Get Off Your Attitude
Change Your Attitude, Change Your Life
by Ryan C. Lowe

The Secret to Success
Master the one thing that affects every area of your life.

QUICK OVERVIEW

In Get Off Your Attitude, Ryan Lowe explains it isn’t what happens to you in life but how you respond to your circumstances that matters. Lowe has a history of both triumph and failure. Because he’s “been there, done that” he has little sympathy for pity parties and negative attitudes. Nor does he approve of a passive approach to life that abdicates responsibility for what goes on between one’s ears. “Children react to life; adults respond to it.”

After making the case that you have both the choice and the ability to control your attitude, Lowe provides strategies and encouragement to that end. He offers practical insights that reveal the impact attitude has on every aspect of your life—from your relationships, to your health, to your money. He sprinkles the book with catchy GOYA-isms to inspire you to keep your thoughts and beliefs in check.

APPLY AND ACHIEVE

Do you know how much your time is worth? Sure, you can figure out how much you earn an hour, but even that figure doesn’t offer the full picture. You can always earn more money, but once you spend your time, it’s gone forever.

You’ve likely heard financiers talk about the value of keeping a spending journal. The premise is that, by tracking every penny you spend, you’ll have a better idea of where your money is going. Lowe prescribes a similar activity with a focus on tracking your time. To see where the minutes really go, track them one by one for the next few days. You may be surprised to see how much time is frittered away on activities you really don’t care about.

SUCCESS Points
From this book you will learn:

- The importance of regularly weeding out negative thoughts
- Where your habits begin
- How to invest your time more effectively
- Why “just getting by” really isn’t OK

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Who am I to tell you to get off your attitude?

I’m a normal guy who has failed, been hurt, made mistakes, been rejected, and lost nearly everything. I’m a dropout who has been shot, foreclosed on, fired, diagnosed as clinically depressed, dumped, and failed in business.

For many years, I had the wrong attitude toward life and it seemed that life had the wrong attitude toward me. I felt the rules didn’t apply. I expected trouble to find me, and it always did.

Despite my former approach to life, I’ve had several great opportunities. I’ve traveled as a promoter and speaker for Brian Tracy and other training organizations. I’ve served as the vice president of sales for two companies. I’ve lived in some amazing places and was fortunate to meet several of the most incredible and successful people in this country. One thing I noticed about all of them was their positive attitude. They were happy, fulfilled, friendly, and enjoyed life. I learned that it wasn’t because they had reached success. It was because they had a confident belief, not only in themselves, but also in life. Being around them inspired me to search for a positive outlook for myself. The more optimistic I became, the more great things seemed to happen to me and the better my life became. The more I applied this positive attitude to specific areas of my life, the better I did in each area.

This took time, effort, and patience. The payoff was huge!

THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTITUDE

Why is attitude so important? Because it determines everything else in your life!

Attitude isn’t just about whether or not you’re having a good or bad day. Attitude is more than that. It affects relationships. It affects careers. It affects your entire future. I’ve met people who went through something similar to what I did. They were flying high, had a great business, and then lost it all. Years later, they’re still talking about their problems and misfortunes. For some of them, their spouse left them and they were forced to sell the family business. With others, their business partner was cheating them. Some had their major customer go out of business. These people are talented, experienced, and smart. If they would start another business, the odds of success this time could be quite good. Unfortunately, they’re still reliving the events that led up to their failure. Their negative attitude won’t let them get on with their life.

I know how they feel. I know what failure feels like. I lost my business. It hurts. What’s the difference between those negative thinking people and me? It’s our attitudes. I’m not any better than they are or any smarter than they are. I am different from them in one way: I chose to see my past and my future differently.

Can you see how important your attitude is? Changing your attitude can literally change your life. It did mine. And here’s the great thing about attitude: It’s your choice.

Want a Great Life?

Your attitude is a habit. Most people I meet have a bad habit of believing they can’t do anything; of talking down to themselves, and of living a life of quiet defeat. They think, talk, and act as if it’s impossible for them to succeed.

If this is you—stop it!

When I’m guilty of that, I remind myself of this truth:

Watch your thoughts, for they become words.
Watch your words, for they become actions.
Watch your actions, for they become habits.
Watch your habits, for they become character.
Watch your character, for it becomes your destiny.

Do you see it!? If you want to live a fulfilling life—one filled with an abundance of health, wealth, and happiness—it starts with how you think, talk, and act!

Living the life of your dreams starts with getting into a habit of being positive in how you think, talk, and act! The flip side of the coin is if you have a habit of thinking, talking, and acting negatively, you are living a life far below what you can achieve.

Dream Out Loud

My mother started an antique store with one piece of furniture and a dream. Through hard work, determination, and a belief in herself, she turned it into one of the largest antique stores in the area.

It wasn’t something that happened overnight. It took time. It also took the whole family. My dad would come home from his full-time job at the utility company and spend nights and weekends polishing, repairing, and refinishing furniture. All six of us—my parents, my two brothers, my sister, and I—put a lot of time into the family business. I’m glad I was able to be part of that and watch my mother’s dream come true. My father believed in her every step of the way. Together, we built something we could take pride in.

