



# **RiseZine**

A Publication of PleaseRise.com

## *Spring 2010 Vol. 5 No. 4*

Welcome to **RiseZine** my quarterly electronic magazine (ezine) that can help you solve problems in your business and your life. It is my desire to bring you inspiration from the experiences I gained during the twenty (20) years I spent as a Judge of the Denver County Court participating in the transformation of lives. I'm convinced that those experiences will heighten your knowledge, sensitivity and outlook on the issues you face in your business and your life. I am honored to share your precious time with you.

### **P O P for Success**

“For unto everyone that hath shall be given and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.” Matthew 25:29 Holy Bible, King James Version. That’s the way Malcolm Gladwell opens his New York Times bestseller Outliers; The Story of Success, 2008. I was so impressed with the book that last week when I returned to Spencer Elementary School in Savannah, Georgia to speak to the “Young Men of Honor” (YMOH), I wanted to share the premise of Gladwell’s book in a way that was understandable to ten and eleven-year-old boys. My earlier visits (nee chats) all contained elements of the principles of success as I saw them. In prior meetings, I created a RAP to help me introduce my ideas and mnemonics to help them remember the concepts: “Get on your feet, clap your hands, lend a hand, please rise; you’re Alpha Lambda’s Young Men of Honor, you will have successful lives.”

In my first meeting with YMOH one year ago, I used the mnemonic **B-A-L-L** to encourage them to [**B**]elieve, [**A**]chieve [**L**]ead and [**L**]earn. I used the **D-E-E-D** mnemonic from last quarter's RiseZine at my meeting with them in November. It



was always my intention to define success for them and demonstrate how they possessed the elements necessary for success in their lives. After reading Outliers, my focus changed from how do we define success to how do we achieve success. Malcolm Gladwell immediately transformed for me the way I understand success.

The word “outlier” comes from what scientists call, “phenomena outside the normal or ordinary experiences; a statistical observation that is markedly different in value than the others of the sample.” Is extraordinary genius, luck or significant effort necessary to achieve success? Gladwell answers the pertinent question about our culture, “Is how well we do determined solely on innate ability or is persistence and effort significant. The attitude persists during your tenure in school or the workforce and the success you achieve is related to that attitude.” If you want extraordinary results, you need extraordinary effort. Meaningful work is found through passion, not genius. So you throw your heart and mind into it and it develops “big success” > outliers!

Mastery of your work is how Gladwell defines success. He introduces his reading audience to the 10,000 hour rule. That is how long an apprenticeship is needed before you become an expert or be able to master your work...roughly 10 years. He cites the example of the Beatles...how long did they practice before they became World Famous? In 1957, Paul McCartney and John Lennon were the beneficiaries of an amazingly fortuitous event. When a promoter needed a band to play eight hours a day, seven days a week in Hamburg Germany, the Beatles

were chosen. By the time they hit the United States in 1964, they had well over 10,000 hours of practice. I can take my own example: how long did I practice law before I became a judge, 10 years? How long did you practice your craft, profession or skill before you mastered it; 10 years? Can you be an expert surgeon before you achieve 10,000 hours of practice? Doctor, I don't want you operating on me with anything less than 10,000 hours. I want an outlier!

I wondered how I would get these Fifth-graders to remember the concept for achieving success. I remembered a joke by Jeff Foxworthy, host of the television program, "Are You Smarter than a Fifth-Grader". He told a joke about how much fun his family had playing with a sheet of bubble wrap. I was speaking to Fifth-graders so if I could create a sound, rather than chance that they might not follow the use of the word 'mnemonic' I could seal the message. I passed around a sheet of bubble wrap so all thirty of the young men could pinch it and then asked them what sound it made... They began to chant **POP! POP! POP!** We had our word for the day: **P-O-P**

## **Passion – Opportunity – Perseverance**

### **Passion**

Before I conducted the Leadership Training Seminar in Yakima, WA last month for the Washington Association of Maintenance and Operations Administrators (WAMOA), I spoke to several members about the biggest challenge they faced with their employees. Most of them mentioned the need to ignite the **passion** in their employees for the work they did. At the seminar I asked those attendees to think back to their first day on the job; describe the feeling they had, the anticipation, excitement of a new experience and the desire to prove themselves. Then I asked them how their attitude differed now from that first day. To re-ignite the passion in their employees, they had to find the passion themselves and demonstrate it in carrying out their management duties. It is what brought them to service as a public professional, and what will sustain them throughout their career.

For the Young Men of Honor, it was a different challenge. I wanted them to think about the things they enjoyed doing and how those things could be converted to a business. Of course, a few mentioned sports; but, most were passionate about computer technology, law, art, music and games. US News and World Report ranked Thomas Jefferson High School, Alexandria, VA., as the “Top School in America”. TJ Principal said, “[N]one of our students have the same passion, but all of them are passionate about something.” Having a passion is widely accepted and embraced. Passion placed TJ at the top of the list for the last three years. We must acknowledge and encourage the pursuit of passion for every student, employee and family member. The thing that keeps popping up in your life must be a talent that needs to be nurtured for success.

### **Opportunity**

The Beatles were very ordinary musicians before they went to Hamburg, Germany. Playing every night for those years made the difference. Gladwell found, “Practice isn’t the thing you do when you’re good; it’s the thing you do that **makes you good!**” Ironically, outliers may start out as very ordinary people who achieve great success because of extraordinary opportunity. Many of my peers relate to the extraordinary opportunity we received when President Lyndon Johnson signed the Equal Opportunity Grant program into law in the mid-sixties and allowed us to pay for our college educations. When you are supported by your community, you seize that opportunity and are sufficiently passionate about it to pursue it, success results.

The Young Men of Honor have been presented with an opportunity to build relationships with other motivated young men their age. With the great support from their mentors, community and Program Director Diane Jackson, they are seizing that opportunity; as evidenced by their growth and achievement in their academic careers so far. Who we surround ourselves with has a profound effect on who we are. Are you seizing the opportunities you get and turning them into successful efforts? **Outliers do!**

## Perseverance

What can we learn from those who succeeded in their endeavors? It is displayed prominently on the whiteboard at the front of the classroom where the Young Men of Honor meet...**Never Give Up!** It takes time to accumulate 10,000 hours. Success is a lifetime endeavor. My ninety-year-old father-in-law, Frezell Gurley, "Freeze" accompanied me to the Young Men of Honor meeting last week. I asked the students to guess his age; he was happy when they underestimated it by **20 years!** Then, I asked Freeze if he was still learning. He said, "Everyday!" If they see that a ninety-year-old man still has a thirst for knowledge, then 10,000 hours (or ten years) don't seem like such a long time. If you shouldn't give up at ninety years old, what should you be doing at your age? Or, do you need to pinch the bubble wrap?

### Passion –Opportunity – Perseverance

**P O P** It's a formula for **success**.

Can't your organization use a healthy infusion of inspiration, motivation or training in Leadership, Decision-making, Communication, Ethics or Team-Building? I can provide a keynote, workshop, seminar or individual coaching tailored to meet your needs and help you and your team **RISE**. Email [Beau@PleaseRise.com](mailto:Beau@PleaseRise.com).

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*"Actually, it's not that most people don't have much and they just want a little; It's that they have it all and they just want a little." -Anonymous*