

Rules of the Game

By Burt Dubin

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We're talkin' about the game of being an expert at your specialty. These rules are unforgiving. Break them and a remorseless force simply sweeps you off the board, clicks you off the screen-and you're not even history. You're nuthin',baby.

Abide by these rules and you smile all the way to the bank. I started out not even knowing there were rules. Within 4 years I'd lost my little all. \$235,000 eaten up, gone -beyond recovery. Money talks, right? Well, mine was never to be heard from again!

I learned these rules the hard way. You can too. You can learn the hard way. Do you really choose to do that? Nobody cares. Nobody will care. It's your life. Now that I've had a chance to think about it, I prefer the easy way. I'd rather learn from other people's goof-ups. So, let's get started.

Rule 1: Have something of value to offer your market. Something you're passionate about. Something that comes from the marrow of your bones. From your core From your gut. From your essence. From your soul. And when you offer it, be it. Allow it out of your pores, out of your heart, out of your deepest feelings and beliefs. Let it shine from your eyes, be reflected in your stance and your glance, radiate from all your fingertips. Yes, from your eyelashes. Be on fire! Be so enraptured by what you offer that you magnetize your clients to your service or product.

Rule 2. Be a marketer first. (Marketing, defined: Marketing is creating conditions by which others decide on their own that they want what you've got.) Be a marketer first-and then a deliverer of what you offer. Many fine professionals and business people do not survive because they think the world is going to welcome them with open arms. Sorry, no cigar. This is a painful lesson. You either gotta be so dazzling, charming, entertaining, gorgeous, brilliant that your prospects all but lose control, are beside themselves, go ape in your presence-or be a good marketer. How to market is beyond the scope of this short piece. By whatever means, you just gotta attract those in your universe to desire what you offer.

Rule 3. Have integrity. Integrity that is absolute. Would you go driving in a car with a tire that wouldn't hold air? Would you go sailing in a leaking boat? Would you eat a spoiled fruit? When the skin of a fruit is broken open, the fruit begins to rot right there. Nature insists on integrity. Is integrity any less important in your commitments to your prospects and clients?

Rule 4. Be exclusive. Be one-of-a-kind. Be a specialist. Create your unique market position. Be special in your corner of your world. Be the only game in town. Know more about your specialty

than anyone else on earth. And don't tell me you can't do it. You can. I know you can. Your creator endowed you with a unique talent. A talent nobody else has. Engage it!

Rule 5. Associate with brilliant achievers. People who are reaching for lofty outcomes and dedicating themselves to worthy attainments. To outcomes that make a vital difference for others as well as themselves. People who are super-positive. People who build you up by their presence. Shun ordinary work-a-day types who lack a sense of their latent magnificence.

Rule 6. Invest in Brand You. In this, my 22nd year in business. I continue to invest tens of thousands of dollars in research each year. Not just dollars. Time. Probable 20 to 30 hours each week in pure research. Why? So I can stay on the cutting edge. And, not just time. Focus. Energy. Asking why? Contemplation. Meditation. Looking inside. Looking outside. Looking away. Here's the idea; Make yourself such a unique resource for the market you serve that there simply isn't a #2. Be so far out in front that others who would compete with you can't even shine your shoes. This is what I want you to do. You do it by using the brains your God gave you.

Rule 7. Find your North Star. Set your compass by your North Star. Your North Star is your personal mission. The North Star allows mariners to set their course and stay on course. That's what your personal mission does for you. Have a personal mission. Put it in writing. Be sure it is transcendent. You know your mission is transcendent when you awaken one morning realizing you no longer have your mission. Instead, your mission has you. You're caught up in the rapture, the energy, and the power of your mission. You're a mission samurai. A warrior.

Now you're hooked. Hooked to the magnificent destiny you've created for yourself. From this moment on you have a new and vibrant energy. It's always been there. Waiting inside you. Waiting for you to release it.

Measure your every decision against your mission. Whatever action serves your mission is good. Actions that do not advance your mission are to be avoided. Create a mission. And a Mission Statement. Put it on your office wall, your refrigerator door, your bathroom mirror. Live it. Live it vividly. Let it govern your every action.

Rule 8. Set specific goals. Measurable goals. Goals with deadlines. Goals that advance your mission. Then take the bit in your teeth. Go after those goals ferociously. relentlessly. Let setbacks strengthen your resolve.

Rule 9. Get debt-free as fast as you can. The wisest experts agree on this. Get out of the plastic trap. Then, invest your profits for the long-term.

Rule 10. Make yourself one of the best anywhere: "Be more of what you are. Be all of what you are. Do what you love; do it with your whole heart. Do it with passion and a clear vision of where you are going. And a commitment to become excellent and the courage to face your fears and to be realistic and honest with yourself and to take complete responsibility for your future. And if you do that and if every morning you wake up and hit the ground running you will be outstanding in your field!" (Brian Tracy)

Rule 11. Raise your fees. Be worth more than your fees. Many specialists and experts lack the courage to set fees that reflect the real value they deliver. This insight shows you why: Most specialists, 83%, according to Tom Waininger, are the K-marts of their business. 17% of specialists are the Tiffany's of their business. Which are you to be? Be the best, the very best, at what you do. And charge accordingly.

Rule 12. Get yourself a coach, a mentor. Get the very best you can find. Then trust this

person. If you can't trust this person, get somebody else. Open up. Tell your mentor where you've been, where you are, where you want to be. Get an expert in the field you've set your heart on. Someone who understands. Someone who has been around the track a few more times than you. Listen to what your mentor says. Abide by your mentor's guidance. And march on to glory!

Burt Dubin, a 20 year veteran of the business of speaking, coaches and mentors speakers and wanna-be's world-wide.

Burt works with people who want to be speakers and with speakers who want to be masters. The words of his clients, the admiration and respect expressed for his work by some of the world's most successful speakers, testify to the values he delivers. For samples of his wisdom, simply go to his web-site, <http://www.SpeakingBizSuccess.com> . Down-load some of the 12 FREE articles and 20 FREE newsletters.

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