

The Perfect Day to Boss Up

What's in it for me? Learn how to boss up and build a successful empire.

Rick Ross. Rozay. The Boss. The man goes by many names, but there's no doubt about one thing: his hustle and shrewd decision-making have made him a twenty-first-century hip-hop icon and business tycoon. It wasn't always that way. Ross wasn't born rich, and he's faced serious setbacks throughout his life and career. But he's treated every situation, good or bad, as an opportunity to "boss up" and be better. These blinks lay out Ross's no-nonsense approach to success – and life. Full of inside stories from his music and business ventures, they offer practical advice on everything from transforming ambition into action to managing money to handling stressful situations.

In these blinks, you'll discover

what it really means to be a boss; the best thing money can buy; and how not to end up like the megalodon shark (that is, extinct).

A boss sees the big picture and adapts as priorities and circumstances change.

Fifteen years ago, Rick Ross shot into the mainstream yelling "every day I'm hustlin'" – the central refrain of his breakout single. And those words were true. Since the release of "Hustlin'," Ross's bank balance may have accumulated a few more commas, but he still hustles hard every day. When the pandemic hit, and his primary revenue stream – performing – went bust, he knew he needed a new game plan. So he headed toward The Promise Land: his 235-acre estate in Fayetteville, Georgia. The Promise Land contains a recording studio and a home gym – not to mention a movie theater, a bowling alley, multiple basketball courts, and a horse stable. Oh, and the biggest residential swimming pool in the US. Talk about the lap of luxury. Ross hadn't spent more than a few days there at a time since he bought it in 2014 because of the constant touring. Now, though, he had time to enjoy the fruits of his labor – and focus on the other eggs in his basket. In addition to being a multiplatinum-selling recording artist, Ross is an entrepreneur with a diversified portfolio. He's the founder of Maybach Music Group (home to Meek Mill and Wale), the owner of a fast-food franchise, and he's also involved in the spirits industry. He has his own line of ramen noodles, potato chips, and grooming products, and he's a best-selling author. Why all the side hustles? Well, he's not trying to end up like four-time world heavyweight boxing champion Evander Holyfield, who earned hundreds of millions and used to own The Promise Land – before going bankrupt due to poor money management. Holyfield apparently owed more than \$500,000 to a landscaping company. So Ross's first quarantine purchase was a John Deere 5090E tractor. As he lit up a joint and began cutting grass, he noticed little details he'd never seen before: pink flowers, anthills . . . the goddamn goose poop. The words of Bruce Lee came to mind: "Be formless, shapeless, like water." It didn't matter what challenges COVID presented; Ross was going to go with the flow. He wasn't going to make excuses, because, in Ross's own words, "goals don't give a fuck about excuses" – not even legitimate ones. You need to find ways to overcome your obstacles and win. For Ross, that meant knocking out guest verses for everyone from Anderson .Paak to Freddie Gibbs to T.I., promoting his brands harder than ever, and writing a book about the

principles that helped him build an unshakeable empire. Voilà, mofos.

To be a boss, you have to get in the driver's seat - and log the miles.

