



Getting Beyond Struggle: The Difference Between People Who Succeed and Those Who Don't

Ric Thompson: Hi, everyone. This is Ric Thompson with the New Order Business School and another No BS talk lined up for you here. Today, we're going to talk about the difference between people who really succeed and the people who don't; the difference between people who are making the \$1 million in a year and the people who are struggling along at \$30,000. With me today to talk about this is a phenomenal gentleman.

He holds a doctorate in Psychology. He is the author of 11 books. He is a body-language expert and unconscious-influence expert to the BBC, the *New York Post*, and a whole bunch of other magazines. As a matter of fact, he is generally agreed to be the nation's leading body-language expert. He's dynamic; he's a well-known, international public speaker, consultant, corporate trainer. You are going to get a lot of great stuff out of this interview.

He's a lot of fun and one of the sharpest guys I know. I've been following him for the past year and am really excited to have him on the call today. Let me introduce you to Mr. Kevin Hogan. Kevin, welcome to the call.

Kevin Hogan: Hi, Ric. How are you doing?

Ric Thompson: I'm fantastic, looking forward to this today.

Kevin Hogan: I appreciate the opportunity to talk to you and your listeners. I think it's great, and hopefully, we'll get some cool ideas disseminated out, as many as possible in as short a period of time as we can.

Ric Thompson: That sounds great. As always, we're flying without a net here, so let's see what kind of magic comes out. Let's start off, Kevin, because there are a number of different things that you are very well-known for, but let's kind of focus in on just the general area. Let's say I'm an entrepreneur just getting started. I haven't really broken through yet.

Maybe I'm even a little bit stuck, like I said, at \$30,000 to \$35,000 a year. I'm not starving to death, but I am definitely not happy, and I've definitely got a lot more potential in front of me. What would you say? What are your thoughts on that?

Kevin Hogan: First of all, make sure you have that question written down because I'll eventually answer it. Let's start out here: imagine that you're fairly new in business—maybe even five years in business—and you haven't quite 'made it' yet. Why is this? I've read all the books, even the ones that matter, like *Think and Grow Rich*? I've read the books and it's still not happening. What is missing?



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I became very curious about this question about 12 months ago. I started to write a book with Dr. Mollie Marti at the University of Iowa and Dave Lakhani, who is a professional speaker and also does quite well in the field of influence in turning research into real-world influence that he can help other people with. We put together this book; it's called *The Twelve Achievement Factors*. Don't worry; you can't go buy it now even if you wanted to.

It's not out. I'm not going to try to sell, but do remember the title because it's a good title: *The Twelve Achievement Factors*. There are a million books that say, "Here's what this successful person did, and here's the model. You go and do this. You start a software company and you get on everybody's computer in the world. If you can just get on everybody's computer in the world and make them all give you a dollar, you'll be a billionaire." Of course, this is true, right?

Then there's Coca-Cola. You can sell everybody a bottle of Coke. You're going to be wealthy and get people hooked on your product, and that's a cool thing. Then you go out there and you try to sell your product, your idea, your patent, your trademark, or your invention and you do all the things exactly like the books say. It's like you have it in your mind and you do all this stuff.

You work hard, you're up all night, you're sweating, and nothing happens. You think, "That can't be possible because I did exactly what I was supposed to." We came up, the three of us—Lakhani, Marti, and myself—and we were trying to figure out what the difference is between success and failure, because there are lots of successful people, but there are lots more people who aren't.

I'm only measuring success today in terms of wealth, income that is collected for the accumulation of wealth purposes. There are a lot of other things that are important as success: being happy, having a great family, love, and all the things that we can't measure so easily, but we can measure money. That's a measurable commodity. Are you familiar, Ric, with the books like *Built to Last*, *Good to Great*, and some of those titles? Do they sound familiar?

Ric Thompson: Absolutely, sure.

Kevin Hogan: That's where we started. We started to read stuff like that. The good thing was that the books are actually a few years old, so I was reading these books about companies, what things these companies had in common, what made them great, and how they got there. An interesting thing happened; over the following three to four years those companies, after the books were published, turned out to actually not perform as well as the rest of the companies in the United States did.



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They actually tended to under-perform. Here I had all these companies—including companies that had been great for 25 to 50 years, like GE, General Electric, J & J, Proctor & Gamble, tons of companies—and all of a sudden they under-perform. They had all the attributes of being excellent and amazing. They were doing everything right, and then everything went to heck. Why? Why is it that these companies are now actually showing negative losses on their statements? What is going on here?

It turns out there is some randomness involved. You can actually go to the dice table in Vegas, throw seven passes in a row, and think you're doing really well, that you're amazing all by yourself. The fact is that the eighth roll could just as easily be a loser as it is a winner. Realize there's some randomness in life. That's a really good thing to know. Here, I'll recommend somebody else's book because I want you to learn about the things that go wrong in life.

