please step out of your vehicle."

The cop led me back to the car, and proceeded to nail me with a huge fine. The insurance and registration on the van had expired at the end of October. Elias hadn't bothered to pay it or tell me. They towed the van to the impound lot, leaving me standing on the street with the cute elf. Disgusted, she grabbed a cab home. Without a nickel in my Santa's suit, I walked two hours back to my miserable apartment.

The van took nearly a grand to fix, between the brakes, some engine parts and the impound fee. The van was a money pit, and it sucked me dry. Elias had charged me five grand for the van. It wasn't worth half that. I had never been so broke in my life. In retrospect, diet powders didn't look half bad.

A week before Christmas, there was a pounding at the door to my apartment. It was Elias. I hadn't run a game at the field in three weeks. Business had dried up. My Santa paycheck was the only thing putting pizza on the table. I was three weeks behind in the payments on the \$8,000 I owed him. He was yelling at the door.

I pretended that I wasn't home. He was the last freaking guy I wanted to see right now. I sat in my beanbag chair, the only piece of furniture in the whole place next to the used bed and the three-drawer chest in the bedroom.

Suddenly there was a huge crash, and the sound of splintering wood. I watched my door knob fly off, and the lock smashed as the door flew inwards. Elias had kicked in the door!

He strode into my little apartment with a crazed look in his eyes. I hadn't seen him in nearly two months, but I had heard that he had developed some seriously bad chemical habits. He looked pissed. I didn't know if I should jump up and try to fight him or stay calm. Escape was impossible, he blocked the only exit. I sat in the beanbag chair and contemplated my next move.

At that point, I definitely feared for my life...literally. But I managed to calm him down slightly, talked things over, and told him the truth about my financial predicament. He left after about 10 minutes without killing me or getting any money.

I sat in the beanbag chair for about five minutes, alone and quiet. My front door hung at an odd angle. I just analyzed my life and my miserable existence. I formulated a plan in my head. I'd sell off everything, then leave town back to Pinawa and regroup. Then it hit me like a lightning bolt – Elias still had keys to the van!

I grabbed my jacket and raced out onto the street. I sprinted two blocks south to where I had parked the van. It was gone!

All my rifles were in their, as well as the goggles, all the equipment and my four paintball guns. It was all gone....my mountain bike, my UofT jacket...everything.. Elias had decided to foreclose on the loan and virtually everything I owned had vanished.

#### Success Strategy #44 The Secret Currency of the Rich

- People will work for currency and recognition.
- It's illegal to print your own money.
- Giving genuine praise costs nothing, but has great value.

I slumped to the ground on the dark, lonely sidewalk in one of the roughest parts of the city and began to weep.

Success Strategy #45

If You're Stuck in a Rut, Take Your Foot Off the Gas!

- The definition of insanity is doing the same thing, but expecting a different result.
- Change your behavior pattern if you're bored with your current reality. Take responsibility for your own life.

Success Strategy #46

Your High School Guidance Counselor Was Wrong About College

- The richest people are not doctors, lawyers, engineers and dentists. The richest people are business owners.
- The straight A kids in college got degrees and ended up working for the kids who got B's and C's and went on to start corporations.

Success Strategy #47

Judge a Man by the Company He Keeps

- Take your nine closest friends' annual incomes. Add them up and add in your annual income. Divide by 10 to find the average. Odds are you'll be smack dab in the middle of the range.

## Chapter Seven: Life in the Crack Den

It was an extremely lonely Christmas. I sat in my little apartment with my cat. She had been a stray that I found in the alley behind the house where I lived. She was a strange kitten. Whenever I was in the bath, she would jump on my chest, using it like a little island, curl up and go to sleep, completely surrounding by water. She was so trusting, so innocent.

I didn't have enough money for cat food. Actually, I had zero cash. Not a cent. And there was less than \$100 left on my one remaining credit card. I literally laid in bed for ten days straight, in some sort of depressed coma. I ate once a day, a single small pizza from Pizza Pizza. The cat ate my pieces of pepperoni and some of the crust. I think the only reason I didn't develop scurvy or rickets is that I still had a few cases of herbs from my old business. I took the tablets to stave off some crippling disease.

I gave the cat away just after Christmas to one of the street walkers in my neighborhood. I had no money, and was so depressed I couldn't feed myself, let alone the cat. The lady promised to take good care of my little cat. It was so sad. I was totally alone.

My phone was cut off. I had no money for rent. I had no money for food. My dad was royally pissed that I had crashed the business and let him down on the business loan. My poor mother had to deal with his frustration about my failure. Plus, she worried constantly about me. She sent me a care package of some essentials like toothpaste, some canned food and fifty bucks. I was in a bad way. Again. I sat on my bed, and wondered what I was going to do.

I wandered down to the payphone, and called a kid from my hometown, Scotty. He was in my youngest brother's class, and I had met him when he moved to Toronto for film school. He had played paintball once back in the summer as my guest.

We got together just after New Year's for a coffee. He was living with a really weird student in the basement of some guy's house near his college. The guy would cook the strangest smelling concoctions at three o'clock in the morning. I let Scotty go on about what a lousy roommate he had, then I offered a solution.

"Why don't we get a place together?"

That's all it took. We grabbed a newspaper and started searching. We found a huge basement apartment at Kipling and Bloor in the north end of the city. We were the only white guys for miles, but we didn't care. The rent was decent and the place was big. With no time like the present, we decided to pull some quick midnight moves and get out of our places immediately before the end of the month.

### Success Strategy #48 The Value of Your Time

- Take your expected retirement age minus your current age. Take the result and multiply by 50 to get the number of working weeks you have remaining. Divide by two to get the number of paychecks you have remaining.
- How much is your time worth?

That suited me fine. I heard Elias wasn't doing so well at the store and his lifestyle was creating cash flow problems. Even though he stole the van, and re-claimed ownership of the field, he was telling people that he was going to get the rest of his money out of me. I wanted no piece of that crackpot.

I had one major problem, though....no money. I called a guy that had played paintball and owned a truck. I persuaded him to help me move for twenty bucks and a case of beer. I hocked everything I had that wasn't nailed down. The old Commodore 64, the one I had bought with my trapline money, went for first and last month's rent. Old sports trophies, clothes from high school, bits of miscellaneous paintball gear...if I could sell it for a buck I did. I barely scraped enough together to give me money for moving, and then I was flat busted again.

I moved into that basement apartment with Scotty and I owned nothing but an old bed, a set of three drawers, and a suitcase of clothes. Throw in about three cases of herbs and meal replacement protein powder from my previous job and you had the whole sum of my material goods.

We called our place The Crack Den. It was January 1989. I was twenty one years old, and nearly twenty grand in debt.

### Will Work For Food

I combed the Help Wanted ads of the paper. I needed a job, and I needed it fast. I applied at Radio Shack at the nearby strip mall. Amazingly, I failed the aptitude test. “How the hell can I lack the skills to sell batteries?” I demanded.

The pimply-faced manager replied, “The questionnaire revealed you don’t have the right attitude to be on our team long term.”

I thought to myself, “You got that right you pencil necked geek!” Me, an attitude problem....nah.

A temp agency had an interesting ad in the paper for people to work on Bay Street for a brokerage firm. Bay Street was Canada’s version of Wall Street. It was the late eighties, the economy was booming and yuppies were in full force.

I put on my only shirt, my only tie, and my cleanest pants. I only had sneakers. I couldn’t afford dress shoes. I put on my coat and took the bus and two subways downtown. It took an hour and twenty minutes to get to the interview.

My stomach grumbled so loud I thought everyone would stare at me. I had to borrow the two bucks for subway fare from Scotty’s penny jar. I was living on vitamins and protein shakes.

I’m sure I appeared extremely nervous. I didn’t want to appear too eager, but I tried so hard to smile and be friendly. At the end of the ten minute interview the guy stood up, shook my hand and welcomed me to the team. He handed me a slip of paper and told me to report immediately to Nesbitt Thompson for orientation.

I was elated! A job! I wasn’t going to starve!

I took the elevator up to the 17<sup>th</sup> floor of the Sun Life Tower. Huge windows from floor to ceiling revealed a fabulous view of the financial district. I could smell money there!

I reported to the messenger pit. About twenty other people, mostly young guys, were sitting around. I handed in my slip at the heavily barred cage window and was told to take a seat.

I started my new job at an amazing salary of \$14,000 per year. I starved and scrimped, living below the poverty line for the next 2 years to get my financial footing back. I lasted just six months downtown. It didn’t take long for me to realize that the real money wasn’t in working for a brokerage firm. It was in being the guy on the other end of the phone, telling the peons what to buy and what to sell.

I made up my mind to become the guy on the other end of the phone. Once I had my pile, then I would have my say over what gets bought and what gets sold.

#### Success Strategy #49 The Value of Your Knowledge

- We generally underestimate our worth.
- What can you do well now? What would someone without those skills pay you to learn them?
- Teaching people skills one-on-one – from programming a VCR to using a computer – will be a 21st century growth industry.

At the same time, Scottie and I stumbled onto another economic revelation. By adding roommates, we could reduce our rent. So, we started adding roommates in a big way.

Success Strategy #50  
Don't Be Stopped by Organizational Walls

- So many people limit their career potential by choosing only to master those skills relevant to their specific job description or to their particular department.
- Learn as much as you can about your entire organization. Use knowledge to expand your capabilities and, consequently, your value to the company.
- If you are seen as a problem-solver, you are invaluable.

Success Strategy #51  
Essential Skills to Teach Children

- The purpose of parenthood is not to raise lazy, co-dependent, emotional cripples. (I can be harsh here, since I used to be one!)
- Learning how to cook, do laundry, balance a checkbook and do your own tax return are valuable life skills.
- You will worry less as a parent when your precious angel leaves the nest if you know that they can at least feed themselves and do laundry without turning all of their shirts pink.



## Chapter Eight

### Come On In, The Water's Fine!

In late November of 1990 I was watching late night TV and drinking beer, absolutely miserable. I was working for a trucking company in Toronto, living in a house with five other guys from school, making \$380 (before taxes) a week and going nowhere fast. I was spending all of my time feeling sorry for myself. I was 22 years old, broke and facing a terrible Christmas alone.

All my roommates were heading home for the holidays except me. Normally I went to Mexico for Christmas and New Years, but I had foolishly bought a new motorcycle in the summer and that had left me strapped for cash. There was two feet of snow outside and a \$250-a-month leased Ninja in the garage.

I watched an infomercial about some tall guy with a big smile who flew around in his helicopter. He talked about how, at age 20, he had been called a “wonder boy” with a great business making over \$10,000 per month. He talked about how bad business decisions and bad partners caused it to flop. He shared how he had overcome tremendous hardships and now, six years later, he was a millionaire and a best-selling author.

He talked about modeling successful people, and used the phrase, “success leaves clues.” He had a huge 30-day training program on audiocassette called Personal Power. I had never heard of Tony Robbins, but for whatever reason I squeezed the \$200 tape program onto the last remaining space on my exhausted Visa card. I rationalized it as a Christmas present to myself.

The next day at work I was hating the routine more than usual. I got up at 6:30am, showered, dressed, packed a lunch and trudged off through the snow fifteen minutes to the bus stop. I waited ten more minutes with the other sleepy commuters, then stood in the aisle of the already-filled bus twenty-five minutes as we crawled to the subway. There I stood for fifteen minutes more as we packed the train like sardines.

I sat at my desk on the phone for eight hours getting yelled at by customers and truckers alike. It was that day of all days on my break when I saw what I’ll always think of as “THE AD”. It was in the Toronto Sun Business-to-Business Classified Ads.

