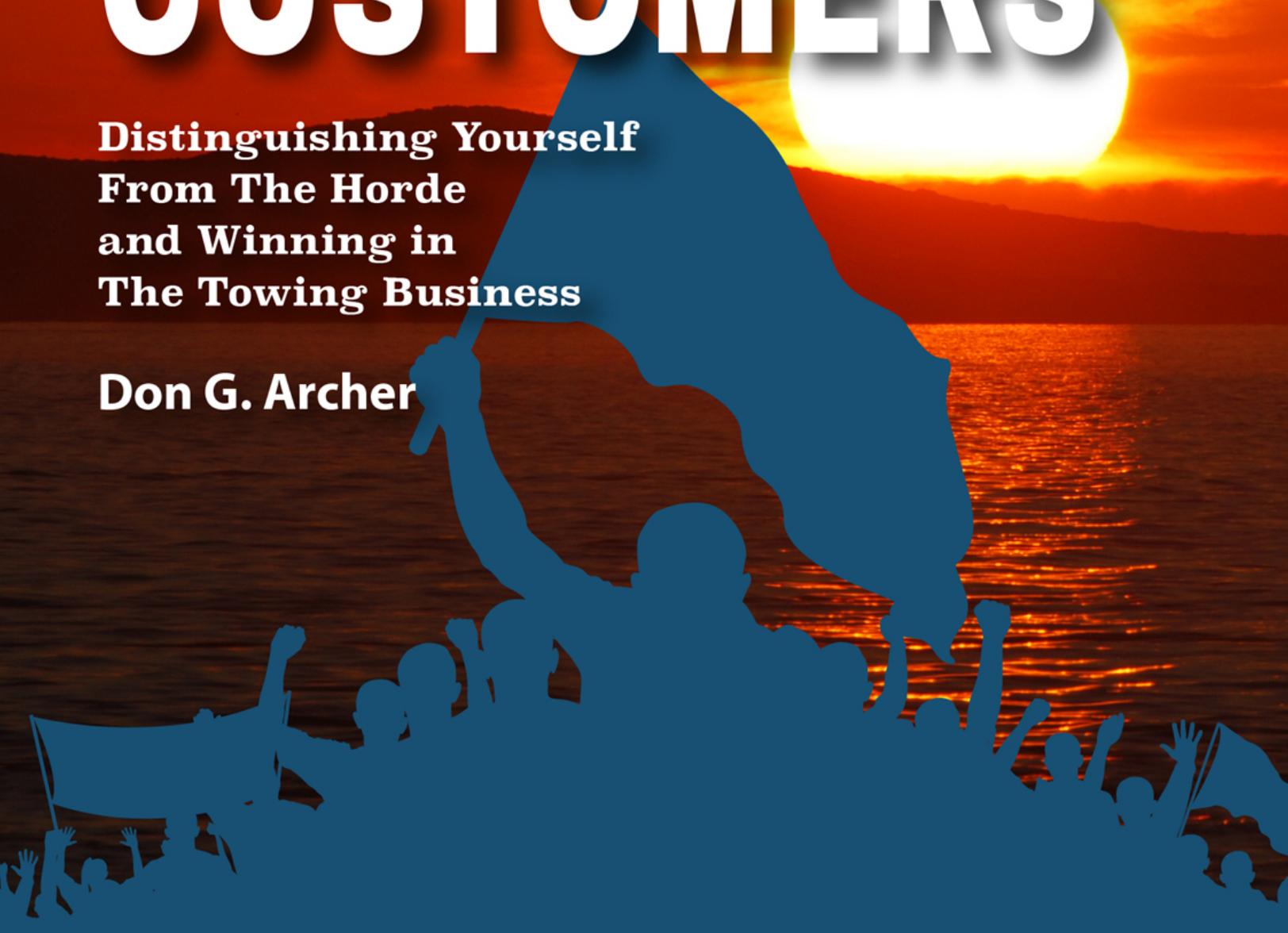


# HOW TO ATTRACT A DEVOTED THROG OF **FANATICAL** CUSTOMERS

**Distinguishing Yourself  
From The Horde  
and Winning in  
The Towing Business**

**Don G. Archer**



# How to Attract a Devoted Throng of Fanatical Customers

Distinguishing Yourself from The Horde and Winning in The Towing Business

By Don G Archer  
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# How to Attract a Devoted Throng of Fanatical Customers

By Don G Archer

## Introduction

*“If people believe they share values with a company, they will stay loyal to the brand.”*

**Howard Schultz, Starbucks.**

I’m not a big fan of Starbucks coffee, and no, it’s not because of their \$8-dollar coffees, it’s mostly because they want you to bend to their will and use their terminology. Instead of “medium,” it’s Grande, and “Tall” is actually small. Makes no sense. And, I’ll contribute one little value-added twist to Schultz’s quote. If people admire the company owner and want to emulate him, they’ll trip over themselves to help him achieve his objective.

Schultz’s quote, with my gracious addition, simplified means, if your customers respect who you are, and what you value, most likely they’ll want to see that you get ahead. So, the question, of course is, how is this achieved? How do you attract a devoted throng of fanatical customers? So, to answer the question of “how to attract customers to your business,” let’s first explore why some people naturally attract others, and some do not.

When I was a snout nose brat in elementary school, I guess you could say I was average. While I had a hand full of friends that I hung out with, and played with during recess, I was by no means one of the “popular” kids. On the playground, and during gym class is where the social order was determined.

There were the kids at the top, like, Terry, who was ahead of everyone athletically...and, whose name children chanted during dodgeball. And, then there were the Napoleon Dynamite types at the bottom, who were socially awkward, no matter the situation. No one told us where we stood, we just felt that we belonged somewhere so that’s where we gravitated.

Why did we feel we belonged (and must stay) somewhere in that social order? Because we were then, and still are today preoccupied with how others perceive us. And, if taken too far, this preoccupation can cause us to take every petty offense, or negative comment to heart—and wear our fear of rejection on our sleeves, like an ugly Christmas sweater. A beacon for all to see.

School children are like animals in the wild hunting for prey. They’ll sniff out any weakness in others, so that their own flaws and abnormalities are deflected, and they’re left alone. Conversely, if they happen upon a bright, confident, schoolmate, one who seems to have it all together, they’ll want to ride on their coattails. They’ll do almost anything to be around the

“Cool Kid” because they would rather fly with eagles than be seen talking to turkeys. This is because they feel inadequate.

Unfortunately, these feelings of inadequacy don't simply go away once children reach adulthood. Sadly, in most people, the feeling of “not being enough,” lingers and even intensifies until the day you die. And why not? With all of the great, fabulous things we see happening to other people, 24/7, on social media, and television, you can understand why most people feel inadequate.

Nobody's posting about the negative things that happened to them. The divorce is kept hush-hush, and you certainly don't want anyone to know you got fired because you took too many sick days. (I'd like to see that Facebook post.) So, everyone, except you, looks like they're doing great in every area of their lives. But, they're not.

If you haven't figured out by now what this has to do with attracting a ton of loyal customers, I'll break it down for you. Because of these feelings of inadequacy, most people have a strong desire to be around, and do business with people who are confident, know what they want out of life, and who are making a day-by-day conscious effort to get it. Unwittingly, most people are believers in “success by association,” much more than they are believers in themselves. That's why celebrities are so fawned after.

And, while it is true, that who we become has a lot to do with who we allow into our lives, you still have the ability to achieve great things in your life on your own. I'm sure that when you were younger, your parents complained about one of your friends or maybe a girlfriend. They were doing it to keep you from going down the wrong path. Of course, this is not a new concept. It's even in the Bible. Proverbs 13:20 says “Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.”

So, how do you become someone who others want to associate with and do business with? To begin to answer that question you need to first understand where these feelings of inadequacy come from. No one is born feeling unworthy. It's only after our evil brain has matured—just enough, that it attempts to attach meaning to things that happen to us—that we begin to feel inadequate.

If, as a child, you felt fear or anxiety, depending on the circumstances, your mind might have told you that the feeling you were feeling was because there was something wrong with YOU. Rather than understanding that whatever was making you feel fear or anxiousness as the problem, you internalized it instead. And, you may still carry wrong assumptions about yourself to this day.

Feelings like, “If someone doesn't like me, there must be something wrong with me.” Or, “If I'm treated with cruelty and disrespect, I must be a bad person.” These feelings are not facts, they are simply learned interpretations of events felt with intense emotion. And, they produce severely limiting false beliefs about yourself.

Even though you may believe that circumstances beyond your control are the reason you don't have what you want, the reality is, the false feelings are to blame. These feelings have turned into limiting beliefs about your abilities and yourself. And, they're why you're not where you want to be.

How do you get rid of these limiting beliefs? Well, you could spend some time in therapy or read a lot of self-help books. You could practice recognizing a false belief when it comes into your head, and then dispelling it with mental exercises. All good ideas. But if you want to quickly do away with all of the fear, doubt and anxiety in your life you need a plan for how you want your life to be. You need to work on moving toward something that's bigger than yourself. You need an objective.

You have power beyond your comprehension, and you don't need anyone's permission to unleash it. Sure, you've had past failures, we all have. I've made mistakes in the judgement of people and business opportunities, and it's cost me tons of money. I've made decisions I wish I hadn't and spent too much time running down, what turned out to be worthless rabbit holes.

