

Introduction

Thank you for picking up my book. I decided to write it in an effort to help anyone coming from nothing who desires freedom and wealth. In my life, I value both financial and personal freedom. It took years to create a wonderful environment, and I've made my share of mistakes and good moves along the way. If you aren't where you want to be in life, I think you will find many of the following 50 points helpful. Whether you are 10 years of age or 110, I promise you there will be value in the chapters to follow!

I'm a multiple business owner, but I'm proud to say that I've earned my living in sales, and have built my modest wealth in real estate. There will be a lot of sales and real estate-related material in this book.

The three businesses that I own are:

A Security Representation Business, where we sell security equipment to installing alarm companies called Personal Alarm Representation (PAR).

Secondly, a Promotional Products business where we can put any business logo on millions of different items like pens and shirts, called GoLogo.

Finally, Real Estate business where I own rental properties, I buy rental properties with the intention to hold them forever and create wealth with appreciation and debt reduction. Let me speak to each of these businesses.

The Security Representation Business was started in 1998 mainly out of the desire to no longer reside permanently in corporate America. Secondly, because I'm an entrepreneur at heart and would rather call on independent businessmen than corporate

customers; I just relate better to them. In this business we represent 30 product lines in a 4 state region. Companies use representation firms like ours instead of employees and sometimes in conjunction with employees. The benefit for the companies using reps like us is that they get territorial sales coverage for a fixed percentage of sales like 5-10%. For the manufacturer this is predictable and normally less expensive than an employee with benefits and expenses. The manufacturers also benefit from our 25-plus-year relationships with the customers. Day in and day out in this business, our company PAR Products (www.parproducts.com) calls on installing security companies, think ADT and the thousands of smaller competitors and wholesale distributors where the alarm companies get their parts, like ADI and Tri-Ed. Our goal is for companies that install alarm systems in businesses and homes to use our products instead of our competitors. Ernie, Kyle, Craig, and Crystal do a tremendous job in this fun business. I was lucky to get into this recession-proof business at a young age. I always say, "in good times people are building, thus using new security gear, and in bad times, unfortunately, the crime rates increase and people are breaking in and there is more need for security." The security business usually does well regardless of what's going on in the economy. As a young person trying to find a recession-proof business, I got lucky!

The Promotional Products Company, GOLOGO (www.mygologo.com) was spun out of an idea I had in 1994 of a Koozie (beer can insulator) that could fit in a golf cart, The Cart Cooly. Basically, the shape of every fast food to-go cup, but in a Koozie form before that shape was everywhere. After selling the Cart Cooly exclusively with corporate logos, people would ask, "Could you do golf balls, shirts, etc.?" That led us to offer every product under the sun with a logo on it. Over time, the Cart Cooly became too expensive to produce, but thankfully for that little invention, a lot of good came for a lot of people! A lot of people didn't have to drink warm beer.

The best thing that came out of it was being able to afford to move my parents from cold Chicago to Dallas. GoLogo is now a full-service promotional products company. We can put your logo on virtually anything! This business does over \$2.5M in sales, and the average order size is \$400. As you can imagine, a lot of attention to detail comes with this fun business. Bobbi Jo, Bryon, Ashlee, Courtney, and on occasion Will, are awesome, and I'm lucky to get to work with such a great group!

Real Estate Business—I have always had a passion for Real Estate as far back as my desire to own my own home before I was 20 years old! I did it at 19 and 10 months. I currently have 158 people paying me rent each month, (I have adjusted this number up four times since the start of writing the book. I just can't stop buying great investments.) My properties range from great homes in Southlake, Texas, an affluent area outside of Dallas, to small apartment buildings in semi-rural Kentucky (www.kyapt.com). My philosophy on real estate rentals is that if the property is pretty it can be negative cash flow for a few years (rents don't cover the cost of mortgage). If it's ugly, it has to make money on Day One. The "pretty" high-end properties make money long term because they typically appreciate rapidly over time, rents increase, and the properties go up in value. The "ugly" ones appreciate rather slowly, so they need to make money immediately. We will talk a fair amount about leverage in the book and real estate, when you only put 10-20% down and you get to keep 100% of the gains. This is a great way to leverage your money and put it to work. Very few new fortunes have been made without leverage. If you understand both the upside and downside of leverage, you will understand that it is an extremely good tool for creating wealth faster than some other methods.

