

NOTES FROM: *No B.S. Guide to Succeeding in Business by Breaking All the Rules*, by Dan Kennedy

SUMMARY: Well, my Dan Kennedy binge shows no sign of slowing down! I'm swiftly making my way through every single book that he's ever written, and considering that his ideas have made me sooo much fucking money (sorry for swearing), you can understand why I keep binging his books!

I'm also not a rule-follower by nature, so this one naturally spoke to me. Exactly as the title says, it's an unconventional guide to success that flies in the face of most of the advice circulating out there about how to succeed in business and in life. Quite frankly, most of it is written by theorists and wannabes who will *never* get what they want out of this life. That may sound harsh, but it's true.

The bottom line here is that there's *always* a way to succeed, but you're not likely to find it by following the crowd. To borrow from *The Third Door* by Alex Banayan (another excellent book), life is like a nightclub. Most people are standing in line in front of the main entrance, waiting patiently, quietly following the rules, hoping eventually to get in. There's also the VIP line going back in the opposite direction, where celebrities and people with money and connections also clamber to get in. Then there's "the third door."

The third door is the one you make yourself. It's where you go around the back of the building, crack open a window, climb in through the kitchen, slipping past security and the rest of the staff and making your *own* way in. Dan Kennedy's book helps you find the third doors that exist all around us. Now, all you need to do is find or develop the courage to walk through them.

"Reading this book is easy. Living it is hard."

"Naturally, the 80 percent diligently obeying all the rules made for them and by them despise the 20 percent who defy some of the rules and the 1 to 5 percent who defy ALL the rules and get extraordinary, exceptional, infinitely better results. If you listen to and conform to the 80 percent, you will be one of them. Here, I'm showing you how the top 1 percent to 5 percent think and act very, very differently, and get very, very different results."

"We are a people in search of rules. It might have stopped when Moses came down from the mountain and announced: 'Good news - I got Him down to ten.' But even though few people manage to live by those, everybody wants more."

"When you meet the Buddha of Conventional Wisdom on the road, aim for him and push the gas pedal to the floor."

Bertrand Russell: "Thought is subversive and revolutionary, destructive and terrible, thought is merciless to privilege, established institutions, and comfortable habit. Thought looks into the pit of hell and is not afraid. Thought is great and swift and free, the light of the world, and the chief glory of man."

"Early on, I was not motivated to 'get rich' or inspired by positive visions of some grand and glorious future of fame and fortune. I was, instead, motivated by my HATRED for being poor. A lot of people seem to resign themselves to being poor and get comfortable with poverty and failure. Not me. I absolutely HATED everything about it and every minute of it. I lived for a while with very 'dark' thoughts about my predicament, fueling a fierce determination to escape it and rise above it somehow, no matter what it took. When I applied for my first job as a territory sales rep for a publishing company - offering a base salary, bonuses, and a company car that would make me NOT broke - I was rejected for being too young and too inexperienced by the national sales manager in town conducting interviews. I was first depressed but quickly ANGRY. 'I'll be damned,' I told myself, 'if I'm going to let this bozo stop me from getting this.' And the next morning, when he opened his hotel room door to grab the newspaper, he was quite surprised to see me sitting there, blocking his exit."

"Who is to say what should motivate you? I say: *whatever works*."

"In brief, Dr. Maltz became convinced that no amount of conscious positive thinking or attempts at willpower and self-discipline can overcome a negative self-image. Another way to say this is that whenever resolution is incongruent with the self-image, the resolution fails."

"This is why, incidentally, for 40 years, I refused any speaking engagement where I was prohibited from selling my 'tool kits' from the platform. To get people all jazzed up about my ideas and then send them home without the tools they needed to make real changes and without securing their commitment to doing so is just one giant waste of everybody's time."

"Give up *forced* 'positive thinking' or 'motivation'; instead, build a solid foundation of strong self-image, well-defined goals, practical plans, and know-how that naturally produce positive expectancy, initiative, and follow-through. Cultivate REASONED optimism. Have something tangible to believe in and to be excited about - not just excitement itself."

