

# Be Passionate

*Loving what you do makes the doing enjoyable.*

*People are attracted to those who have passion about their work.*

*Your WHY is defined by your Passion.*

You immediately know when you are in the presence of someone who is passionate. We are drawn to them. They are so damn crystal clear about why they do what they do, and they do it with vigor. Without question, when you find that in someone and you know their craft, you will always recommend them. Passion is referable! There were people in my life that I would hire and hang out with because they were so passionate about what they did.

My dentist, now retired, was a man who was practically obsessed with doing the best possible work. He loved the craft of dentistry and strove to be the best at it. I always felt I was in the best hands when sitting in his chair. Prior to Danny, I hated dentists and was horrified by the thought of having work done. I was sad to see him retire. His replacement was skilled, friendly and competent, but her passion simply did not match her predecessor. I became indifferent and returned only out of habit, for lack of knowing a better option.

There's an accountant I knew who I would highly recommend. He was passionate about the Income Tax Act. He loved every single line of the act, studied it and lobbied for improvements. To him, spreadsheets were foreplay and the lines in tax returns were like porn. When injustices bubbled up and our government made major changes or threatened them, he became vocal and highlighted the poor judgements of politicians. He vociferously defended Canadian business owners and would quote every single word in the Act – knowing it better than any policy maker. I never personally needed or used his specific service, but his passion for the

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work would lead me to recommend him to anyone who needed him.

Lastly, we had a man who worked in my past investment firm as our company receptionist. That's right - a middle-aged man ran our reception desk in a typically misogynistic industry and heavily conservative Canadian Caucasian clientele. He was from the Caribbean as well, which meant he stood out in a big way in a brokerage firm in Calgary. He loved that everyone meeting him for the first time was a bit surprised. Not only did our firm seem progressive, he gave us no choice. Dexter was the most passionate person you would ever find when it came to his desire to make the customer experience memorable and special – for every single client who walked into the lobby. He woke up every day with a positive energy and enthusiasm about his role in making the day special for everyone he met. His passion was contagious.

The words artistry and craftsmanship are synonymous with passion. The pursuit of personal achievement through what you do and ongoing drive to excellence cannot be realized without passion. Uncover yours and express yourself. Show passion to your customers, your family, and to yourself and your ideas. Live with passion for what you do and embrace the energy it provides. Passion is addictive. Keep a clear mind as you indulge this in your business. Don't fall in love with your passion if no one else will buy it. Passion alone can make you poor.

## **Leading with passion can produce great outcomes.**

Paul Alofs, the President of Canada's HMV enterprise in the early nineties, had had vision and successfully carried HMV Music through the changing times in the retail music industry. The company increased its revenue from \$30 million to \$200 million. In his book, "*Passion Capital*", Alofs quantified passion as energy plus intensity plus sustainability. He went on to describe seven basic principles to which passion must be applied to generate a spark and wrote that passion capital is the foundation upon which all other forms of capital are built.

I largely agree with Paul and ultimately believe that without passion there is mediocrity. This should instill caution for the enthusiastic entrepreneurs in the crowd. Alofs didn't have

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success simply by being passionate about what he did. He took very measured steps to apply his passion to successful business-building principles. Beware: passionate people go broke all the time. It isn't enough to be passionate; you must execute smart, effective, money-making ideas well. People must clearly understand what your passion is through how you share it, communicate and the actions you take. This must be unmistakable.

## Passion + Purpose + Action = Success

My passion for coaching was so strong it forced me to change the direction of my life, just as I was reaching a peak in the growth of my investment business. Day after day, I could not focus on managing money when I only wanted to guide people and share the wisdom I had gained over decades of experience. When I was just starting to make the transition to coaching and was writing my third book – the precursor to my own GROW GET GIVE life, I shared the ideas I was passionate about with my business coach, James.

As a result of the success I enjoyed serving the non-profit industry and growing a profitable investment management business, I had been mulling the idea of shifting to build niches for entrepreneurs and helping them give back — two areas I was very passionate about. I wanted what I had a passion for to be right there for everyone to see. In my efforts, I created what I thought was a catchy acronym for my passion program. I called my idea *DYN&MIC* training — “*Dominate Your Niche & Make It Count*”. I sat with James in his home. He first had a look on his face like, “What?!?” He then asked me to explain this in 30 seconds... well, I began some long-winded explanation about how niche building is powerful and entrepreneurs need to learn this and when they become rich they can give the money back. And I would be the person who would train them. All this might be true, but boy, did my explanation land with a thud. I was passionate about my intentions, but it was clear no one would get it. We needed to simplify and clarify. People would never invest their hard-earned money in what I couldn't explain — just because I lived it with passion and believed it would be good for them.

