

Never Stop Using Your Imagination

By [Harrison Barnes](#)

It is amazing what people are able to do with the power of their imaginations.

- Steve Jobs became incredibly famous by taking things that already existed and imagining and creating new uses for them. The changes he made by using his imagination made him one of the most famous men in the world.
- Walt Disney imagined entirely new ways to entertain the world and his vision led to a global, multi-platform entertainment empire.
- The imagination of inventors brought us television, the light bulb, satellites, the telephone, and other incredible devices. Imagination can truly change the world.

There is almost nothing more powerful than our imaginations. If you have a well-developed imagination, you can bring positive (or negative) change to every single person on the earth. You need to use your imagination every single day, and you need to think about who you want to become.

Two people presented with the same circumstances and same information will become different people based on the power of their imagination. I recently listened to part of a book called *The Four Hour Work Week* by Tim Ferris. While I didn't get a lot out of this book from a business standpoint, what I was amazed at was Ferris's power of imagination. He was able to become a Chinese cage-fighting champion by using his imagination. In this sport, there are various weight classes, and the weigh-ins occur 24 hours before the fight. Ferris was able to fight in a much lighter weight class by learning how to lose, and then gain, 25 pounds in less than 24 hours. Using his imagination, he was also able to exploit a rule that would disqualify his opponent if he pushed them out of the ring. We can win virtually any match in life if we apply our imaginations to the circumstances around us to figure out what we need to do in order to win.

You can either imagine the life and the career that you want or you can imagine the limits that hold you back from attaining your goals. That's how powerful your imagination is.

When you look around yourself, what you see is the life that you've created. Everything around you--the computer you're looking at, the desk you're sitting at, the home you go home to at night--is a result of your mind and your imagination. Whatever you want in the world, whatever you can imagine, you can create.

- Perhaps you would like to live in Paris and work there. If this is what you want, you can have it. I know people who have done this.
- If you're interested in living on the beach in Costa Rica and surfing every single morning, you can do that, too.
- You may be interested in working in a giant skyscraper in New York and screwing around with [financial derivatives](#). You can have that, too.
- You may want to be a rich and powerful [trial lawyer](#) who sues giant companies and makes hundreds of millions of dollars. If you want that, you can do this, too.

In fact, whatever you are interested in doing and having is possible. All it takes is using your imagination then forming plans to make it happen. Your imagination is the most powerful tool you have. When you use your imagination, you create a possible future for yourself. Your ability to imagine what you want is one of the strongest skills there is. You need to use your imagination, and you need to make sure you never stop dreaming about what you can accomplish.

If you're seeking a better career then you need to use your imagination. You need to think about what you want to become.

When I was at kindergarten age, I attended a school in Detroit, called the Waldorf School, which had some unusual philosophies about how people learn best and develop. One of these philosophies involved using your imagination. Every Monday morning, after the weekend, the teachers would sit us down and tell us about how they went to the forest that weekend and had all sorts of adventures with gnomes, dragons, and other creatures. This was absolutely fascinating for me as a youngster because the teachers would be quite serious about these various fantasies that occurred in the forests and other areas. The creativity they showed was absolutely amazing. Because I attended this school for some time, I really came to appreciate the value of imagination and what imagination can do for our lives. Quite simply, if you can imagine something you can really change the world.

Several years ago, I was in a career I didn't enjoy. I was practicing law and wasn't having a good time doing this. I started using my imagination to think about other things I would enjoy doing. I thought about what sort of career would best meet all of my interests and eventually, I was able to imagine a life for myself that met all of my goals. Just thinking about what you want and holding a picture of this in your mind is half the battle. Once you can imagine your preferred outcome, you can begin to achieve it. You can't begin to do anything, however, until you use your imagination.

Imagination is the most powerful and wonderful tool you have at your disposal. If you can use your imagination effectively, you can make the most out of any situation in front of you. You can succeed in any undertaking and make the most of your life when you know exactly how to use your imagination. The power we have to use our imagination is something that very few people take advantage of. Ideas and imagination are forms of energy we can choose to put to work or not. Our ability to imagine what can be is something that can accomplish a tremendous amount.