***“I’m 21, drive a new Corvette convertible, own 5 properties and make \$15,000 a month. Please don’t waste my time. 519-555-1212”***

What a cheeky punk! I loved that ad, and at the same time hated it. In fact it made my blood boil! Here I was facing the worst Christmas ever, and this guy was flaunting his status. I called the number from the office, determined to take him down a peg. I remember being concerned that it was a long distance call.

I only got a lady who worked for the answering service. She said that if I wanted the free information that I had to leave my name and phone number. I left my number at work. By the next day I had forgotten all about it.

I received a phone call later that day. It was the guy from the classified! He asked if I was the one who had called about his ad. We jockeyed and postured during the conversation, like two male bulls trying to establish superiority. I found out his name was Paul. He kept asking me question after question — regarding my job, my goals, where I lived, and what I was looking for out of life. He got me to do most of the talking. I bragged about my “successful” paintball business and my herbal weight loss marketing business. He listened attentively.

He mentioned that he owned a large environmental products marketing company and was looking for a new business partner. I asked him how much it would cost. He said he wasn’t looking for investors, to leave my wallet at home and to come to his office for a meeting this Saturday at 10:00 am. I reluctantly agreed, still very much in the dark.

It was the typical Friday night at our house, packed with party people. I didn't drink any beer that night, and went to bed before 1:00 am, a first for me. My roommates wondered if I was sick. I wanted to be sharp for the interview.

I set the alarm for 6:00 am, figuring it was at least a two-hour subway ride to this guy's office. I groaned when I was ripped from a sound sleep by the blasted alarm. It was Saturday morning, dark out and ten below zero. I was supposed to ride the subway for two hours to maybe meet some guy who might or might not cut me into his business plans. I weighed the pain, and rolled over back to sleep. Monday, the phone rang for me at work. It was Paul, and he was pissed. "Where the hell were you Saturday morning?" he asked. "I drove in an hour from my country home to meet you. You called me, remember? I'm the one with the opportunity. Are you serious or just kidding around?"

His anger and intensity were evident over the phone. I stammered, "No, I'm serious."

"Fine. Be there tomorrow night at 7:15 p.m.". And with that he hung up.

I took a subway and two buses to get to his office. It was way out in an industrial section of a suburb to the west of Toronto. I left immediately after work, but I was still late. I trudged the last block through the snow from the bus stop to the building. The parking lot was filled with Jaguars, Mercedes, a Porsche and a Corvette. I was in blue jeans, running shoes, a t-shirt and a leather jacket – not dressed for the European sports car crowd.

I went into the brightly lit lobby of the building and a wave of déjà vu hit me full blast in the stomach. It was a multi-level meeting, like the ones I remembered from my weight-loss product days! Loud pounding music came from the meeting room just past the registration table. People in suits with cell phones (picture the brick-sized monstrosities that were the "portable" phones of that era) were everywhere. Motivational posters lined the walls. I had two choices: flee back into the night, or stay inside where it was warm. A lady at the registration table made up my mind for me.

Success Strategy #52  
The Credit Card Blues

- The average American bankruptcy last year had more than 11 credit cards.
- The average credit card balance in the U.S. is over \$5,000 at 17% annual interest.
- At 17%, the principle doubles every four years.
- See a debt counselor if you get in over your head.

"Welcome to the Haines Success Center. Are you a guest or a distributor?" she smiled at me.

"A guest, I guess."

"Who are you here to see?"

"Some young guy named Paul who drives a Corvette."

She grinned, and called into the hallway beyond. A tall, thin kid with long, curly hair and a purple suit that hung loosely on his lanky frame came out. He glared at me with my blue jeans, leather jacket and sneakers. I thought he looked equally ridiculous. He didn't even shake my hand.

"You're late. Get in there and see me after."

I grabbed a seat near the back in a dark corner. The room was small, but all 90 seats were filled and probably 10 or 15 people stood around the perimeter of the room. The stage was raised, and illuminated with spot lamps. A large table to the left of the stage had a number of large and small plastic tubes with metal spouts coming out of them. A banner above the table said, "*Come On In, The Waters Fine.*"

It was just like I'd remembered it. A nervous person introduced a young lady who talked about the products which were, in this case, water filters. She talked about tap water quality and how someday everyone would buy bottled water at the store. She held up a cream colored unit and talked about the "puppy dog" approach. Imagine giving a puppy to a child for a week, then trying to get it back. The same

thing occurred with that unit she said. People would just fall in love with the way coffee, soups and tea tasted, and would love the drinking water that was chlorine free.

She took two glasses of water, one tap water and one filtered. She put three drops of a chemical in each, which would change the chlorine present yellow. The tap water looked like a glass of urine, the filtered water remained crystal-clear. “Which water would you want your family to drink?” I was impressed.

She then introduced the next speaker, a sharp looking man in a suit. He drew the same circles I’d remembered from my previous sales life and talked about starting as a dealer for \$39. He showed how the common counter-top unit sold for \$239 and you’d make over \$50 per unit. He said that some people were getting as high as an 80% sales-success rate using the puppy-dog approach. He asked for a show of hands from people who had sold at least one unit. I’d guess that 75% of the room put up their hands.

He then talked about the benefits of becoming a Direct Distributor. He said when you and the dealers you sponsored sold 28 units in a month you’d get to buy directly from the manufacturer. Then, your commissions would nearly double with a rebate program. He started to lose me as he drew stair steps and levels and lots of numbers.

He went on to talk about being Car Qualified, and earning a car bonus on top of your royalties and commissions. He asked for volunteers to share how big their Car Bonus was last month. It seemed as if a dozen people had bonuses for over \$500 last month, and one guy said his biggest Car Bonus was \$2400 in a single month! He also happened to drive a big Mercedes.

The presenter talked about “breaking away” as a Sales Coordinator, when your group did \$25,000 in sales in a single month. He said the average Sales Coordinator made over \$10,000 a month. He said that when you created a Sales Coordinator, you’d make between \$3000 and \$8000 per month from him for life. He turned to the crowd, grinned and asked “How many people here would like to be Sales Coordinators?” Everyone laughed and put up their hands. “How many Sales Coordinators would you like to have in your group?” Shouts of “Five!” “Ten!” “Twenty” came up from the crowd.

“Well, the top income earner is a 29-year old former waiter from Sarasota Florida. He has personally created over 65 front-line Sales Coordinators in the last four years. His check last month was over \$300,000!” My jaw dropped. This was far bigger than diet herbs!

The presenter talked about two more high level spots, the 5th Dimension and National Marketing Director and all the bonuses that went along with it. Then he opened a door near the back and a parade of suits and pantsuits came across stage. These people told stories of earning 10,000, \$15,000 even \$25,000 a month and more. I still remember one young guy beaming, dressed in an expensive suit. His booming voice filled the entire room. “Good evening ladies and gentlemen, my name is Eric and I’m a 5th Dimension from Cambridge. I’ve been involved for two years now. When I started I used to drive a Honda Civic, and now I drive a gold Jag!”

I had just travelled two hours by subway in the freezing cold, and was looking at a horribly long trip back. I was definitely primed for a sales pitch from a guy driving a Jag. They had me.

The meeting ended with huge applause and loud upbeat music. My eyes were glazed. I had that fire back from the old days. I sought out Paul. He shook my hand and saw my grin. He had the same smile across his face as he asked me that classic question, “So, what do you think?”

#### Success Strategy #53 Why the Fly Must Die

- Watch a housefly at a window. It will ram its head against the glass until it dies from sheer exhaustion, even though an open door is four feet away.
- Think of three key life areas where you are banging your head against the glass.
- 80% of the people who read this book will never make that list of just three little things. They will keep banging their heads.

“I’m in. Give me a kit.” Paul was a little taken back by my decisiveness.

We did the paperwork on a round table in the hallway. Everywhere I looked there were people in suits doing paperwork with people who weren’t in suits. Paul introduced me to his brother Danny, whose Porsche 911 was sitting beside Paul’s ‘Vette. Dan shook my hand and asked which car I liked better, a Corvette or a Porsche. I said Porsche. Dan laughed and shoved his brother. “You see, Squig, another smart man! You know, the funny thing is I sponsored Paul, so he paid for my Porsche!” He sauntered off to meet some other people.

I asked Paul about the office. He explained it was a co-op business center, and all the top producers rented offices there. He said that the meetings were held four times a week and that I could bring my guests for free to see the presentation. We booked a time to get together at his office next week. He wished me a Merry Christmas, and gave me the form to buy my dealer kit at the front office. As I was leaving he said, “Buy a video called Living the Dream. Dan and I are on it.”

At the front office I bought my dealer kit and the video. I saw the shelves bulging with videos, audios and books. I had never seen any tools like that in my previous company. I saw one box with red and black letters, “THE BLITZ KIT: HOW TO MAKE \$10,000 A MONTH IN 90 DAYS.” I was on cloud nine!

I walked the quarter mile along the road from the industrial unit to the bus stop. I stood there shivering, clutching my little bag of goodies. Suddenly a huge gold Jaguar pulled up to the stoplight. It was Eric. He was talking on a giant cell phone, waiting for the light to change. He glanced over at me, and gave me a nod of his head, then roared into the night. I couldn’t wait to get home!

It’s funny how history repeats itself. I read everything in that kit three times before I got home at midnight. Everyone was in a festive mood with Christmas approaching, and my roommates were well into the rum-nog. I popped in the Living the Dream video and made them watch it. It was a mini-version of the meeting I had been at before, with tons of testimonials. At the very end of the tape were Dan and Paul telling their story about how rich they were. I pointed at the TV set and screamed, “There they are! Those are the guys that signed me up!”

My enthusiasm wasn’t contagious, as my roommates went back to playing cards and drinking rum-nog. As usual, I verbally firehosed them. “Guys, we’re gonna be rich! I’m going to make enough by spring to buy a Porsche!” They laughed at me.

I retreated back to my room, and watched the video again. That night I tossed and turned, dreaming about clean water and being rich.

Reality set in the next day as I had to get up to go to work. I couldn’t focus on the task at hand. Thank goodness it was the Christmas season and things were slow. I passed around my one ‘Living the Dream’ video each day to a different co-worker. They all told me it looked interesting, and to talk to them after the holidays.

My Personal Power tape series arrived a week before Christmas. I dove into it, and loved the course from Day One. That was my first introduction to the personal development arena. It put me back on the path to being a student again. Within days I was thinking differently and acting differently. I became passionate about my goals again. My goal setting got me through the lonely Christmas.

Paul called me the week after Christmas. He said that if I could come up with \$5000 to buy in at the Direct position, he could pull a few strings to get me promoted to the Car Qualified position and all the bonuses that go along with it. Five grand! I didn’t even have \$500. He told me to go to the bank and ask for a loan. Was I serious about my goals, he chided me, or just kidding around?

Ok, so he was being a greasy kind of salesman, but he was right. If I didn’t make a commitment to something eventually, I’d still be working at that trucking company and hating every minute of it. The next

day I went to see my bank manager. I was shocked when she agreed to give me \$6500 and a new Visa card. Had the world gone mad? I didn't care. I had the money.

Success Strategy #54  
The Scary Truth About Retirement

- Eight out of 10 Americans at age 65 have either died (80 percent from a chronic degenerative disease) or are flat broke.
- Take the amount of money you've saved in the past three years, divide by three and you have your yearly savings average.
- Multiply your yearly savings average by the number of work years you have remaining. Add your current life savings to calculate your retirement nest egg.
- If your investment strategy averages three percent, the average inflation rate, you'll be stuck with roughly the same sized pile of money as you calculated above.
- Will you have enough to retire on an upper middle-class income -- \$50,000 per year or more -- and live in style for at least 25 years?
- It's time to get serious. It's never too late to make a pile for retirement.