The key to unleashing your power is three-fold. First, you need to focus only on past successes, and use them as a steppingstone to future successes. Second, when a memory of a past failure enters your mind, replace it with a memory of a past success. Finally, you must decide on a single objective and immerse yourself in it.

## Chapter 1: Immerse Yourself in Your Objective

*“The key to success is to focus our conscious mind on things we desire not things we fear.”*

**Brian Tracy**

An objective is a single achievable outcome that is not ambiguous. And, in my opinion, having an objective is much more important than simply having a goal. While goals are valuable, to me, they seem too squishy. They’re like a wish than can easily be changed, dependent on the circumstances. And, although rolling with the punches can be appropriate at times, (especially when you’re in a fight, which you will not be whilst immersed in your objective) making course corrections whenever it is deemed necessary can take your eyes off of the prize. Which is not what you want.

### **Why an objective instead of a goal.**

When I started my first business, I didn’t think in terms of having a single objective. Instead I had a goal of wanting to provide for my family and wanting to make a lot of money. The implications of which, I would later find out were enormous. First, with vague goals such as these, if I experienced difficulties that were too burdensome, I might simply quit and get a job (which didn’t happen.) And second, without a direct plan or path to achieving this goal, I might change course many times (which did happen).

I know you may not believe it now, but time is much, much more valuable than money. And, with too many course corrections, I lost a lot of valuable time. I eventually gained focus, but had I believed in obtaining a single objective years ago, I would be much further ahead than I am today.

On the table below, courtesy of [www.rapidbi.com](http://www.rapidbi.com) you can see the difference between Goals and Objectives.

<b>Goals</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
Broad in scope	Narrow in scope
General intention or direction	Specific or Precise
Intangible or “soft”	Tangible
Abstract	Solid or Concrete
Can’t be easily measured/validated	Can be easily measured/validated
Large in size	Chunks
The end	Ends in themselves
The result	The means to the end
The whole	Part of the whole, often with milestones
Longer-term	Shorter-term

With an objective, having a narrow scope forces you to focus on what exactly you want and what it takes to get there. Of course, you may have a grander goal that you'll eventually want to reach one day. But it's my belief that you can only reach your goal by achieving measurable objectives along the way.

Say you have a goal of wanting to achieve success in the towing industry. Well, the term "success," is vague and open-ended. What, specifically does achieving success in this endeavor constitute. Does that mean you have 12 trucks, 20 employees and work for 5 law enforcement agencies? Not necessarily but achieving those objectives can lead to your overall success.

And on the website [www.diffen.com](http://www.diffen.com) you can find this table the defines the difference clearly.

	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Objective</b>
<b>Plan:</b>	Broad plan	Narrow plan
<b>Action:</b>	Generic action	Specific action
<b>Example:</b>	I want to achieve success in the field of genetic research and do what no one has ever done.	I want to complete this thesis on genetic research by the end of this month.
<b>Measure:</b>	Goals may not be strictly measurable or tangible.	Must be measurable and tangible.
<b>Time Frame:</b>	Longer-term	Short to medium term
<b>Meaning:</b>	The purpose toward which an endeavor is directed.	Something that one's efforts or actions are intended to attain or accomplish; purpose; target.
<b>Principle:</b>	Based on ideas	Based on fact

With an objective defined you can determine specific actions require to achieve it. This then means your objective must be measurable. How else will you know you've achieved it.

Coming up with your objective is as simple as asking yourself what you want. Unfortunately, answering that question, for most people, isn't so easy. As mentioned in the introduction, most folks carry a ton of useless baggage with them. Which means that many feel they're limited when choosing an objective. But, the reality of the matter is that you are only limited by three things.

1. Your imagination.
2. What you believe you are capable of.
3. What you believe you deserve.

In the book, "Built to Last," the author, Jim Collins coined the term BHAG, which stands for "Big Hairy Audacious Goal." The idea behind the use of the term is that, if your goal isn't big enough and challenging enough, you'll go off on a tangent and look for something else. But I believe that because of the aforementioned feelings of inadequacy, many never achieve their goals. Simply, because their goals were too big to begin with.

Of course, have a goal, but once you do, determine one (1) single objective you need to accomplish, in order to move toward that goal. A single objective that is worthy of your time and attention, but that's also achievable. And, this is important, it must be something that consumes you fully. I mean, you must want it more than anything else in your life.

You must be so obsessed and immersed in your objective that your friends, and even your family take a back seat to the objective. That's not to say that you shouldn't be concerned with your family's well-being, quite the opposite. What you are doing is *for* your family. You want them to have nice things, right? You want your kids to go to the best schools, and live in a comfortable, safe neighborhood, right? Well to have those things and be all that you can be for your family, you must stay hyper-focused on your objective.

In the opening quote of this chapter, Bryan Tracy 's quote talks about focus and fear. Upon immersing yourself in your objective, you will inevitably experience challenges and setbacks. You're going to stumble, and when you do, fear may creep into your heart. Fear of all the hard work, fear of not being enough, and even fear of success. (It's a real thing I'll talk about in a minute.) And, these fears will cause your mind to wonder about some other shiny, seemingly easier opportunity. And, when this grass-is-greener moment occurs you may consider that new opportunity to be a better choice than the road you're currently on.

Let me stop you right there. I've been there many times and can tell you that no path is better than any other. It's the person on the path, it's your determination to make this thing work that makes the difference. So, when these moments inevitably occur, shake your head and focus your attention on your objective.

## **Fear of success**

Fear of success can occur when you have simply experienced a bit of success already. And, in that moment you realize that, to reach the next level something's got to change. In the towing business, this next level may mean that you'll need to take yourself out of the truck. But, being in the truck is how you got where you are. So, without realizing it, you may push back. This pushing back can come in many forms, not calling on new customers, not marketing your business, and refusing to accept that your employees are just as capable as you.

Understand, everyone who has ever accomplished anything worthwhile has done so in levels. When passing through these levels they encounter and overcome one self-limiting belief after another. During this progression, they fear that making each new change may cause the whole thing to collapse, like a house of cards. But, once they've experienced success more than a few times it gets easier and easier. So, when this happens to, when you feel the urge to push-back, just remember, if you're not growing and changing, you're stagnating and dying.

## Your first objective

If you want to build a 6 or 7 figure towing business, the first thing you need is money. Now, you might be saying, “Don, that’s exactly why I want to get into the towing business, because I want money.” I know...it’s like the kid, fresh out of college who goes job hunting, but no one will hire him because he has no experience. How’s he supposed to get experience if no one will give him a job?

In an upcoming book, I dedicate an entire chapter to the decisions necessary, and the steps to take to determine the amount of investment required to start a towing business—in a given area. Here, I’ll provide the highlights of that chapter.

Let’s say you want to start a consensual towing business, with one truck, in a town with a population of 100,000. And, we’re going to assume that there are no city ordinances which prohibit the overnight parking of commercial trucks on residential streets. This means, you can run your business out of your home.

What you’ll need to get started, assuming you already have real-world experience doing the job.

<b>What</b>	<b>Money required</b>
Flatbed Tow Truck & Equipment	\$30,000 to \$60,000
Insurance	\$10,000 annually
Marketing	\$800 to \$3000 monthly
Household living expenses	\$0 to \$5000 monthly
Miscellaneous expenses	\$500 monthly

So, depending upon your circumstances. The type of truck you can find, how much you invest in marketing, and whether or not you have a wife who whose income pays all the household bills, you’re looking at expenses between \$55, 600 and \$172,000 the first year in business.

Of course, if you market yourself properly and there is sufficient demand for your services, you may reach your breakeven point much faster. Which means that, if you continue your progress and begin turning a profit faster rather than later, the revenue generated by the business will pay the expenses, and then some.

So, I suggest that your first objective should be to SAVE, EARN, INVEST—so that you have enough money to start your business without needing to depend on anyone for assistance. If you already have the resources, i.e. money, to move forward, good for you. But, do not assume that just because you have the money required to get started that it alone will attract a throng of loyal customers. You need to work on your intent...which we’ll get into later.

If you choose instead to borrow the money or believe that you can operate on a shoestring to win, you will be putting yourself in a very precarious situation. Not only will your stress levels be heightened but attracting a devoted throng of fanatical customers will be almost impossible—Because you'll need their business.

You'll be like the kid who desperately wants to be friends, and who will thus be repelled by others, because they will sense your neediness. It will come through in your speech, in the way that you move, and in everything you do and say. You'll most inevitably be perceived as being needy, which is the exact opposite of what you want.

Remember, most people have feelings of inadequacy. And, because of this they want, need, desire to be friends with people who have it all together. And, when you don't feel confident in yourself, simply put, you don't have it all together.

You don't want to be in the unfavorable position of needing the work, just so you can pay the bills. It's not healthy. And, I know this principle may seem like a conundrum to you. Because you're operating under the assumption that you need customers more than customers need the services your company provides.

It is my goal that, once you're finished reading this book, you'll have a better understanding of the value you provide, and more specifically why you don't want to have the stench of neediness on you. But, first let's take a look at the value of pursuing an objective.

## **The value of pursuing an objective**

When I was in my early 20's, I worked in a warehouse that distributed shoes. I worked on what was called "Piece Work." Which basically meant, the more orders I filled, the more money I would make. And, I believed, I was very good at it. But I would soon learn I could do much better.

Here's what happened. My wife and I were living from paycheck to paycheck, not knowing any better, until one day she told me she wanted to buy a house. So, we went house shopping, with zero money. Not a good idea.