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The objectivity my coach brought to this allowed us to come up with my original Big GROWTH Big IMPACT. It said it all. I helped people get big growth and make a big impact. That's what I was passionate about. Helping entrepreneurs GROW their business, GET more freedom for them, and GIVE back to their community. My passion was undeniable, but until then, I had no idea how to present it.

## **Passion is crucial, but passion that connects is powerful.**

*“If you don't have your dream, then others won't be able to have theirs.”*

*- Rudy Rutiger,*

*focus of the biographical movie, “Rudy”.*

It all comes down to passion. It is what drives you to move forward, to dive into a subject or market, and inspires lifelong learning. If you're not able to connect your passion with a vision of the future in a way that is better or ideal for you, then you are not able to pursue it. If you learn how to share it clearly with others, they will be able to benefit and enjoy their dreams as well. Your passion will support them, lifting them up, enabling them. Without the passion of you pursuing your dreams, you can never help others to pursue theirs.

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# Build a “Mountain of Credibility™” and Carry A Magical Business Card

Stand atop your mountain — become credible in the eyes of your customers. Authority positioning is a blend of experience, expertise, and perception. Your experience allows you to position yourself in markets where your expertise can be leveraged by customers who perceive you to be the most credible authority on the subject. Building your Mountain of Credibility™ can be done in many ways and you must start now if you wish to secure your position as the subject matter expert in your field or market.

To build and climb your own mountain of credibility is the key to gaining top of mind positioning with your prospects and clients. It really is like “scaling the peak of a mountain”. In the 60+ years since Sir Edmond Hilary and his Sherpa, Tenzing Norgay, were the first to reach the summit of Mount Everest, over 4,000 people have successfully done so, over 300 people have lost their lives attempting, and literally billions of people have never even tried. When someone says they’ve climbed Everest, we are still in awe of the achievement. In fact, that adventurer becomes instantly credible for somehow more than just the physical act of climbing the mountain. They become credible for things outside of their area of expertise. For example, if they were mingling at a conference of jellybean flavor testers and were asked their opinion of the chemical blend that makes bubble gum flavor possible, anyone within 20 feet would stop to listen to their insights on the matter. It is amazing.

If someone reputable from the community or a celebrity introduces this mountaineer, their credibility rises even higher. Reaching the top of the mountain in a marketing sense is extremely challenging. From speaking, to writing articles, to appearing on radio or television, to being interviewed or endorsed by an expert or celebrity, there are many ways to begin the climb to credibility. However, despite thousands of books being published every year, writing a book still

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creates instant credibility and places the author at the very peak of the mountain immediately.

## **The accomplishment of having written and published a book presents you as a perceived authority on a topic.**

It is something so many people want to do and hope to, but writing, finishing, and publishing a book eludes most of those folks. Everyone has a book “in them” but proportionately, few get one “out of them”. In this accomplishment, people are impressed. Oprah took this acknowledgement to a whole new level and redefined how a celebrity endorsement of a book written by you will place you on the highest peak as the recognized authority. I won’t lie, while it sounds very simple, it can be extremely difficult to write a book.

I found that simply putting words on paper was not too challenging ... and even organizing thoughts and ideas wasn’t that difficult either. But knowing when it was done and being able to finish a book was the real trick. How many times have you heard someone say they have been working on a book, but you never see it completed? The only thing harder than starting to write a book is finishing one. It doesn’t have to be an epic, or the century’s greatest novel. To be effective for building credibility, it must be a complete, sensible and topical book. When asked about some of his “smaller” books, my business coach, James always responded to the typical critic by saying,

*“The tiny little book I wrote is a heck of a lot better than the book my competitors didn’t write”.*

There are hundreds of thousands of authors published with books already written and thousands more each year. The thing about authors is in order to write their book, they had to do the research. Thus, they have become an authority on that subject. When it is a published work, people recognize and respect this for its completion. Finally, a book is content. Content is in huge demand. Quality, helpful content is invaluable. An author makes themselves a valuable resource for others who seek to learn more on a subject, or market one.

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Early on, when I was working to establish myself as a credible authority in the planned

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giving and estate planning space by cold-calling and introducing my thoughts on why a charity or endowment needed to work on their governance with such a smart guy as myself, I got nowhere.

As I mentioned, when the stock market crash of 2008 hit, I decided to devote my energy to re-directing capital to charitable causes and guiding those charities to better manage their capital. As story after story of poor fund management and decision-making were revealed - with charities losing up to half of their investments during that time - I decided I would be the one who wouldn't allow that to go on any longer. To better prepare them for the next time, I first wrote a white paper on the biggest challenges of the time faced by my target clients (charities and their endowments struggling to attract funding during a recession).

