

## Putting Yourself Out There and Your Heart, Body and Soul

By [Harrison Barnes](#)

I started my career selling asphalt maintenance door-to-door in Grosse Pointe, Michigan. Not only did I sell the service, but I did the work myself and then, over the course of several years, built up the business. In fact, it was something I planned on doing for the rest of my life until I made the decision in March of my senior year of college to take the Law School Admissions Test and apply to law school.

It's a funny thing about that test. On the day before I took it, I remember coming down with a violent sort of cold. No ordinary cold but a very violent cold that required me to bring a roll of paper towels (this was way beyond Kleenex) into the exam room. I was also drugged up on all sorts of cold medicines during the exam and remember having to snap myself out of it a few times when I realized I'd been staring at a wall during an important part of the test.

It was all I could do to make it through the test. I didn't do nearly as well as I had expected due to all the drugs and inability to sit still but I managed to do well enough because I found myself in law school that fall. This was even more incredible considering that when I finally got the results of the exam in May or so, the classes for most of the law schools were already full.

The next time I remember getting that sick was the day of the bar exam. On this particular day, I got a horrible eye infection that was so serious I could barely see. It started around 1:00 am the morning of the bar exam—which was extremely inconvenient because it meant that I didn't get any sleep. After an hour or so of writhing around in pain, my fiancé and her aunt drew a bath for me and proceeded to put washcloths on my face while I sat in a bathtub naked and embarrassed in the middle of the night.

After the first day of the bar exam (it's three days) I was met outside by my fiancé and rushed to a doctor. She had to take me into the bar exam the next morning and the situation was so dire that I could only see around one foot in front of me. All sorts of proctors were called into the exam room in order to make sure they were permitted to walk me directly to my seat. Because my eyes were the size of golf balls and oozing pus, the proctors were afraid to touch me and sort of poked me on the way to my seat.

Because I couldn't see in front of me well enough to walk around, I had the surreal experience of sitting alone in an auditorium that must have seated 2,000 people during lunch that day with a proctor sitting by me to make sure I didn't get up and attempt to steal exams.

When I went to the doctor after day two of the bar exam, the doctor managed to find some sort of infection, of course, and put me on a brutal dose of antibiotics that were so strong I was asleep within 30 minutes and woke up the third morning of the bar exam after having slept over 12 hours.

In thinking about those two episodes and the fact that they occurred on such dates, I can't help but think there was more to it than just coincidence: You see, I didn't want to become a lawyer deep down. In fact, I wanted to be an asphalt contractor but the forces of society, prestige, and so forth pushed me directly into the line of fire of law school and becoming a lawyer.

After getting sick at the Law School Admissions Test, I had spent years of perfect health until the morning of the bar exam. In retrospect, I believe my body must have been violently resisting a career path it simply didn't want. In fact, had I been an asphalt contractor, I would have spent the majority of my time outside and stayed in really good shape. I would have met all sorts of interesting people and probably would have spent the winters in Florida relaxing on sun chairs and having a good time.

In contrast, the life of an attorney involves sitting in large building on chairs 12+ hours a day (the more the better!), working with impossibly wound up people and being virtually prohibited from taking much time off at all.

In my first year of practicing law at a law firm, I was assigned a mentor whose job it was to stay in touch with me and be my "friend" in the law firm. After about nine months of practicing law, I had planned a vacation for a week—something that as far as I knew, none of the young attorneys I had started with had done yet. I had been working 12-18 hours in the law firm at least 6 days a week since I'd started. I was looking forward to a vacation. Around 9:00 pm the night before I left for the vacation the phone rang.

It was my mentor.

When I picked up the phone he started making some idle chit chat about this and that and then said something I could not believe:

*"I just want you to know that everyone supports the fact that you have decided to take a week off and go on vacation. Don't worry about it—it's perfectly fine."*

Worry about it? I wasn't worried about it. In fact, I was downright excited! But the fact that he was implying people supported me going on vacation really freaked me out. They did not want my body to rest! No wonder my body had freaked out before the LSAT and bar exam! It had a premonition that if I became a lawyer, it would be destined to be confined to a chair forever and be force fed caffeine to keep it going permanently. Being an attorney is hard on a body.

