

The Third Door Summary

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1-Sentence-Summary: *The Third Door follows an 18-year-old's wild quest of interviewing many of the world's most successful people to discover what it takes to get to the top.*

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Finding success is like trying to enter an exclusive nightclub. There are two main paths: the first door, where everyone waits in line and hopes to get in, and the second door, where the VIP's effortlessly slip through.

What most people don't realize is there's always a third door. It may be sneaking through the cracked window in the back or the kitchen, but whatever it is, it will take resourcefulness and guts. This, Alex Banayan explains, is what the successful do.

Reading about Bill Gates as an 18-year-old, Banayan realized he didn't want to be a doctor, the life his parents wanted for him. Instead, he was going to figure out how Bill Gates went from being a kid like him to one of the richest people in the world. He became determined to travel the country, track down the wealthiest people, and interview them.

After winning the funds on *The Price is Right*, he set off on his ambitious quest. *The Third Door* is Banayan's account of what happened next. In this book, you'll follow his exciting journey to crack the code of what it takes to succeed at the highest level, according to those who've done it.

Here are my 3 takeaway lessons:

1. Success always requires persistence, but in the right way.
2. Get out of your comfort zone if you want to make it in business.
3. Create your own definition of success to approach the right third door.

If you want to make it big, let's see if there's a way to stand on the shoulders of giants!

Lesson 1: Persistence is a consistent factor in all the most successful people's careers.

Want to know the secret to getting your big break? Never give up. I know it sounds cliché, but persistence really *is* critical to reaching our dreams.

The one thing all interviewees had in common is that they were tenacious. We need to be determined to fight our way to that third door. It is important, however, to be persistent in the *right* way.

Banayan is a huge fan of Tim Ferriss, author of *The 4-Hour Workweek*, and became obsessed with interviewing him early on. After catching him at a conference, Ferriss told him they'd keep in touch for an interview. After time passed with no contact, Banayan sent email after email with no reply. But he kept them positive and cheery nonetheless.

Finally, Ferriss agreed to talk. When they did, he taught Banayan an important lesson: be persistent in the right way.

Ferriss explained how he was able to get his foot in the door with a startup by being determined. They turned him down for a job 12 times. Finally, he called, said he was in the area, and wanted to stop by. Except he wasn't. When the CEO agreed, Ferriss took a plane across the country to make the "casual" drop-by happen. This landed him the job.

Ferriss stresses to keep your balance between persistence and rudeness and to never to be presumptuous. Make sure that you don't give up, but don't harass people.

Lesson 2: Push yourself beyond where you are comfortable.

Only when he landed his book deal did Banayan meet the man who inspired him in the first place: Bill Gates. Founder of Microsoft and now one of the richest men in the world, he was once a 19-year-old kid, scared to make a phone call.

In the '80s, when a company called MITS released the world's first mini-computer, Gates and his partner offered them to sell software to run it. After hearing nothing back, both of them were too scared to follow up. Eventually, Gates got over his paralyzing fear and made the call. Had he not swallowed his self-doubt, he might not be the billionaire he is today.

The lesson? Pick up the phone and get out of your comfort zone!

We see Banayan be vulnerable repeatedly throughout the book, from telling his parents about quitting his pre-med degree to coming to terms with how difficult his goal was. He often didn't even know how to talk to the people he admired without being immensely nervous and freezing up.

But whenever he gets out of his comfort zone, the payoff is real. As a result, we see the author go from a young, nervous 18-year-old to a 25-year-old who is ambitious and confident enough to land a huge book deal.

Lesson 3: Unless you define success in your own way, you'll never find the right third door.

There is no one way to become prosperous, and though it is helpful to learn from others, we need to get to find our own third door.

In 2000, Walmart tried copying the technology and strategy of Amazon to keep up. It didn't work. One day, they attempted something different. An executive hung up a poster that read: "You can't out-Amazon Amazon." After their mentality and strategy shifted, their market share soared.

We can't just copy others, we will only really succeed in business when we find a way to be ourselves.

When Banayan met Steve Wozniak, he realized that for him, success was much different than for his former partner, Steve Jobs. They founded Apple together, but Wozniak was happy to keep working as a simple engineer.

When Apple went public in 1980, Jobs refused to give stock options to some people that had been with the company from the beginning. Wozniak gifted some of his shares to those employees, who went on to become millionaires.

Everyone remembers Jobs as the mastermind behind Apple, but Wozniak radiated happiness. He loves his family, his dogs, and his life. And to Wozniak, that is a full life.

It's our job to find our own way to that third door, and push our way in, so we can define what realizing our dreams means to us.

The Third Door Review

The Third Door has it all, from an entertaining coming-of-age story to advice from smart people. It's a refreshing take on the genre of success books. We get to watch Banayan find his own way to that third door and learn countless lessons along the way.

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Who would I recommend The Third Door summary to?

The 25-year-old college student who is wondering about the best way to begin their career, the 39-year-old office worker who is afraid of striking out on their own, and anyone standing on the edge of taking a chance at making their dreams a reality.