Paul was flabbergasted when I showed up with the cashier's check. He shook my hand and introduced me to some of the "players" in the office. He introduced me as David, his newest Car Qualified Director.

I showed up for work at the trucking company on Monday, and everyone in the office avoided making eye contact with me. I got to my desk to see a big box on it with all my belongings. My boss pulled me into his office. Long story short, he fired me because he said I was scheming to start a company behind his back and I was planning to take all the employees over to my new office. I tried to explain to him that he was completely wrong, but to no avail. I grabbed my box, glared at my former co-workers who had ratted me out, and strode out with my head held high. I vowed to show them what real success was all about.

I phoned Paul for some advice. He said it was the best thing that could happen to me, and now I could go full time. He and his brother were opening a new co-op center and he would rent me an office for "only" \$300 a month. I nervously agreed.

The brothers had started their own training center, and I was expected to be a part of it. The two-hour commutes via subway to the office in the middle of winter were killing me. I was cash starved, but hanging on. I remember so vividly standing in a suit and thin coat, absolutely freezing my ass off at the bus stop, watching people drive home in their Mercedes and Jags. I was so driven, so determined to succeed. I began reading motivational books, sometimes two or three a week. I had a Walkman constantly with me. I listened to four hours of tapes a day for three months.

Success Strategy #55  
Your Parents Rules, Not Yours

- What belief systems are you carrying around that your parents gave you?
- Do these beliefs (examples -- "We're not made of money." "Children should be seen and not heard." "Don't talk to strangers.") serve you when it comes to your current spiritual needs, relationships, financial matters and career goals?

I went door to door, business to business, looking for prospects. I raided fishbowls for business cards in every restaurant in town. I made cold-call after cold call. I was 22, broke, and totally determined to make this thing work. I always had a brave face at the meetings and trainings. Paul taught me to always answer, "Great!" or "Fantastic!" or "Phenomenal!" whenever someone asked me how things were going.

His attitude was “Fake it ‘til you make it!” He encouraged me to go out and buy a new suit after I sold one of my water filters and got back my original \$239. I had to look successful to be successful. Problem was, though, I was eating my original capital of \$5000. The bank loan, motor cycle loan, office rent, and phone bills were a heavy burden indeed. I was way overextended. It all felt eerily familiar.

In early February the weather broke a little and we had a false spring. I took my Ninja motorcycle out of the garage and took it for a spin. I looked like a giant puffy lumberjack, with every article of clothing on, out for a ride with the weather less than two degrees above freezing! That night I dressed in layers, throwing my windsuit and huge parka over the top of my dress suit. I put my dress shoes in my backpack, wrapped a scarf over my face, and put on my helmet and my warmest mitts. Then I hit the highway.

Startled motorists couldn’t believe their eyes as I raced by them on my Ninja in the middle of winter. The roads were bare, but the wind was incredibly cold at 60 miles an hour. My two hour subway trip to the office took less than 20 minutes by bike. What a time saver!

Absolute shock registered on the face of the ladies at the front table as the Abominable Snowman lumbered into the office. “Take me to your leader!” I joked.

I waddled into my office and locked the door. I did a quick strip down and ...voila!...instant businessman. I was quite pleased with myself that night at the meeting. That was, until I looked out the window. It was an absolute blizzard outside!

I had to leave my beautiful bike in the parking lot that night and take the subway home. It was so discouraging. It seemed even the weather was against me.

I arrived home very late that night, and checked my answering machine. There was a message there from one of my ads! He wanted to get together to hear more about my opportunity! I was finally looking at my first serious prospect! I called him first thing the next morning, and booked him for the next business briefing at my office.

**Success Strategy #56**  
**Why I Never Cut My Own Lawn**

- I cut grass all through high school to make extra money and grew to hate it.
- By paying a professional landscaper \$15 per hour, it frees me up to focus on \$500 per hour endeavors.
- Where, in your life, are you focusing too much time on low-payoff activities?

I was very nervous and showed up early for the briefing. I hovered near the lobby, hoping to meet my guest. I wasn’t really worried about someone else “scooping” my guest, but it happens all the time in networking. I wasn’t going to lose this guy.

My guest showed up at 7:15 p.m. He was a professional guy named Mike. I introduced him around to all the higher pin levels and let them tell their stories of success in the business. Mike worked at a nuclear research facility and was worried about layoffs. He was looking for extra income from home.

Mike sat through the briefing, and at the very end I turned to him and asked, “Well, what do you think?”

“Looks pretty good.”

“Where do you see yourself starting in the plan?”

“The Direct level looks pretty good.”

“Do you have any questions before we get started?”

“Do you take Visa?”

That was it! My first Direct distributor. Mike bought his 28 filters for \$5000 the next day, and I made \$900 profit in royalties. Over the next few months I tried to work with Mike on his list. He brought guests

out for the first few weeks. But it seemed that each guest was progressively poorer financially. After a few months Mike dropped out.

By March I was learning that the direct sales approach to network marketing was feast or famine. The company had created a structure where good salespeople could front-load \$5000 worth of filters quickly and make instant profit. But because the products were non-consumable, there was very little repeat business. Seriously, how many water filters does anyone use in a single house?

The briefings became revolving doors. The same veterans hanging on week to week, always looking for a fresh crop of “Five Granders”. I don’t know why I couldn’t see it earlier. I blamed it on my naive youthfulness and the fact that my mentor seemed to be enjoying fabulous success.

In April of 1991 I signed up five people that month on Direct packages. I made Sales Coordinator, finally! I went across the stage in front of 2500 people at a huge Regional training event in Toronto to get my pin. That month I grossed \$10,500 but I had to pay \$1000 rebates to the five new Directs I signed. The \$5500 profit kept the wolves away for a few weeks, but I was still behind on all my bills.

Success Strategy #57  
Rolling University

- Commute times are increasing as city highways grow more congested.
- Use audiotapes in the car to reprogram your mind for success.
- The average commuter spends the equivalent of one full college semester in the car each year. Leverage that time!

My friendship with my mentor and sponsor Paul went to the next level. We hung around together all the time. I drove my motorcycle out to the country house where he lived on a lake and read books from his big library. He had tons of books on networking and personal development. He taught me a lot about sales.

He kept urging me to get out of the house with my five college buddies. He thought they were a negative influence on my business. I ended up moving into a 1200-square foot executive penthouse condo with another Sales Coordinator in his group, Carl. Carl told me he “owned” the condo, and that he would only charge me \$600 a month in rent. The problem was, that was double the rent I was paying in my old multi-roommate place.

Even though my entire experience with this organization was less than a year, it seemed like so much more because we all worked together and played together as a group, with lots of cross-line activities, parties and barbecues. I worked the business 18 hours a day, and I was always hanging out with people in the business. This compression of time made the whole experience that much more intense.

There was a National Convention in Baltimore coming up at the end of June, six weeks hence. I told Paul that we should organize buses and offer hotel and travel packages to those downline. He said it was a great idea and asked me to head up the project.

I realize now that I spent far too much time trying to seek approval from the leaders in that business. It was a problem that plagued me until I was 26 years old and decided to take 100% responsibility for myself and my actions. That lesson was made clear to me with the bus trip.

I was “volunteered” to organize this big bus trip for everyone at the co-op center. I called bus lines and hotels, made deals and organized itineraries. Initially it looked like we’d have about 150 people and would need four buses. As crunch time began and people started to drop off the list, we ended up with 38 people, not even a full busload. I had to absorb over \$1,000 in losses. I got to play tour guide to 38 people, feeding them, and tucking them in at night. And guess how many of my own downline went on the trip? That’s right, zero. I was alone at the National Convention. I had spent an entire month organizing the trip. My bonus check that month was zero. I was full time in the business, I hadn’t recruited anyone, and my check was zero. This situation was pathetic.

I turned 23 in June 1991. I traded in my Ninja and leased a brand new Volkswagen Passat. It was gorgeous, black with all the bells and whistles. I had truly arrived! The only problem is that my lease on the Ninja was \$250 a month, and the lease on the Passat was \$650 a month. Oh well, it just meant I would have to work harder. Fake it 'til you make it, right?

The financial pressures of being full time in the water filter multi-level game were crushing. I had to make \$4500 a month just to break even. And except for the one big month in April, things were pretty slow for everyone. I showed up at my office one day to find the locks had been changed. The landlord had shut down the entire co-op! Things were looking bad. With no weekly meetings locally, many distributors just packed it in.

I returned to my condo one August day about a week later to find a Sheriff's Notice of Eviction on the door. It turns out Carl had been pocketing my rent money and didn't actually own the condo. He was on a "no-money-down" lease option and the original owner was throwing us out! I had to scramble to find a new place. Finally in desperation, short on funds, I loaded up everything I owned and drove 24 hours straight to Winnipeg in my car, now a month behind in the payments.

**Success Strategy #58  
Don't Let Age Be Your Cage**

- A healthy human lifespan is roughly 120 years.
- When he started Kentucky Fried Chicken in his 60's, Colonel Sanders was just middle-aged.
- Being too old or too young to do something is simply a crutch. Colonel Sanders never served "excuse sandwiches" at any of his shops.

Things were not looking up.

I ended up in a tiny rented room in a boarding house on the south end of the city. I could lay outstretched across the width of the room and touch one wall with my toes, and another with my fingers. I had a shared bathroom, and a shared kitchen. It was a hell-hole, but at least it was only \$225 a month in rent. Glue sniffers, welfare bums and alcoholics were my dorm mates.

I linked up with the local co-op of distributors who ran an office in the absolute armpit of the city. It was in the scariest, nastiest neighborhood in all of Winnipeg, on Osbourne Street near the Main Welfare office. How in the heck are you supposed to get guests to come to your meeting to buy \$5000 worth of water filters if they are scared for their lives?

The meetings were awful with low energy, terrible presenters that befit the environment around us. There was something sweet about these people, though. There were none of the Mercedes-driving \$800-suit wearing crowd that were pretending to make money back

in Toronto. These people were broke and not afraid to show it. "I'll fit right in" I thought.

I started to hang around friends from Winnipeg with whom I'd gone to high school. They were the kind of guys that started drinking on Thursdays and kept the party going until Sunday night. I began to get lured back into the go-nowhere party world. But being drunk was an easy way to avoid the reality of the mounting bills, now over \$75,000 and climbing. I was way behind and drowning in a sea of red ink. I was starting to sell my filters for \$50 just so I could go to the bar with my friends and buy pizza.

I sold six of my last eight filters to a old school acquaintance nicknamed Herb. He was really smart in school, straight A's and an excellent hockey player. He had partied his life away, and was out of university and looking for something to supplement his boozing. Selling multi-level water filters seemed to make a lot of sense to him. He gave me a \$1000 and I gave him 6 filters. I said "Herb, you have to get trained. Let's go to the convention in New Orleans!"

This was November of 1991. Desperation filled my every waking moment. I somehow reasoned that if I could only make it to the Convention I would get the magic dust I needed to make this multi-level water filter business work. Herb and I packed a suitcase each and 48 hours later we were on the road. An impromptu adventure was underway.



I really didn't know Herb all that well. I was to learn the hard way. We had no sooner crossed the North Dakota state line when he ordered me to pull over for gas. He disappeared inside the station and came out with a 24 pack of beer. "Road Rockets!" he exclaimed. "Can't drive 36 hours without a beer."