"The activities in which I have become very successful and from which I make large sums of money are instructive because of how ill-suited by 'natural ability' I am to them. For example, for more than twenty years, I have made hundreds of thousands of dollars a year as a professional speaker. I stuttered badly for a while in my youth, I was shy (I still, frankly, am not much of a 'people person'), and when I started speaking I was downright awful, awkward, and uncomfortable. My earliest audio cassettes are so bad and embarrassing I try to buy them back when I find them. I make the lion's share of my living writing - 36 books have gone through bookstores; millions of dollars a year of my self-published books, manuals, courses, and newsletters are sold worldwide. And a large membership organization was built on the foundation of my writing. I have been and am routinely paid six-figure project fees as an advertising copywriter. As I recall, I got a C in creative writing, a B in journalism, and my English teacher in my junior and senior years in high school suggested I'd make a great plumber. Several critics have made similar suggestions since then. And I would only agree to this extent: I doubt very seriously that I have any 'natural' writing talent. But I can certainly write for dough. Instead of talent, I own what I call highly developed skills. These do not come out of the womb already installed. They are made through determination, study, and work. I think the idea of 'natural ability' is, at best, irrelevant. The argument of genetics versus education and environment is almost irrelevant. Not necessarily invalid, just irrelevant. If you are limited in a particular area, if you really do lack natural talent, you can make up for it if you determine to do so. If you happen to have some natural talent in an area in which you desire to excel, celebrate and build on the advantage gratefully. But either way, you can do pretty much whatever you set your mind to do."

"In fact, some excellent career or business advice is to pick endeavors because of the type of person the endeavors will force you to become. An early mentor used to urge people of very limited financial means to commit to the goal of becoming a millionaire, not so much for the money, he explained, but because of the people they would have to become, the positive characteristics and behaviors they would have to develop in order to achieve the financial benchmark. He was widely misunderstood on this point and perceived by some to be a preacher of greed. What he meant, simply, was: Big commitment to big goals build big people."

"You are not limited in business by what you know or can do - only by what capabilities you can organize. Nothing is really 'beyond' you if you go beyond yourself as is necessary for your goals."

Henry Ford: "I don't need to know that - I have a button on my desk to push, to bring someone who does running into my office."

F. Scott Fitzgerald: "Genius is the ability to put into effect what is in your mind."

“College graduates, on average, out-earn non-college graduates by six figures to, at most, a million dollars, lifetime. That IS an argument in favor of a college education, although a million dollars divided over 40 to 60 years of active work is not as gigantic as it sounds stated as a lump sum. Look closer and here is what you will discover: If college actually prepares you for anything, it is for a job. College does not prepare you to be entrepreneurial, and it certainly does not prepare you to get rich.”

“Relying on academic theories and textbook case histories for your success blueprint in business is somewhat like relying on advice from poets on succeeding in the publishing business.”

“The only real financial security is your ability to produce.”

“And that’s the key: getting ‘education’ however you get it, that is relevant to your ambitions - and avoiding education not relevant to your ambitions.”

“An old friend of mine, James Tolleson, used to include in his speeches his story of graduating from high school in Boaz, Alabama, and being eager to get into the University of Alabama, where Bear Bryant coached, until he called up, asked for their course in becoming a millionaire, and discovered they didn’t have one. Then he called around to a dozen other universities and, to his utter amazement, found that they didn’t offer such a course either. That ended his interest in attending college. To this day, incidentally, you can get all the way through high school and college without taking a single course in basic financial literacy, let alone how you get and stay rich as an entrepreneur. There is even a pervasive negative attitude about success ambition perversely flourishing at universities. A desire to get rich is considered crude and unenlightened by faculty, despite facts that their university is hoarding wealth in its endowment funds and that most of the facilities on campus as well as their salaries came and come from wealth.”

“I have nothing against college, incidentally, as long as the person going understands what it is *and what it isn’t*. For some careers, such as doctors, lawyers, and schoolteachers, it’s essential. They have these rules about self-taught brain surgeons. But as I said, for most it is at best preparation only to work for and thus, be dependent on someone else.”

“When I make a bank deposit, they don’t deduct 10 percent because I made all that money without going to college.”