Within a few months, we found a home that worked, and, after much handwringing, and hemming and hawing, we decided to sign on the dotted line. The good part about this particular purchase was, we didn't need to finance it through a bank because the owner was willing to finance it herself. Which was good, because also we had no credit.

To finalize the deal, I needed pull together \$500 for the earnest money, which—to my amazement I did. But, the really had part was, another \$2300.00 was required at closing, only 30 days away.

I want you to understand the gravity of the situation. We had no money in the bank, (I'd just handed over our last \$500) we had no one we could ask for help, and we couldn't get a loan for the down payment.

But I did have one thing—An objective.

I needed to take action to reach a measurable target within a specific amount of time. And, not achieving this objective held specific measurable consequences. Namely, losing my earnest money, disappointing my wife, not buying the house, and quite possibly being sued for breach of contract.

So, with my objective firmly branded into my psyche along with the consequences of not achieving it, I set out to get the money. And, what happened next, I didn't really expect. I became a changed man...a man on a mission.

First, I no longer concerned myself with the same unimportant things I had before. I stopped hanging around with friends, I didn't watch television, and I didn't participate in petty workplace gossip. I didn't have time.

Second, I learned that I had it in me work to harder than ever before. Before I decided to pursue this objective, I averaged about 8 shoe orders per hour at my job. Which, as I mentioned earlier, I thought was a good number. But, with my objective in mind, I began filling an average of 12 orders per hour.

And, it didn't stop there. I worked overtime, and even got a second job working for a disaster restoration company. But, as the days passed, and closing drew closer and closer, I could tell we weren't going to put together enough money to close the deal. Even with my newfound enthusiasm, the overtime and the extra job — I was going to fall short of my target. So, I considered selling the only car we had and begin biking to work, but then something amazing happened.

I'm telling you the God's honest truth, when I say, I believe the universe conspired to help me achieve my objective. You see, at the time, we lived in Jefferson City, Missouri, a town on the Missouri River. And, that year torrential rains and other factors caused the river to come out of its banks. So much so, they called it the flood of the century, or a 100-year flood. Because, it hadn't been that bad for 100 years.

Unfortunately, it negatively impacted many of the low-lying areas. But the good part was, because of the flood, the disaster restoration company I worked for became swamped (forgive the pun) with work. And, my boss offered to put me on 30% commission if I would bust my hump to help him get caught up. Long story short, before the month was through, I pulled in an extra \$1200 dollars. Which put us over the top, and we were able to buy the house.

T.E. Lawrence is quoted to have said, *"All men dream but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds wake in the day to find that it was vanity; but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may act their dream with open eyes to make it possible."*

I believe there is an invisible force in the universe that somehow detects when a person is proactively trying to do a thing. And that, once you commit, not just with words, but with actions, eventually things start going your way. But, if you reach a place where you feel comfortable, and cease moving forward, learning and trying new things to get what you want, this invisible force moves on.

So, don't stop. The focused setting and achieving of one objective after another is what will keep this force working in your favor. Of course, you're going to encounter challenges along the way. You'll hit walls that seem to be insurmountable. You'll run into people who will discourage you from your efforts, calling them impossible dreams. But, for the most part, they're only telling you that you can't do it because they fear that, if you do achieve it, it will make them look bad.

## **Dealing with doubt**

Many people choose not to pursue an objective because of doubt. Doubt can take many forms. It can be in the form of a nagging little voice in the back of your head that says, "Are you sure that this is the highest, best use of your time." Doubt can be sprinkled into your consciousness from a well-meaning friend or relative. "Are you sure you can do it?" And, doubt can arise when you experience a minor setback.

To avoid allowing doubt to stop you from achieving your objective you must recognize one thing that happens when it pops into your head. When doubt shows up, you're going to envision past failures and associate these past failures with your ability to achieve your objective. And, if you don't quickly replace those images of past failures with images of past successes you can easily be swayed from the pursuit of your objective.

The good news is this, and it's why I believe I have been successful. Once you are committed to achieving your objective and begin taking massive action toward its attainment, as I've said—the universe will conspire to help you. And, once you have achieved that first objective, this will give you confidence in your ability to pursue and achieve more and bigger objectives. Just like dominoes falling, one after another, with more and more objectives set and achieved, your confidence will compound. It will double than double again and again until there's nothing you can't achieve.

## Chapter 2: Distinguish Yourself from The Horde

*“Be willing to use yourself to get out there.... If you have to make a fool of yourself, make a fool of yourself, but make sure that you end up on the front pages, not the back pages. In time, it's possible that your company will stand out from the crowd, and you'll be successful.”*

**Richard Branson**

The two major reasons why most people fail to get what they want are, negative thinking, and not having a purpose. When combined these can cause you to feel helpless. In the towing industry, this feeling of helplessness manifests itself in the phrase, “feast or famine.” The phrase is intended to describe the nature of this business. Meaning, “Sometimes you’re so busy you can’t keep up, and other times, you’re struggling just to pay the bills.”

However, this seemingly innocuous phrase has deeper negative implications, of which I’m sure most who use it are unaware. If you believe your livelihood lies in the hands of invisible forces, then consequently, you think you’re not in control of your life. How disempowering.

One way to distinguish yourself from the horde of other tow company owners in your market is take responsibility for the fact that you have complete control over both your income and your expenses. Most tow company owners, and I suspect most business owners in general, do not accept this responsibility. Instead, they take profits from their business and waste them on things that they believe will make them happy. In most cases, it’s homes, cars, and other consumer items.

Rather than thinking how best to use the profit from their efforts to ensure there’s always more coming in the door, they wine and complain when the money-flow stops. Then they slap a label this occurrence calling it, “feast or famine.” Consequently, they have nothing set back when a rainy day, in the form of repairs, damages, or low demand—rears its ugly head.

But why? Why do the majority of business owners stick their heads in the sand and refuse to take responsibility for their business’s success? I believe the reason, in part, is because they don’t have clear intentions around what role their business truly plays in their lives, the lives of their customers, and the community as a whole.

Most people are so wrapped up in distractions and other people’s opinions of their thoughts and actions to even consider what their own intentions are. Couple that with the aforementioned feelings of inadequacy and you have an army of ADHD pseudo-entrepreneurs wondering around, seeking to be led. And, getting nowhere.

Wikipedia defines an Intention as; “a mental state that represents a commitment to carrying out an action or actions in the future. Intention involves mental activities such as planning and forethought.”

In the book, “When Violence is The Answer,” the author, Tim Larkins talks about how intentions can move mountains. In one story, he details an incident of a man who was dead set on freeing a woman (presumably his girlfriend) from police custody. The man was not a trained assassin, or a Navy Seal, simply a man on a mission who overpowered a 17-year, decorated police officer, and a security guard—because he was 100% crystal clear, on what he intended to do.

The woman had been caught shoplifting at a Wal-Mart and was being put into the back of a patrol car when, out of the corner of his eye, the police officer saw a man in a hooded sweatshirt with his hands in his pockets, walking toward him.

The police officer looked at the man and shouted, “take your hands out of your pockets.” When the man refused to comply, and continued walking toward him, the police officer commanded, “Stop right there.” But the man kept moving toward him quickly. And, as their proximity to one-another increased, the police officer knew his firearm would be of no use.

The officer was also at a huge disadvantage because he did not know the man in the hooded jacket’s intentions.

Once abruptly face to face, the man in the hooded jacket pulled a knife from his right pocket and sliced at the officer. The officer grabbed the man’s wrist, twisted it and broke it, but the knife was just a diversion. In pain, but intent on achieving his objective, the man then pulled a revolver from his left pocket and emptied all 5 rounds into the officer. One bullet incapacitated his shooting hand.

The security guard saw what was happening and jumped on the man, but the man grabbed the knife with his good hand and stabbed the security guard two times. With the officer and security guard on the ground, and the assailant intent on doing more harm, he began moving toward the racked AR15 in the patrol car.

And, he might have been successful, had the police officer not been able to finally get to his holstered gun and put an end to the man’s rampage.

Yes, intentions can be used for both good and evil. And, they’re the surest way to get what you want. The assailant in the story above acted on raw emotion in the heat of the moment. You however will use intent to create a clear picture of what you want your life to be. And, design specific objectives that serve to create that picture.

Once you know what you want and how to get it, you’ll be an unstoppable force with laser focus. And, it’s this laser focus that will draw other people into your life like a tractor-beam. Why? Because you’ll be an anomaly. Rather than flitting about from one thing to another, trying to make this thing or that work, and begging for customers, like most people. People will be attracted to you like moths to a flame. They’ll not only respect you but want to emulate you and do business with you. But you must remain focused.

When everything begins to fall into place as you've meticulously planned, there's the risk that you may lose your way. Money and adoration can mess with your head, and if your intentions are too thin, or not big enough—you may find yourself seeking the approval of those who admire you. Which will inevitably cause you to change your intentions. If this happens, you're going against how the intention principle works.

People are attracted to someone who knows what they want out of life. And, if your decisions are based on the thoughts and reactions of others then you're fighting a losing battle. You'll have lost their interest simply because you sought their approval.

This book is entitled, "How to Attract a Devoted Throng of Fanatical Customers," which may lead you to believe that I was going to instruct you that you should seek their approval. But you would be mistaken.

I purposely did not name it, "How to Get the Approval of Your Customers," because focusing the approval of others rather than your objectives and intentions will have you relegated to a commodity. You'll be like all the other towing companies in your area.