The power you have to really reach your full potential, change the world, and do whatever you want with your career is already in front of you waiting for you to use it. Very few people out there are able to tap into this power, and it is because of this that very few people ever to have the careers they're entitled to.

What interests me most about the world, and your career, is that you probably have the same opportunities in front of you right now that someone who is going to become an incredible success also does. What separates people who are the most successful in their careers is their ability to process the material in front of them with their imaginations. Different people will use the information out there and get different results using the same information.

When I was in college, I remember a particularly brilliant teacher of mine speaking to the students one day about the importance of looking beyond what they were learning and actually doing something with these new ideas. I had taken several anthropology classes with a brilliant anthropologist. His classes were simply fascinating and involved learning about "fringe" African rituals and all sorts of anthropological stuff that was fascinating. Sitting in his class made one feel like you were watching a cartoon while under the strength of some very effective hallucinogens. I would read and learn about African rituals involving piercings, animal sacrifice, shrunken heads, and other things that were absolutely fascinating.

After taking a few classes with this teacher, however, I realized that a lot of what really motivated him was showing people that there were massive groups of people in the world who were marginalized and needed to be understood. I believe that he had a real desire to help these people be understood, and through this understanding, help not only the people that were the basis of his instruction, but help his students learn to appreciate those around them more. In sum, I saw his work as actually something that was geared towards giving people in the world a greater understanding of what was going on around them. This was a very interesting and inspiring concept to me and is something that I learned a lot from because there are an incredible number of people out there who are not understood. I loved these classes because they pushed my imagination in different ways as I learned about people in the world I had no idea existed.

Just as there are people out there who aren't understood, you may not be understanding the world around you as well as you can.

The students who showed up for these classes were a special bunch. They were not the same sort of students who would show up for classes in economics, for example. The students in anthropology classes typically didn't wear button down shirts and were much more "granola" than the average students. They would immerse themselves in reading about and discussing various anthropological ideas, and most of them seemed pretty isolated from much of what was going on in the world outside of the ideas they read about. More to the point, they would sit in these anthropology classes, and no one outside of the professor and a few people would ever learn about their ideas or read anything they wrote. Many of these same students might continue on in their lives constantly reading about various ideas and discussing them with a limited number of people. Not much would ever happen with what they learned. The world would not be impacted by the ideas.

One day the teacher said something to the class I will never forget:

"You know, it's nice to learn about these ideas, but I really hope that some people here do something with the ideas you're learning. Most of you will never do anything with these ideas. If you're really concerned about underprivileged people, you should go out into the world and make something happen."

This idea really struck a cord for me because I knew what he was saying was absolutely correct. People can understand ideas, but it is a completely different thing to do something with these ideas. It is much easier to understand and appreciate an idea than it is to make something significant happen with that idea. Very few people ever do this.

One of the most ridiculous things I ever witnessed is people who sit around discussing ideas and spinning one idea around after another without doing anything. This is something that infuriates me to this day. I remember when I was in college seeing people sitting around discussing ideas without doing anything with them. In the dorm rooms, people would sit around discussing various ideas. Schools are filled with people who sit around discussing ideas and not doing anything with them. Out in the world, there are countless people who will sit around discussing ideas without ever doing anything.

In order for you to have the career and life you are entitled to and deserve, you need to stop thinking and start acting. You also need to use your imagination to think of exactly the person you want to become. The power of ideas about yourself, once you apply your imagination, is something that can literally transform your life and career. Very few people, however, understand the power of ideas and applying creative energy to these ideas.

Use your imagination to change your life. Imagine who you want to become, and then stay focused on this. Applying the power of your imagination to something is the most powerful and important thing you can do in your career.

THE LESSON

You can make the most out of any situation by using your mind creatively. Your imagination is your most important tool, and your strongest skill is your ability to imagine what you want. Imagine the person you wish to become and the career you wish to have, and stay focused on this vision. Use your imagination and never stop dreaming about what you want to accomplish.

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