“Some individual or some short list of individuals can serve as your ‘college.’ Even without direct, personal contact, you can pick a few worthy models to make a deep, thorough study of. For myself and my interests in writing and publishing to be a person of influence on certain philosophies to certain audiences, I’ve made Hugh Hefner, Ayn Rand, Napoleon Hill, Martin Luther, and several others subjects of my thorough, serious study. I own every book written on Hefner, a bookcase full of years of Ayn Rand’s newsletters, and the same for the others. As a self-promoter, I’ve done the same with Houdini. They have been my ‘professors.’ I guarantee that I have a better-than-a-Ph.D. education in advertising in the wall of books I have collected on the subject, from ancient masters to contemporary figures. You can also go to work in the field you wish to exploit, in a company where you can learn a great deal by observation. Try to work in every job within the business. Consider working free if necessary. Be a sponge. Soak up everything you can. The individual who pays attention for a purpose every minute can gain 10 years of synthetic experience in ten months.”

“YOU can be as ordinary as toast but decide to be extraordinary and to do extraordinary things. Please do. Go out and accomplish something extraordinary, that commoners are not supposed to be able to do - America needs the examples.”

Mike Todd: “The meek shall inherit the earth...*but not in our lifetimes.*”

“Arrogance is an almost essential success characteristic.”

“You don’t know them by accident. You know them because they purposefully set out to make you know them.”

“If you are not prepared to look anybody and everybody in the eye without blinking and tell them that you are the best at what you do and that you know your stuff, somebody’s going to kick your butt and send you home early. And if you are not going to knock down doors, holler at the top of your lungs, make a miserable pest out of yourself, and do whatever else is necessary to attract attention and get your message across, the marketplace will simply pass you by.”

Gary Halbert: “The poorly paid and average paid people in our field are all in the copywriting business. I’m not and you aren’t. I’m in the Gary Halbert business and you are in the Dan Kennedy business, and we have, as our deliverable, copywriting work. But we are in the self-aggrandizement and self-promotion business. Never forget it.”

“In business, you must do everything you can to protect your ideas, information, and interests and to obtain full, maximum compensation for your knowledge and expertise. The respect granted you is the respect you command and demand.”

“Don’t undervalue what is ‘common knowledge’ to you but very uncommon knowledge to the other guy.”

Stuart Wilde: "If they show up, bill 'em."

"I'll bet that occasionally you mentally convert your paycheck into dollars per hour as sort of a checkup on how well you are doing. This is deeply ingrained in many people. It is also very limiting."

"If you are going to achieve exceptional success, especially exceptional financial success, you have to break completely free of wage-earner thinking."

"Give to charity, but never give in business. Place the highest possible value on your expertise and confidently present that value to the world. When they show up, charge 'em. The meek and the humble may be very talented and capable but will all too often be overlooked or undervalued. Arrogance and self-promotion are necessary to advance in just about any business environment."

Jack Welch: "Until you take control of your own life, someone else will."

"I suppose we have all been raised with the 'politeness ethic.' I know that I was. And I have often been chided and cautioned about being too aggressive, abrasive, arrogant. Warned about losing my temper. Urged to avoid offending others at any cost. I am now 69 years old. I've had a 50+-year career. From that, I can assure you that this is terrible advice."

"My own experiences with Gerry Spence, limited though they may be, have been fascinating to me. When he came into 'the greenroom,' the speakers' waiting room backstage at a seminar, his presence took over the room. He is larger than life. In keeping with every criticism I've ever read of him, his ego seemed larger than life, too. Backstage he is attention commanding and attention greedy. Onstage, while holding an audience of 15,000 in his hand, and coming across as most humble, there is still also arrogance - the first time we were on a program together, he deliberately ignored the meeting planner's instructions and the huge blinking digital timer and went a whopping 20 minutes over his allotted time. The second time, given stern instructions, the flashing timer, and a staff person pacing in front of the stage at his cutoff time, he did wind up, but he let the audience know he was being 'forced' to cut his remarks short and that he wasn't pleased about it. Yet, he has personally been very courteous and gracious to me. And I must tell you: He delivers the goods. His speech was excellent and meaningful. His book *How to Argue and Win Every Time* is so good, I bought copies for my clients. If I were in big legal trouble, I'd want Gerry Spence, insufferable ego be damned. Things like this cause many to view him as arrogant: Showing off his huge, *Architectural Digest*-featured home, he told a *Playboy* interviewer, 'You see this house and whatever else I have. It all comes from insurance companies. That's like an Indian hangin' out his scalps. These are my f-ing scalps.' Spence is gentle when playing to an audience in person, to 12 or 12,000, or on TV. But in individual relationships, in conducting business behind the scenes, he is anything but gentle. I cannot imagine anybody intimidating Gerry Spence. I can imagine Spence intimidating a lot of people."