It's a really important thing to know. There is *The Black Swan* by Nicholas Taleb. Pick up that book; that's a really cool book. It sort of gives you cause to understand that you aren't in total control of everything. When you do everything right, there's still stuff that can go wrong. That's number one. Number two is that just because you have somebody's success formula doesn't mean you've got their recipe for success. I don't know if you've had this experience, but my mom made great food.

She used to make great potato salad; it had this right flavor, mustardy and all that. It was perfect. It was the perfect food. She would tell other people how to make it. It's not like mom held anything back, but it didn't taste the same when anybody else made it. The fact is that it tasted downright bad sometimes with almost the same exact recipe, if not the exact same recipe. How can that be?

The deal is that we always talk about the things that we want in life, "I want to be successful," "I want to be earning \$100,000 a year," and "I want to be helping 500 people a month." If you're in relationships, "I want a gal, and I want her to be really pretty, sweet, nice, and not yell at me," and all those good things. We have all these things, but we don't specifically itemize the things that we don't want to happen.

What the books all miss and what the gurus miss when they're communicating is they're telling stories from their perspective of what they did to succeed, all of which are legitimately cool and valuable things. They're neglecting to say the things that you should not do, the mistakes that they avoided or overcame and those kinds of things. In other words, what things don't you want to have happen in your business? Those are actually some of the things that cause you to be really successful.

If there are ladies listening, here you go. Imagine, ladies, that you're saying, "I want the perfect husband. I want somebody who's funny and happy and somebody who's strong and good looking." Great! There's your model. Now that same guy could be a terrible



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father. He could be completely unkind in many other ways to your relatives. You didn't say you wanted him to be kind to your relatives; you only said you wanted him to be nice.

There are all kinds of other terrible things that this person will do in life, and this is what happens in everyday life. We don't itemize the things that we don't want to happen. We don't create ways to get over the obstacles that are going to come up in life, so what happens is people get out of a success path. It's very easy to do this in any business: real estate, investing, anything.

They fall apart and they don't succeed because they don't know what they don't want. That's a head-scratcher right there! How do you know what you don't want? We'll go back to the relationship for just a second. The woman doesn't want somebody who's going to hit her, right? Does that make sense?

Ric Thompson: Yes, I'd say so.

Kevin Hogan: Fair? Yet we know that with one out of 20 that happens. The woman doesn't want somebody who's going to hit her children, let's say; let's go there. She would like somebody who actually has proven income potential, not like he just got out of college and he could get a really good job; he's really smart. That's nice, but does he have proven income potential? Does this person have a track record of bringing in \$50,000 or \$100,000 a year?

This would've saved a lot of problems along the way, too. As people look at the downside, the drawbacks, and things that can go wrong in life and they find out ways to solve those problems ahead of time, then it's much easier to build wealth. Otherwise, what happens is we get discouraged; people tend to get discouraged. I talk to people all over the world, and they say, "I started this business, and I read *Think and Grow Rich*," as an example.

I'm not picking on Napoleon Hill. That book was so huge. I must have read that thing I can't even tell you how many times, maybe 100 to 150 times that it went in my mind. Then *The Law of Success*, that other beautiful book that he wrote. Without that, I don't know if I would've had the motivation early on to go through those discouraging things. The fact is that most people, when they get discouraged, inertia sets in and they tend to not continue to work as hard, to do as much, to achieve the goal, to go for the goal.

You want people to know that a lot of stuff can and will go wrong, and we call this outcome-based thinking. This turned out to be one of the core factors. Outcome-based thinking works like this: What is it that you want? You write this down. I'm making a little squiggly line with my hand here, which means it's profound, but you probably can't see that. While you're driving, remember to write this down.



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What is it that you want, specifically? Number two, what are the things you don't want in this business? What don't you want to happen? Number three, what are the obstacles that are going to happen along the way? Then one of my favorite phrases is 'what else?' When you think of obstacles that could be along the way, we might have insurance problems. What else? We could have lawsuits. What else? You just list all of the possible things that can go wrong in this business.

It even gets into fantasy. Think about the weird things that happen in life. These are the 'black swans'. Earthquakes happen. Weird things happen in people's lives. Write down all of those things. Now you think, "I'm prepared now." Now you have to create the map, and a real map has obstacles that are overcome. How specifically would you go about overcoming each of these obstacles?

The person who actually does this step is the person who is prepared and succeeds. My son was in Boy Scouts, and they have the proverbial motto of 'Be Prepared', which is a pretty cool motto. Nowadays, 'Be Prepared' is a lot different than it was 25 years ago when scouting was an option for me. In those days, I think you got a canteen and a compass.

Now you get a canteen, a compass, and a first-aid kit. You get a flint to make a fire, you even get a lighter, and you get a knife. You can do a lot of damage with all this stuff, too. Anyway, these kids are walking around with these huge backpacks. They are prepared, and the reason is this. Twenty-five years ago, they said, "Give the kid a compass and a canteen, and he'll be fine," which is true to some degree.

There's always motivation when the mosquitoes start biting, it gets cold and dark, and all that. You've got to get back to camp, so you do find your way because you're motivated. What about the kids who aren't motivated? What about the kid who needs the first-aid kit? The reason that the kid got bigger and we got more efficient at learning what people need is because we watched other people fail.