Before I wrote my first book, "*Philanthropy; an Inspired Process*" in 2010, I was still struggling to gain a foothold in the non-profit marketplace. I was an investment advisor trying to help them while working closely with their donors. For sure, I was perceived as the fox in the henhouse. They distrusted my profession, my peers and me. The executives at the charities I wanted to help did not know me; they were fearful of the risks they did not understand and aware of the painful evidence and headlines pronouncing the consequences of poor decision-making. In order to have them decide, I needed to reach the influencers – the board of directors – to share my knowledge and ideas for a better process.

Traditional marketing – cold-calling, word of mouth and chasing warm leads - did not open the door wide enough with this market. The negative perception was too great. I needed to capture their attention as a useful resource.

Then, I wrote my book on the philanthropic journey taken by famous iconic philanthropists and donors moving from involved giving to committed philanthropy. It became the most meaningful "business card" I had ever possessed. Almost instantly, I gained credibility. I was invited to speak at numerous industry events and conferences. I was interviewed on the radio, in magazines. I was able to invite executive directors of charities to meet me in my office! I also received numerous opportunities to present to the board of directors of organizations I wanted to

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work with. Getting their ten minutes was elusive before.

Writing a book seemed magical. And it was. It was because it was hard. There is respect for the effort and an understanding that you've done the difficult work to become the authority. The only more credible endeavor would be to write two or more books and have a highly admired television celebrity endorse your book. Always remember: the book you write is exponentially more powerful than the one your competitors won't write.

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## **BONUS Top Secret!**

### **Carry a magical business card**

The author stands at the top of the Mountain of Credibility™. Your book places you in the upper echelon of accomplishment. Authors are revered for the accomplishment. I have the pleasure to meet Jack Canfield and speak with him personally. He is the author of *Chicken Soup for the Soul* and the co-founder of one of the biggest book franchises on the planet. He knows about the power of books and being the author. To be the author is to be the perceived subject matter expert.

*“When smart people want to find answers they go to books, and when they want to hire the expert, they hire the author”.*

### **This is paramount wisdom gleaned from Jack.**

### **His company has half a billion books in print worldwide!**

I learned this firsthand when I was struggling to work with charities and the donors I could help. It dawned on me that to be recognized as a helpful advisor who boards of directors would engage with or listen to, I had to demonstrate my credibility. I had to get invited to educate them

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on what I did and why it was important. So I wrote white papers and they proved to be my “gateway drug” to writing my first book. Upon completion and publication, the results were magical.

Presto! In markets or in board rooms I had been shut out of before, I was welcomed. Those few minutes of attention needed to become introduced as a valuable resource to my prospective clients was offered to me and inevitably it was extended to 30, 60 or 90 minutes. Being an author was no less than a miracle in marketing my unique offering. It became the unquestionable reason why I was “in the room” and it changed my business, my revenue and my life profoundly. With complete conviction I can say that my book created tenfold growth in an expedited time for me. Without it, all marketing and my effort to sell would have been a never-ending grind and the timeline to success would have seemed to be forever.

J. Conrad Levinson wrote one of the first influential books on marketing that I read. “Guerilla Marketing” was a staple on the shelves of entrepreneurs everywhere in the 90’s. When asked about the power of books and “how much he made from selling his books”, Levinson responded that he made \$10 million! He said he had only sold about \$35,000 worth of books, but that he made and estimated \$9.965 million from the sales of courses, speaking engagements, services, products, etc. that came as a result of his book. That was the magic of writing a book for him. It can be your reality too.

Once you’ve written one, you will want to write another and another. If you are an entrepreneur moving into new markets and creating unique offerings, it will be something that you do every time you make a shift. My second and third books were part of my evolution from charity advisor to charity and donor consultant to entrepreneur and business coach.

My fourth was a collaborative effort to deepen my expert positioning and my last three-book set – this one – was used to re-introduce myself as a valuable coach while expanding into new markets. All my books placed me at the top position as an authority in my chosen market and continue to act as the best business card I have ever owned. Handing a new prospect or contact or future partner your book – instead of that 2” x 4” hunk of cardboard – is the most

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effective and magical first impression you can consistently make.

Be an author.

## Focus On Your Unique Ability

What is it that makes you unique? Arguably it is locked up in your DNA, your fingerprints, your eyes. Physiologically speaking, there are many ways we are naturally different from one another...yet in basic carbon composition, very similar. Psychologically, the combination of our genetic make-up influenced by the environment and personal experiences throughout our lives offers us more diversity.

How we view the world and interact with it become traits that enhance our existence. When people can focus their energy on these things, they stand out. In business, they differentiate themselves from others. That is when you see some shine.

Too often, identifying what it is that makes us unique eludes our attention. When we are not aware or do not focus on what we do better or differently than others in business we are left wondering how our competitors seem to frequently attract the right people and opportunities to their lives while we don't.

Kathy Kolbe, renowned for her work in what is called "conative" skills identification and measurement, launched a rating system called the Kolbe A Index™. It provides a rating of the Four Action Modes® she identified that represent human instincts used in creative problem-solving. The premise is simple.

