

Ferraris Crashing Into Poles and the Importance of Focus in Your Life and Career

By [Harrison Barnes](#)

I read another article about someone in Los Angeles crashing a Ferrari into a pole today. The car was split in half. The driver of the Ferrari was Charles Lewis, a famous mixed martial arts fighter whose car spun out of control while he was racing a Porsche. Lewis' Ferrari was split in two after hitting a pole. Tragically, he was killed.

Right in front of my house several years ago there was another famous Ferrari crash. In February of 2006, Stefan Eriksson, a Swedish entrepreneur, lost control of his \$1,000,000 Ferrari Enzo sports car while driving along Pacific Coast Highway in [Malibu](#) and crashed into a pole at 199 mph as recorded on a speedometer by a passenger videotaping inside the car. The impact of the crash was so violent that the car was split in half. Incredibly, Eriksson survived.

The fact that people crash Ferraris shouldn't be news to you. There are tons of Ferrari crashes each year as the uber rich take these cars and make horrible mistakes driving them. What should interest you, however, is that people crash these cars into poles and split them in half. Think about all of the places these cars could crash into when barreling down the road out of control right before the accident. Why is it they always crash into poles? If you really think about this particular problem, you will realize that crashing into a pole is something that would be pretty difficult to do, even if you wanted to when jetting along at 150+ mph. Something is going on that makes all of these people crash into poles.

I know exactly why these people crash into poles because I have almost done something similar myself.

When I was younger, I was very interested in race car driving. Although I never went to race school, a good friend of mine did. My friend had always been incredibly interested in racing and his wife had purchased him a couple of days at Skip Barber racing school for their first anniversary. When I was around 27 years old, I purchased a used Porsche that was very, very fast and had the time of my life in the car. Like these men who had terrible accidents I, too, was guilty of some incredibly reckless driving.

I will never forget the lesson my friend taught me one day as we careened around a curve I'd taken at around 70 miles per hour. The back end of the Porsche started to slide and the car started to go out of control. I braced myself as we were careening right towards a pole. My friend started screaming:

"Don't look at the pole!! Don't look at the pole!!" I was headed right at the pole.

He grabbed my head and turned it in another direction. We kept skidding but he was forcing me to look in a different direction. As I looked in the other direction, I ended up turning the wheel accordingly. I don't remember exactly what I was looking at, but it was something else--I think it was a big piece of gravel and dirt to the side of the road. Sure enough, the car miraculously avoided the pole, and we went screeching in a huge cloud of dust and dirt right where my friend had turned my head. We stopped just fine.

I was almost one of those guys who crashed into a pole.

I was, of course, very curious about what had happened, and for the next several minutes, I spoke to my friend about it. He explained to me that the most important thing about racing is understanding how to come out of a skid. He explained that what he learned at racing school was that what most people do when they are in a skid is they focus on what they don't want to hit. He said that what ends up happening is the driver who is in a skid looks around them and sees the telephone pole or whatever it is and, despite the fact that it is the last thing in the world they would want to hit, they end up slamming right into it because they (1) pick it out and (2) it is the only thing they are focusing on. Instead, he said the only way to pull out of a skid is to focus on where you want to go and not what you fear.

He said you need to focus on where you want to go and not what you fear.

How does this relate to your career and life? It has absolutely everything to do with your career and life. The best way to get where you want to go in your career and life is to change what you focus on. What you focus on has everything to do with what will end up happening to you and where you go.

When you focus on the results you want, you are likely to go there. This is typically how you get where you want to go. When focusing on what you want and what you need to achieve your goals, you are going to be far, far better off than when focusing on what you don't want to achieve.

One of the craziest things happened to me several years ago with one of my employees. It's so crazy that I still can't believe it happened. It's something that's related to the power of focus and how powerful it can, in fact, be.

I had an employee who was really quite lazy compared to other people in the company doing the tasks. There were several other people in the company who were much harder workers and did a much better job, and this particular employee seemed to cause one problem after another. Since this guy wasn't doing much work, I started thinking that he might be better off working somewhere else. It was really not in the company's best interest to keep him around.

One day I was sitting in my office and he walked in and asked to speak with me. I was hoping he was going to quit. Instead, the guy sat down and asked for a raise. He started telling me what a [good job](#) he thought he was doing and how he was entitled to a raise. I listened to him for awhile and then told him I would think about it. The guy was clearly delusional, but I was taken back.