Growing up with entrepreneurs for parents, I knew I wanted to have my own business one day. In 2007, I had my chance. A business associate approached...
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me and offered me the opportunity to become a partner in his new insurance company and to serve as the vice president of sales. I immediately accepted. Over the next two years, we built a great company and enjoyed success. I was watching my dream of being a business owner unfold right before my eyes.

The economic recession completely blindsided our industry. Our company was affected along with hundreds of others in the financial sector. Everything quickly fell apart. We were among the first victims of the brewing economic recession.

For a while, I didn't know what to do. I felt that life had handed me my dreams and just when I had wrapped my hands around them, life snatched them away. I was hurt, angry, and confused. That's why I was waking up at four in the morning panicked and anxious. I had no idea what had happened or what to do next.

Looking back, I see my real problem was that I had lost sight of my lifelong dreams. I had set them on a shelf. You see, I didn't only dream to have my own business—I also wanted to be a motivational speaker and author. While I was a business partner, those dreams seemed to be within reach. But after the business collapsed, I felt foolish and ashamed for ever thinking about them.

There I was, living out of a friend's spare room while working an entry-level sales job. I couldn't see any way to go from there to being a motivational speaker, author, and entrepreneur. So I shelved the dreams and trudged on with a miserable, bleak life.

The morning when I started telling myself to get off my attitude, I decided to take my dreams down from that shelf and dust them off. I realized that I had had some setbacks, but I knew I wasn't out of the game for good! I knew what I wanted to do. I was going to start a company to inspire people the same way we were inspired—with the message to get off your attitude!

Stop Saying “I Can’t!”

You can! Success requires action! The only reason I'm passionately pursuing my purpose is that I changed my attitude toward it. I decided to believe I could go after my dreams. That's the only thing keeping you from reaching your dreams—your self-limiting beliefs.

Stop telling yourself it will never work, or it's foolish, or it's impractical. Stop making excuses about why you don't have enough time or why you need to wait until later. My mother had four children and a husband and still found time to see her dreams come true. We weren't neglected because my mother was focused on her work. I was fortunate to be a part of that!

When you go after your dreams, include others in it. It will make the journey much more worthwhile. I shared my dreams and my goals with my family, friends, and girlfriend. They encouraged me and helped me reach those dreams. Sharing your dreams with others helps you to commit to them.

HOW DO YOU SPEND YOUR TIME?

Time is like money that you can deposit into something and get a return on your investment. By investing money, you have the opportunity to make more money. With time, you can't get more, but by
in investing it wisely you can enjoy the things money can’t buy. If you invest time in people, you’ll enjoy great relationships. If you invest time in your education, you’ll be more valuable to everyone around you. If you invest your time in your faith, you’ll have more peace and confidence.

Time is far more valuable than money. You can make more money—you can’t make more time. Once a moment is gone, it’s gone forever. The important thing is to make sure you’re as productive as you can be in every moment. I’m not talking about being an efficiency maniac. In The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen Covey says it like this: “The key is not to prioritize what’s on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities.”

Just because you spend forty hours a week at your job and only twenty hours on the weekend with your family doesn’t mean your job is more important than your family. You have to work to eat, right? You have responsibilities and obligations you have to fulfill. Your livelihood is highly important, but are you sacrificing time in other areas of your life for your career?

However, you have to be careful about letting the little things in life take priority over the big things. Having a clean house is important, but are you obsessing about it to the point you’re spending less time with your children? Are your dreams important to you? If they are, do you spend time pursuing them? Do you realize when you decide to watch pointless TV shows or play computer games that you could have been spending time pursuing your passion? The saying goes, “A fool and his money are soon parted.” The same is true for time. If you don’t spend your time wisely, you’ll sit around and wonder where it all went.

Have you ever kept a time journal where you write down exactly how you spent every minute of every day over the course of a few days? Do it. I promise you’ll be amazed how much time you spend on the mundane and how little you spend on important things.

MAKE MONEY, DO GOOD

One of my favorite quotes about money is by one of the co-authors of the Chicken Soup for the Soul series, Mark Victor Hansen. He said: “The best way to help the poor is to not be one of them.”

When some people hear me quote that, they cringe. But think about it—if you’re poor, you can’t help yourself, and you certainly can’t help other people. The way you put yourself in a position to not be a burden, but a boost to others, is to be financially secure. If you manage to be wealthy—well, so much the better.

But discussions about being wealthy or poor always seem to stir up controversy. People have some deep-set perspectives and old wounds when it comes to money. Whether it’s a divorce, childhood fears about poverty, fights over who’s making the most—all of that boils down to money. To a large degree, money affects your relationships, your decisions, and your life. Wouldn’t you agree?

But you know what? It’s really not money that affects these areas of your life. It’s your attitude toward money. Money isn’t a good thing, but it’s not a bad thing, either. In fact, money isn’t anything more than a tool for you to use. All the hype and obsession with money is really over how people deal with money. Some people use it for good. Some people use it for bad. Some people don’t know how to use it at all.

