

Earn a CEO's income part-time in pajamas:
*An inside look at success coaching,
the new career phenomena*

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Introduction

Imagine how fabulous your life would be if you could roll out of bed and go to “work” in your pajamas -- feet up-- in your most comfortable chair. You spend your day helping wonderful people improve their lives. There is no question that you are making a positive difference in the world because you see the results. Then to top it off you set your own schedule and get paid handsomely.

It may sound too good to be true. But it's not! I do it and you can too.

You see, every true professional needs a coach. Ask any great actor, investor, athlete, speaker, golfer, politician, artist, or trial attorney. Uninspired amateurs don't hire coaches, but motivated professionals do. That is how they stay on the top of their game.

The business world may be overflowing with opportunity, but that doesn't mean it is an easy place to be. Despite years of effort and struggle, many entrepreneurs and independent professionals have seen their dreams evaporate. For some, financial independence, quality time with loved ones and confidence in a bright future are more elusive now than when they launched their businesses. Instead, they find themselves trapped in a bewildering maze by the demands of 21st Century daily life.

As a success/business coach, it is my job to lead these modern day heroes out of the labyrinth of unmet expectations, compromised schedules and the feeling of working too hard, for too little, to the path of high achievement.

Clients hire me because they want to grow their businesses, raise their

income ceilings and reduce their work hours. Like Hercules, they are driven to capture the Minotaur, take the bull by the horns, and obtain more control, more time, more money and ultimately more joy from life.

In ancient myths, my role is that of the old man, beautiful maiden, wily serpent or accidental stranger who provides the missing link that gives the heroic journey new direction. Although I wear the modern guise of a success coach, it is the journey *within* and the conquering of the self I consider most important -- because it is one's inner life that ultimately determines his or her happiness. Consequently this book is as much about priorities, fears and feelings as it is about time management, marketing and sales.

This book is written with two objectives in mind:

The first is to provide real-world, practical solutions for professionals and small-business owners who want to grow their businesses and/or get more out of life.

The second is to introduce and encourage the concept of coaching. Every entrepreneur can benefit hugely from having a good coach. And I cannot imagine a more rewarding, fulfilling vocation for experienced people seeking to expand their existing counseling practice, or start a new career. Aside from being a great career, coaching is excellent "retirement" work.

Before expanding my business in order to show others how to do what I do, I literally made a CEO's income with feet up, in my most comfortable chair, chatting to people I like who trust and cherish my advice -- part-time in pajamas.

This book replicates one day in my life as a success coach, based on real

life examples and coaching calls. Names, situations and occupations have been changed to uphold my pledge of confidentiality and the privacy of my clients.

The book divides naturally into two parts. The first offers tools to improve personal clarity, control, focus and productivity. The second zeroes in on the aspects of growing a fruitful business.

While this book is written for people who want to build a new career as a business or success coach, it should be extremely helpful to business owners, managers and independent professionals.

This book is packed with advice that will help you succeed. You will learn what you need to know about creating outcomes, getting people unstuck and solving problems-- issues that business owners and executives face on a daily basis--- while directing the big picture. Life coaches who want to increase their client retention will also find the information in this book most valuable. (The cost of hiring and maintaining a business/success coach, just like having a good accountant, is essential to most smart executives. A "life" coach, like a personal trainer, is considered by many to be a luxury.)

A success coach is in the business of building dreams and seeing to it that they come to fruition. The Priority Living coaching system gives people tools for providing the structure, accountability and support they need to get them where they want to go.

I hope to add your success stories to the hundreds I have already received from people who have used and applied the simple, effective tools offered in this book.

Acknowledgements

The tools in this book have been refined and synthesized from many sources and multiple disciplines over the years. I would especially like to acknowledge the work of the following authors, innovators, researchers, trainers and consultants whose work has significantly impacted and improved the Priority Living Coaching Process and the contents of this book: Jay Abraham, David Allen, Alice Bailey, Richard Bandler, H.P. Blavatsky, Kathleen Burt, Joseph Campbell, Caroline Casey, Robert Cialdini, Kendrick Cleveland, Sean Collins, Roger Dawson, Carolyn Deal, Charles Faulkner, Michael Gerber, Carl Jung, Dan Kennedy, Marc Le Blanc, Dr. Bruce Lipton, Shelle Rose Charvet, Jose Silva.

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Part I: From Chaos to Control

How to Recognize Opportunity Disguised as Loss:

Kevin's Crises Call

The digital clock on the stove read 12:07 p.m. as I walked into the kitchen, still wearing my bathrobe with "Muse" embroidered on the breast pocket.

I scanned the refrigerator for something quick and easy to eat. No luck.

There was just enough time to shower, dress, answer e-mail and review my notes before my 2 p.m. teleconference.

I started up the stairs, but the jarring ring of my private phone line drew me back to my desk. Calls on this unlisted number were rare, and unscheduled ones went directly to voice mail. But despite my tight schedule, something compelled me to pick up the phone.

"I don't know if you remember me from the insurance convention you spoke at last year," began the unfamiliar voice. "My name's Kevin Pritchard. Peter Sanchez suggested I call."

I knew Peter well. He was highly respected in the financial services community and I had put on several sales training programs for his firm. He had given Kevin my private number -- that was enough of an endorsement for me.