Before Ross hit it big, he was a struggling rapper living in DJ Greg Street's basement. His momma was covering his car payments, and he was so broke that he slept in his truck whenever he left town. But the whole time, he was meeting and networking with hip-hop legends like J. Prince, Tony Draper, and Scarface. And they never guessed his situation. Because Ross hadn't carried himself like a broke college dropout; he'd made it clear he was a boss. It doesn't matter whether you're driving a Bugatti or a busted Buick. What matters is that you're driving. A boss grabs the steering wheel, gets in gear, and takes their life in the direction they want to go. If you want to be a boss, you have to get in the driver's seat and log the miles. In other words, you have to put in the work. So ask yourself right now, Do you want to just look successful or do you want to be successful? Because if you want to end up in the marble halls of true, long-lasting success, you'll have to go the distance. You can't stand by the finish line, acting like you ran the race. You've got to actually complete the marathon. Otherwise, you'll be huddling in a straw hut that can be blown down by any big bad wolf. The process isn't pretty. It's blood, sweat, and tears. It's working hard when no one's paying attention. But you don't want it to be easy. Money and fame may ebb and flow; when you really put in the work, though, you become a master at something - and no one can take that from you. No matter how big your dream is, you'll need to start small: an empire is built brick by brick. The first thing you should do is make a plan. Who ultimately catches more fish - the guy who took the time to build a fishing rod, or the caveman who prays a fish will swim into his bare hands? Building an empire also involves acquiring knowledge. One of Ross's former mentors, a Miami hustler called Big Mike, told him, "You gotta have game if you want to get work." That is, you have to learn if you want to earn. Know the ins and outs of your field. Look at the people who succeeded before you - exactly what did they do to get where they got? Once you've started to work, get as much experience as you can. Invest in your development. Sharpen your skills. Set goals that are ambitious but attainable. Take a moment to celebrate the small wins - and keep going. Malcolm Gladwell's "10,000-Hour Rule" says the key to succeeding at anything is putting in 10,000 hours of practice: In 1994, Ross graduated high school. A year after that, he left his college football scholarship to become a rapper. Ten years later, he dropped "Hustlin'." You better believe that victory tasted sweet.

How you choose to spend your time is your most important decision in life.

If you're ever lucky enough to walk around The Promise Land, you'll find foreign art on the walls. Piles of ornamental bicycles. Horses. A room full of sports memorabilia. Multiple garages containing multiple cars. More classic video games than in any public arcade . . . Some call Rick Ross a hoarder; he prefers the term "collector." Needless to say, Rozay did some spring cleaning during quarantine. But one thing he'll never part with is his watch collection. The Rolexes, the Hublots - they're worth millions, and there's no question he's a boss any time he walks into a room wearing one. But that's not why Ross loves his watches. It's because they represent the most valuable resource

on earth: time. Every day you get 24 hours; once that day's gone, it's gone. So what you do with those 24 hours has a direct effect on your future. That's why Ross's daily motto is "rise and grind." To determine whether you're using your time effectively, grab a pen and paper. Think about all the things you spend time on. Your main job, side hustle, education, relationship, exercise, hobbies, going out, sleeping in, Netflix, Netflix and Chill, stalking your exes on Instagram – write it all down. Then note how much time you spend on each activity. Be honest. If you choose to lie, well, take it from DJ Khaled: "Congratulations, you played yourself." After completing the exercise, start over. But this time, close your eyes. Picture the best version of yourself – the one who makes the most of their 24 hours. How does that person spend their day? Compare the two lists. Get clear on who you are now and who you want to become; identify the changes you need to make. Then, hold yourself accountable, and implement those changes. After all, how can you expect your situation to change if you aren't willing to? We all know "Rome wasn't built in a day." You'd have to google how long it actually took. But the point is, greatness doesn't happen overnight – so as you put in the time, be patient. Remember, "Hustlin'" was ten-plus years in the making. And Ross only came close to dropping a dud once: when he rushed the process. One last thing: you know that moment when you feel like falling to your knees and giving up? That's your sign to grit your teeth and keep going. The finish line is just around the corner.

To get rich, make your money work for you, be ambitious, and choose the right team players.

People in Miami aren't exactly modest about wealth. In fact, they often exaggerate how much they have. Those Lamborghinis on South Beach? A lot of them are rented. As a young man, Ross saw hustlers get money fast – and lose it even faster. When he signed to Def Jam and received a seven-figure advance, he went from broke to millionaire. He could've easily blown through the money, but for nine months he acted as though it didn't exist. He performed "Hustlin'" anywhere that'd pay him and squirreled away that money too. Not until Port of Miami debuted at number one did he finally lay out some cash on a house. Ross now has lots of "extravagant rapper shit" – and then some. But he still lives within his means: he doesn't buy anything he couldn't buy twice. And he makes his money work for him. Take The Promise Land. Ross bought it for \$5.8 million – and immediately began monetizing it. The estate was a set in Superfly and Coming 2 America, movies with multimillion-dollar budgets. Any producer who's even thinking about filming there and wants to visit has to pay a fee. The Promise Land isn't a liability; it's an asset that's already paying for itself. When you choose to save and invest your money, as opposed to spending it, you can build up a rainy-day fund and start earning passive income through things like real estate, stocks, and bonds. You'll have to make some sacrifices, yes. But you're swapping immediate gratification for an even more fabulous future and the very best thing money can buy: peace of mind. Stacking your paper isn't the only thing that'll make you rich. Master P is one of Ross's biggest idols. Like Ross, he walked away from a sports career, had one foot in the streets, and blew up with a hit-single: "Make 'Em Say Uhh!" And, like Ross, he was driven by ambition. Ambition and passion push Ross to hustle every single day – and these attributes have also made him a lot wealthier than many of his peers, despite their having sold more records or having more social-media followers. No one can hand you a burning desire to achieve your dreams; you need to build that fire yourself. But others can help you fan