Is “Just Getting by” Okay?

Money isn’t a bad thing—you have to eat to live, right?—but it’s not something you obsess over, either. Money is one of those things like time—it must be nice for people who have a lot of it on their hands. I know a person who believes, “You’re going to spend what you make, so just make the best of it.” This is the barely-getting-by, living-paycheck-to-paycheck crowd. They’re good, honest, hardworking individuals, but it seems like things are always financially tight. They have bills to pay, a mortgage to keep, and mouths to feed. They barely have money for braces, much less investments. They watch other people who’ve had financial success drive nice cars and live in nice houses, but they never believe they can have those things themselves. That’s the real danger with the people who have the just-getting-by mindset—believing they have little control over what happens with their money. They think you become wealthy by being born in the right family, hitting the lottery, or belonging to a secret club of elite people. This crowd doesn’t realize the key to financial success isn’t any of that—it simply depends on having the right attitude.

My dad used to tell me: “Any fool can make money. It’s the wise man who holds on to it.”
Don’t fall for the trap of believing you don’t control your money. Make wise choices and learn the truth about finances.

Do Good for Yourself and Others

I’ll never forget the time I was walking back to my car after a social event and a man stopped me to ask for some money. He said he had lost his job and had a family to feed. Instead of giving him money, I told him to hop in the car. I took him to a nearby grocery store and told him to get whatever he needed while I waited at the front. After about fifteen minutes, he came back with the normal stuff—milk, bread, sandwich meat, a two-liter Coke, and couple of other things. Together, it all cost about thirty dollars. Outside the store, the man threw his arms around me and started crying. You would have thought I had given him a million dollars!

He didn’t know it, but I gained more out of that exchange than he did. When you focus on helping others and adding value to their lives, you’ll see more value added to yours. As you make money, remember to spend it wisely, just as you spend your time. Invest it in yourself, in your family, in your community, and in your dreams. Money is just a measure of value. The more money you have, the more you can trade it for the things that are truly valuable in life.

Don’t Let Fear Stop You!

If you don’t spend your time wisely, you’ll sit around and wonder where it all went.

If you’re not going after your dreams now, do you know why? It’s not because of money, timing, family, or anything else. It’s because you’re afraid—afraid of failure, ridicule, loss, and everything else. It’s called “fear.” In my seminars, I use this acronym many speakers use: False Evidence Appearing Real.

That’s the one I tell people the most, but my favorite acronym is: Forget Everything And Run!

That’s how fear affects you! You have a gut reaction and want to stay away from that feeling. We need to be more like kids. They have no fear, they’re relentless, and they don’t take “no” for an answer. When they want something, they don’t stop until they get it. Imitate them. It works!

Listen to me: Going after your dreams is tough. You’ll have to get out of your comfort zone. But if you never leave the comfortable little place you’ve made for yourself, you’ll never grow. Here is what I tell people: You must do something you’re not used to doing, to get something you’re not used to getting.

That’s why only a few people succeed. They’re the few who left the safe harbor and sailed into uncharted waters. It’s okay if you don’t think of yourself as an adventurous risk-taker. You don’t need to be some kind of star athlete or made of “the right stuff” to go after your dreams. Anyone can.

Dreams come in all sizes. Maybe you’ve always wanted to be a teacher, own your own business, or be a respected athlete. You might want to play the piano or write poetry. Whatever it is, you can do it!
About the Author

Ryan C. Lowe is a motivational speaker, coach, consultant, and author and has delivered presentations to companies of all sizes, from small businesses to Fortune 500 companies. During his career he has achieved award-winning sales positions and become one of the most-requested speakers/trainers with Brian Tracy Seminars, The American Sales Trainer Association, Universal Seminars, and The Productivity People. He has also served as the vice president of sales for two financial services corporations and as a partner in a financial services startup. Lowe is president of Get Off Your Attitude Seminars based in New Orleans.

Action Steps

Get more out of this SUCCESS Book Summary by applying what you’ve learned. Here are a few questions, thoughts and activities to get you started.

1. What, if anything, from your past keeps coming to mind as a regret or a failure? How is that recurring thought affecting your present?

2. Are you in the habit of reacting to situations, or responding to them? Can you tell the difference?

3. What is your big dream for your future? Write it out and share it with at least one person this week.

4. Do you know how you are spending your time? Keep a time log this week and track how you use your minutes.

5. After you’ve tracked your time, tally how much you spent doing something that you could delegate.

If you freed up that time, what could you do that would move you toward your big dream?

6. Are you an excellent money manager? If not, what do you need to learn to improve your financial situation? Connect with an expert who can help you in that area.

7. Do a good deed with your money this week. That could mean buying groceries for someone, sending a donation to a charity, or giving an unexpected gift to brighten someone’s day. The amount isn’t important; giving from a heart of abundance and generosity is.

Recommended Reading

If you enjoyed the summary of Get Off Your Attitude, check out:

You’re Broke Because You Want to Be by Larry Winget

How Successful People Think by John Maxwell

Think and Grow Rich by Napoleon Hill

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