Really, when you watch people fail you learn a lot more than when you watch people succeed. Everybody watches people who succeed. We watch the Olympians who are going to be in the Olympics coming up here. I know people will be listening to this probably forever, but think about your Olympians; they're great stories. They're very focused and single minded; that is their life.

I'll promise you one thing; that won't be your life in business. If it is, you'll probably fail miserably. If you think back 10 years to how you found stuff on the Internet, it probably wasn't with Google and it probably wasn't with Yahoo!. You probably found it through www.AskJeeves.com and some of these other ways. If you think about your current email address, it's probably not what you had 10 years ago.



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If people get too narrow of a focus and too long-term of a goal, they get these big 20-year goals like, "When I grow up I want to be the president of General Electric." You and 10 million other people! That's a really narrow goal. I want to beat Michael Jordan at basketball, but chances are I'm not going to be able to accomplish that until he's in a wheelchair, and even then I'm in trouble. We have to get goals that make sense. We have to get goals that we can actually achieve.

We have to be able to be prepared for all of the stuff, like the little kids, the scouts with their first-aid kits, for all the stuff that can go wrong. You literally map it, because then you anticipate challenges. One of the biggest things that I've watched, when I look at people who succeed versus fail and I pay close attention to the people who fail, they have a map for things that they do when something goes wrong.

They don't get too stuck on one long-term goal. Short-term goals are very crucial, by the way, to achievement. All the research points to this beyond a shadow of a doubt, but the further out you go the less valuable those goals become, and they can actually be counterproductive. If your mom says, "You'd make a great minister," and you say, "Great, that's what I'll do. I'll become a minister," or a great lawyer or whatever, I think it might be the same thing, actually.

You're just negotiating with a different entity. I never thought of that before. As you think about it, there you are and you're going to be a great lawyer. What if attorneys aren't that needed where you are? Then all of a sudden you have this one skill, right? Then you become scared because it's all you know. There's Barbara Sher; she wrote a book called *Refuse to Choose*, a revolutionary program for doing everything that you love. It's about five years old, and it's by Barbara Sher.

The idea is that over the years we've been taught that you have to become good at just one thing, and then be really amazing at that. The fact is that probably isn't going to work. People who get good at two or three things learn the ability to evolve and to change with the times. You asked me a question before we started this interview, "If you could change one thing or if you could give one piece of advice, a recommendation, or an idea that was the difference between a success and a failure that you learned a long time ago, what would it be?"

Another answer to that question would be this: I used to have a school, I owned a school, I taught therapists how to do hypnosis, and that was my specialty. I did that for seven years, from 1990 to 1996 or something along those lines. We taught therapists; it was really cool and it was fun. We had this great advertising resource. It was very inexpensive and provided a very nice income and a lot of revenue. Then one day it dried up.



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The company that owned the catalog that we advertised in didn't want to take advertising anymore. They wanted to have all of their products and services advertised and no one else's, which I totally understand as a website owner; I get that. My heart sort of stopped too, because I wasn't ready for something to go wrong. I didn't realize that other people could affect the game.

I had all the goals lined up; perseverance has never been a problem. Everything was in line with all the books, but there were no books that would tell you how to deal with something like your only source of revenue is now dried up. The revenue is not the people who walk in the door; it's not even the people who you do business with. It's your marketing, the ability to communicate with the potential clients to develop those relationships. What I had done was this enormous mistake.

I had put all of my eggs into one basket. I trusted one way to communicate with a group of people who might be able to use my product or service. It was an enormous, dumb, rookie mistake that everybody makes. You really want to focus on two or things. Be like Barbara Sher and 'refuse to choose'. You don't have to have, "I want to be an Internet marketer," or "I want to be successful in selling this," or whatever it is. Say, "That will be fun, and I will do that as long as it's fun, as long it's exciting, and I'll evolve."

When you evolve, you evolve up. You transition. You always learn. You're constantly learning and constantly filling your mind with knowledge, information, and all of the stuff you possibly can that excites you. Then you have the huge advantage over everybody, which is this. You're doing something that fascinates you. You're doing something that is exciting or interesting, and they're all doing something that they're frustrated with, are bored with, or because they have to.

They don't really like it; they're not really passionate. I hate to use the word passionate because it's a word that's used so often over and over, and it's almost become trite, but it is true. If you have something that you're passionate about, if you have something that you're excited about, think about the people who come up to your door on Saturday afternoon. "Katie, go answer the door, would you?" It's either one of five groups of people who are at the door.

Let me ask you a question, Ric. Dave Lakhani came up with this thought. One time, he said to me, and I'm asking you the same question, "If you wanted to just go and find salespeople and marketing people and you could only pick one state, where would you go?" I'll ask you the question. Any idea?

Ric Thompson: What one?

Kevin Hogan: One state, and that was the only state that you could look in for people who you were going to find marketing skills. What state would you go to?