### **Keep your intentions to yourself**

One important note on intentions and objectives. You should keep them to yourself. Just as you play poker with your cards face down on the table or close to your chest, there's no reason tell anyone what you aim to achieve.

First, doing so is a form of approval-seeking. You're either bragging that you're taking a chance and going after what you want, or you're asking what they think. Second, when you inevitably have hiccups on the way to the achievement of your aim, those you've told may mock you. Like it or not, this takes up valuable real estate in your psyche. Lastly, when you tell others what you plan to do it takes away from the aura of charismatic attraction it's designed to create. When they know your intentions, they will put you in a box, rather than remaining attracted to you.

### **Stand for something**

After you have determined what you're intent on having and doing with your life, and you've identified the first objective necessary for moving in that direction, you'll want to ensure that you join local organizations, like the Chamber of Commerce. Regularly attend City and County Council meetings. Join local and state government groups and attend functions, hearings, community groups, and other local organizations.

At this point, you may be in the process of, or will have already achieved your initial objective of putting enough money aside for 6 to 12 months of business and household expenses. And, you

may have started your business already. Your next objective is to become a respected leader in your community.

As a member of each group, and the community at large, during discussions at government hearings, or anywhere really—get in the mix. Everyone has an opinion, but not everyone is willing to let theirs be heard. When something needs to be changed in your community, locally, or not-so-local, and you believe you know a way to change it, provide input.

Now, you might not possess strong beliefs one way or another about a lot of topics. But, if you're going to be effective, and achieve your objectives you need to have a strong presence in your community. And, because of the simple fact that most people don't speak out—when you do it right—you'll eventually be perceived as a leader.

To do this, first think about the things you hold dear. Your family, faith, and money are three big ones. And, if you still have hang-ups surrounding money, you need to get over that fast. Money is simply a representation of your value thus far. The more you have of it and the more that keeps coming into your life, the more valuable you are to others.

Once you know what you hold dear, and as you become more involved in the community, you'll come to have a better understanding of how various topics impact your life and the lives of others. And, as you state your opinions (with reason and clarity) be careful you don't become predictable. If your words are all drone on, always beating the same drum, you'll become like white noise and people will ignore you. You want to inspire emotions, so that people either respect you or fear you.

When you do this, you'll inevitably be disliked and impugned by those who think differently than you. It is a good thing that some people dislike you. Because, while haters are always going to hate, those who agree with you will champion your causes and love and respect you. This method is not unlike what Rush Limbaugh, Dennis Miller, Dave Ramsey, Laura Ingraham, and hundreds of others have done to catapult themselves to success. Why not you?

I'm not suggesting that you scream and shout, or that you must lean heavily in any one direction, I'm simply suggesting that you develop a persona that is uniquely yours. One that eventually gets attention. Attention in the form of free publicity on local television and radio stations, and newspaper articles.

But, in some cases it is best to be careful not to cause those above you to feel inferior. As Robert Greene writes in, *"The 48 Laws of Power,"* *"Those who attain high standing in life are like kings and queens: They want to feel secure in their positions, and superior to those around them in intelligence, wit, and charm."* These people can serve you in one of two ways, they can put up roadblocks against you, or they can lift you up and help you. Making them feel stupid or ineffective will not serve you in most cases.

And, I caution you on this as well, do not speak-out ONLY on items that have a direct impact on your business. You will look self-serving and petty. Also, appealing to the masses as a ploy to get business will be futile. Although it works with the main-stream media to pull the wool over the eyes of some, you don't have that type of reach, and you'll be appealing to the wrong kind of folks.

## **Ignore your inner critic**

You may be thinking that becoming a public figure as I suggest is the surest way to alienate half of the people who might use your services. I assure you it is not. Right now, unless you've already taken advantage of the marketing services The Tow Academy provides, your business is 100% invisible to the people in your community. No one knows who you are.

And, when it comes to politics, most people aren't paying attention anyway. Remember, they're all shopping, watching, sports, or wasting time on social media, waiting for someone to inspire them. Only 55% of the eligible voting population voted in the 2016 Presidential election. And it's the most advertised and hyped election there is. And, local elections do much worse, with average turnouts ranging between 20% to 30%.

So, right now, your business is lumped into a pile with all the other towing businesses in your area. Motorists carry the same take-it-or-leave-it attitude about your business as the do every other towing business. But, when you stand up and intelligently articulate your opinions with conviction, you'll instantly set yourself up as someone to take a look at.

Love you or hate you, you'll be Googled by the thousands. And, if you've properly positioned yourself online, as the CEO of "XYZ Towing," then you'll have successfully set your business apart from the horde of other towing companies out there. Who, for the most part, are viewed in a negative light anyway.

I'm telling you; this is a no-lose proposition.

What you'll have done is created a connection with individuals who, over time, with continued exposure, will choose to do business with you, because of you. Rather than feeding at the teat of the motor-clubs, like all the other towing companies, you'll be sought out by thousands. Your business will stand for something, and people who believe as you believe will actively seek you out. Rather than Googling, "Towing Service," They'll Google your name or the name of your business.

Ok, let's just do the math. Let's say that you live in a medium-size city with a population of 400,000. And, we'll say that only about 25% of people are paying attention, 100,000. Now let's say that half of those people don't like what you stand for, they have differing opinions on your ideas. But, at the same time, the other half of these people absolutely love your ideas and want to support you.

So, which would you rather have 50,000 people who respect you and like you, some of whom own businesses with fleets of vehicles? Or, being lumped in with all the other towing companies competing on the basis of price? I think the choice is clear.

And, when you implement a referral engine utilizing your 50,000 raving fans, who will inevitably know some of the remaining 75% of the population who's not paying attention, your business and profits can shoot through the roof. This is big people. And, it all starts with achieving your first objective, and being a die-hard proponent of your intentions.

Can you do it? I believe you can, and you're going to be pleasantly surprised at how much you will change and grow.

## **Transforming into the new you**

The transformation will not happen overnight, it will be incremental at best. Depending on where you are right now, it may take six months to a year before you fully comprehend the value of your opinions and are able to intelligently and clearly articulate them in your own unique way.

There's also a thing called, "Imposter Syndrome." Just like it sounds, you may revert back to an old image of yourself and start thinking you're an imposter. But, you're not. You have every right to talk about anything that has the potential to impact your life, your family's life, or the lives of your neighbors. And, you should do so.

The transformation you're looking for is not one in which you're viewed as an ogre. You don't want to grow into some staunch, combative cranky old man who repels everyone. To be clear, I'm not saying that you should be someone you're not. But you could do worse than to be perceived as someone with a demeanor somewhere between Sheriff Andy Griffith, and Detective Columbo.

Sheriff Griffith was a kind and knowledgeable country boy who had the ability to persuade others without twisting arms. And, Columbo had the ability to disarm those he questioned with his bumbling nature and disheveled appearance. Suspects felt no qualms at answering Colombo's questions because he wasn't perceived as a threat. And, in the end, he would solve the crime with, "Oh...Just one more thing."

In his book, "No, The Only Negotiating System You Need for Work and Home," the author, Jim Camp, writes about the power of being "Unokay." He says the only person in a negotiation that needs to feel Ok is the other guy, or guys. And, one way of helping them to feel Ok is by allowing a flaw of your own to show through. A personal flaw or quirk is disarming, like Sheriff Griffith's naïve boyish smile and Colombo's bumbling nature, it puts the other side at ease. And, your message is absorbed much easier, because the other side's ego is at bay.

To be an effective negotiator you must have the ability to persuade. And, persuasion is the tool you will use when speaking about the topics you feel passionate about. Your goal should not be to simply complain about all of the wrongs in your community. You need to provide viable solutions and demonstrate why you believe those solutions will work better than the status-quo.

There's a simple formula you can use in many situations where persuasion is necessary. It's a three-step process that goes like this. Problem, Agitate, Solve. First you identify the problem as you see it. Then use analogies and stories to further illustrate the problem to those who are listening. Lastly, you want to provide preferably one, but it can be more than one, solution to the problem. It works wonderfully in most situations. But, to do this effectively, you also need to research the topic thoroughly.

Research is going to be your best friend moving forward. You're going to encounter smart people who have spent decades in government. Quick-witted people in your community, itching for a fight. And, people who believe as you do, who may know more than you. If you're going to be effective, (And why else try if that isn't your intention?) you're going to need a firm grasp on each topic you discuss. You're not running for office, yet, but you need to speak with conviction and intelligence, and you can only do so if you know the material around each subject better than anyone in the room.

Rather than falling into the trap of complaining about "feast or famine," when times are slow, seek out solutions other communities have put in place under circumstances similar to what's being discussed. Google is a great tool to conduct your research, but you can't dismiss books, magazines and newspapers. Steer clear of spending too much time on social media, you can easily slip down a rabbit hole for hours. Besides, much of social media has become a cesspool where those with nothing to say, say it for hours on end.

And, over time, as you learn and grow, and begin wielding these powerful tools of influence successfully, many people will come to see you differently. They'll look to you as a source of knowledge, and someone to be listened to and respected. When this happens, the residual effect be major improvements to your self-image. But I warn you, not everyone will like the new you. Many people will be jealous and some of the will try to bring you back down to their level.

### **Crabs in a bucket**

If you've ever seen a bunch of crabs trapped in a bucket you've probably noticed that, when a single crab tries to climb out of the bucket the others will pull him back down into the bucket. This crab-in-a-bucket-mentality is best described as, "if I can't have it neither should you."