*If you hope to get the most out of people, place them in situations and careers where their strongest attributes are used.*

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Their natural behavioral tendencies will likely provide them more engagement, more possibilities for success, and greater passion for their activities. The Strategic Coach™

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program's first step for all new members is to have them take their Kolbe A Index™ test. This gives their “students” an excellent idea of what they should be focusing on to begin their coaching experience. There are four key areas identified. They are:

- 1) “Fact Finder” – detail and complexity, providing the perspective of experience.
- 2) “Follow thru” – deals with structure and order, and provides focus and continuity.
- 3) “Quick Start” – deals with originality, risk-taking and uncertainty.
- 4) “Implementer” - deals with physical space and ability to operate manually, and provides durability and a sense of the tangible. In fact, coaching members even walk around with name tags that have their Kolbe scores noted right on them. This behavioral testing focuses a person on what The Strategic Coach™ labelled the concept of “Unique Ability”.

There are many methods of testing your personality and behaviours, ranging from the Myers Briggs test, to Tom Rath's “Strengths Finder”, and more. I have found the Kolbe A Index™ to be the most revealing when it comes to entrepreneurs and business. I require all my clients to take the test, and you won't get past the first interview working with me unless you have taken the test either. Finding out your “score” doesn't tell us everything we need to know.

However, we must combine that behavioral knowledge with our skills, experience, and practical applications of what it is we do and the industry we work within. Identifying what you do, how you do it, and what you are naturally inclined to do matters.

A person who is attracted to systems and processes and feels better crunching numbers on a spreadsheet is not the person you look to drive innovation in the organization. Their contribution might be integral to innovation, but their role would help the visionaries in providing the background and data needed to make sound judgements. Knowing your strengths and learning to embrace them and exploit them will help you rise to more success. Do not resist this.

We are often taught from an early age to focus on enhancing our strengths. However, kids, students, and often adults who become narrowly focused and “obsessed” with specialization are ostracized. They are considered out of touch with everyone else, or ignorant of what others are

doing or feeling.

Then another shift occurs, and an emphasis is placed on addressing weaknesses. Somehow there is a belief that applying energy to improve the things we're worst at is better invested there than applying the same – or less – energy to that which we do well.

The words “well-rounded” have become a compliment, though one could argue that it basically means average, or status quo. To be well-rounded in a social or emotional context is probably a good quality; in fact, it is a huge advantage in life, generally. But when it comes to the skill or thing you do best, specialization is incredibly valuable.

In my life I have been a poster child for the jack of all trades, master of none. I was very good at everything growing up. I was good at sports, good at music, good at academics and good at relationships. I never focused on and developed specific areas I had real talent for — mostly because I couldn't figure out what my real talent was. No one helped me figure this out either. I would say I was a high achiever ... not an overachiever.

Because of this, I wish I did something differently. Later in life I learned my Kolbe A Index™ score. It was 2-3-10-2 and it placed me in very select company. Had I understood this as a young adult, I could have realized powerful results realized early on.

Knowing it was natural for me to pursue multiple opportunities, adapt to changes and synthesize many ideas or concepts to come up with action, might have led to incredible success early on in life. Otherwise I simply “dropped” things and moved on, out of boredom or lack of fulfillment or even lack of focus. My coaching purpose is to help others discover their unique qualities and embrace them. For me uncovering this in a formal and conscious way did not happen until my forties.

You will find throughout this book and in my storytelling, there are many times that I reference our children. One of the reasons is that they provide so many life lessons, but the other is that their lives have focused around the unconventional. Their passions and pursuits as well as unique skills have led them to explore career paths that are highly specialized. In my last

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book, I discussed school and grades.

As much as we desire our children to be “well-rounded” students, we expect their top grades and focus at school will be on the skills and learning that best positions them to explore their unique abilities, while allowing them the chance to excel in those areas. Interestingly, their grades in all subjects rose when they spent more time focusing on improving their best attributes.

When people focus their energy on their strengths, they build perseverance through enjoyment, to pursue their “thing”. They develop habits and skills to excel at them. Those habits get applied to every other area of their lives and they then see improvements in other areas.

Our daughter Madison exited elementary school with a diagnosed learning disability significantly affecting her math and reading comprehension. She worked with tutors, applied herself conscientiously and developed incredible behaviors and skills to enable her to learn.

Six years later, she ended high school with marks in the 90%'s and early acceptance into film school as a result. She focused on her unique ability to “do art” and specifically, special effects makeup artistry. She has become self-taught and developed to a level of professional quality before formal schooling, because she understood how to excel by focusing on her unique “thing”. The habits she has put in place will carry her through her lifetime as her professional skills develop. Focusing on her unique ability got her noticed and selected for more opportunities for excellence in the areas that come naturally to her and which she is passionate about.

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