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Ric Thompson: It's a very interesting question.

Kevin Hogan: Can I tell you what I said? I said California because it's the biggest state. Dave shook his head. He said, "No, you're going to Utah." I thought, "Utah?" I said, "What's in Utah?" He said, "People who are from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." I said, "What you're saying is that you want the Saints working for you?" He says, "Wouldn't you? Who's at your front door?" A lot of the people listening to this phone call are Latter-day Saints.

Some of the most successful business people on this planet are Latter-day Saints. They are people who are familiar with the idea of being passionate, being able to walk out and say, "Hello, Dr. Hogan. Can I get five minutes of your time?" They're familiar with that, and it's okay. They like doing it; in fact, they feel rewarded, blessed, and excited because they get to do that. The obvious answer, of course, is if you had to pick a state, you would go to Utah.

That's where you would search. The idea is, of course, that you want to make sure that you're constantly evolving into something that is fascinating for you, exciting to you, and that you're really passionate about. It's still work; don't ever let anybody kid you about that. I love writing books. I've written, I think, 19 or 20 now. We'll say it's 19. Isn't that crazy?

Ric Thompson: You better update your website, then.

Kevin Hogan: I know! I bet it still says 12.

Ric Thompson: It says 11.

Kevin Hogan: Is that what it is? I haven't been there for a long time. It was 2004, I think, when we hit 11. Ric, *The Psychology of Persuasion* all by itself, that one book, is now in almost 30 countries around the world. I don't want to sit here and go on about it, but it really is about evolution, just evolving intellectually and helping people in different ways and better ways. It's about having more fun with yourself and refusing to have to choose. It's like being okay to be a good body-language expert.

Most people know me; I'm pretty good in that area. Other people say, "Wait! I thought you were really good at influence and persuasion. Didn't you write the persuasion book?" That's the whole thing; I didn't get stuck on just one thing just in case something went wrong over here. What if I would've been wrong about Bill Clinton? That was where it all started back in 1998.



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As the body-language expert, I was always pretty good. I had written about it. Then the *New York Post* called, and they said, "We'd like you to analyze the body language of President Clinton. He's going to deny that he had an affair with an office intern." I was scared to death. I watched this; it was a very short thing. He just says, "I did not have a sexual relationship with that woman, Monica Lewinsky."

He's pointing his right hand right at the camera, and he's very firm. I think, "Boy, it looks like he's telling the truth, but I just have this weird feeling that he's not." I had videotaped it; I rewound it. Rita Delfiner, who is a writer at the *Post*, called back right away and said, "What do you think?" I said, "I haven't really figured it out yet." I watched that video over and over again, and I thought, "You really want to be right. If you're going to go in public, this is the *New York Post* about the President of the United States. You probably want to be right."

I didn't know the correct answer until it finally dawned on me that he was denying this, which was just fine; he should be denying it, but he denied it with his right hand. In other words, he was shaking his right finger just like Mom used to do at me when I was a kid. Of course, Mom, when she would get mad at me or be angry, she would always raise her hand, point her finger at me, and say, "Now Kevin Lynn,"—don't tell anybody, by the way, that my middle name is Lynn, or I'll be very upset—"don't you dare," and then fill in the blank with whatever the problem of the day was.

Then it hit me; Bill Clinton is a left-handed man. I thought, "Whoa!" I tried that, and I thought, "I wonder what it would have been like if Mom would've pointed at me with her left hand and tried to be angry." Then I tried to do that. Go ahead and do this right now, unless you're driving—don't do this if you're driving. Then I thought, "Wait a second! You can't deny something with your opposite hand."

I called Rita back and I said, "Rita, you can say that Dr. Kevin Hogan says that indeed Bill Clinton did indeed have an affair with that woman, the office intern Monica Lewinsky." Thank goodness it was right. If it had been wrong, if it had been wrong, then you need another thing to do because you're out of a job. Being intelligent and talented is only as good as being right on a big one.

People will remember you for being right on the big ones until you really screw up big. Then they realize you're just an astrologer. I think I'm pretty good at body language. The fact is I could be just lucky right now. I could be lucky; I could've just gotten a lot of these things right because of randomness. I've learned never to give myself too much credit for anything in life.

Just in case, I want to keep learning about things that are cool, exciting, and fun so I didn't let it stop at nonverbal communication in college. I was also interested in rhetoric, which, of course, is a dirty word nowadays. It's too complicated to hear Aristotle and all



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that stuff. At least with persuasion influence and all those kinds, it's much more interesting and people like to learn that stuff. We talk about all that now. If that ever went wrong, that would be a shame. Let me ask you a question, Ric. Where did you grow up?

Ric Thompson: I grew up in Florida, South Florida, as a matter of fact.

Kevin Hogan: South Florida. What kind of an income level were you at when you grew up?

Ric Thompson: Middle-class income. I'd say \$50,000 to \$60,000 a year from my Dad, I'd guess.

Kevin Hogan: That's pretty good. To be at that level and to grow up in that, that's a pretty normal kind of life.