the flames. Ross feels blessed to have a dream team that includes his mother, his sister, and a close circle that manages everything from operations to security to hyping his crowd. They care about him. They want him to succeed. And they challenge him to be better. So find like-minded, loyal people to form the backbone of your empire. Value them, empower them – and keep them close. As Ross puts it, “your network affects your net worth.”

To achieve your dreams, believe in yourself, be an opportunity, and don't let your emotions sabotage you.

One of the first tracks Rick Ross ever wrote was called “Where the Hoes At?” At the time, he didn't have a lot of experience with quote-unquote “hoes.” He was a nine-year-old virgin in third grade. But he was already honing a powerful tool to self-actualization: believing things into existence. He knew where he wanted to go, so he rapped from that imaginary future self's perspective. Later in life, he used the same tactic when he wanted to become an investor in Luc Belaire – a new rosé. He'd tried it after a show at a club one night and was immediately smitten with the black bottle and its neon-pink labeling. But Brett, the mastermind behind Luc Belaire, didn't want to do business with Ross. At least, not at first. Ross spent the next year willing his desire into reality – he promoted Luc Belaire without any financial stake, sending out bottles to his music industry contacts, rapping about it, and featuring it in his videos. He didn't take no for an answer. Needless to say, Brett and Ross have been in business together for nearly a decade. In repping the rosé, Ross showcased another vital aspect of success: turn yourself into a “can't miss” opportunity. Don't just tell others what you can do. Show them. Ross demonstrated to Brett that he'd be a huge asset to the brand; he was willing to go all out. Not only did Ross get to be an investment partner, but Luc Belaire is now the top-selling French rosé in the US. That's called a win-win. Instead of worrying too much about things not playing out the way you want, try to concentrate on the “What if it goes right?” scenario. And if your efforts don't yield your desired outcome, you can still be proud knowing you pursued your passion. It's important to note that being emotionally invested in what you do is not the same as letting your emotions drive your decisions. Ross had to learn this the hard way. In 2008, with his rap career on the rise, it came out that Ross had once worked as a correctional officer. People were saying he was a fraud. Instead of giving a calm response and admitting that, yes, he'd held that part-time job for a year when he was a teenager, he defensively reacted by claiming the rumors weren't true – which backfired, of course. To be a boss, you need to be self-aware. For Ross, that meant understanding that some of the behaviors he'd learned growing up in the hood, like fight-or-flight reactions, were no longer serving him. So remember: slow and steady wins the race.

Hustle your own way – that means staying true to yourself and doing what you love.