Thus began the road trip from hell. A county trooper came whipping through the ditch 10 miles down the road to chase me for speeding. Herb had lit up a Camel cigarette and was holding a beer. He promptly started to freak out. I had him roll down the window and put the beer in the glove compartment. I took the \$60 speeding ticket, and screamed at Herb with maniac rage. I threw his cigarettes and beer in the damn ditch, and was getting ready to beat the hell out of him. I didn't care if he was a foot taller and 50 lbs. heavier than I was! My gorgeous black Volkswagon Passat with heated seats and a sunroof was all that I had in the world and I was damned if he was going to wreck it!

We hit the worst ice storm I had ever seen just outside of Kansas City. Between KC and St. Louis, I counted over 100 cars and big rigs in the ditches. Troopers had blocked off the highway, and asked us to get off the roads. Herb, the absolute lunatic, said, "No thanks, we're from Canada!" and drove around the cop cars and kept driving at 20 miles an hour towards St Louis.

I don't know how we made it to New Orleans in one piece. My guts were absolutely burning from bad roadside coffee, zero sleep in two days, the stress from driving, the stress from crazy Herb, and the mounting stress from the financial pressures. We got near the city with Herb at the wheel.

The whole way down he had criticized my driving. Now, though, it was my turn to start carping, and I was given good reason. Herb was a country bumpkin who had never driven in a huge city on a freeway. He started freaking out. He was literally screaming as he missed exit after exit, swerving, trying to change three lanes at a time. Finally I had him pull over so I could take the wheel.

Every hotel room in the entire city was booked solid. I mean every single one. Besides our convention of 12,000 water filter people the San Francisco 49'ers were also in town to play the Saints in football. We spent the third night together in the car, parked in an ally in the French quarter. Between our sweat and the natural odors of Bourbon Street, we were smelling a little ripe. We got cleaned up at a local YMCA and went to the first evening of the convention, the reception party.

I ran into Paul and Dan there, and their reception was frosty to say the least. I hadn't tried to communicate with them in the four months since my move. They thought I was dead. It struck me at the time....if these guys were so successful and had 3,000 people in their sales organization, why weren't any of them in New Orleans? I counted only seven people from that group, besides myself. Maybe Paul and Dan were living the fake it til' you make it philosophy.

After the reception, Herb and I took off to Bourbon Street to explore the scenic part of New Orleans. Within an hour I was on my fourth beer, and Herb was on his tenth. We went into a cool bar that had ladies' wrestling. I started to shoot pool with some girl from Texas, and when I turned around Herb was gone.

I waited around until 3 am hoping he might come back. No sign of Herb. I hailed a cab and said in a slurred voice, "Cabby, take me to my car."

"Where is it?"

"It's black."

"Where is it?"

"It's German, with Canadian license plates."

The poor cabby drove around the French quarter for 20 minutes before he found my car in the alley. Still no sign of Herb. I crawled into the back seat, and passed out...

It was a strange feeling waking up the next morning. Total disorientation. I had absolutely no idea where I was when I came to. No sign of Herb. I got cleaned up at the Y, and headed off to the convention.

The place was packed, with over 12,000 reps from five countries. The company was at the peak of its power. I had overheard a lot of scuttlebutt from veteran networkers.

They were begging corporate to bring out a consumable product like nutrition or skin care to increase the residual commissions. The crowd waited anxiously, the atmosphere was electric.

Good old Jay, the founder of the company was a master at working the crowd. He was a veteran speaker. The time came for the grand unveiling of our new product line. The tension in the air was thick.

It was a children's educational board game that sold for \$750, a new heated air filtration unit, and a \$500 set of encyclopedias. I couldn't believe it. Selling water filters was bad enough, but encyclopedias! The world was moving to CD-Roms. Who the heck was going to buy board games and encyclopedias.

**A retrospective note here:** It was another 9 months before the company added nutritional products and changed the compensation plan to make it easier, but by then the damage was done. I still maintain to this day that if they had moved earlier into consumables instead of the disastrous board game, history would have been radically different. They had 200,000 distributors, they were doing \$30 million a month in sales, and they were poised to go global. Today they do less than 10% of their former sales. My best guess is that 75% of the sales force quit within 12 months of the New Orleans debacle.

Success Strategy #59  
Failing to Plan is Planning to Fail

- Everyone gets 168 hours in a week -- no more, no less.
- What are you going to do with them? Do you have a weekly plan?
- Who will try to waste some of your time? Beware of "time thieves" -- they'll steal your most precious, non-renewable asset.

The wind was completely out of my sails, I was crushed. I saw the hand-writing on the wall. I spent the rest of the weekend moping around New Orleans, mostly alone. I was sitting back in the ladies' wrestling bar nursing a beer on the very last night of my trip and wondered almost aloud if I would ever see Herb again.

Like a slow-motion scene out of a movie I spotted a disheveled character stumbling along across from the wrestling ring. Two giant tattooed ladies were pummeling each other in the ring as this scruffian made his way slowly, methodically around the squared circle. He still wore a suit, but no shirt. His tie was around his head like a headband. He was puffing a Camel in one hand and had a beer in the other. Our eyes met and there was instant recognition.

"HERB!"

"Ledoux. Man am I ever glad to see you."

We sat down to catch up. Herb had bought a stranger a drink at the bar three nights ago. So surprised by Herb's small town friendliness, the stranger invited him out to the parking lot for a beer that he had in his car. I said, "Herb, were you nuts? Did you get mugged? You sure smell like you got mugged!"

Rather than the obvious tire iron to the skull, the stranger and Herb actually drank a case of beer together in the back alley of the bar. They then headed down to the banks of the mighty muddy Mississippi River to find a party. Herb said he lost the guy but linked up with a group of hobos, who found this well-dressed well-soused Canadian to be the life of the party! He took about four of these guys out for breakfast.

"Dave, I wanted to go party at their house, but they said, "Herb you don't understand. We're hobos. We have no place to go." When I couldn't find your car, I slept under the dock where they hung out. I'm out of money, I was planning to start hitchhiking home in the morning.

This was my key downline member, the rising star who was going to help me build a super team on my climb to the top. What was I thinking? Who was I kidding?

The drive home was uneventful except when we ran out of gas near Fargo, North Dakota at 3:00 am. But eventually, I got him out of the car by early morning, back in Winnipeg. I've never seen him since to this day, and thank God for that small favor.

About 10 days later my car was repossessed. I cried when that big metal hook took away the only car I had ever owned in my life.

It was December 1991. I had some lead boxes that prospects could fill out a ballot to drink fresh water for free for a week. I had left a filter for a week with a lady from the laundry mat who had filled out a ballot. I went to an apartment on north Main to try to close a sale on my last filter. Drunks, glue sniffers, and prostitutes lined the streets. I was in the worst part of town. It made my horrible flop house look like a palace by comparison.

I did a fabulous sales presentation for the couple. Their house smelled like beer and glue. There was filth everywhere. The wife had broken her coffeepot on the spout of the filter. She couldn't taste any difference in the water. I bet she could tell the difference between Budweiser and Miller though.

The husband was a scrawny guy with sores on his lip. He asked me how much the filter was. I said, "Two thirty-nine."

He said, "Too Tirty Nine, dat's preddy damn good!" He handed me a crumpled five dollar bill.

I said, "That's two hundred, thirty-nine."

His eyes first glazed, then grew crazed. With a shriek he ripped the filter off the tap and hurled it out into the hallway. "Get the hell out!" he screamed and slammed the door.

I picked up the little plastic filter, rolled up the plastic hose, and trudged out into the snow for the 20 minute walk back to my boarding house. Tears, huge round tears began to roll down my cheeks and freeze. I had been counting on that sale to buy food for the next month.

My fall to the bottom was complete. I sat in my little room and sobbed that night. Here I was, the pride of Pinawa, class president, and a straight A student. I was supposed to be graduating dentistry school soon. I was completely alone. I was living in a boarding house full of alcoholics, I was \$100,000 in debt and not only did I not have a single penny to my name, I had no food to boot. I was in hell.

The next morning I put on my suit, my dress shoes and overcoat and walked the seven blocks to the local co-op office for distributors. I didn't go in. I put my head down, and walked a half block more to the Welfare office. I paused for a minute at the door, not sure if I should go in. My growling stomach made the decision for me.

I sat in a waiting room packed with the downtrodden, the rejects that society throws away and hopes not to see again. It was tragic to look into the faces of these people and see all hope, all pride, all dreams stripped from them. Finally they called my name.

My caseworker thought I was another government employee at first, fooled by my sharp appearance. She got tears in her eyes as I explained to her that I was broke, my business in ruins, my credit decimated, my savings gone. I hadn't eaten in two days.

That month of December was the most humbling, depressing, lonely month of my life. I completely withdrew into self-pity. I never left my little room, just staring blankly out into space, almost catatonic. With a week until Christmas I ventured out a little, usually eating once a day at Kentucky Fried Chicken. I'd get a large container of their delicious gravy and sit with some bread and have a treat.

It was Christmas Eve. I went shopping with the \$30 that I had left from my welfare check. I bought a piece of turkey, with roasted potatoes in a little plastic deli container, a 26oz bottle of vodka, and a can of orange juice. I put the turkey in the fridge, hid the bottle in my room, and took my afternoon stroll for lunch to KFC. It was a snowy, chilly Winnipeg winter day.

**Success Strategy #60**  
**Be a Hugger, Not a Shaker**

- Hugging someone has far greater meaning than just shaking their hand.

I got back to the boarding house, and made myself a drink. “This is the very first Christmas when I didn’t get one single present.” I thought to myself. I also hadn’t sent one either. Even my family didn’t know where I was. I was just too ashamed, too proud. I was in a self-imposed exile.

I strolled out into the communal kitchen to prepare my gourmet Christmas meal. I opened the ancient fridge, and my mind reeled and could not comprehend what it saw. The plastic deli container was still on the shelf, but my turkey was gone! Some bastard had stolen my Christmas meal! I screamed profanities like you wouldn’t believe, calling for the thief to come out of his hole and fight me. Not a single door opened.

My rage turned to total frustration. I remember collapsing on my bed, sobbing uncontrollably. I was a mess.

My growling stomach eventually forced me back out to the kitchen. I had no money left for food for 3 days until my next welfare check. I found some stale Wonder bread in the fridge that I had bought to eat with the KFC gravy. There was some ancient Baloney in there as well. I had to trim the crusted edges of the slice of bologna, and made the sorriest sandwich the world had ever seen. That was my Christmas dinner.

I chugged the rest of my 26 in record time. With a belly of warm vodka I staggered out into the night on my way to my drunken encounter with a snowbank, where I laid there and believed I might die.

To this very day I have no idea what happened that night. I woke up the next morning in my little boarding room with an incredible headache. Why I didn’t freeze to death is beyond my comprehension. Perhaps my will to live was stronger than I thought.

But perhaps the old David Ledoux did die that night. I like to believe that my miserable, sorry, pitiful evil twin froze to death in that snow bank in Winnipeg that Christmas Eve.

Believe me when I tell you that I was different from that point on in my life. Dramatically, fundamentally different. Perhaps all the pent-up stress of going broke was magnified over the holidays. Perhaps a person really has to hit the very bottom before they can begin to climb up. All I know is when I woke up that Christmas morning I was a changed person.

I went to my little closet and pulled out a big box. It was chock full of books, videos and tapes on network marketing, sales, and personal development. I pulled out a red vinyl album that I didn’t recognize.