Ric Thompson: That was more like a high-school level. I'm not sure what he was when I was younger because we never talked about money, business, jobs, or any of that type of stuff.

Kevin Hogan: Exactly. Now here's something that's worth pausing and thinking about. There are a lot of people listening to this call who probably grew up like you, and there are a lot who probably grew up like I did. I grew up on the Northside of Chicago in a little tiny house, with a little TV, and a little living space. There were seven people, and then my step-dad died and then there were six, Mom and five kids. She didn't have a job that was fulltime.

She worked for a lady who sold tulips halftime, and she was there. When your husband dies and you have five kids, life gets challenging. Life was like that for about five, maybe six, years. It was kind of challenging. One of the things that happened to four out of the five of us kids in that family was we all developed not a belief, but an attitude that no matter what, we aren't going to be broke when we grow up, no way. There were no goals; nobody was thinking, "I want to grow up and be rich."

Having the Boy Scouts bring your turkey dinner to you on Thanksgiving in 1973 is a really crummy experience. It's so appreciated when it's there, but it's very embarrassing. It's very hard to accept that. It's like, "Our family has to take charity." It's like, "This is not going to be like this." We'll do this for other people, maybe, when we get older, but we're not going to do this. None of us had any goals.

We didn't know what we wanted to do. We simply knew what we didn't want. Of the five of us, four of us had one result, which was that everybody ended up with pretty good financial success. We had no right to because we had nothing going for us all. We were



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all really average in just about every way except for how much we didn't want to be in poverty for the rest of life.

The fifth child in our family is homeless today. Let that be okay for everybody because that's her choice, too. It's a really hard choice, but it's important that you get that feeling inside of you with your heart sort of in your chest like, "Oh, gosh! That's terrible! Why did that happen?" It's because that is what she was familiar with. She never developed that attitude of, "I'm not going to have this."

We watched the difference between the four of us and her, our whole life, trying to always infuse her with that, "No! Do you know what? You want to learn. You always want to be learning, always be learning." She didn't want to so much; she didn't think she was all that smart. We weren't all that smart, either; we were just a bunch of goofy kids from Chicago. The point, of course, is that you have amazing choices and amazing battles and obstacles to overcome.

There are people who are prepared to overcome them and people who know what they don't want. People always think about what they want and have all these pretty heavenly pictures in their mind; that's cool. When the research was done at Yale about four years ago, they found that when people picture a goal in their mind, this really cool goal, and it's imbued with emotion and all that in first person, it turns out that's not what works. If your readers want to write something down, they can write down.

You actually do a split-screen image in your mind, and you do it in third person. Here's how it works. On the left-hand side of your TV screen in your brain, you have a picture of what you don't want in your life, a very vivid picture. On the right-hand side of the screen you have a very vivid picture of what you do want, and it's in third person. Not only are you watching yourself, but there's also a group of people watching you.

When you combine all of these elements into one picture, one image, one sense feeling, that turned out to be the most powerful, goal driving, behavioral-change tool there was. Is that cool?

Ric Thompson: That is very cool. You have a split-screen image. Does it matter which is on the left or the right as long as you've got two pictures, what you don't want and what you do want?

Kevin Hogan: That wasn't tested.

Ric Thompson: That wasn't tested. In theory, one-half of the picture is a very clear picture of what you don't want and the other side is a very clear picture of what you do want. The third component you mentioned is that you have to kind of step back, remove yourself, and watch it like a movie.



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Kevin Hogan: Perfect. If people do that, they see other people in the image watching the whole thing. They see the other people; there's an audience watching the whole thing, and the audience sees the person as being impoverished, say. The audience also sees the person as succeeding and being successful. That was the other component; when they added that, the numbers dramatically increased. It was just a behavioral change into what people were willing to do and how successful they would ultimately become.

It was pretty amazing and a reencounter to everything that I had ever been taught, and yet here's the data. It was clear and it was very cool. That's a take-home. Let's go back to our outcome-based thinking. Remember I told you to write that question down, because eventually we'll come around to it?

Ric Thompson: Right.

Kevin Hogan: We will. In outcome-based thinking, number one, you know what you want. Number two, you know what you don't want because now I've got my picture, right? The picture of what I don't want is in my mind. I have people watching me, which is so important. Why? Because when there's just me, I can be lazy by myself. I can sit down here. I'm just going to sit down for a second, if you don't mind.

Now I'm sitting on a nice couch, looking across the room, and it's kind of pretty. I feel kind of relaxed. I could probably get used to this for a few hours. That's kind of nice. I think, instead, that I'm going to stand up and walk because that's how you build energy. Get back into momentum; get rid of inertia. You have a picture of what you don't want, a picture of what you do want, obstacles, how to overcome the obstacles, and then you've got to make a commitment, which is a very simple commitment.

What is the absolute least you will accept in your life in each of the areas that matter in life: relationships, love, happiness level, the security level you're willing to give your family? You say, "What's the least acceptable result in this area?" Today, we're talking about money, so for this today it might be, "I absolutely will not work my butt off for less than \$100,000 a year; no way. I'm going to do it, and it may not happen this year. In fact, it probably won't."