The same day he asked for a raise I was actually hoping to fire him; however, he had not been at all afraid of getting fired. Instead, he focused on what little work he was doing and decided that this made him entitled to a raise. This helped change my focus as well. "Was I really seeing things correctly with this guy?" I wondered. He had put the focus with him somewhere else.

This particular employee ended up diverting my focus away from his substandard performance for a period of time by getting

me to focus on something else. It actually worked for awhile, and it was a very effective tool because it manipulated me into focusing on something I hadn't been focusing on before. Instead of focusing on what was wrong with him, I started focusing on the little that was right.

You need to understand that your focus can have huge results in either a positive or a negative sense.

- When you focus on getting an offer, instead of not getting an offer, the offer is more likely to come to you.
- When you focus on not getting laid off, as opposed to being laid off, you are more likely to not get laid off.
- When you focus on getting a promotion, as opposed to not getting a promotion, you are more likely to get a promotion.
- When you focus on getting along with people, as opposed to not getting along with people, you are more likely to get along with people.
- When you focus on prosperity instead of the lack of, you are more likely to be wealthy.
- When you focus on being happy as opposed to being sad, you are more likely to be happy.
- When you focus on being talented rather than average, you are more likely to be talented.
- When you focus on being interesting rather than boring, you are more likely to be interesting.
- When you focus on being a hard worker as opposed to being an average worker, you are more likely to be a hard worker.

Whatever your focus, that is the likely direction in which you will go. This is just how it works and how it has always worked.

If you wanted to feel bad right now how would you do it?

- The first thing you could do is start thinking about all of the funerals you've been to of close people.
- Then you could think about all the bad relationships you've been in.
- Then you could think about all of the bad things people have said about you in the past.
- Then you could think about the biggest failures you've had in your life.
- Then you could think about how you're not that successful.

This would make you feel really lousy, right? I'm sure it would. It would be a real barrel of laughs! What do you think your mental state would be like after an hour or so of this? Do you think you'd be able to accomplish a lot due to these thoughts? Do you think it would be fun having these thoughts? Give me a break! This would be a complete nightmare.

But this is what a lot of people do with their lives. They focus on the negative, they focus on where they don't want to go and this is exactly where they end up going. This is so stupid! And yet, this is something we all do. You may be among people who concentrate their thoughts on negative stuff like this. A good part of the world does this all day long and every day. I'm sure you know a lot of people yourself who concentrate their thoughts like this. What a bunch of bologna!

If you wanted to feel good right now, you could do the following:

- You could think about your greatest successes.
- You could think about all the good things people have said about you in the past.
- You could think about all of the people who love you and you love.
- You could think about what you're grateful for.
- You could think about the future you want to have for yourself.
- You could think about all the good decisions you've made in your life.

Now that's what I am talking about! If you focus on the positive and things that empower you, that is exactly where you're going to go!

I am about to describe two types of people to you. I am sure you too know these two types of people because they are everywhere around us.

First, there are people who tend to look at every situation in a positive way. They look at people and assume they have a positive intention. They look at the world and see a happy and exciting place. They are, in a word, happy people. When you are around people like this, your experience of the world tends to be pretty good as well. It's enjoyable being around those who are happy with the world and whose focus is on positive things. When you see the world in this vein, you tend to feel less threatened and overall much better about everything that goes on around you.

Second, there are people who tend to focus on the negative. They focus on how this or that is impossible or very difficult. They focus on how people are mean and out to get them. They focus on the negative things that others have said. They look at the world as evil and are suspicious of it and what goes on around them. When you see the world like this, and spend time with these sorts of people, you tend not to feel that great about anything. Your experience of the world tends to be pretty bleak.

The sort of focus that got you to where you are today isn't the same focus that gets you to where you may want to be tomorrow, next week, or next year. Changing your focus can't happen overnight or instantly. It's like anything--you need to take small steps to get more cumulative changes made over time. However, if you change your focus, you are going to change the direction your life is headed. This is just how it works. Remember that where you focus is where you are going to go. Focus is what empowers you and gives you and your career power.

THE LESSON

Many people mistakenly focus their energy on things that they want to avoid, rather than the things they wish to achieve. Your focus ultimately determines where you will go in life and what will happen to you. The best way to move ahead in life, therefore, is to focus on your goals rather than the obstacles to them and the risks along the way. You need to take small, consistent steps toward changing your focus, and understand that it will not change overnight. Once you do change your focus, however, you will be able to change the direction and momentum of your career for the better.