When Ross received the call from Kanye West's people telling him to come over to

Pinewood Atlanta Studios, he was skeptical. Ross and Kanye go back 20 years – and Ye had always been provocative. But recently, his tweets had started rubbing Ross the wrong way. Still, they had history. So Ross donned a Balenciaga sweater and drove over in his Rolls-Royce Phantom. Kanye had relocated his music operations, his apparel lines, and his presidential campaign from Wyoming to the seven-hundred-acre film studio in Georgia – and he wanted to show Ross what he'd been working on. At the end of the tour, he suddenly said, "Tomorrow I might tweet that I don't feel like being president anymore." His campaign staffer's response blew Ross's mind: "It's going to get a million retweets." Kanye isn't successful despite his erratic behavior. Provocation is a big part of his success. But that's not the way Rick Ross rolls. If you think you can win by walking in another's footsteps, think again. That person forged their own path – which is precisely what you should be doing. Everyone has their own unique blueprint for success. Go ahead and study others' methods and strategies, and borrow from them when it's to your benefit. But, in the end, do what works for you. And make sure you're always operating in a way that aligns with your morals. Success can be a long, bumpy road. If what you're doing doesn't vibe with your values, it's a lot more difficult to persevere. Before becoming a rapper, Ross had some dirty dealings. So take it from him: always act with pure intentions. Money made at the expense of others' well-being is not worth the retribution down the line. Another thing: don't hustle halfway. Instead, try to be the very best at whatever you do. This is a lot easier if you genuinely like what you're doing. For example, Ross owns 25 Wingstops. Rapping about chicken wings and promoting them on Instagram is totally natural for him. He was patronizing Wingstops and savoring lemon-pepper ten-pieces long before he started selling them. Ultimately, hustling hard isn't an obligation; it's an opportunity. You'll know you've beat the game when you can revel in all parts of life – even when you're working your ass off.

To succeed in life, turn setbacks into comebacks, keep learning, and create a meaningful legacy.

Rick Ross raps for a living. He prides himself on being able to take down a rival in just a few lines. But he had to hand it to Anderson Cooper. Calling Donald Trump "an obese turtle" in the wake of the 2020 election results? Brutal. As a large person himself, Ross felt a momentary pang of pity for Trump. But the man hadn't acted like a boss. He hadn't accepted his loss; instead, he'd tried to take everyone down with him. On the path to success, there's one thing you can be very sure of: there will be setbacks, failures, and fuckups, so the sooner you get comfortable with "taking Ls" – accepting your losses – the happier you'll be. Your losses are often the best lessons. It's only by examining your flaws and missteps that you can begin to improve yourself and move forward. In other words, stay a student. This goes for both personal and professional gains. To keep winning, you need to keep an open mind. Take Jay-Z. He's as musically talented as ever. But a while back, he realized his popularity as a rapper wouldn't last forever. So, at his artistic peak, he began to reinvent himself as a businessman – and has since become an even bigger boss. If you're stuck in the mud and refuse to learn and evolve, you're going to go extinct like the megalodon shark. And we're not just talking about your career. Ross spent the last few years relentlessly striving to get his net worth past \$100 million. He was close. But his tunnel vision cost him time with his children and took a toll on his health. He's had more than a few brushes with death – including his first seizure when he was 35. Luckily, he learned his lesson and started eating

better, exercising, and sleeping more. The funny thing is, he's able to hustle even harder now. Roaming around in his tractor during the pandemic, he thought about how important it is to pause and make sure you're still heading in the right direction. Success isn't just dollar bills - it's also about the mark you make on your surroundings. So he opened a Wingstop in Clarksdale, Mississippi, where he was born. In addition to creating jobs, the project brought the abandoned Greyhound Bus Depot back to life as a Black-owned business. It stands as a reminder to dream big - and also to remember where you're from. Rick Ross's upcoming album is called Richer Than I've Ever Been. It's a testament to his business savvy, but also his internal desire to dig deeper and live more meaningfully - the ultimate hallmark of a boss.

Final summary

The key message in these blinks is that: Rick Ross hustled his way to greatness, and so can you. A few proven strategies can help you reach the top of your game: stop making excuses, put in the work, be smart with your money and your people, stay true to yourself, and see every failure as an opportunity to learn and grow. But the first step is taking the first step - there's no better time to boss up and become the CEO of your life than now. And here's some more actionable advice: Prepare for life's challenges - and blessings. Life is unpredictable. You might think you have an airtight strategy all figured out, but shit will inevitably hit the fan - and when it does, it's important to be ready. So when things are going well, don't get complacent. As Ross says, "Times of peace are when you prepare for battle." Being ready isn't just about having a contingency plan in your back pocket; it's also about preparing for unexpected blessings. It might mean having extra funds in case of emergencies or once-in-a-lifetime investment opportunities - or buying tanks to protect The Promise Land. The bottom line is, you need to think ahead: life's a game of chess, not checkers.