If a person made \$50,000 this year, you can do \$100,000 next year, but the chances are you'll do \$75,000 before you'll do \$100,000. That's okay as long as you say, "No, I will not have that result again." When you start looking, you say, "That just hurt too much," or "It's too much pain. The credit card bills just got way too high, and it was just too much. No, I'm not going to do it. I just refuse to have that again after this year. I know I've got to get out of it, but I'm not going to do it again."



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Then start doing the behaviors. Back in 1990, my daughter was going to be born, and in order to do that we had to prepare. Some people don't prepare, but we actually prepared. We had a simple promise. It was that we wouldn't put a child into the world until we were out of debt. We didn't have an income goal; we weren't thinking like that. We just didn't want to have kids with debt.

I remember being a kid, and I remember you need money and you don't want to have a lot of debt when you start your family. That was one of the things, for example, that we did. The least acceptable result was to have no debt when you have your child. We accomplished that, which is kind of cool. You don't accomplish all your goals, by the way. Then finally, if your outcome-based thinking revolves around another person, like a husband, a wife, or a boss—in other words, you've got your goal—what you don't want is this.

You've got your boss and what they want, and you've got obstacles and all this kind of stuff. You always have to keep in mind what the other person in your life wants, too. What do they want? The person in your life will support you through everything as long as you give them what they want. That's pretty crucial to write down. People can say, "Do you know what, Ric? You go do that part of the business over there; I'm going to continue on over here in my thing."

"You do your thing and everything will be fine." The survey says that's not how it works in the real world. The survey says that in the real world when husband and wife support each other in their joint venture, things work out. You work with your wife, right?

Ric Thompson: I do. Most people find that phenomenally strange.

Kevin Hogan: Exactly. By the way, there are days where she finds that you're insufferable, true?

Ric Thompson: Absolutely.

Kevin Hogan: She shakes her head and she thinks, "What was I thinking?" I know that because I went through the same thing, but here's the deal. When that person is supporting you, if you can actually acquire that support, give that person what they need, specifically. The best way to do this, by the way, is this really cool, devious strategy—ask.

People have this really crazy concept of romance, but it's all about mystery. If you just guess and bring her tulips today, that might work except that she likes lilies more than tulips. I didn't know that for the first 18 years of marriage. Why? Because I didn't ask. Asking is so important. Do you know who Dottie Walters was?



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Ric Thompson: Yes.

Kevin Hogan: Dottie Walters ran the biggest Speakers Bureau on the planet for, probably, 30 years. She worked for Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, who is the author of the amazing book, *The Power of Positive Thinking*, a book that was so huge in my life. Dottie Walters came to Minneapolis back in '97 or '98, and she was about 65 or 70 years old. I got a chance to go see her talk. I was so excited because this was one of my heroes.

This is a woman who is a public speaker and presenter, and she's a brilliant storyteller. She's a successful person and is one of the people I want to be like. I don't want to be short and female, but I wanted to be like Dottie with what she had accomplished and do some of the great things that she had done. I went up to her at the end of the event, and I brought her a copy of my book, *The Psychology of Persuasion*, in hard cover.

I had already prewritten it out; it says, "Dottie, I appreciate everything you've done in my life, and you didn't even know it. Love, Kevin," or one of those kinds of things. I handed it to her and I said, "Dottie, I know you're at the end of your day." Everybody had already gone. I waited until the last person. I was the evil person, the one who made her wait the longest.

I said, "I'm at this \$2,000-a-day-speaking plateau. I've been here for five years. I've been making the same amount of money every time I go speak before an audience for five years." I said, "What do I do?" She looked at the book. As I was giving it to her, the book was very close to just under her chin because she was a very small lady as far as height. She looked down at the title, and she opened the book. It almost hit her chin as she opened it.

She looked and said, "*The Psychology of Persuasion*." She looked up at me. Ric, she had these cool eyes, these beautiful eyes. She said, "Honey, have you asked yet for more than \$2,000?" I said, "No," and she said, "Honey, next time you ask, and they'll give it to you." That was it. I walked away. I said goodbye; I gave her a hug. The next time some meeting planner said, "We can't wait to get Kevin here." No! It was just like, "We have got 58 other people who said no. We'll call Hogan. Maybe he'll do it."

The person calls on the telephone. I had a cold—it was January; it was Minnesota—and I answered the phone. The first question out of every meeting planner in the world is not, "How good of a speaker are you? Can you help us with this and our company? Can you make us better? Can you teach us this? Can you entertain us? How funny are you?" No, it was none of those things. Do you know what the first question is?

Ric Thompson: Not, "What do you charge?"



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Kevin Hogan: “What do you charge? How much do you cost?” I almost said \$2,000, because it’s what comes out of your mouth after five years. I said, “\$5,000.” He said, “Dr. Hogan, we had \$4,000, literally, budgeted for this event. We probably could’ve done \$4,000. I suppose I could go to the board, ask them, and see what they say.” Now this is sounding pretty optimistic to me, too.