Regardless of the work you've put in to achieve your status, there will be people who believe you don't deserve to be so revered. Many times, they will be old acquaintances, who knew you before you were successful. But, not necessarily, you may find yourself hated by people who simply don't agree with your ideas or tactics. Whether it's envy or politics, their reactions will manifest in various ways. You or your ideas may be attacked, and when this happens, you have a couple of options on how to respond.

In most instances, there is nothing you can say or do to sway these people to your side, and I suggest you not try a direct approach. But, ignoring them outright is not the answer either. So, what do you do? Use their words as fodder, to bolster your ideas. But it must be done with diplomacy.

Openly, but indirectly mocking a suggestion as outlandish or over-the-top, may have you viewed by some, with contempt. This will undoubtedly bring about the opposite of what you desire. However, polite, benevolent consideration of another's opinion should be your response. Then, once duly studied, if your cynic's idea doesn't prove wise, provide your reasoned solution. But, don't allow yourself to be dragged into an argument.

Distinguishing yourself from the horde is the best way to rise above the din. To continue to be effective, you must stay active and employ your own twists. Creativity in this area can come in the form of starting your own YouTube channel, writing a column for the local paper, getting involved in causes, running for office, and even having your own television show. Don't be afraid to expand your reach into areas you might not otherwise consider.

Admittedly, the time required to do all of this can be demanding. So, remember, you also have a business to run. But, small thinking, and thinking that you must do everything yourself will not serve you. You cannot continue to grow your business if you choose to only operate a tow truck. If you prefer to remain the consummate technician and forgo the role of entrepreneur, that is your choice. But, as mentioned before, when you cease growing you begin to stagnate.

## Chapter 3: Firing Up Your Referral Machine

One of the best ways to attract a large following is to create a referral machine. People love to refer others to reputable sources because it demonstrates their knowledge and expertise in that area. So, when you ask for a referral, you are actually providing the other person an opportunity to shine. However, if the company that is referred fails to provide exemplary service to the person who was referred, the referrer stands to lose any reverence they might have gained. And, in fact, may lose credibility altogether.

So, the first thing you need to do is become a business worthy of being referred. And, to do that you need to start with your employees. In the book, “The Referral Engine,” the author, John Jantsch says that employees generally treat customers the same way they are treated by their employers. And, since the first contact customers have with your business are your employees, wouldn’t it make sense to treat them how you want your customers to be treated?

Of course, creating a referable business all starts with who you have in your business. Who’s on the bus? So, the first step is hiring the right people.

### **Hire for attitude and develop superstars**

When interviewing dealer candidates for Wynn Casinos, Arte Nathan liked to “Screen for Attitude.” You see, he’d set up an interview with two interviewers, one in the room with the applicant, and one waiting outside, ready to disrupt the whole thing.

The interviewer in the room would ask the applicant a series of questions, and when the applicant was in the middle of answering a question, the second interviewer would interrupt by barging into the room. He would excitedly walk up to the applicant, shake his hand in an energetic manner, and welcome him to the interview.

If the applicant seemed irritated or upset by the intrusion of the second interviewer, it gave them insight into the applicant’s attitude. It showed how optimistic the applicant was, if he could roll with the punches, and work amidst the chaos of a casino.

Operating a tow truck is chaotic. Many times, motorists can be anxious and upset because of their predicament. So, you could do far worse than to screen for attitude in your interviews. Another way to do this is to break the interview process into two separate interviews. Most applicants are on their best behavior during the initial interview. But, if they’re called back for a second interview, they are more confident because they believe they already have the job. Which means they may be more inclined to let their guard down.

Of course, you’ll want to do background checks, drug screenings, and make calls to previous employees. But you also want to Google them, and check out their Facebook page. These will

give you a little more detail into their personality, to help you decide if, or if not they're a good fit for your company.

Once you have the right people on the bus, then you must nurture and develop them into people who will care for your customers. They must be service minded and trained on exactly how business operates, and what their role is in it. If you get this part right, your business will stand out from the horde, and your customers will remember, and refer you to others.

The Boston Consulting Group Surveyed over 200,000 employees worldwide, asking them what they valued most about their jobs. Below are the results. You might think that money is the most important, but it came in at number eight.

1. Appreciation for the work that they do
2. Good relationships with colleagues
3. Good work-life balance
4. Good relationships with superiors
5. Company's financial stability
6. Learning and career development
7. Job security
8. Attractive fixed salary
9. Interesting job content
10. Company values

An employee believes that a job is valuable to the extent that they know exactly what is expected of them and why—what they do matters. So, do not be vague when it comes to training your people. Demonstrate their value by detailing how what they do helps others, and how they play an important role in the lives of the people they serve. Also, inspire them, and teach them to think big, and become better versions of themselves.

When you inspire your people, you're giving them a gift they rarely receive from anyone else. And, unfortunately, due to the inadequacies discussed earlier, many people are need that type of validation and support. Most feel like they must have permission to dream big. So, give them that permission. Tell your people, as my friend and tow company owner, Luis Chacon says, *"Do your job like you make \$100 per hour, and one day you will."*

You cannot think small here. Luis doesn't want his people working for him forever, and he tells them that. And, don't let fear be your guide. Giving people permission to dream big will not increase your company's turnover. Employees are always going to come and go, and it's been my experience that an inspired employee tends to stay around much longer. Why? As mentioned, there are very few people in their lives who give them the same kind of support that your leg-up mentality provides.

Once you have a trained and committed squad of people on your side, the next step is wowing your customers. And, although you are the leader in your business, allow your people to help develop the programs and systems that will make your referral machine bring in more and more customers. Then, as your business gains traction and you grow, remember to reward your people with what they value most. Refer to the list above.

What follows are suggestions to help your business stand out from the competition. If you do it right, competing merely on the basis of price will be a thing of the past. Customers will be so impressed and blown away by the level of service your company provides that they'll be chomping at the bit to tell others about you.

### **Be respectful of the customer's property**

Whenever I have to call in for software support for many of the online services, I use sometimes the agent will need to see my screen. Before they do though, the company they work for requires that they read from a script. They usually say something like this, "Before you share your screen with me, please close anything that you might consider to be of a sensitive nature."

I understand that the software company is requiring their agents to read that statement simply to cover themselves. But it makes me feel that the company cares about my privacy. You can use a similar statement before entering a customer's car. I know it might sound odd but go with me here. What you want to do is set yourself apart from the crowd of other towing companies.

Many times, you may need to get into a customer's car when providing towing or roadside assistance. And, before you do, I suggest that you first inform the customer of your intentions. Then ask the customer if there is anything in the vehicle that they might want to remove before you enter. Maybe there's a wallet, an open purse, or even cash sitting in the open console. Allow your people to help you develop unique script though. If you don't get complete buy in, because it doesn't sound or feel like something your employees would say, it may not be used.

Something along the lines of: "In order to properly load your vehicle onto my truck, I'm going to need to get into the driver's seat of your car. Before I do, is there anything you would like to remove or arrange?"

Issuing this statement prior to entering a customer's vehicle, not only serves to hold the driver harmless, should something turn up missing, but it will also have the effect of impressing the customer greatly.

### **White Glove Treatment**

As you may know, many of the dealerships go above and beyond when providing repair and maintenance services. They wash cars and even do minor detailing after the repair work has

been completed. These kind gestures are done to engender loyalty from their customers. You can employ the same tactics to get referrals and repeat business. And, your doing so will be so much more noticeable, because very few towing companies are willing to put in this kind of effort to wow their customers.

Tow truck operators get dirty. You have to lie on your back and get down on your knees in dirt, mud and rocks. For safety, health, and cleanliness reasons, your hands should always be gloved when performing any of your duties. And, when you must enter a customer's vehicle or touch the vehicle's exterior, I suggest that you make use of some items that will ensure none of this dirt comes into contact with the customer's car.

When you are working on a customer's vehicle, loading it onto your truck, or performing a tire change, you're wearing either leather or canvas gloves. A glove that's sturdy enough to take the abuse that comes from the job. And, even if you take off your gloves before entering a customer's vehicle, there's still a good chance that oil, dirt, or muck is on your hands. You may have touched your pants, or some other surface with an ungloved hand.

To avoid transferring any unwanted substance onto the customer's car, I suggest that you invest in disposable surgical gloves, white preferably. You can get them for around \$3 dollars per box of 100. Before entering a customer's vehicle, and in their presence, remove your work gloves, and then put on your surgical gloves. Your customer will appreciate the gesture, and it will be remembered.

You could even go so far as to place a paper floor mat on the floor of the car, like the dealerships do. Or slip on a clean pair of thin coveralls before you sit in the car seat. If you use coveralls, I suggest that you keep them in a sealed plastic bag when not in use. This will keep them pristine, time after time.

Take notice of what other industries are doing and copy them if it fits or come up with your own way to demonstrate respect for your customers' property and time. Some HVAC companies require their technicians to wear booties over their shoes when walking on a customer's floor. Some house cleaning companies leave flowers and even mints when finished cleaning. Use your creative imagination, and those of your employees, to come up with various ways to differentiate your business.

## **Collaborate with other small businesses**

One way to break the ice with other local businesses and generate referrals is to use mutually beneficial collaboration. To do this right, you might want to start by creating a coupon that provides other business's customers with either a percentage off the first service, or a specified dollar amount off of your towing service. In exchange for distributing and/or making your coupons available to their customers, you should then offer to give every one of your customers one their coupons.