At the end of the day, I proudly consider myself a Salesman. Sales is a great judge of what you are doing right or wrong. Sales reward you each day, month, and year. Sales will let you know real quickly what you are doing well and what you need to improve on. I don't believe that there are that many, "Born Salesmen". I surely wasn't one. It's a skill set that takes time to learn, like every other trade. The challenge with sales is the

tremendous amount of rejection and the people who “try sales” and fail, then rule out sales for life. I think that’s crazy. Were you good at riding a bike, driving a car, or hitting a golf ball the first time you did that? Why should you be good at sales right out of the gate? The difference is other things you fail at don’t give you as much personal rejection as sales. As a young guy, I got super lucky to be hired by two tremendous salesmen. I am lucky that Lance Dean saw that I was a hard-working bartender, and might do well in sales. He was kind enough to hire me into the security business. Both Lance and I reported to Ben Cornett, who might be the best salesman I have ever known and probably the best relationship guy there is. Lance grew to be every bit as good as Ben; some say better. I’m so thankful to have met these two men. I love them both so much that I can’t pick a favorite between the two of them. There is no way I could have achieved my modest level of success without meeting these two people at the young age I did. Ben is 20 years my senior and Lance is 3 years older. Meeting and learning from great mentors at a young age changes your success trajectory over a lifetime.

We were all working for a company that made a sensor, which detected glass breaking (Blue Grass Electronics, based in Lagrange, KY). This Glass Break Sensor would then be wired back to an alarm control panel. Back in 1988, it was a nice company full of young, energetic salesmen doing \$6 million worth of sales annually. But the lessons learned were priceless! I suggest that as a young person the people you can learn from mean more than the job you are currently working at. It always amazes me that someone will try to get into the best college, but once they have graduated they will take the highest-paying job, regardless of whether they will have great mentors to learn from. Students will take on \$100K in college debt but take the wrong job without mentors to learn from because it pays \$5K a year more? Crazy! In my mind, it’s just like in the dictionary: mentors come before money.

There are millions of people more successful than I. Why is it that I feel like I have the right to write a book? Why would you take your valuable time to read it? The driving forces are:

First, I have read more than 700 books and very few give you basic blocking and tackling common sense on how to start from nothing and achieve some level of success. I have found that most books focused on just one concept for 300 pages. This book is more diverse. According to Tim Ferriss, author of 4 Hour Work Week, fewer than 5% of the 195,000 books published each year sell more than 5,000 copies. I'm not writing this book with the vision of grandeur; I'm writing this to help others. All proceeds will go to the community storehouse food pantry in Keller, Texas. At the end of my book, I have a list of my favorite books. Robert Kiyosaki, author of the Rich Dad Poor Dad series, is right up there with everything the late great Zig Ziglar wrote. I love everything Grant Cardone has written, especially a book called 10X, while the tough no-nonsense style of Jeffrey Gitomer is the right potion if you are having a pity party. Maybe the original positive salesperson writer is the late Napoleon Hill. His words helped mold my thinking as a young man.

If you get bored easily, I think my book will keep your attention. If a particular chapter isn't for you, skip it and go to the next! In school, if you get 9 out 10 questions right you get an A, so if something isn't clicking with you go to next chapter. I would have loved to read this book at age 20. This book will cover everything from the importance of "thank you" notes to leveraging money, to having a generous aura about you. Secondly, people say that I'm self-made because I didn't have family money or married into money. I truly feel no one is self-made. We are all a product of the opportunities around ourselves, and choosing to learn lessons, and embracing the knowledge from people that know more than you. I look for sharper people than me and learn from them. School is never out for me. When forced to be around negative and unmotivated people, I observed and noted their behavior so I continue to learn what not to do.

There are many books that are from a more-polished perspective, but if you are interested in hearing REAL life lessons from a kid who collected aluminum cans and bottles (back in the day you could turn them in for a nickel or dime) for money, delivered papers, washed dishes, worked in a factory, worked in

restaurants, was a lousy salesman and grew to become a fun loving, generous multi-millionaire, this is the book for you. It's great to know you don't have to score perfect on your SAT or be extremely gifted to achieve a very happy, financially free and prosperous life.

People often ask me how I got started. What were my influences? I hear often that I look at things differently, and where did you get that perspective? Most people don't achieve financial and personal freedom, so following the mass thinking all but guarantees you won't have a different and favorable outcome. There will be a lot of financial information in this book, and if you don't know me you might think it's all about money and/or material things. People who really know me would say that I am generous with my time and money. The only thing money does for me, is that it gives me freedom of choices, and I strongly desire the freedom to do the right thing every day. Money allows more free choices. This morning, I passed a group of 10 servicemen in the airport. I reached into my pocket pulled out a \$100 bill, thanked them for their service, and told them breakfast was on me. I'm thrilled I could do that; \$100 isn't going to change my life, but hopefully my gesture made their day! I am humble and extremely blessed to have a great positive attitude and I managed to create a life that I truly enjoy each and every day. So here you go... everything opened up. Here are the 50 things that I've learned with my 50 years on the planet. Enjoy!