Moreover, I remember when that phone call came that I knew this was something I couldn't do forever. I had no desire to continue improving in it (although I knew I should) because the message of the phone call I received was this: *We are going to lose money without you working for a week but we like you and have decided it's ok.*

To me, this seemed like no way to live. You need to be doing something that your heart, body, and soul are invested in.

Prior to getting into law school, I planned on being an asphalt contractor for the rest of my life because it was something I

understood and knew could do well. There was only one reason I was successful in this business: *I continued trying various combinations of things until they worked.*

When I first started the business, I passed out flyers in various neighborhoods to see if people were interested in having the work done. My flyers looked good and they were printed on stationery; however, I still got very little response.

I would estimate that if I passed out 500 flyers, I would be lucky to get a few phone calls about the service. The people would call on the phone and I would go out and give them an estimate and they would say "we're getting several estimates ... we'll let you know."

Passing out flyers like this rarely turned up any work and after having done this for some time, I started to wonder if it was even possible to make a living doing this business. I wasn't getting the sort of response I was hoping for.

I became so frustrated by this that I decided the only solution was to dramatically increase the level of my brochures circulating in the mail. I went to a company called Val-Pac and started sending out 20,000-30,000 announcements about the asphalt service. Despite having sent out all these announcements, I only received two phone calls. I was absolutely astonished by the complete lack of interest.

At this stage of the game, most people would quit. In fact, other people I knew had started and gone into the business when I did ended up quitting around this time. They thought it was too difficult to get work.

They were absolutely right.

Going around and passing out flyers and mailing them was a difficult way to get work. When you did this, you had to hope that the consumer might be interested in you and if they weren't, you were out of luck. People are trying to sell things to people all day and why would someone want to buy what I was selling anyway?

The thing about passing out flyers, however, is that it's a good way to avoid rejection. You don't have to be there when someone takes a look at the flyer and thinks to themselves "*I have no interest in this. No thank you.*"

Even when the person calls you in for an estimate you do not have to feel bad when you don't get the job. They tell you "*We are getting several estimates. We will let you know.*"

When you do not get the job, you simply think to yourself that *the person must have got a better price, must have known someone*, and so forth. Your thoughts basically revolve around the fact that whatever happened, it wasn't your fault.

As time went by, and I continued passing out more and more flyers, I quickly realized this wasn't for me. I figured that the more I passed out flyers the more estimates I would be able to give but that, overall, I would never make a great living doing things this way.

It's no fun sitting by the phone waiting for it to ring with good news. This, however, is what so many people do. They sit by the phone, by the mailbox, by the email—waiting for some good news to come about. They just wait and they wait and they wait.

I am going to digress for a minute into a topic that may offend you but I don't care. When I was in high school, there was a guy in another school—literally thirty miles or so from my school—that was rumored to have slept with something like 120 different girls. In fact, he slept with a new one every single weekend. I couldn't believe this! The more stories I heard about him, though, the more I realized it must be true. When I saw how he did it with my own eyes, I realized that it was true!

One day we picked the guy up to take him to a party. He walked out in a jump suit with a towel around his neck. He lived in a poor part of the town and wasn't particularly good looking or tall and had no incredible features one way or another. He wasn't bad looking, though, and he was personable.

Since I didn't go to school with this guy, I didn't really know him. I just had been hearing stories about him for years. When we got to the party with him, I noticed the most interesting thing: He went up and talked to every single girl at the party—I mean every single girl. Most of the girls had heard about his reputation and blew him off; however, even if one blew him off earlier in the evening he would come back later and try again. He spent HOURS doing nothing but going from girl to girl to girl.

