

Millionaires on a boat

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A few years ago I was asked to photograph, in Michigan, for a major financial firm. My first thought was they might need some group shots and candids for a corporate event.

I was pleasantly surprised to find out that it was a lot more than sales people schmoozing their clients and boring speeches. The firm was inviting some of their best clients on a 65-foot yacht with all the food and drink they could desire.

It was at these events, over a couple years, that I found myself in an environment where I could listen, observe and share ideas that lead me to come to some fantastic conclusions about how people generate wealth.

You might be thinking one of two things. One, why would these people share such ideas with the photographer and two how are a bunch of millionaires impressed by a yacht full of food in the middle of Lake St. Clair.

The answer to the second question is, there was more. Not only did the financial firm bring in a large luxury yacht for their clients, they enlisted sailboats to entertain their clients. Not just any sailboats; two Stars and Stripes boats to race across the choppy waters of Lake St. Clair.

That is good, but it had to be better. You can't have the full experience racing the Stars and Stripes boats without Dennis Connor, the most famous sailor in the world, and his crew at the helm.

The guests of the firm would take turns sailing and spend the rest of their time on the yacht. My job was to photograph them having a great time.

Between races I would spend time with the guests. I would mostly listen, but once in a while I might have a conversation when appropriate.

Near the end of what turned out to be my last trip I began to come to some conclusions about the common themes from my hours of listening and observation.

I talked to a few people on the boat about my conclusions. They told me I may have figured it out and that few would actually believe me. It was too simple. One gentleman, John, even explained his entire business model pointing out that my conclusions paralleled exactly.

He explained how he would buy underperforming companies, turn them around and sell them. John was worth tens of millions of dollars.

John was also quick to point out that just because all these people on the boat had millions of dollars didn't mean they were happy and didn't have problems.

The concept is simple. I want to share it with you, but you have to promise to apply it to your life. You can apply these basic rules in many ways. Some applications are positive, but they can also be used negatively. It's a formula. How it is used is up to the user.

First: find something you enjoy doing. This is not as easy as it sounds. I know people over forty that still have not found anything they like to do.

Second: Streamline, Simplify, and make it profitable. Once you make something profitable you have learned many lessons. You may have failed a few times, found better ways of accomplishing tasks, but ultimately you found some success. The amount of profit is not as important as the third step.

Third: Repeat. Repeat the process.

Yes, that's it.

Allow me to illustrate.

Lynn, an artist, has found her calling. She loves to paint. Her heart is in it and she is willing to do what it takes to paint beautiful images canvas on a daily basis. Lynn loves what she does.

Each day she gets up with joy in her heart because she has a new idea for a painting. Each night our artist goes to bed in sorrow because she is broke, feels misunderstood, and receives no recognition for the beautiful images she creates and then stores in the dark basement.

Lynn, has found step one, but has not accomplished step two, making her love profitable.

I went to art school. I am well aware that using the words art and profitable in the same sentence can earn you some dirty looks in some circles. But, if you want to continue to do what you enjoy on a daily basis you have to find a way to support yourself with that which your heart directs you to do.

You need to find a way to make your calling profitable. You need to find a system and streamline the process to make it profitable.

One day our determined artist decided to go to a gallery to sell her art. The dealer looked at her work and then looked at Lynn and said no. This is where

she had ended her quest the last time. Lynn swore she would never be rejected like that again.

But now our artist realized she had to keep going until she found someone who appreciated her work. Someone who would say the magic word, yes. She was rejected twelve more times, but each time Lynn learned a little more. She asked questions of prospects and was not offended.

On her thirteenth try a gallery accepted Lynn's work. Lynn was now able to pay some bills. She was, for the moment, content.

Many people do not take the next step, because they are content or they have found their good.

Maybe our artist will continue trying.

Because she was successful in the second step, Lynn had learned a number of presentation methods; it only took our artist five tries before she found another gallery to accept her submissions work. But, again, after Lynn finally found three quality galleries that successfully sold her work Lynn believed she found her good.

Some people have a dollar amount attached to their self-worth and when they reach it, they sit back in their good.

This is very common, especially with people in sales. Many sales people may reach their yearly goal months early and coast the rest of the year.

Once you have found success, you must repeat if you wish to become extremely wealthy. Of course, as you grow you will have new challenges.

This formula doesn't explain how to make your calling profitable. Every discipline is different, but the basic formula can be applied to most any situation.

Some people do get lucky and become very wealthy at the second step. Often it is a great idea or invention. But, the formula can still apply.

If an inventor goes through the process of successfully taking an invention to market they have learned a great number of skills. I'm sure most people would do things differently and more efficiently the next time around. But, now they have the ability to repeat with more knowledge and fewer barriers.

Our artist used her new skills well. Lynn managed to find seven galleries to accept her work. But, at this point Lynn realized that she was doing more selling than creating art. Art was her love and when she was away from her passion too long she felt empty.

Lynn realized that she had to find new ways to expand her business without taking herself away from her what brings excitement to her life. She hired people that said they were interested in art and would like to help, but unfortunately they didn't work.

Eventually, she hired people with similar skills, passion and methods of doing business. Lynn went back to the basic formula and developed a plan. This time, the repeat was a duplication of herself.

Lynn used the formula to find new markets, create new products using her art. She even used the formula to invest the money she had earned.

She never named the formula, nor did she ever formally recognize the idea, but she used it and made it regular part of her life. A successful life full of passion, wealth and happiness.

The formula didn't make her happy, Lynn had to have that within, but using the formula allow our artist to keep her passion the main focus of her life.

The formula can be used in business, the stock market, real estate, and day-to-day living.

One of the most famous definitions of insanity is to "doing the same thing over and over, expecting different results." - Benjamin Franklin

If you do what actually works over and over again you can build happiness, security, peace and wealth.