Craig Proctor: "Things presented to me as THE RULES turned out not to be rules at all. They were just other people's opinions, paradigms, ignorance, and bad habits!"

"When I started in speaking, I was told by many never to tell a joke that might offend *anybody* and never to talk about politics, religion, or sex. After a very short time, it dawned on me there wasn't anything of importance left to talk about and, if you never risked telling a joke that might offend somebody, you can't tell a joke, period. If I stuck with that advice, I'd be so bland I'd be invisible."

"The risks of timidity are greater, though: no attention, no interest, no affinity, no magnetism."

"You may win some temporary victories with this approach, but after changing your colors so many times, will you have any true colors left? The contrarian approach: presenting a consistent personality, being yourself, saying what you mean, meaning what you say, and having everybody know it is more likely to lead to lasting, satisfying success."

"Rush Limbaugh was fired in 1984 from a Kansas City radio station for delivering overly controversial, conservative commentaries. He got hired by a Sacramento station to replace Morton Downey Jr., and was told by management, 'We're not afraid of controversy here. But we will not back you up if you say things you don't believe. If you can convince us why you believe something, no matter how outrageous it seems, we'll back you up all day long. But we will not have controversy just for the sake of it.'"

"Your ability to create fierce loyalty and enthusiasm for your cause, business, products, or yourself as a personality is restricted only by the extent to which you are willing to create fierce opposition."

"If you wait to be discovered and rewarded based on merit alone, you had better bring a lunch and several good books because you're going to be waiting a long, long time. The bigger your ambitions, the more likely you are to offend people while achieving those ambitions. And your opportunity to have meaningful impact will be in direct proportion to your willingness to offend. What others perceive as arrogance may very well be the level of confidence, self-promotion, and pushiness necessary. Also, arrogance magnetically attracts more than it repels because many people prefer association with an individual who is absolutely certain of himself and his convictions. Leaders in fields, highest income earners, and most prominent figures become that by upsetting apple carts and disrupting the way things are supposed to be done."

"We rarely get paid for any original ideas. We get paid for creating profitable results - and nobody cares if we produced those results by originality and invention or just dogged implementation."

"More fortunes are made by implementation than by invention."

“The truth is, nothing needs to be original to you because most people have lots of ideas, including some good ones, but are very poor at implementation and follow-through. You can succeed by doing what they never get done.”

“He did fundamental things very well. And he got rich doing them.”

“You need only *one* creative thought to get rich; two just about guarantees it.”

“Ideas alone are like unplanted seeds.”

“In my experience, for every marketing challenge, for every entrepreneurial objective, for every personal desire, there is somewhere at least one successful model that already has plenty of answers available to anybody willing to pay attention. Solving problems does not require creative invention. It requires solutions.”

“The last truly original idea to come out of Hollywood may have been the big sign up on the hill overlooking the city. And that’s okay. It’s a *business*. About sales, ad revenue, viewer numbers, streaming subscription revenue. About profit. Trying to raise the likelihood of a success by greatly borrowing from prior successes is just good business. Why risk creating from scratch when there are so many fantastic models to copy from?”

“Never underestimate the value and power of the ordinary implemented with extraordinary zeal and diligence.”

W.C. Fields: “If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again. Then quit. There’s no use being a damn fool about it.”

“The sales manager’s most frequent answer to the frustrated salesman is, ‘Make more calls.’ The parent’s answer to the struggling student is, ‘Study harder.’ But there’s a flaw in all this. Once I said to a golf expert, ‘Maybe I just need to practice more.’ ‘Not is you practice THAT swing,’ he said.”

“Speed of getting through noes automatically guarantees more yeses.”