You could approach local coffee shops, donut shops, pizza shops, ice cream parlors, car washes, detail shops, and more. The opportunity here is limited only by your imagination. And, when you hand your customer something they hadn't expected, maybe a coupon for a free slice of pizza or a free single scoop ice cream cone, it will be appreciated and remembered.

When you go above and beyond like this, not only will your customers want to tell others, they'll think about you the next time they need your help. Why do they do these things?

Three reasons:

1. It gives them an opportunity to prove their value to others.
2. You've added unexpected value to the transaction.
3. They'll have an innate desire to reciprocate.

Reciprocation is a psychological phenomenon that causes a person to have the impulse to give back to someone who has done something or given something to them. The impulse to give back though, isn't usually equal in size, actually we feel the need to give back more than was given to us.

Also, when talking to local businesses, offer to give their customers priority service. When one of their customers has car trouble, i.e. a flat tire or needs lockout service, promise that your company will provide fast service. Explain that your trucks are always right around the corner and can be there to help in a matter of minutes. This will help to raise that local business's value in their customer's mind.

When a business owner or manager is presented with an opportunity to help beyond what's expected, their customers appreciate it. And soon they come to see the place as more than just a donut shop, or coffee shop. They're now a trusted friend.

Collaborations are a great way to stay in touch with the community as well. Business owners and managers see tons of people on a daily basis, and if you're seen as helpful, they'll want to send customers your way. Reciprocation in action again.

You could even collaborate with your competition by holding contests with various events and inviting the public to attend. In a light-hearted and good-natured fashion, you could have door unlocking contests, tire changing contests, loading and unloading contests and even a backing contest. Of course, safety must be adhered to at all times. And, if you solicit a local radio or television personality to host and judge the event, you could get tons of folks to show up and watch.

Regardless of the type of collaborations you choose, they're one of the best ways to gain exposure and generate referrals. They cost very little, with respect to money and time. The best part of course, is that tons of people will come to know, like, and trust you and your business.

## Education through demonstration

One way to generate referrals is to provide valuable and actionable information, both on your website and in print. I'm assuming you have a search engine optimized website, you should. Because, if your website isn't SEO'd properly, it will not show up in search. Then all the great information make available online will not help your business because no one will find it.

When you create valuable content that's not only on your website but also in the form of printed monthly or quarterly newsletters, that you give to every customer, you're raising the perceived value of your business in their eyes. You are demonstrating that, not only can you help them with towing and roadside assistance services, but that you care about them and their families.

Your newsletter could contain content like, "How to Avoid Calling for a Tow Truck," or "How to Be Prepared for Winter Driving," and even "What to do When Your Steering Wheel is Locked Up."

What you're doing when you do this is, differentiating your business from all the other "me to" towing businesses out there. And, I hope by now you know the reason you would want to do this. So, that you're no longer required to compete on the basis of price alone. Because, the reality is; PRICE is not your customers' only consideration. I'll demonstrate what this looks like from an incident in my life.

### Edge Shave Gel Versus Equate

The other day, I was taking a shower and noticed that my wife had replaced my empty can of shave gel, "Edge," with a generic, cheaper shave gel "Equate." The difference between the two gels was like night and day. To begin, I had a hard time getting any of the Equate shave gel out of the can. Because the can was an unfamiliar shape, I wasn't sure if the cap was still on or not. But, once I did figure out that the cap had already been removed, I learned that I needed to apply an excessive amount of pressure to get anything to come out.

I'm right-handed, so due to the force required to get the dispenser to work, I used my dominate, right hand and dispensed the shave gel into my left hand. When the shave gel *did* finally come out, it came out in a large glob. So, I put the Equate can back on the shelf and transferred the gel to my right hand, to apply it to my face.

And, as I was applying the gel to my face, I thought about the Edge shave gel, and how it was much easier to dispense, and that I usually held the can in my left hand and dispensed the gel into my right hand. Which meant, I probably used more of the Edge shave gel because I didn't need to put the can down to apply more to my face.

Also, I noticed that the smell of the Equate shave gel wasn't as fragrant as the Edge shave gel. The Equate shave gel smelled like chalk or dust, I couldn't really place it. Overall, the equate did

the job, but my experience with it left something to be desired. And, even though I may use more of the Edge shave gel each time I shave, to me, the savings of buying the cheaper brand was not worth the trade-off.

The takeaway here is this, just because your competition has a tow truck does not mean they are competing on the same level as you are. And, even if they have nicer trucks, their people are friendly, and they are great at what they do, the first company to recognize and then demonstrate their value to the customer effectively will win.

### **Take the Case of Schlitz Beer**

In the book, "The Customer Loyalty Loop," the author, Noah Fleming, tells the story of how Schlitz beer differentiated their beer from all the other beers at the time. In the late 1800's Schlitz beer became known as the company that put Milwaukee on the map. However, during the early 1900's sales began to drop.

Schlitz knew they had a great product, but with more and more competitors entering the market, selling basically the same product it was hard to compete. Their product had become commoditized. (sound familiar?) So, knowing they needed to do something about this, the executives at Schlitz hired a consultant by the name of Claude Hopkins.

So, Hopkins took a trip to the Schlitz factory and was given a tour of the brewing facilities. During the tour, the executives made no fanfare of the place, just your standard brewery. But Hopkins was astounded by what he saw.

He made note of the fact that the plant was on one of the Great Lakes and had an ample supply of clean water. He noticed the bottle cleaning area, where the bottles were washed a minimum of 12 times to remove the impurities, so the beer would be of the best quality. He saw that the scientific testing areas were encased in glass, and had air purification filters, all done to prevent impurities from getting into the beer.

After the tour, he was amazed and asked the executives, "Why aren't you telling your customers that you do all of this?" They responded by saying, "Because all beer is made this way." But, not one beer company was telling their customers how it was being done.

Well, Hopkins understood the value of telling your story before anyone else. He knew that, even though your product or service might be considered a commodity, if you tell the story about your business in a way that stokes a fire inside your potential customers minds, and do it before your competition does, you'll be a hit.

Hopkins went on to create ads for Schlitz that did exactly that. In one ad he explained that the reason Schlitz uses only brown bottles is because they provide an extra level of security against sunlight, which spoils beer in lighter bottles. And, many other similar ads that helped

differentiate Schlitz from every other beer. And, within 6 months Schlitz beer became the number 1 selling beer in America.

So, with that in mind, try to look at every aspect of the services you provide. Or better yet, bring in an objective outside observer and have them take a look at what you do. From dispatching, to the way you greet customers in person, how you hook up vehicles, accident recovery, and even the way you accept payment.

Then, pull out the things that stand out, and simply explain, in detail, what you do and why you do it. Explore every aspect of your business, and with enough repetition, you'll no longer compete on price alone.

Do you use an eight-point tied-down system when securing vehicles to your rollbacks? If so, why? You're doing it to ensure that the customer's vehicle remains secure, and that other motorists remain safe during transport.

When roadside, do you ask that customers get into the cab of your truck during the loading process? If so, why? Explain that it's for their safety, and that there are far too many distracted drivers on the road, and you don't want them to be struck.

Do you instruct your dispatchers to smile before answering the phone? If so, why? Explain that smiling helps to ensure that callers will receive courteous, attentive, and empathetic assistance.

There are literally hundreds of things that you do that you don't fully appreciate because you're so immersed in your business. Think about how your business looks from the customer's point of view, and how what you do benefits them.

And, with your writing, you probably take for granted many things that customers might find interesting. Get them out and onto paper, so that your customers can consume them and gain value from them. When you do this, not only will they come to see you as the expert, you'll have created another reciprocal event.

You could even offer to write a column in the automotive section of your local newspaper, providing weekly tips and tricks to help motorists with their cars.

Topics like,

1. "Why Using a Flatbed Tow Truck is Best for All-Wheel-Drive Vehicles"
2. "How to Check if Your Windshield Wipers Need Replaced"
3. "What to Do If Your Parking Brake is Stuck"
4. "Why Tow Truck Operators Play with Dollies"

When you generously give of your time—in a light-hearted manner to help those in your community, you'll be seen as the go-to guy in the towing business. Which means—you guessed it, you're much more referable than you ever were before.

## Promotional items that create buzz

As I've mentioned, reciprocation is a strong psychological impulse that makes the receiver feel the need to give back *more* than was given to them. But I don't want you to get the impression that the only reason you should give something to your customer is because you expect something in return.

On the contrary, I want you to give with a sincere desire that your customers gain some sort of value from what you've given. You see, operating with generosity and caring in your heart will compound in you and allow you to grow for the long haul.

That being said, while you're doing multiple collaborations with other businesses, and handing out your own newsletter, you could also add something else into the mix. Something called a Car Toad.

What's a Car Toad? Well I'm sure you have seen the Facebook Post of a sad toad with a caption that reads, "I just got my Car Toad." To take a sheet from that Facebook post's playbook, you could create your own Car Toad car air freshener. And, give them to your customers.

On the website, [makemyfreshener.com](http://makemyfreshener.com) you can use your own photos to create personalized hanging air fresheners, and depending on the quantity you purchase, the cost can be very nominal.

Here's how I envision what your air freshener might look like. First of all, the air freshener I'm talking about is one that hangs from the rear-view mirror. So, it'll be highly visible. On the one side is the image of a cute, or ugly toad. On the other, is the name, address, and phone number of your business. On the website I mentioned they make the process very easy; anyone can do it.