My friends and I generally stood around talking at parties not too far from the beer and spoke only to the girls we already knew. For example, we might each speak with a total of five or six girls over the evening. This guy who had allegedly slept with 120 girls would speak with at least 50!

Every time he spoke with a girl, he would refine his approach a little bit and see what was working. He would try something new and then something else again. At the first party I was with him, he indeed went home with a girl. The next party I was at where he was at, the same thing happened. In fact, it was true — it always happened. The guy was an absolute master.

Years later, when I had started my fledgling asphalt business, I thought back about this guy. There was a method to his madness. He wasn't afraid to talk to girls and, in fact, he spoke to every girl he possibly could. He was like a machine and never stopped talking to them.

I decided at some point that it made absolutely no sense for me to continue sending out all of these flyers to people. I needed to find people and convince them to do asphalt work with me. I wanted them to use me and I needed to get out there and hustle instead of sitting around hoping that the phone would ring. The only way I was going to make the most of my business and my life was to take action and just start talking to everyone I could.

I had a little ritual I would follow before I would go out. I would take a shower and iron a shirt and my shorts. I would make sure I looked as good as I possibly could. I would even wash my truck to make sure it looked good. If I had any, I would throw on a bit of cologne. I wanted to make an incredible impression.

Then I would go door to door in the best neighborhoods to sell my asphalt services.

I immediately noticed it was working much better than the old way I was selling my services. At first, I would tell people about the service and attempt to interest them in it and many people would purchase it. But it wasn't all that easy. People would say things like:

- Can you do it in three weeks on a Thursday?
- Can you do it next Sunday when we are out of town?
- You can do it but I want to wait until the Fall.

The reason I was selling and getting more work was because *I was showing up and asking personally for the work.* However, the reason I wasn't selling as effectively as I could was because I wasn't doing a good enough job "closing" and I was allowing others to control when the work was done.

I then changed my approach. I started telling people I would be on the street tomorrow and if they didn't want to do it, then I couldn't do it. I told them that in return for allowing me to do it the next day, I would charge them half of what I normally would charge.

My business went through the roof. Practically every house would do it. I would start out selling the stuff at around 6:00 pm and by 9:00 pm most evenings I would have at least \$5,000 worth of work for the next day. It worked like a charm.

It was all because I (1) got out there and (2) learned to change my approach.

Just like the Casanova kid I observed (who by now has probably slept with *thousands* of women).

So what does this mean to your career and life?

The first lesson is that you need to put yourself out there to the maximum extent you can. You need to be seen and you need to be vulnerable. When I was passing out flyers about my asphalt business, I wasn't being as vulnerable as I could have been. When I was dressing up and going door to door, I became vulnerable.

It's only when we make ourselves vulnerable that we can begin to reach our full potential.

The Casanova that "got along" so well with so many women would have never done so had he not talked to so many people.

I never would have succeeded in the asphalt business without talking to so many people. You need to get out there and meet people and continue doing it. You just cannot stop getting out there if you're looking for a job.

As I write this, I am getting ready to go running on my treadmill and read the paper. Since the job market isn't in good shape at the moment and I read several papers a day, I am confident I will see another story about someone who is unemployed and has been for months. The stories are always the same. Usually they show a photo of someone sitting in a dark room with a pizza box and a television looking depressed. The story will say something like:

...Over the past nine months, Jim has sent out some 29 job applications and only gotten two interviews. He is close to giving up because he sees no improvement on the horizon:

"Employers are just not interested," he says..."

I am sure you have seen these stories in the paper too. This is ridiculous. If Jim got up and went door to door talking to every employer he could he would get different results.

Just like I got different results.

Just like Casanova got different results.

You need to get out there. If you are just applying to jobs on job sites, you may get results—but imagine how different the results would be if you went door-to-door. I can assure you that you might piss some people off (I did selling asphalt), you might get some rejection (Casanova certainly did), but you will end up better in the long run.

Maybe you feel you are in a profession where you cannot go door-to-door like this (even if you are in law or medicine). If you truly believe this, then use the phone. The more "in your face" you are with your job search work, the better the results you will get.