I’m all bummed out because you’re telling me right now, at this exact moment, that there’s \$4,000 waiting for me, which is twice what I’ve ever been paid. On one shoulder there was a little devil that said, “Kevin, don’t be an idiot. Take the \$4,000 and be happy with it.” Then on the other shoulder was this little angel. It was Dottie, and I kept hearing, “Just ask, honey. Just ask. They’ll give it to you.” I thought, “Dottie, you better be right.”

I said, “I’m sorry. Five thousand dollars is the price. I wouldn’t ask you to work for less, and I would hope you would do the same for me.” He said, “Dr. Hogan, we appreciate talking to you today. If anything works out, we’ll give you a call back in a week or two.” Do you know what? They did, and they said yes. Now that’s pretty cool. I had never been paid \$5,000 to stand up in front of an audience for two hours and talk. That was neat; that was amazing.

The next time I saw Dottie Walters was in Washington DC. It was five years ago; it was in 2003. It was at the National Speakers Association. She didn’t remember me at all. I brought another copy of my book, and I gave it to her. I went and saw her speak. I wanted to talk to her and just thank her, to tell her that she stood on my shoulder and I really deeply appreciated that. I put it in the book.

She said, “Honey, would you walk me over to my next event?” She was going to speak on the other side of this big Marriott Hotel Convention Center there in DC. She took my arm, and I’m so proud. I’m walking through the Marriott with Dottie Walters! There’s nobody cooler than this in the world. I’m thinking, “This is awesome!” It’s like, “Who’s that?” “That’s Dottie Walters.” “Who’s that good-looking guy with her, I wonder?” “No, that’s Kevin Hogan; he’s not that good-looking.”

I told her the story, and she thought it was really sweet and cool. She said, “Honey, what are you earning now?” I told her. I said, “I’m making \$7,500 a speech.” She said, “Is that all the more you’ve been asking in the last five years since I saw you?” I thought, “Shoot.” I’m with Jeffrey Gitomer. Do you know who Jeffrey is?

Ric Thompson: I do very much, yes.

Kevin Hogan: Jeffrey wrote *The Sales Bible*, and all these little cool books, *The Little Red Book of Selling*, and all that. I was with Jeffrey’s group that day because nobody else would take me. Jeffrey’s got me hanging around him, and I tell him about my experience



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with Dottie. He said, "Wait, wait! You are telling me you are working for \$7,500? That's it? What are you, a wimp? I'm twice as good as you?"

He says, "Michelle, I'm twice as good as him. Tracie, I'm twice as good as him." He says this really loud because he was getting paid twice the money that I was. He said, "I'm worth twice as much money as Kevin Hogan. That's pretty cool. I am worth twice as much." He drilled this. Jeffrey has this really interesting way of making a point. I thought, "Okay, I get it. I get it. Is Jeffrey twice as good as me? No. Is he better? Probably, but not a lot, just a little bit."

The next time somebody called for an event, I upped my fee to \$10,000. A year later, it was \$12,500 and a year after that it was \$14,500. I met him for lunch two years ago here in Minneapolis sitting down with Michelle, again, and him. We're in Minneapolis, and he says, "Kev, what are you charging now?" I said, "I'm so proud, man. I'm so proud." I'm thinking, "I'm right next to you now." I said, "\$14,500." He just shakes his head.

Michelle said, "That's not a price. Fourteen thousand five hundred dollars? You couldn't get \$15,000 from the person who's going to give you \$14,500?" I was so frustrated. I said, "Michelle, you're just saying that people will give you anything you ask. That's crazy." She said, "Really! Jeffrey gets \$25,000." He said, "I told you, kid, I'm way better than you." You can probably guess how the story continues, and so we don't need to go on. The point, of course, is to remember the very first thing I told you.

At the beginning today, I told you to put a higher value on yourself, to allow yourself to be worth more than the McDonald's price or the Wal-Mart price. As you look at yourself and you realize what you're doing for somebody else out there, is what you're doing really cool? Are you really changing somebody's life? Are you giving them a great experience? Can they identify with you for some reason?

Do they like you, or are you giving them a lot of value? Whatever it is they're getting from you, it's really worth finding out what that it is, finding out what you're worth. The only way you can do that is to ask. Ask, literally, and ask without fear. You have to get rid of the devil's side on the shoulder that negotiates. This is your price. Here's your price; this is the price. A lot of people have said, "Kevin, would you come for \$15,000?" I said, "No, I can't do that."

I wanted to do the deal, but I turned them down. The thing is that when you put a price on your head, it's got to be your integrity. It's like, "What am I really worth?" Once you identify with what you're really worth, once you have self-worth, are you willing to change your self esteem because somebody asks you a question? Once you've determined what value you give people every day, refuse, absolutely refuse, totally to change that value.