Now, if you do as I'm suggesting and create your own Car Toad, I want you to incorporate a little psychology into the giving of the gift to your customers. Doing so will make it much more effective.

To begin, we all admit that the Facebook post is silly. So, your presentation of the gift should be fun and light-hearted. Second, not everyone has seen the Facebook post, so it would behoove you to act as if no one has. Lastly, when you order your air fresheners, you have the option to choose various scents. I suggest that you choose at least two or three.

Giving your customer a choice of fragrance, or even choice of toad (you can use multiple photos) reinforces the chances that they will appreciate and USE your air freshener gift. So, don't just toss the air freshener in a bag with all your other goodies. Splay them out and say something like: "Well now that you've had your car towed, it's time to get your Car Toad." I know it sounds a little crazy, and if you don't like it, make up your own fun one-liners and try them out. Test which works best, which gets the best reaction, and then go with that.

Even if you don't provide towing service for the customer, say you've changed a tire change, you can still give them an air freshener. Just use this line: "Ok, I got a little something for you, just in case you need to get your car towed."

Incorporating this fun, crazy little gift has the potential to get talked about in your community. If you do it enough times, customers may even share it on social media. And, local media outlets may run a story about your air fresheners.

There are tons of possibilities here. Not the least of which is the fact that your customer will have your fun little gift (with your name and number on it) as a good memory of a possibly not-so-good car breakdown. You'll have turned an unpleasant event into something memorable and fun, which can help generate more referrals.

Firing up your referral machine requires imagination, patience, and commitment to the process. But, once you have it revved up and running, it will provide your business with a steady flow of appreciative customers. No longer will you grovel at the feet of the motor clubs, or fight for scraps, competing on price alone. Your referral machine will be your golden goose, popping out nice, shiny golden eggs day in and day out.

## Chapter 4: Release Your Social Magnetism

*“Social media is just a platform. What some people decide to do with it results in something good or bad.”*

**Rana Daggubati**

A gun is only a tool. Just as it can be brandished to cause harm it can also be used to protect. Social media is also a tool. And, depending on its use, it can either be destructive or constructive. You only have so many hours in your day, so, wasting time scrolling or posting simply for likes and comments is a waste of time. It's also an ego trip that makes you look needy.

However, using social media properly, and constructively can attract people to your business and build your brand. If you're going to use social media as a tool to attract a fanatical throng of people to your business, you need an objective in mind. You need to determine a specific desired result, you would like to occur, from your efforts?

Very few motorists think to search on Facebook to find a towing business when they need help. More than 90% of search volume occurs on Google's search engine. So, if your desired result is to have new customers call you through your Facebook Business page, you're going to be sadly disappointed. But there is a way to use your Google Business Listing and your Facebook Business page to grow your business.

### **Why Social Works**

Before I discuss the right way to conduct a social media campaign, I want you to know why an effective social media campaign will attract customers to your business. As I mentioned, people don't go to Facebook to look for help when their car breaks down, but they will go to Google. And, if you have a properly constructed and optimized website, then conducting a social media campaign as I'll detail, will help boost, not only your website pages, but your Google Business Listing as well.

First, there are only two outcomes of an effective social media campaign. The first being, clicks to your website. Of course, for this to be effective, you must have a properly optimized website to begin with. And, if you don't already have an optimized website, you can contact us at [www.thetowacademy.com](http://www.thetowacademy.com) for help in getting one.

Google uses algorithms that consider hundreds of factors when determining which businesses are displayed when a search is performed. One of those factors is similar to a psychological phenomenon called “Social Proof.”

In his book, “The Psychology of Persuasion,” the author, Robert Cialdini describes Social Proof this way, “*we (people) view a behavior as more correct in a given situation to the degree that*

*we see others performing it.*” Which means if we as people see a number of people performing some action, that they therefore benefit from, we’ll tend to want to perform the same or similar actions.

The way that Google’s algorithms use Social Proof, with regards to clicks to your website, is when they see that more and more people are clicking on and staying on your website, they’ll tend to want to present your website in more and more search results. And, the more often your optimized website is presented in search results, and the more clicks you get to your website, the more this will boost your Google Business Listing.

The second outcome of an effective social media campaign is something that big corporations use, and radio & television stations tout, it is Top of Mind Awareness (TOMA). When you utilize social media the way I teach, your business will come to be viewed as a trusted resource. Over time, those who have liked and commented on your posts will have seen your logo, and your business name, hundreds, possibly thousands of times. The intention of the campaign is that, when the day arises that one of these people needs a service you provide, rather than Googling “towing near me,” they’ll Google your business name.

Unfortunately, and for various reasons, most motorists hold a very dim view of towing companies. But, with an effective social media campaign you can rise above these preconceived notions. When you post effectively and religiously your business will be trusted and come to be seen as part of the community.

## **Making social media work for you**

I’ve mentioned this before, but I want to stress this point again, so that it’s imbedded in your psyche. For a social media campaign to be effective and achieve the desired outcomes, it must work in conjunction with a search engine optimized and properly constructed website. Without these in place your efforts will be futile at best.

Once you have an optimized website, you’ll also need a verified Google Business Listing as well as a verified Facebook Business page. These three must be properly integrated and associated with one another, with links from each listing to your website. You can include more social media platforms, but these two are the most important as of this writing.

## **Posting Frequency**

One of the reasons many social media campaigns fail is a lack of commitment on the part of the business owner. Although it’s human nature to want to do something exciting and new, being committed to the process is the key to making anything in life work.

You didn’t just explode into the universe as you are today. You had to first battle millions of other sperm cells to fertilize an egg. It then took thousands of hours for you to develop into a

human being capable enough to survive outside of the womb. You then spent years in school, and then work, to finally have the ability to start your own business. Everything's a process. So, for your social media campaign to work, you must also stay committed to posting regularly.

I suggest that you post at least five times per week to both your Facebook Business Page, and your Google Business Listing. Post Monday through Friday and, if at all possible, at the same time of the day. There's really no specific time of the day that works best but posting at the same time of the day will help reinforce your new habit.

It may be difficult at first, but after you've done this for at least three weeks it will be automatic, and you'll come to miss it if you forget. But, don't forget. Use the free online calendar that comes with your Google account to set reminders. Use the alarm function on the iPhone to set recurring reminders, whatever you have to do. Just remember to post regularly.

### **What to Post**

When posting to social media, I like to refer to the copywriting acronym AIDA, which stands for Attention, Interest, Desire, Action. To use this effectively, you need to first get their attention, once you have it, you must then interest them in whatever you are posting. Once they are interested in what you have to say, you'll want to have some sort of carrot on a stick that peaks their desire to learn more. Lastly, you'll want to have a vehicle that allows the user to learn more, like a button or a link that takes them to...you guessed it, a page on your website.

In terms of effectively getting a Facebook user's attention, there is a hierarchy of what works best. This begins with video, then GIF's, then static images. Of course, the video, GIF, or static image must be of something that is of interest, not necessarily to you, but to the person scrolling through Facebook. Here is where you, again, want to distinguish your business from the horde of other towing companies trying to get the attention of the general public.

You, however, have a leg up. You're nimble and already know that to get attention, you must do the exact opposite of all those other tow-guys. As you evolve, you'll learn how to take local happenings and use them to your advantage. But, for now what I want you to do is follow a few simple guidelines. Once you have these mastered and have entwined yourself into the local scene, you'll then be free to use your imagination to work your own magic on social.

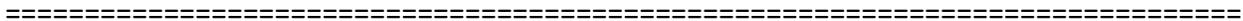
Generally speaking, most people sit and scroll through Facebook during their downtime. Either in the morning with a cup of coffee, or in the evening after work. And as such, most will only stop scrolling and investigate further when they see something cute, amusing, intriguing, scary, beautiful, or, to a lesser degree— informative. Mainly, they're looking for entertainment.

So, your first job is to find or produce video, GIF's, or images that do all of the above. You'll notice, I said nothing about tow trucks, but they do have their place, which I'll get into.

If this sounds like a lot of work, you're right. It is quite a lot of work, but the good news is, after you learn, through your insights panel, what your audience reacts to the most, it becomes a lot easier. Not only will you have the ability to look for or create specific types of media your users want to see, you'll also get better at the next step, which is CREATING interest.

Once your media causes a user to stop and take notice, the next step is to create content directly related to what they see. This is where your individuality kicks in. There has never been anyone exactly like you in the world, and there never will be. You are a unique, one in a trillion person who has their own take on everything. If instead of embracing your innate creativity, you stifle it, you're doing yourself a disservice.

Below is an example of a post, I'll explain the details afterward.



Don't disappoint your doggies.

If your dogs are like most, they love to go for rides. But, how can they go if your truck's not running? Don't disappoint your doggies, call XYZ Towing and Recovery to get that pick-up truck to the shop. We provide towing, roadside assistance, and accident recovery...24 hours every day.

#towing

<https://www.xyztowing.com>

Image source: [honesttopaws.com](http://honesttopaws.com)

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As you can see, the image is of a bunch of dogs looking longingly into the camera, presumably wanting to go for a ride. All I did was use a one-liner to describe my perception of the image, and then continued by relating how XYZ Towing can help. You can do the same, all it takes is your imagination and some practice. And, the same as with knowing *what to post*, the more you flex your content imagination muscle, the stronger it will become.

Also, if you notice, I included some other items in this post.