Before I had left Toronto it was commonplace to swap and trade books and programs with the other water-filter zombies. I had traded my Zig Ziglar “See You at The Top” album for this red one just before I had left. I sat down on my bed and took a look at it.

**Success Strategy #61**  
**How to Properly Read a Book**

- Read with a hi-lighter, post-it notes and a pencil.
- Memory retention from reading alone is very low. It increases dramatically when you get involved in noting key passages.
- 90 percent of people never read past a first chapter in a book. You can put yourself in the top 10 percent just by getting to Chapter 2!
- Don’t do this with borrowed books!

“The Psychology of Winning” by some guy named Denis Waitley. I had never heard of him. I hadn’t cracked a book or listened to a positive tape in nearly four months. I had hardly been in a “Winning” frame of mind in those days. The back cover had the face of a smiling guy, and his biography talked about him working with athletes, astronauts and business leaders. I popped in a tape, and slumped back against the wall to listen and to get over my hangover.

The guy spoke to me. I mean, it literally seemed as if we was talking directly to me, person-to-person. It was as if he created that tape program just for David Ledoux. It had a profound impact on me. I listened to the entire program that Christmas morning. Then I took out a pen, an old notebook, and began to write.

I wrote for nearly two hours. I just poured my soul into that journal. I wrote about everything that had happened to me, everything negative, scary or lonely, everything fun and positive, I mean everything. I wrote out a ten-year plan for my life. I wrote down all my goals, my dreams, my plans, my future. I wrote everything in vivid detail. I wrote about the woman I wanted to meet, the cars I wanted, the house, the clothes, the businesses, the travel, the income, everything I could imagine.

I felt so different that day. I was still broke, I was still hungry, I was still alone, but none of it seemed to matter as much as it had the day before. I felt like Ebenezer Scrooge the morning after his run-in with the Ghost of Christmas Future. That Christmas Day was literally the beginning of the rest of my life.

Success Strategy #62  
You Can’t Eat a Status Sandwich

- Many families in America go broke on \$100,000 per year or more because they fall into the status trap.
- Leasing an expensive European car doesn’t make you successful.
- Nobody cares that much about you or what you have anyway. They are all too busy going broke themselves.

Success Strategy #63  
Two Things You Should Never Worry About

- Things you can fix.
- Things you can’t fix.

## Chapter Nine: An Uphill Struggle

I spent the next three years rebuilding my life. Getting off the depressing cycle of welfare wasn't easy. My self-esteem and confidence was completely shredded. The bankruptcy took everything from me. It was an incredibly painful period.

I sold toilet paper and garbage bags, made signs, sold coupon books, and cleaned floors to make ends meet. I went to a government auction in the fall of 1992 and bid my life savings, all of \$800, on a two-tone van that they had for sale. I call it two-tone because it was blue and rust. It could seat 13, and was a huge tank. It used to be a prison vehicle. I was amazed when I won the sealed tender. I now owned The Beast. I finally had wheels again, more than a year after they had repoed my beautiful Passat.

In August of 1993 I moved back to Toronto and got a job in the sales department of a company that sold personal development programs. I lived in my two-tone van for a few days until I could get a paycheck and rent a room in an apartment. I listened to every tape program on which I could lay my hands over the next 18 months. I became an absolute sponge for self-improvement. Robbins, Tracy, Ziglar, Les Brown, Waitley, you name it, I consumed it. My personal power was growing by the day.

The highlight of 1993, besides getting the job, was attending a Destiny Weekend seminar one weekend in September. This was a fabulous personal improvement experience. A young lady named Falia sat at my table. I had no idea what an impact she would have on my life. We began dating and fell in love. I proposed to her on her birthday a year later, September 14<sup>th</sup> 1994. And, to my eternal gratefulness, she said yes.

I was working 18 hours a day, six days a week for this company, making \$390 a week. I started off in order entry and within a year I was Director of Operations. They sold their products through a version of network marketing. In the time that I was there the company grew from 2000 distributors, three products and \$10,000 a month in sales to 5000 distributors, 600 products and \$70,000 a month in sales.

The eighteen months I spent inside at that company were the most educational, valuable, and frustrating any aspiring careerist could imagine. I wanted that company to make it. I put 110% effort into it. All the time nowadays I meet ex-mlm distributors who have grandiose ideas about starting their own MLM. I always laugh, shake my head and put my arm around them. I tell them to go work inside the "pit" of a growing MLM company for six months and then re-evaluate their goals. It was like being inside a tornado 24 hours a day.

### Success Strategy #64 What to Do When You're Stuck

- Ask for help.
- That's what advisors and your mastermind are for.
- Fresh perspective often helps.
- Never take financial advice from someone who's broke.

I can't begin to describe the many different issues I learned to tackle working at that company. I could write a whole new book just about those 18 months. It suffices to say that I have a huge respect and admiration for the owners of large, successful network marketing companies. It takes an incredible amount of personal sacrifice and dedication to make them grow successfully.

The company I worked for was plagued with ownership problems, financial problems, cash flow problems, personnel problems, product problems and problems that probably defy description. But the experiences I had were invaluable. I got the opportunity to deal first hand with authors and speakers. I

produced audio programs and books. I dealt frontline with the key distributor leaders. I was one of the first in the country to use Summit V, the top MLM software in the world. I began to speak in front of crowds of 50 to 100 people at a time. I wrote a training manual that sold 2500 copies to the field. I learned the fine art of corporate diplomacy and negotiation. I learned to manage staff. I designed a 15 product

nutritional line, and dealt with Canadian labeling laws. I organized a three-day national convention for 350 participants. The experience was invaluable

The pressure was enormous, but we were slowly moving forward. In the fall of 1994 the nutrition line that I had helped design was ready for the grand unveiling at our national convention in October. It was a huge success, with great speakers, a reception, and two excellent days of training.

Most people know what it's like to experience an emotional letdown after a big event. That's where I was mentally at this time. I was working incredibly hard at my job. I was engaged to the love of my life. And I was broke. We had just had a hugely successful launch of a big product line on which I had done the lion's share of the work. And the bosses couldn't care less.

Success Strategy #65  
Learn to Use Your Toys

- Each month, dedicate one hour to learning one time-saving feature or lifestyle-enhancing aspect of your electronic toys – cell phones, DVD player, computer, etc.
- Hire a teenager if necessary.
- Use the feature. Show off to your friends!

They never even said “Thank You!” for saving their ass. My predicament was compounded by my forthcoming wedding. The engagement ring alone took every nickel I had. They say that two can live cheaper than one. That's only true if one of you gives up eating.

The sad reality began to dawn on me that I would never be able to afford to get married on my meager salary, let alone ever purchase a house in a city where a quarter million won't buy you a little shack.

The straw that broke the camel's back came when the younger brother of one of the owners asked me if I would like to buy his house. His wife was bugging him to buy a hobby farm. If I could just come up with \$35,000, he'd carry a second

mortgage for me out of the goodness of his heart. Wincing, I asked him what the payments were. “About \$2500 per month” he nonchalantly replied.

“That's 50% more than what you currently pay me.” I hissed. I stormed off, disgusted. He looked surprised. I don't think he ever realized what a low salary he was paying me.

It took me two weeks to get the company CEO out for lunch. He cancelled twice. Finally he offered to take me out for chicken wings.

On Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup> 1994 I sat with the CEO at Walt's Beanery near the airport. He ate hot wings, curly fries and a Diet Coke. I gave him the speech that I had been rehearsing for weeks.

I reminded him how hard I was working. I reminded him how sales had quadrupled in my division. I reminded him about how I had carried the day with the nutrition launch and big convention. I reminded him how I was engaged to be married and very eager to have a wedding.

“If you would just give me a raise to \$38,000 per year, I'll work for you forever.”

In a person's life there are defining moments. This was one of them. Year's later, I realize how close I came to being a working stiff, stuck in a dead-end job for the next 40 years. I'm sure in a parallel universe somewhere my alter ego is still at his desk working for peanuts. Life will give us anything we ask of it. I was blind to my real potential.

The CEO had been nodding during my little speech as he munched on a wing. He took the bone out of his mouth, and used it as a prop to point with for emphasis. He remarked how I had indeed been doing the work of 3 normal slackers. He was very pleased with my performance, and indeed, I did deserve a raise. Then he said the three-letter word starting with B and ending with T that changed my world for ever.

“BUT....

“Times are tough. Frankly you’re lucky to have a job in this economy. There will be no raises for at least 9 months, but you’ll be at the top of the list. Thanks for lunch.”

He got into his Porsche and drove away, leaving me with the bill.

I can’t remember if the feeling in the pit of my stomach was rage or spicy chicken wings, but I snapped. I quit on the spot, and my life changed again. That weekend the air smelling sweeter, the food tasted better, and everywhere I looked I saw opportunity. I had been so worried about my \$390 a week. I began to ask myself better questions. “How can I make \$390 a day?”

Falia was very supportive. She believed in me. Just as importantly, I believed in myself.

#### Success Strategy #66

##### Program as Many Contact Phone Numbers into Your Cell Phone as Possible

- When you’re stuck in traffic or in a line at the bank, make your monthly rolodex calls.
- Touching base with these key contacts keeps you fresh in their minds.
- Remember, you’re calling to find out how you can contribute to their lives. Be centered on them.



## Chapter Ten

### Loving Life and Living it to its Fullest

November of 1994 found me engaged to my beautiful soon-to-be wife, unemployed, and nervous. Fate has a funny sense of humor. I had already left 15 phone messages with the Vice President of Marketing of a two-year-old American networking company. Frustrated, I left a scathing 16<sup>th</sup> message. I promised him he would regret not listening to me, and he'd better hope to hell I don't go work for his competition.

I guess that did the trick. He finally called me back that Friday at midnight. He was on the road in Boston. We talked for two hours.

This little company had caught my eye nine months previously when I was designing the nutritional line for my employer. These guys owned their own lab and manufacturing facility. I had found myself always trying to copy their amazing labels, their impressive formulations, and their tremendous brochures. I was jealous of them. One day I asked myself, "Why am I always trying to copy these guys? Why don't I just have them make our products for us?"

I had budgeted \$50,000 for our first lot of product. I was going to bestow this huge order on this little company if they could give me a good price. I finally talked to someone in manufacturing who patiently explained to me that they didn't do third-party manufacturing, and that they had their own sales force. They sent me some beautiful literature. They weren't as little as I had thought. Here was a company the same age as the one I worked for, but five times the size. I kept a file on them that said, "HOT ONE. Watch for follow-up."

Every time I looked at that file I felt a strange pressure in my abdomen. I wasn't tuned in enough, I guess, to listen to my intuition. But that file kept popping up in my thinking, and now I was pitching the VP.

I had watched that company for nearly a year until November of 1994. Now I wanted to be on their team. I told their VP that I was "their man" in Canada. He drilled me with questions. I guess he had talked to a lot of self-professed heavy hitters in the past. He was grinding me to see if I could take it. I was ready. He had no idea how much I needed this.

I had no dreams initially of building a big downline with these guys. I wanted a consulting contract. I wanted to help them do business in Canada. With any luck, I figured I might get a sales manager position. I was all of 26 years old.

He wanted a proposal, and I spent all weekend working on it. Legal, labeling, fulfillment, staff, computers, shipping, French — you name it, I covered it. It was a blueprint to open an entire country on a shoestring budget. Three days later I had the green light. I couldn't believe it! I was on cloud nine!