“Raising questions about ‘persisting at what?’ complicates what dogma demands be a simple, bumper sticker-length commandment. I tell people: Don’t step in dogma! Success requires a more sophisticated navigation. Persistence has to be applied where it can do good but cast aside where it does harm.”

“When I go to the bank to make a deposit, nobody asks me: ‘Is this easy money or hard-earned money?’ The bank does not give me a bonus when I deposit hard-earned, hard-fought-for money. The bank does not penalize me for depositing money made easily. The bank doesn’t care.”

“Certainly, having a vision of where you want to go in life is important. But too often, people get too nitpicky in micro-defining how they’ll get there, thus excluding all sorts of great opportunities and sticking themselves with having to summon up huge amounts of persistence to get a goal the hard way even if an easier path presents itself.”

“Be wary of the ‘quitter’ label. Rethink your ideas about goals, persistence, success, and failure. Focus on ‘testing.’ And look for that which is easiest, most effective, and most efficient for you to do that can take you in the direction you want to go. If you have diligently tested a plan, product, service, business, etc. and found it unrewarding, it is perfectly okay to bury it in the backyard and move onto a different opportunity or method.”

Character Played by Richard Dreyfuss in the Movie *Let It Ride*: “You’ve got to place a bet every day; otherwise, you might be walking around lucky and not know it.”

“Decide who your ideal client is, then focus all your efforts on attracting that client, and no efforts on any other clients.”

“Through work, you can put yourself in positions where you can get lucky. I think you can learn the art of constantly putting yourself into situations where good luck can occur.”

“Good luck exists. Some people are going to get ‘lucky breaks’ whether they deserve them or not, whether you deserved them more than they did, and there’s not a thing you can do about all that. It is as random as where raindrops fall. So don’t let yourself get eaten up inside with envy or jealousy. Focus, instead, on putting yourself in as many situations and circumstances where good luck can occur for you as possible. Then you’ll get your share.”

“Steve Jobs said that if you are succeeding or leading you have to remember there are two kids in a garage staying up all night working on the idea they’ll use to take everything away from you. It’s a lot truer now than when he said it.”

“In the book *Profiles of Power and Success*, Dr. Landrum notes that the super-achievers studied were all afflicted with a kind of ‘rushing sickness’: They ate, talked, drove, even slept fast. Napoleon graduated from college in half the normal time. Walt Disney went on prolonged, fast-paced working binges broken up by periods of complete collapse, and slept on the couch at his office nearly half his adult life because he resented the time wasted commuting. At age 19, Picasso was turning out a new painting each day. He was warned by art dealers that he would ruin the market for his work. (They were wrong.) Impatience and intolerance for anything impeding their progress characterized every super successful man and woman featured in this extraordinary book, which I recommend highly. As I think about it, the most successful people I’ve ever worked with - and there have been plenty of them - have exhibited both of these characteristics in great abundance.”

“What if everything you’ve been told about speed has come from slow people? And is wrong?”

“He says that his commitment to high speed and mega-growth created its own kind of momentum and magnetic attraction. This has been my experience with countless clients over many years. What my friend Jim Rohn called the secret of MASSIVE action attracts people, capital, media attention, and excited customers like nothing else. When you are doing big things *fast*, the world notices.”

“As I write this, he’s on his way at a brisk pace to \$200 million. All ignited by one Trigger: a multiplicity of offsets to new customer acquisition cost, not just the industry norm of one.”

“Then came the opportunity. A new client, Peter Lowe, sought me out, to consult on ways to boost revenue of his public success seminars. One of the strategies I proposed was adding an unadvertised bonus speaker at the very end of the day, a surprise to the audience, an unknown person who, if advertised, would not pull audience, but who could sell info-resources successfully in that bad time slot, under those adverse conditions. (The speaker and his company split sales revenue 50/50). He wanted to test the idea, and we agreed that I’d be the guinea pig. I had a suitable info-product that I sold from the stage. I appointed myself to the new position I had created. The SUCCESS events were fast growing, quickly full days in 25 to 27 cities a year, in basketball arenas, with 15,000 to 25,000 attendees, brought from about a \$1 million ad budget per city. Virtually all those attracted to these events were perfect customers for me. And I was there, every time, for nine consecutive years. The audiences shrank throughout the day, so I often had only 2,000 or 3,000 staying to hear me. But still I would sell to 300 or so in every city, over 7,000 in a year; because of their quality, over 2,000 converted to ongoing customers/members. I was - for free - acquiring Peter’s best customers that cost him over \$20 million a year to get. That was good, but there was a bigger benefit: Being on these events with audiences of this size, events covered by media, along with former U.S. presidents, Hollywood celebrities, legendary entrepreneurs, as well as the top business and motivational speakers of the day like Zig Ziglar, made me a celebrity by association. It poured gasoline on everything. This lifted me as a book author, speaker at other events, and gave me a lot of access into many OPC ‘nests’ I would not have gotten without this celebrity. I estimate its overall OPC effect was about 1,000 new ‘sticky’ customers/members a month vs. the old pace of 1,000 a year. That’s a 12X, for those weak in math. In many cases, OPC beats OPM, hands down.”