- **Hashtag:**  
First, the use of a hashtag relating to the type of service XYZ Towing provides. Hashtags make your posts searchable, and on Facebook it's been shown that using a single hashtag gets more engagement.
- **Your Website URL:**  
Always include a link to a page on your website. This can be a link to the home page or any other page you want to send the user to. If you mention something specific on your post that would work best by sending the user to a page on your site that relates to the post, all the better.
- **Image Source:**  
If you use someone else's video, GIF, or image always give them credit by sourcing where you found it. You do not have to link the post to their site, simply give them credit by providing business name or website name.
- **Learn More Button:**  
What I did not include in the post above, but what should be used in every post, both on Google and Facebook, is a "Learn More" button that links back to a page on your website. On Facebook, the "Learn More" button can only be used if you boost, which I'll discuss next.

## Boosting

In the good old days, you could put up a post and it could go viral on its own. But after Facebook changed up their algorithm a few years back, if you want people to see what you

post, you must boost each one of them. Most business owners mistakenly believe that if they have 1000 people who like their Facebook Business page, that all thousand people will see what they post. Unfortunately, the rules have changed.

Facebook owns their platform, and now requires business pages to pay-to-play. The good news is, it doesn't mean you need to break-the-bank in order to play. On the contrary, I suggest is that you boost each post for just one dollar per day. But, when you do, ensure that you are targeting people in your geographic area. There's no need for your post to be boosted all over the nation. Besides possibly sending the wrong signals to the search engines, you're wasting money.

Remember, part of what you're doing with the social media campaign is building TOMA, Top of Mind Awareness. And, if your posts are being seen by people outside of the area you serve it will do you no good. So, depending on the population of your market, target your posts to be seen in a radius of around 20 or 30 miles from your location.

### **Like Campaign**

For a social media campaign to be effective it must to be seen by Facebook users. For this to occur, you need people to like your page. To get that to happen, I suggest that you create a "Like Campaign." Depending on how much money you invest in it, you can generate between 30 to 100, or more likes per month. With our Like Campaigns, we always invest the smallest amount allowed by Facebook, which is \$3 per day, and we let it run perpetually. Generally, we're able to produce around 100 likes per month with that budget, but, in some cases, it's much more than that.

Setting up a Like Campaign is very simple to do. First, go to your Facebook Business page, and click on the "Insights" tab in the menu under the search bar. Then click on the "Likes," tab in the menu on the left. In the middle of the next page you'll see a question on the right that says, "Want More Likes?" and a blue button below which says, "Promote Page."

You can use any images you like that might entice people to like your page. But they should pertain to your business and the type of services you provide. Solutions to problems work best, and if you can use images that include the people's faces it will help. Again, moving images work best, and you can even create a carousel with 2 or more images. And, you'll want to target the same geographic area as you do with your posts.

### **Comments, Likes, and Shares**

If the objectives of your social media campaign are to get clicks to your website and to create and maintain Top of Mind Awareness, then your goal with each post should be to generate comments, likes, and shares. Why? Because this will help improve the reach of each post. The more people exposed organically to your post, the larger audience you have.

Below are some other types of posts that may spark interest and help improve your reach.

- When posting about your tow trucks use interesting facts to get attention. For example: Did you know that our flatbed tow trucks are rated for 12,000 pounds? That means it can easily carry your Ford Expedition, King Ranch, or 6 Adult Bulls, although it would be quite a challenge to get them secured properly. :)
- Company get-togethers and accomplishments. Share photos and video of company gatherings including photos of your employees. If you have an employee of the month include this in your posts.
- Rollover Recovery Videos. While I do suggest that you shy away from posting anything too graphic like wrecked vehicles, rollover recovery videos done tastefully will get a lot of attention. Not many people get to see rollover recoveries, so when you put one up, they'll be of interest.
- Customer Reviews. Not only do positive reviews about your business show that you do a great job, it also gives people a boost of Social Proof. Remember that psychological phenomena I spoke of earlier. When people see that others have had good experiences with your company, through positive 5-star reviews, then they'll believe that they could do worse than to choose you as well.
- How to Do Something. How to posts are ones that provide the reader with knowledge that they will want to share. An example might be, "How to Change a Tire," or "How to Get Your Car Ready for Winter." As a tow company owner, you have information and can provide details that the average motorist may not know. Besides providing helpful information, how to posts set you up as the expert.

## Insights

After you have posted consistently for at least 30 days, you'll want to take a look at your insights. Again, you can find the Insights section of your Facebook page by clicking on the menu item below the search bar titled, "Insights." What you first see when landing on this page is the "Page Summary." It defaults to the last seven days, but you can change it to view the last 28 days.

Set the Page Summary to the last 28 days, then take note of these important numbers. "Page Likes," "Post Reach," and "Post Engagement." There's a number in each box that tells you how many of each of these your page received over a given period. Below each number is either a green number, representing an increase over the last period, or a red number, indicating a decrease.

- **Page Likes** are simply the number of people who have liked your page over a given period. You want this number to steadily increase. On the left side of the Insights page you can choose to take a deeper dive into your Page Likes. You can find the number of likes that were paid versus organic likes, and you can also see how many dislikes you received during a given period.

- **Post Reach** is defined by Facebook as the number of people who saw your posts at least once. So, seeing this number trending upward means more and more people are being reached. But, the most important number on the Insights page is the Post Engagement.
- **Post Engagement** is defined by Facebook as the number of times people engaged with your posts through reactions, comments, shares and clicks. This is the meat and potatoes of your social media campaign. If this isn't trending upward over a 28-day period, then you need to revamp your strategy.

Below the Page Summary, you will find all of your posts, from the most recent to the beginning. You'll need to click, "see more," to see them all. This report provides the Organic/Paid Reach plus Engagement of each post. To use this reporting effectively to determine what's working and what's not, it's best that you give each post the same billing. If you boost one post for 5 days and \$5 dollars, and another is boosted for only 1 day and \$1 dollar your results will be skewed. You'll be comparing apples to oranges.

If you see that your audience likes images of hot rods more than silly dogs, then you should adjust your future posts accordingly. But, don't relax and think you have it dialed in. I suggest that you look at your post engagements on a weekly basis. This will allow you to learn what's trending. Remember, your Like Campaign will bring new people onto the page all of the time, and they will most certainly have varying tastes and interests.

If you stay committed to the process you will generate possibly thousands of likes, and clicks to your website. And, over time, your business brand and name will stand out in the minds of all of these people as The Towing Company they relate to. They will know, like, and trust you, and eventually, when they need your services, they'll Google your business name and not "Towing near me."

## Summary

If you want to grow your towing business to 6 or 7 figures, you need a steady stream of loyal customers. One way to attract customers is to commit to an ongoing marketing campaign. Which I believe everyone should do. In concert with marketing however, you should seriously consider what we've been talking about here in this book. You and your business must become revered, respected, and trusted in your community.

You may be thinking that distinguishing your business from the horde is a lot of work. That getting up in front of your friends and neighbors and offering solutions to community challenges will take time away from time you should spend working on your business. And, I admit, that it is a lot of work and it does take time. But doing so will serve to attract a much more loyal base of customers than marketing alone could ever do. And, the good news is, it will get easier and easier as you go. And, if done right, it you'll grow beyond your wildest expectations.

As you delve into the issues of the day, you'll inevitably learn new things. You'll meet new people and develop new interests. The mind is always attracted to new things, as the internet's popularity demonstrates. I suggest that, rather than consuming news like a sponge, you be the news. Create your own newsworthy events.

In the early 1980's there was a TV sitcom called "WKRP In Cincinnati." It was about a radio station. On an episode centered around Thanksgiving, the news team decided to release live turkeys from their traffic helicopter as a stunt to get attention for the station. Well, it turned out to be a blood bath as turkey after turkey plummeted to their death, smashing into pavement and crashing through windows of parked cars. It was horrendous mistake, but, in the end, it ended up boosting the station's ratings. Because everyone heard about it.

So, you have two options, you can be distracted by the next shiny new thing and allow pop culture to direct your interest, or you can feed your desire with interests of your own and dazzle everyone with your imagination. Pursuing your own interests and drawing the interest of others will make you master of your world, whereas chasing the next new thing can be your downfall.

When you follow the same path as everyone else you become predictable and boring. People feel superior to those whose actions they can predict. If they can put you in a box, they will. Don't shy away from trouble, get in the mix. Your job is to do anything to gain attention. And, while not criticizing those who can give you a leg up can work in your favor, in some instances, the opposite works best.

Drawing attention to yourself by pushing back against those in power can work wonders for building a reputation for doing what's right at all costs. But I warn you, do not let anger be your guide. Operating out of anger is the surest way to say and do things that will harm your reputation.

When someone attacks you or your ideas, you may be inclined to strike back with a sharp word or two. Instead, count to 10 and remember that an attack is attention, and any attention you receive is good attention. There will most certainly be those who believe as the attacker believes. But, on the same note, there will be many who will stand with you. And, with each attack, the support will grow stronger.

So, get out there, young warrior, and take advantage of all the opportunities available to you. Life is what you make of it, so don't shrink in your chair and let others speak for you, stand up and be noticed.

Are you interested in learning more about the towing and roadside assistance industry? Below are some books by the author that are sure to help you in your travels. Also, be sure to subscribe to our email list at [www.thetowacademy.com](http://www.thetowacademy.com) When you do, you'll receive notifications when more titles become available.