In order to face so much rejection, though, your heart needs to be in whatever you are doing. This is a must.

You need to be doing something you like. If you're not happy in what you're doing, or if you're not meant to do what you are doing, you're never going to have the passion and desire to really make the most of yourself. You need to be 100% behind what you are doing with your heart, body, and soul.

The Casanova interested in women? His heart was in this "work".

Me becoming an attorney? My "heart" wasn't in this work.

Your career? Your heart needs to be in the work.

I've always been somewhat interested in "body work" which is massage therapy and so forth. I've been through many professional massage therapists but have found that there are some really exceptional ones out there. There are people who have been giving 8-10 massages a day for 25 years and who really understand the body—when you work on bodies that much you develop 'intuitive' understandings about the body.

The best professional massage therapists have always told me that I need to "listen to my body." By this they are saying you need to see how your body is reacting to the situations, people, and so forth you are around. When you are in the correct situation, you are likely to be much happier and better off than when you are not. When you are not in the correct situation, your body will tell you.

The reason your heart, body, and soul need to be in your work is because when you go out into the world to do that work you are going to face rejection. The best people in any profession are those who aren't afraid to take risks and put themselves out there. You need to be willing to face rejection all the time. You are going to get a ton of rejection when you believe in something. You are always going to get lots of rejection.

Tons of it.

One of my favorite stories about rejection is found in Chapter 2 of the book [Think and Grow Rich](#) where Napoleon Hill writes: As this chapter was being completed, news came of the death of Mme. Schuman-Heink. One short paragraph in the news dispatch gives the clue to this unusual woman's stupendous success as a singer. I quote the paragraph, because the clue it contains is none other than DESIRE.

Early in her career, Mme. Schuman-Heink visited the director of the Vienna Court Opera, to have him test her voice. But, he did not test it. After taking one look at the awkward and poorly dressed girl, he exclaimed, none too gently, "With such a face, and with no personality at all, how can you ever expect to succeed in opera? My good child, give up the idea. Buy a sewing machine, and go to work. YOU CAN NEVER BE A SINGER."

Never is a long time! The director of the Vienna Court Opera knew much about the technique of singing. He knew little about the power of desire, when it assumes the proportion of an obsession. If he had known more of that power, he would not have made the mistake of condemning genius without giving it an opportunity.

Several years ago, one of my business associates became ill. He became worse as time went on, and finally was taken to the hospital for an operation. Just before he was wheeled into the operating room, I took a look at him, and wondered how anyone as thin and emaciated as he, could possibly go through a major operation successfully. The doctor warned me that

there was little if any chance of my ever seeing him alive again. But that was the DOCTOR'S OPINION. It was not the opinion of the patient. Just before he was wheeled away, he whispered feebly, "Do not be disturbed, Chief, I will be out of here in a few days." The attending nurse looked at me with pity. But the patient did come through safely. After it was all over, his physician said, "Nothing but his own desire to live saved him. He never would have pulled through if he had not refused to accept the possibility of death."

I believe in the power of DESIRE backed by FAITH, because I have seen this power lift men from lowly beginnings to places of power and wealth; I have seen it rob the grave of its victims; I have seen it serve as the medium by which men staged a comeback after having been defeated in a hundred different ways; I have seen it provide my own son with a normal, happy, successful life, despite Nature's having sent him into the world without ears.

You need to desire to succeed in whatever you do and make sure it matches exactly who you are and want to be. Your heart needs to be in what you do and you need to be behind it 100%. If you are not behind what you are doing you are going to fail because in order to succeed in your job search and career, your heart, body and soul need to be in the game.

### **THE LESSON**

You must desire success in whatever you are doing, and make sure that desire matches who you are and want to be. Put your heart into what you do, and be behind it 100%. When you go out into the world, you will inevitably face rejection; having your heart and soul invested in your chosen career will help you overcome this rejection and keep pushing forward towards success.

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