#### Success Strategy #67 One Man's Junk is Another Man's Treasure

- Clean your space!
- Use auctions, live and online, to get rid of what you don't need.
- Use that newfound money to create new money flow.

I secured a tiny warehouse, about 850 square feet in the west end of Toronto. I brought in my good buddy Pete to help me. He had been through the water filter wars, and had also formerly been the head of the accounting department at the personal development company. He was thinking of going back into accounting to pay the bills. Much to his surprise he ended up propping the ladder as I installed fluorescent tubes.

"Pete, we are going to look back on this day for the rest of our lives!" I said. "Hold the ladder steady!" We painted the floors, painted the walls, built the shelves and tables, and got the warehouse ready. The bilingual labels, the legal filings, the product registrations, and all the red tape began to slowly creep forward. We wore so many hats. It was intense. We were flying by the seat of our pants.

Peter and I decided to get involved with the network for some extra cash. A lady we both knew from Vancouver had bought a distributorship from her boss. We bought distributorships under her and started taking the products as we were setting up everything for the Canadian launch. That quick decision to build a downline changed so many lives.

The VP wanted to come up at the end of January to do a big meeting and kick off the grand opening of the Canadian warehouse. He asked me how many people I could put in a room. In a tiny voice I said, "Um, twenty?"

He said, "How many?"

A switch went off in my head. I barked, "Sir! A Hundred and Twenty, Sir!"

He laughed. The date was booked. How in the heck were we going to finish everything over Christmas AND pack a meeting room?

It's a good thing I keep a journal, because the next 60 days were a total blur. All I know is that we had 124 people in the room for the launch January 23<sup>rd</sup>. I did the business briefing. I created about 14 overhead slides covering the company, the industry, the products, the benefits of the business, and the compensation. Dallin, the VP did a great motivating speech for about 20 minutes after that. He talked about vision. He talked about the future.

I still have the video tape. I look so skinny, and so young! With huge glasses, a cheap suit and too much gel in my hair. No one could have predicted my future.

We took Dallin for the official tour of the tiny warehouse. I said proudly, "We'll be able to do a hundred orders a week out of here in no time!" I was thinking very small back then. He hired my fiancée Falia to run the warehouse. Her knowledge of Summit V and shipping experience at our previous company made her a good candidate to head up the fledgling operation - freeing me up to go build a downline. They planned to have products in the warehouse and be fully opened within 60 days.

At the airport, Dallin suggested that we plan to attend the regional event that they had planned in San Diego in mid-February. Then he left.

Those moments at the airport with Falia, Peter and his girlfriend Sheila were life-altering.. We knew that we had to attend to catch the big vision of the company. We were all strapped for cash, but somehow we managed. Peter and I planned it so we had a two-day stopover at the corporate headquarters. Falia and I planned it so the four of us would stop in Las Vegas on the way home. I made a goal to make \$1000 in the next month no matter what. That way Falia and I could afford to get married in Vegas.

I phoned Dallin and told him of our plans. Then he dropped the bombshell.

"David, I've asked a couple of distributors to speak at the Regional. I was impressed by your performance in Toronto. How would you like to take 20 or 30 minutes and give them some words of wisdom?"

I was floating on cloud nine. I worked day and night for the next five weeks. I was on fire, relentless and filled with purpose. The fear that used to stop me in the old days wasn't anywhere to be seen. I constantly kept thinking about getting married in Vegas, as well as standing on stage in front of a packed room. When the time finally came to fly south, I had made just over \$1000 in commissions.

It was my first trip to California. San Diego was hot, sunny and absolutely beautiful, so different than the snowy world we had just left behind. I remember bits and pieces from that wonderful weekend. Thankfully we took many pictures for our photo albums.

There were almost 700 distributors and guests at this event. I had never uttered a peep in front of so many people before. I created 15 or so color overheads with lots of cartoons. I wanted them to at least find my training entertaining.

I felt the color drain from my face when I saw the list of speakers. I was sandwiched between Brian Tracy and Denis Waitley! One of the world's best speakers, then me, then another of the world's best speakers. I felt like the piece of common baloney in between two slices of gourmet bread!

I wish I could say that I was amazing, but frankly I can't remember a word I said. I'm sure Dallin, or Pete or Falia or Sheila or anyone who was there could probably give a clearer accounting than I could. I know, though, that the experience gave me an invincible feeling. I know that it planted a seed that today has grown into a passion for public speaking.

After my speech I sat down, and my blindness, deafness and adrenaline burst slowly subsided. I watched in awe as my hero Dr. Denis Waitley took the stage. Never in my wildest dreams would I have imagined that I would see him live, let alone speak to the same crowd.

I was mesmerized. He spoke directly to me, again. I somehow knew that I was meant to be in that room on that day. I somehow knew that I was supposed to be with this company. It was all very surreal.

He came up to me at the intermission. He put out his hand and said, "You were great up there. Hi, I'm Denis Waitley." My tiny little dentist hand disappeared into a bricklayer's hand the size of a catcher's mitt. I'm not sure if my mouth was open, or if any noise came out, but I'm sure I had a ridiculous grin on my face when I squeaked, "Hi!"

Falia and I were married the next day in Las Vegas at the Graceland Chapel. An Elvis impersonator walked her down the aisle, and sang Love Me Tender afterwards. The limo took us out for dinner and then to the casino. It was a classic Vegas wedding!

We were so broke. We had to stay at the Super 8 motel, and our wedding dinner was at an all-you-can-eat buffet at some country and western joint. We couldn't afford a real honeymoon, but we flew down and spent three days with my folks in Puerto Vallarta Mexico where they were wintering. We spent our honeymoon sleeping on the floor on an air mattress and sleeping bag. My mom and dad were happy for us, but both my parents were deeply worried about me attempting another business venture. I couldn't blame them.

Late in the evening on our last day in Mexico I took a walk alone down the beach. I watched the beautiful sunset through eyes clouded with tears. I swore to God that this year was going to be my year. Things would be different. I swore that I would give Falia the life she deserved.

At their condo I took a tiny screwdriver that my father used to fix his eyeglasses. Falia had bought me a silver money clip as a wedding present. Using the screwdriver, I painstakingly carved the back of the money clip.

*1999 - \$1 million*

It was more than a goal. It was a promise to myself, and to Falia.

We got home and got our act in gear. Falia was swamped at the warehouse, a one-lady job for the first few months. Within 90 days, she was moving 300 orders a week out the door. Peter and I gave it everything we had. We did endless one-on-one presentations, pounded the phones, and did three-way calls until we had sweaty cauliflowers for ears.

**Success Strategy #68**  
**A Life Worth Living is Worth Recording**

- Your great-grandkids don't want your old business cards. They want memories and stories.
- Take photographic documentation of your life.
- Review your photo albums often. Remembering keeps us alive.

We were doing at least one hotel meeting every week in the beginning, and at least one Saturday training a month. We did countless presentations over coffee. We ran constant ads in local papers. Eighteen hours a day, 6 days a week. Slowly, like a giant glacier, it began to move.

On the wall of my office I kept a running chart of how many people I had in my consumer group. For example, on February 1, 1995, I had 79 people in my organization. A lot of those were friends and family. And family of friends. And friends of family. I had a lot of mother-in-laws in my group. We didn't care. We knew the health products were great, and that everyone knew someone.

By March, we started to attract the MLM-junkie crowd. These were the guys who joined a company for 30-60 days, brought a bunch of their broke junkie friends, then moved on to the next gold coin or multi-level ashtray company.

We persevered. We persisted. We got better at one-on-ones. Our meetings grew. Each week my organization grew. The chart on the wall was a big comfort. When after a tough week my group grew from 100 to 110 people, Falia made the observation that I had 10% growth in a single week! It takes the same effort to grow from 1000 to 1100 people. She was my rock, incredibly supportive.

The bonus checks were steady, but not earth-shattering. I plowed nearly every dime we made back into ads, tapes, tools, and gas for the huge two-tone van. We lost money for the first few months on the meeting rooms. It was a grind.

Our upline leader flew to town at the end of April 1995 from California. He was an amazing speaker, and we packed nearly 160 people to see him. That function gave my team the momentum it needed. We saw growth nearly everyday as we started to get a solid caliber of distributor on board. The duplication was beginning!

I began to BELIEVE. I began to believe that I deserved to be successful. I began to believe that I could find people who wanted to build a business. I finally began to realize that I could make this thing work. And my belief began to rub off on others.

I hit a major goal of mine in May when I made my first \$1000 in a single week in my business. I hadn't made that much money in a week since the old paintball days. I gave Falia that check and said "Go spend it anyway you'd like."

And she did. But not just on herself. She bought me some business clothes. She wanted me to look good for presentations. I was speechless at her thoughtfulness.

Falia asked me if it was okay if she sponsored a foster child through World Vision. The idea shocked me at first. I had been broke for so many years, the thought of giving money to charity was a foreign concept. I had recently read a book called *The Richest Man in Babylon*, about the need to share your success with others. Her timing was perfect. I agreed, and we sponsored our first child. Every year since 1995 we sponsor another child to commemorate November 4, my freedom anniversary.

Our success seemed to inspire my up and coming leaders. We focused incredibly hard, and on June 15, 1995 I became the youngest person in the company at that time to hit the rank of Gold Director. That June I made \$6500 in bonuses. I was ecstatic!

For my 27<sup>th</sup> birthday Falia took me to a car dealership near where we lived. Right there in the middle of the show room was a new beautiful black Volkswagen Passat! I looked at her incredulously, and then gave her the biggest hug! I owned the car 48 hours later. All my dreams we're coming true, one at a time.

I was sad to see the old two-toned Beast go. I'm sure some lucky kid has it now. I hope he's taking good care of it.

The rest of the summer of 1995 was a blur of backyard barbeques, parties, home meetings, training sessions and events. I was determined to solidify my leaders and help them experience success. Just before Labor Day we had the First Annual Do Team Picnic. Sixty of my team and their families came to a park and we had a wonderful day of softball and barbeque.

I talked to 268 people that first year. Over 90% of them said “No!” to my little vitamin multi-level business. But from the 25 or so that said “Yes!”, amazing things began to happen.

On December 4, 1995 Falia and I were on the deck of the cruise ship Song of Norway, watching the sunset off the coast of Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. I felt so incredibly grateful. So much had changed in our lives in just one year. We had 1000 people in our organization. I had my new car. We had made over \$60,000 in our first year. Here we were on the cruise together, which I had earned for free in a sales contest. I didn’t dare imagine where we’d be if Dallin hadn’t called me back that fateful night. I’m so glad I had left the 16<sup>th</sup> message.

The ship stopped in Puerto Vallarta. It was wonderful to hug my parents again. They were so excited for us. My dad told me how proud he was of me. He then cautioned me to save some money and to be responsible. I told him about the surprise I had for Falia when we got home.

We returned a week later to move all of our belongings into our new home! We closed on our first house, a cute 5-bedroom bungalow in a village of 500 people, with a pool, overlooking a lake. It was incredible what was happening for us. That was the most special Christmas I had ever enjoyed in my life.

It was a long journey from that drunken night in a Canadian snowbank.

## **Chapter Eleven: If You Do What You Have To Do For the Next Five Years, You Can Do Whatever You Want For the Rest of Your Life**

On our first wedding anniversary I was able to take Falia to Tahiti and Morea for the honeymoon we couldn't afford the year before. If you've never been to Tahiti, I would highly encourage you to add it to your list of "Places To Visit". I really connected with the energy of that place. Falia and I always joke about the culture of Morea. Men don't work. They practice canoeing with their buddies. The women are responsible for fishing and feeding the family. If I ever get too stressed out with work, she tells me to go canoe and she'll catch us some fish!