“If you’ll examine the source of all the warnings you’ve had against the idea of getting rich quick, you will find that most, if not all, have come to you from well-intentioned people who have not gotten rich at all, at any pace.”

“Just about any rich person will tell you that slow is harder than fast, because it is almost impossible to create momentum while moving slowly. A two-by-four across the tracks will bring a however-many-ton locomotive just starting to move to a grinding halt, while a train moving at full speed will turn that same board into toothpicks and the passengers probably won’t even feel the bump. If possible, you want momentum on your side.”

“Why not get rich quick? There’s no good reason - only past negative conditioning - prohibiting you from taking a quantum leap, from triggering THE PHENOMENON.”

“Rather than advertising your product, service, or business, advertise FOR the customers or clients you want. The sooner you determine who your ‘perfect match customer’ is and target that person AND deliberately repel those who do not fit that description, the better. Not only isn’t the customer always right, but every customer isn’t always right for your business.”

“Resourcefulness is more powerful than resources.”

“If you can’t make money without money, you won’t make money with money either.”

“The biggest problem with OPM is that it encourages waste, misplaced priorities, and complacency. The end result of this is the same as Margaret Thatcher said about socialism: ‘Sooner or later you run out of other people’s money.’”

“You are entitled to nothing but opportunity.”

Joan Rivers: “Walk through ANY open door.”

“When I called, I was told the position had been filled a week ago. I still asked to speak to this entrepreneur, but I was brushed off. He was too busy and was not available. But I called every day, sometimes twice a day, for two solid weeks. Finally, he invited me in. We subsequently did millions of dollars of business together; he was, in many respects, my best mentor, and without that relationship it is very doubtful that I would be doing what I’m doing today. What would have happened had I accepted that first brush-off?”

“Zig Ziglar tells the story of the saleswoman who couldn’t hear ‘No’ if it was shouted in her ear but could hear a ‘Yes’ whispered 50 feet away. If you want to fight through the crowd and gain entry to the career field you want, in the company you want, starting out with the attention of top leaders in that company, you need to be deaf to the ‘no.’”

“I wonder how many job applicants call back 50 times? Or send a new letter every month for 12 months, discussing different reasons why they want to get started in that particular company? I wonder how many applicants are so determined to break into a particular firm that they will continue to try to sell themselves week after week, month after month, for a year or more?”

“Nobody in the herd would dream of working for free for a year. You will have no competition. This same principle applies to a lot of things other than getting a job. Certainly, to getting a desired client or account or customer. To getting a book published. To solving a problem. Not hearing ‘no,’ doing what others won’t do, showing up differently, demonstrating tenacity have near universal application. In many such cases, you will be breaking the rules of how that situation is supposed to be handled and how you are supposed to behave. But ‘supposed to’ is for other people - not me, not you.”

“Neither your college diploma nor your resume has even a penny of value, in and of itself. To get going, you must begin. To get ahead, you must begin. You must get a foot in the door and a hand on some rung on the ladder somehow, somewhere, the sooner the better. A key to success is doing even the lowliest, least desirable job better and with greater zeal than anyone has ever seen anybody tackle that job. Learn to stand out from the crowd in every positive way possible, but most of all, in your willingness to roll up your sleeves and do the dirty work. However, another key to success is leaping, NOT ladder-climbing. You must be alert for such opportunities, recognized or created.”