"Of course," I replied. "What can I do for you, Kevin?"

"Peter suggested I talk to you about career opportunities. He said you know a lot of people, maybe someone who is looking for someone like me ...?"

He took a deep breath. "He suggested I look into what you do ..."

"Just out of curiosity, what is it that you think I do?"

"To be honest, I don't really know ..."

"A lot of what I do is about asking the right questions. Why don't you begin by telling me a little about yourself and what is going on in your life now?"

"I guess you could say I've been downsized," Kevin said with a touch of irony. The hit had taken him completely off guard. Obviously he was still trying to comprehend what had happened and why.

He had worked at the same company for 30 years and his track record was impeccable. In the beginning, he had loved his job. As the years passed, the environment had become increasingly harsh and demanding. But he stayed and dug deeper. Sometimes he imagined leaving for a brighter space, but he remained on the job, never dreaming he could be knocked down so suddenly and with such force.

The jolt had come the previous Friday, right before the Fourth of July weekend. Kevin was on his way out the door when his supervisor summoned him to the conference room. He probably should have recognized the ambush when he opened the door and saw the human resources director and the CEO seated at the table. But he didn't.

Now, dazed and jobless, he was struggling to make sense of his situation -- and wondering if it was even worth a try.

Kevin spoke eloquently about his life and his career. At the core he seemed strong and determined, but there was something shaky and fragile

beneath. I thought of the old oak tree across the street, struck down and uprooted during Hurricane Andrew. The longer it was down, the less chance it had of surviving. Kevin had been hit hard and he was struggling to get back on his feet. Time was running out. I was glad I had answered the call.

“I think I understand how you feel¹, Kevin.” I said. “I remember feeling the exact same way when I got fired ten years ago.

“I was trying to close a big case that would have meant millions for the company. I needed to meet with the client and was waiting for a top executive on our side to sign the agreement. I had struggled for months to put the deal together -- but we were about to lose it because some corporate soldier was afraid to take responsibility and sign the paperwork. So I marched into his office and pleaded with him passionately. And guess what happened?”

“What?”

“Not only did I *not* get the signature, but a few moments later I was escorted off the property and fired -- without any severance pay.”

“On what grounds?”

“Insubordination.”

“Insubordination? That’s not fair!” Kevin exclaimed.

“Perhaps. I was devastated. But you know what? In the end I found that it was one of the best things that ever happened to me.”

I was moving Kevin into a more receptive state. I knew that in order for him to accept any advice, he would have to be emotionally ready to receive it.

¹ The feel/felt/found method, demonstrated here, is an excellent way to empathetically “reframe” a situation or address an objection.

“Perhaps it’s difficult to imagine right now,” I continued, “but I have worked with dozens of people who experienced similar setbacks. Each and every one of them would tell you that what felt like a major loss at the time turned out to be one of the best things that ever happened to him or her. I suspect that your layoff will be one of the best things that ever happened to you, too.”

“I hope you're right,” Kevin sighed.

“Hope? Let’s look at the situation from another point of view. Imagine a friend you know, someone you truly care about, who is unhappy in his job². Know anyone like that?”

“I know a guy just like that, as a matter of fact.”

“Good. Get a strong image of him in your mind's eye. . .”

“Okay. . .”

I continued: “He works nights and weekends, always exceeding company quotas, and even though his clients love him, the big promotions go to someone else. From time to time, other companies try to woo him, but his loyalty is too strong and he sticks with the old job. His talent and experience are not utilized the way they should be, but he justifies it all by focusing on his steady paycheck and the 401K plan. Every day he goes to work early and stays late -- day in, day out, doing something that bores him for people he does not respect.

“Now you know this guy really well -- he has so much to offer, he is literally oozing potential, overflowing with knowledge. Not only is your friend smart, he is also very caring. And everyone he works with, including his customers, thinks

² When people change their perceptual position, their feelings change. Here I am getting Kevin to use the “observer” position. In a later chapter other perceptual positions will be demonstrated.

he's great. And yet there he stays, immersed in drudgery, wasting his gifts...

"Now imagine if you could reach into that scene and direct his life, what advice would you give him? What would you want to tell him to do?"

"To get out NOW!" Kevin replied without hesitation.

"Exactly. That's what I would say, too. What if *you* are the one in your friend's position? How does it alter your best advice?"

"It doesn't, really."

"It seems to me that given the choice, you would choose³ to get out now. And now you *are* out. Interesting, isn't it?"

"I suppose you're right," Kevin said. "But to tell you the truth, I'm scared."

"Of course you're scared. I was, too. And I found that the butterflies I feel in the pit of my stomach whenever I think about doing something bold remind me of being a kid at the county fair."

"The fair?"

"My favorite ride was the Big Dipper. It was a big, scary roller coaster and I loved the thrill of it. And even though I loved it, all the while I was standing in line and waiting for my turn to walk through the gate, I would have those same butterflies. That feeling was really about anticipation. And now when I notice that feeling of anticipation, it's much easier for me to walk through the gate and get on the ride.

"And so now I'm wondering, what does your feeling feel like?"

"Uhhh ... I don't really know."

³ People feel powerless when they are in a situation over which they had no choice. Here I am attempting to help Kevin regain a sense of control by giving him a choice.