I kept up an intense pace from 1995 to 1997. The business grew to over 12,000 consumers in under 36 months. And then I hit the plateau. I was 28 years old, had a five bedroom house with a pool, a Jaguar, and a multi-million dollar business. I had reached my comfort zone.

When we aren't growing, we are actually shrinking. We are either ripening or rotting. I had stopped working on myself. I had put away the tapes, the books and the seminars. My ego was out of balance. It was a frustrating time. I was one rung on the ladder from the top of the company. At times I began to doubt if I actually would ever make it.

From the first day I had begun building my business, I had told my leaders a quote that I had heard from Jim Rohn. "If you do what you have to do for the next 5 years, you can do what ever you want for the rest of your life." It was the beginning of 1999. I had been involved for just over 4 years. My five-year anniversary was 10 months away. A switch flipped in my subconscious. Every time I reached into my pocket for money, my thumb would touch that money clip, the same one that I had carved the inscription on 4 years previous. That million dollars became a goal that I must achieve.

I began to work like a man possessed. I did four meetings a week in four different cities. Falia and I would drive three hours straight north every Thursday to a tiny town called Owen Sound where we had a growing business. Very often the blizzards were so bad that the road would disappear and I would have to walk in front of the Jeep to make sure we didn't crash. Any sane person would never have been out there. But I was willing to pay the price.

### **Dream Night 1999**

At the end of March 1999 we had planned a big training event in Toronto. We were expecting about 1000 people. A lot of the corporate executives and top earners in the company were flying in. I knew this was going to be an important weekend. The wheels in my brain were turning and I went into massive action.

I created a flyer for what I called Dream Night 1999. To attend, you had to sell roughly the equivalent of \$7500 in products in a month, or higher. The agenda was left as a complete mystery, but I promised an unbelievable life-changing night, with special guests, and a party to follow. I sent the flyer to all of my top people, plus copies for their best people. It was going to happen on the Friday night just before the big event.

I moved my entire organization into a new phase of production. We held weekly meetings in five cities for 90 days. Each week at the end of the Business Presentation we did a 30-minute training to help the new business owners get up to speed more quickly.

At every presentation we had everyone in the room stand up and be recognized if they had dropped off at least one recruiting video to a potential prospect that previous week. We would do a calculation for the total for the room. I remember in mid-March in a single week the team had dropped 395 videos. Imagine what happens when your sales force approaches 1500 prospects in a single month!

March was a blur. We were leaning on the team hard. Running the roads to four different cities every week was taking its toll. I was exhausted. But big things were happening!

The Friday night of Dream Night finally came. We assembled all the qualifiers for the event in the lobby of the most “*shi-shi pooh-pooh*” luxury hotel in downtown Toronto. There were 90 of us in total, all looking like a million bucks. We had created nearly a dozen new leaders in that 90-day time, a record for my team. We had enrolled 905 new distributors into the team in 90 days!

I had to jump through hoops to nail down two of the corporate executives from our Head Office, including Dallin, the Vice President. They didn’t know anything about the event, just that they both had to be at the hotel lobby at 7:00 pm along with everyone else. They showed up as excited as my gang, wondering what was going on.

We left the hotel lobby at 7:05 exactly. Here is the invitation that each qualifier received.

***From the desk of David & Falia Ledoux...***

March 8, 1999

Dear Achiever,

Vision. It’s what makes you a leader. The clearer your vision, the stronger your dream. The stronger your dream, the stronger your business is. I want to help you to build a clear, compelling vision. This is your personal invitation to DREAM NIGHT!

I have arranged an evening of such magnitude that it will be the talk of the company. Dream Night is Friday, March 26<sup>th</sup> and *BY INVITATION ONLY*. Only leaders with a powerful dream will be there. From 7:00 – 10:00 pm you will crystallize your future into something magnificent.

We will be meeting in the main lobby of the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 225 Front St. W., at precisely 6:55 p.m. We will be leaving for a secret location at 7:00 p.m. Business dress is preferred. Bring a camera, and your imagination. Light refreshments will be served after Dream Night, so you may want to have an early dinner. Please be on time; we will wait for no one.

There is so much planning that goes into creating a special night like Dream Night. High performance achievers like you deserve the very best. I need your help. Please RSVP immediately by calling me at 519-555-5555, voice-mailing me at 877-555-5555 or faxing me at 519-555-5555. If you cannot attend, please also let me know so I can scratch you off my list. I need to submit a guest list to the event organizers by March 21<sup>st</sup>.

Spouses and/or significant others are the only guests permitted. Please let me know if they will be with you. To prevent embarrassing situations, please remember that this event is by invitation only. I realize that you may have brand new Achievers in your organization in the next couple of weeks. Rest assured, I will be in communication with them personally.

I promise you a night to remember. Dream Night will become an annual function so special that go-getters will fight to be on the team. Your vision of what is possible in your life and your business will be stretched to new limits. I look forward to sharing this special evening with you.

Please contact me as soon as possible.

Best regards,

David Ledoux

P.S.: Great leaders are like diamonds. No matter how much they seem to sparkle when they're lying on the table, they need the right setting to bring out their best.

We left on time for the "SECRET LOCATION". From the Crowne Plaza hotel we led the group on a ten-minute walk through underground walkways, through corporate towers, and finally through the back entrance into one of the most posh, exclusive restaurants in Toronto. We left our coats there (remember, it's freezing that time of year) and met our hostesses for the evening. They led us through a back corridor, to an elevator, and we all walked out onto the floor of the Toronto Skydome!

The Toronto Skydome is an engineering marvel. It was the world's first stadium with a retractable roof. It holds nearly 70,000 people at capacity. And the 90 of us owned it for the night.

We set up a mock stage on the floor of Skydome. I had the Vice President of the company stand at the podium microphone, and talk about the future. He painted an exquisite word-picture of a wonderful, profitable, prosperous future. He spoke with passion about how excited he was to be part of this Dream Night. He talked about the leadership that it will take within the next decade to fill Skydome with 40,000 distributors for a company function. He was as excited as we were!

He then called out each of my team, couple by couple, out onto the floor of the Skydome. He introduced them by name as new Diamonds in the company, our top recognition level in the company! I had purchased a dozen of those unbelievably loud air horns, and I gave one to each of my top earners. Even though there were only 90 of us in that cavernous stadium, the noise we made cheering for each of us as we took our turns sprinting across the floor to the stage as new Diamonds is something that I'll never forget!

When it was our turn to sprint across that stadium floor, everything moved in slow motion. I still remember the grinning faces of all my leaders as we slapped high fives down a human tunnel. Everyone was ecstatic. After everyone had had their 20 seconds on stage, we had a few closing speeches. I was moved, really moved by it all.

I had been stuck for two and a half years. I was beginning to doubt if I would ever make it to Diamond. But being part of that Dream Building exercise changed me. I knew deep down that it was only a matter of time.

Everyone got an envelope, a notepad and a pen. I asked them to spread out, 90 people in a domed stadium built for 70,000, and write themselves a letter nine months into the future. I asked them to write down what they were thinking, what they were feeling, to describe their fears and dreams. Everyone spread like ants around the Dome. Twenty minutes later we convened again in the center. They took their letters, and put them in their envelopes, and personally addressed it to themselves. I told everyone to expect their letter at Christmas time when I mailed it back to them.

I wrote a very short letter to myself. I tried to capture exactly what I was feeling at that very moment. And I knew at my very core that I would be Diamond before Christmas.

We took endless group photos to remember the special night. We then went up to the restaurant overlooking the field. I had rented it for our private party, and had it catered with wonderful hors d'oeuvres. We did some recognition of the new pin rank promotions, and then my gang surprised me.

Peter, my best friend in the business, my best man at my wedding in Vegas, the first guy I had sponsored and one of my strongest leaders took the floor and gave a moving speech about leadership. I thought he was talking about a new leader on his team. I guess I was kind of out of it, still buzzing from the excitement of the night, because all of a sudden they called my name and pulled Falia and me on stage and presented us with an incredible framed picture of a lion at hunt, with an inscribed plaque on it about leadership. They surprised the heck out of me, just like I did with them and Dream Night 1999!



What a party! Everyone was completely blown away. Needless to say, the next day at the big training, it was the talk of the day. The excitement we created through the ranks was infectious. We had over 1300 people at the training. The momentum we created by working our collective butts off for 90 days was of critical significance. The dreams we created that night were invaluable. How do I know this?

***Because 6 months later my wife and I were the #6 income earners in a company of over 200,000 and brand new Diamonds. On October 31, 1999, 4 days shy of my 5 year anniversary I had reached the Million Dollar Earner's Club.***

What did the event cost, and what was its return? I negotiated hard with Skydome, took it on an off night and off time and talked them down in every way I could. The retail price for an event at Skydome is at least \$25,000. My price for a 3-hour night, plus reception and cocktail party – less than \$10,000. As for return on investment, the difference in income between where I had been stuck for two years and a qualified Diamond was over \$120,000 per year.

But the value it had in getting me to believe in myself again? Priceless.

## Chapter Twelve

### Dreams Really Do Come True

It was July 2000, and Falia and I were backstage. There were nearly 7000 people jammed into the Salt Lake Convention Center. I was shaking with nervous adrenaline.

I had played out this scene a million times in my mind. Every time I drove home at 2 o'clock in the morning from a presentation, every time a prospect told me "No!", after every rejection and set back over the last 6 years, I dreamed of this moment. I would dream about every sound, every feeling, every image and it was burned with laser sharpness in my mind. And now it was finally happening.

Falia looked beautiful. I cleaned up pretty good myself. I was tanned, fit, wearing a \$1600 custom Italian tuxedo, \$400 Florsheim shoes, a \$300 custom French-cuffed shirt with gold cufflinks, and a Rolex on my wrist. I had picked out this outfit over 4 years previous. I had written it down in my journal. For nearly half a decade I had already known exactly what I would be wearing when this special day arrived.

We finally heard our names over the PA system. "From Canada, new Diamonds and Million-Dollar Club Members, David and Falia Ledoux!"

We floated up the 8 steel steps to the giant raised stage and emerged into brilliant, blinding light. The roar from the crowd was deafening. I waved and gave the thumbs-up sign, and Falia was beaming.

A long receiving line of corporate VP's from all the countries we were open in, as well as the owner of the company stood clapping just for us. I shook hands with the Australian VP, and then the Canadian VP hugged me. She whispered in my ear, "Congratulations David. You've waited so long for this."

Her words made me flash back to the thousand of miles I had driven over the last five years. I remembered the incredible humiliation, the shame, and the sorrow of bankruptcy and welfare. I remembered the night I nearly died in that snowbank, despondent and alone on Christmas Eve so many years ago. And the incredible weight that I had been carrying around for so many years was lifted in an instant.

I began to weep, then sob uncontrollably. Dallin couldn't talk, all he could do was hug me, tears rolling down his cheeks too. I was so grateful to him. He believed in me when no one else did, including myself. He shoved me towards the microphone.

I looked out over an ocean of people. My chest heaved, and I squeezed Falia's hand. She was radiant. I took a deep breath, and said the words I had waited to so long to say.

"I am so proud to be here. Believe in yourself. Believe in your dreams. Work harder on yourself than any aspect of the business. If you do what you have to do for the next five years, you can do what ever you want for the rest of your life."

#### Success Strategy #69 It All Comes Down to Leadership

- There is a worldwide shortage of leadership
- "Do as I say, not as I do" will never be acceptable.
- Only by taking 100 percent personal responsibility for ourselves can we ever begin to tap our true potential.
- People are secretly cheering for you.