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If you charge this amount of money for coaching, your \$200 a call for coaching, you don't take \$195. You can't do that because that means that you were worth \$200 yesterday or to another person, but you're only worth \$195 to this person. Wrong, incorrect. You are always worth \$200 or more, because everyday you evolve and get better. You never have fear; you always have preparedness.

Maybe you won't do so well, maybe you have to restructure your packaging somehow, but when you're doing one-on-one, if your price is \$200 today, six months from now it's going to be \$225. It's just going to be that, and people will pay because you will increase the value of your service to them in whatever it is so that it accommodates that extra value, that extra price, that extra experience with you instead of being Wal-Mart and pricing yourself like so many salespeople who turn into entrepreneurs and are always trying to win on price, try to sell something cheaper than the other guy.

He's got insurance so he tries to sell you for \$20 less. I was talking to a psychiatrist this weekend—not my therapist, but somebody else's. I was doing an event out in Philadelphia, and this gal was a psychiatrist; she was great. Her name was Dobra. Dobra works out in East Coast up in New England. She said, "Kev, I earned \$200 for a half hour and \$275 for a full hour, and I want to know how to make more money."

I said, "Is that all the more you are charging?" I've got these lines down now. She said, "Yes." I said, "Why aren't you charging \$500 an hour?" She said, "Nobody would pay it." I said, "Have you ever asked?" She said, "No." I said, "How about you ask? How about you become the therapist to the elite? How about you become the therapist for only the people who desperately want somebody to really help them; you're that person?" She said, "Wow!" that that's what she's going to do. I'll keep you posted on our next phone call.

Ric Thompson: Okay.

Kevin Hogan: I think she actually will. That's the ultimate answer, that once you find out your price, what you're worth, what value you give people, what experience you create people, what are you actually providing? Do you matter? Once you label yourself and you've got a value for yourself, it doesn't change down. If your price changes down you've done something wrong, bad, stupid, and you need to fix it.

If somebody doesn't want to give you \$15,000 because they say \$10,000, you should say no. If you say \$10,000 to one person and \$15,000 to another, I'll tell you that when they're talking at their conference, you're not getting hired back at either place. Get the price, stick it on your forehead, let it be there, and 'refuse to choose' like Barbara Sher says. Don't get stuck being this, whatever this is, for the rest of your life.



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Make it okay to evolve; make it okay to have other goals in life aside from the one that your mom set for you or that you set for yourself last year before you had other ideas and other thoughts. There are so many cool things out there in life, so many neat ways to not only make money, but to make a really significant amount of money to help a lot of people, to make a big difference in people's lives, to get paid significantly for it, to live a good life and to be able to provide for people who don't have any opportunities.

You can be that person, too. That's one of the more rewarding things you get to do when you get past certain income levels, is to actually turn it around and do cool stuff for other people that you never would've been able to do before. Of course, that's all for another phone call, too. Those are some thoughts. I hope we got a few notes out of there.

Ric Thompson: I got a whole page full!

Kevin Hogan: That's a good place for me to pause.

Ric Thompson: That was fantastic. I know that you never, or very rarely, do calls like this, so I'm really grateful to you for doing the one today. Folks, I didn't get a chance to mention that Kevin has got one of the coolest newsletters out there. I've been a subscriber for over a year now. It's called *Coffee with Kevin Hogan*. You've got to subscribe yourself to this. It's definitely not a sales pitch or a hyped-up type of thing.

He gives you a lot of great content. He gives you a lot to think about. He's got great stuff to act upon. Definitely go to www.KevinHogan.com and subscribe yourself to *Coffee with Kevin Hogan*. Quite frankly, he won't do this, but I'll do it for him. Go pick up some of his books. Go to www.Amazon.com, put Kevin Hogan in there, and his name will pop up quite a few times.

He just grabs your attention. He's got a lot of great stuff to offer us. He talked about a number of different areas. Definitely pick up what he's got out there and move forward. Are there any last thoughts you want to throw into that, Kevin?

Kevin Hogan: No, not at all. If you read *Coffee*, it's a pretty cool experience. I'd sit here and tell you all about it, but gamble on it for one time. Come have coffee with me on a Monday morning because I don't send emails everyday or even once a week. We refuse to do that. We're just having coffee once a week together. It's pretty cool. It's changed, I think, a lot of people's lives; that's fair to say. Maybe it will do the same for you, too. Yes, come along.

Ric Thompson: Fantastic. Again, www.KevinHogan.com. Subscribe to *Coffee with Kevin Hogan*. You will definitely enjoy it and, if nothing else, as you can tell, you'll get a few laughs and a few chuckles out of it.



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Kevin Hogan: That's true, hopefully, too.

Ric Thompson: There are very few newsletters that I've been a follower of for over a year. There's a very small handful, and yours is definitely one of them.

Kevin Hogan: Thank you.

Ric Thompson: All right. Again, thank you very much for your time today. I know you're super busy. That was a fantastic interview.

Kevin Hogan: Ric, you have yourself a very good day. My best to your family, and I'll look forward to next time we talk.

Ric Thompson: Great, thanks.

Kevin Hogan: Take care, Ric.