## **EPILOGUE**

I write these words in December 2001. It's hard to believe it's been ten years since I stood in line to apply for welfare. It seems like a distant foggy memory. If I didn't have my journal, I wouldn't believe the hardship and amazing journey really happened to me.

I now understand that everyone is put on this Earth for a reason. I know each and everyone of us all have amazing gifts, and tremendous unfulfilled potential. It is now my life's work to help others to tap that amazing potential.

After nearly 14 years in the network marketing industry, I finally retired about 18 months ago to seek new challenges. As one mountain is conquered, a new one emerges in the distance, begging to be climbed. I have since written several books and training programs for entrepreneurs. I have been fortunate to speak around the world to an amazingly variety of audiences.

Today I am the Founder and Chairman of Universal Profit Marketing Group Inc. Our business interests span a variety of industries including the internet, publishing, marketing and consulting.

The biggest change in my life is that I am no longer afraid and alone. I no longer worry. I have found Success, Money and Freedom. I am living the DREAM.

I wish the same for you.

## Chapter Thirteen

### The Dream

They said you were crazy. Friends, co-workers, family. They said it wouldn't work. Some called it a scam. Some knew people who had been "in one of those things", and still had a garage full of water filters or burglar alarms. They refused to look at your video, listen to your tape or read your brochure. There was no way they were going to "one of those meetings" with you. They snickered behind your back. And some days you felt like quitting.

But the friend that had showed you "*the Business*" promised this day would come. The new friends that you had made in "*the Business*" promised this day would come. And finally it was here...

Early one beautiful spring morning you strode confidently into your bosses' office. You eased back into that gorgeous leather chair opposite his desk and looked him straight in the eye. You slowly leaned back and put your feet up on his desk, your shoes leaving tiny scuff marks on its mirror shine. You exhaled forcefully through your nose in a strong sigh, and clasped your hands behind your head. You savored every tasty second of the experience.

Your bosses' mouth formed a large O, and his googly eyes showed shock and confusion. In a relaxed, gentle tone you say the words that you have been waiting years to say, "Boss, I quit."

His shoulder's slump, his head drops and his eyes stare to the ground for a moment. With a large inhalation of air he screws up his courage, lifts his head and looked you straight in the eye. With a tired smile he shakes your hand for one last time. He knows that you're free at last.

A loud commotion in the lobby of your office building captures the attention of the entire staff. A large gang of casually dressed men and women have stormed the office! You recognize the smiling faces of your friends in your business and your family. They pull a sweatshirt over your head that reads "Retiring Today!" They give you a huge bouquet of balloons, and everyone takes turns smiling for group photos. With a wave of your hand, you say good-bye to your old job and the co-workers that mocked you and your little business for the last four years.

They lead you to the front lobby of your former office building, where the biggest stretch limousine that you have ever seen is waiting. "Is that for me?" you exclaim. The giggles of your team tell the answer!

Just as you are about to climb in, you spy a familiar face beaming at you. It's the building custodian, and with a huge grin he reaches to shake your hand. "Congratulations on your retirement!" he says. "In 10 more months I'm going to be just like you!" He was the only person in the entire building who was willing to look at your business, and joined you a year ago. In less than a year he will be free as well.

As the huge stretch limo wheels its way out of the parking lot you look out the rear window for one last glimpse of the building where you gave so much for so little. Tiny fog marks line every window, as your former co-workers press themselves up against the glass to get a glimpse of you. You wave good-bye as the sound of champagne corks popping echoes through the limo to toast your success.

That night your Retirement Party is the single most exciting night of your entire life. Your spouse is there, your entire team, business leaders of your community even multi-millionaires in your company have flown in from out of town to help you celebrate. You are roasted and toasted as speech after speech salutes you for all your hard work, your achievements, and the hundreds of people that you have helped along the way. Finally it is your turn to address the crowd.

Your voice chokes with emotion as you express your gratitude. You relive the obstacles along the way in your mind like speed bumps on a highway. No matter how many people said "No" you kept on looking for the ones who said "Yes". You encourage the new business associates in the crowd, and tell them to keep reading good books, listening to empowering tapes, and to attend all functions. And finally you thank your

family, the ones that gave up dinners as a group so often those first few years. Your wonderful family, who picked you up when you were down and kept you going when you felt like quitting. Their sacrifices, your sacrifices have all been worth it. You're financially independent!

The weekend flies by in an absolute blur. It seems the barbeque is going non-stop as friends stop by to visit and congratulate you. Your fax machine and email are full of congratulatory messages from friends around the world. "Japan? Who do I know in Japan? Wow, that's a nice fax, isn't it?" You promise yourself that when one of your team retires from the working world, you're going to throw an elaborate party for them as your sponsor threw for you.

You awaken with a start Monday morning, sitting straight up in bed. "Oh, no! I'm late for work! The alarm didn't go off!" Panic shoots through you momentarily, then you smile and slump back into the pillow. The alarm wasn't set. You don't have to get up for work anymore. You own your life. You're free!

It's Monday. Check day! Rather than putting on a suit, the old uniform of the Just Over Broke, you put on a bathrobe and your fuzzy slippers. You grab your set of keys and go out to the garage where you climb into the front seat of your Cadillac. You've had it nearly a year, yet you can still smell that wonderful new car leather smell. When you bought that car you knew you had arrived! Your business was half the size that it is today, but you managed to pay cash nonetheless. It wasn't the biggest or the fanciest Caddy, but it was YOUR Caddy, wasn't it? The gang at the office thought you had stolen it, remember?

You start the engine with a roar, and crank up your favorite CD. You put it in gear, and slowly back down the driveway. At the end of the driveway you stop near the mailbox, and get out. You greet the mailman with a cheery, "Good Morning!"

He asks if you're on holidays this week. With a million-dollar grin you tell him, "Nope, early retirement! Remember that little business I started that I was telling you about? Well, it isn't so little anymore!" You reach into the mailbox and sure enough, that friendly little green check is there. You fish it out and pull it open. "My goodness!" you exclaim, "They overpaid me again!"

The mailman looks at you in astonishment. "If I left a short video in the mailbox tonight for you, would you watch it tomorrow and give me your opinion?" you ask. He just nods in amazement. You grin and give him a pat on the back as you see all your neighbors back out of their driveways for their slow crawl to the office.

You jump into your Caddy, and drive it back into the garage. Breakfast time.

Later that afternoon you take the short drive over to the bank to deposit your bonus check. As you wait in line you see a mischievous smile coming from one of the tellers. She times it so she waits on you. "Congratulations on your retirement!" she beams. "I sponsored two people this weekend when I told them your story. In a year or so I want to be just like you!"

She joined your business about 9 months ago, after seeing you month after month depositing those friendly little checks that seemed to grow each and every time. With nearly 25 people in her organization, she's well on her way. You grin back, and tell her to make sure her whole team attends the Regional training event next month. As you're leaving you slide her a new audiotape on leadership that you just received. "Here, this is for you. I think you're a fabulous leader!" Your 10 seconds of recognition makes her entire day. She forgets about the grouchy customers and the unappreciative boss. You know within a year or two she'll own her own life.

That evening you decide to make a few three-way conference calls with your leaders from out on the deck of your house. You speak with enthusiastic teammates from across the continent, and tell your story to their prospects. It is a productive evening. Business is good!

Your spouse brings two steaming mugs of tea out on the deck and joins you in watching the sun set. As you reflect on the past few years, the struggles, the hardships, the victories, it all seems to blur away. There is only now. The fiery red sky is painted by a setting sun, and your eyes mist with tears.

You did it. You're free.

You can do whatever you like for the rest of your life.....

### **A Special Note From Me to You....**

This is not the end. It is the beginning. Success training is a continuous process. You should seek every advantage that this great nation has to offer in the way of helping you become a better, more efficient person. The art of learning is an exciting vocation. When we stop learning, we die.

This decade is going to be a Diamond Decade for those who are ready to be successful, and who don't mind making the sacrifices that have to be made in order to achieve higher goals. We are living in a world now where man's dreams are becoming realities almost as fast as his mind can conceive them.

You are today a direct result of those dreams you put feeling and desire into yesterday. Dream! Dream BIG! There is no magic in small dreams. Dream as big as the sky. There is magic in BIG dreams. Any dream, thought or idea of a greater success was given to you by a Great Power that knew, before He gave you this dream, that you were capable of transforming this dream into reality. Don't limit yourself. You deserve the best. It is waiting for you. Demand the best that life has to offer! It is yours. All you have to do is dream BIG, then put legs on those dreams. Strengthen those legs with knowledge, apply that knowledge with wisdom, season this formula with patience, and wrap it up with determination, persistence and a deep belief in yourself.

When you do this, swift success is yours. You make mankind your business, the world your office, and God your boss.

**MAKE IT A GREAT LIFE!**

### **More Resources**

**These resources will assist you to make the best advantage of your business. Be sure to take advantage of them.**

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### **About the Author, David Ledoux**

David Ledoux is the author of the best-selling books The Road to Gold and The Ultimate MLM Blueprint. He has produced several audio training programs including The Shifting Paradigm of Network Marketing, A Dream Come True, and Million Dollar Secrets. He authored, recorded and produced a dozen training audiocassettes in the Phone Power Series.

He has been featured on video and radio, and has traveled extensively speaking to tens of thousands of entrepreneurs on the merits of the free enterprise system. His company publishes the monthly newsletter Universal Profit Leader's Letter to several thousand subscribers around the world.

He and his wife Falia have built an multi-million dollar network marketing organization of over 31,000 associates in 9 countries, and own a variety of companies including internet, marketing and publishing interests.

The Ledoux's are very involved in charitable causes, including World Vision, the Canadian Heart & Stroke Foundation, and their annual Christmas Toy and Food Drive.



## About The Author



**David and Falia Ledoux**

David Ledoux is the author of the best-selling books *The Road to Gold* and *The Ultimate MLM Blueprint*. He has produced several audio training programs including *How To Make A Whole Lot More Than \$100,000 Per Year On The Internet*, *The Shifting Paradigm*, *A Dream Come True*, and *Million Dollar Secrets*. He has authored, recorded and produced more than a dozen training audio cassettes in the Phone Power Series. He has been featured on video and radio, and has traveled extensively speaking to tens of thousands of entrepreneurs on the merits of The Free Enterprise System. He was named the #1 Generic MLM Trainer In The World by an industry publication. He published the newsletter, The Universal Profit Leader's Letter to several thousand subscribers around the world. He and his wife Falia have built the successful Universal Profit Marketing Group, a sales and marketing education center visited over two million times annually at [www.universalprofit.com](http://www.universalprofit.com).

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**Praise for David Ledoux  
and  
*Beyond the Road to Gold***

"David has accomplished in a few years what most people only wish for throughout their lives. He offers the map and the driving instructions to get behind the wheel and take the fast lane to personal fulfillment."

Dr. Denis Waitley  
author, *The Psychology of Winning*

"David Ledoux! The guy's a marvel. Energetic, focused, a firestorm of good ideas and even better organizational and follow-up skills. This is one of the few guys writing about marketing whose advice is worth paying attention to."

Dr. Jeffrey Lant  
author, *Money-Making Marketing*

"David Ledoux...the Tony Robbins of Network Marketing! This book is a must read not only for newcomers to the MLM industry. It's a motivational mix of hands-on success strategies that work, and provides honest insights from his biography as an inspiration that is beyond just another "toolbox" manual."

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**Beyond the Road to Gold**

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