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NAPOLEON HILL



HOW TO SELL YOUR WAY THROUGH LIFE

FOREWORD BY **KEN BLANCHARD**

HOW TO
SELL
YOUR WAY
THROUGH
LIFE

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Dedicated to
ALL WHO HAVE TRIED AND FAILED
BUT STILL FIGHT ON
WITH
DETERMINATION
TO MAKE LIFE PAY

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FOREWORD



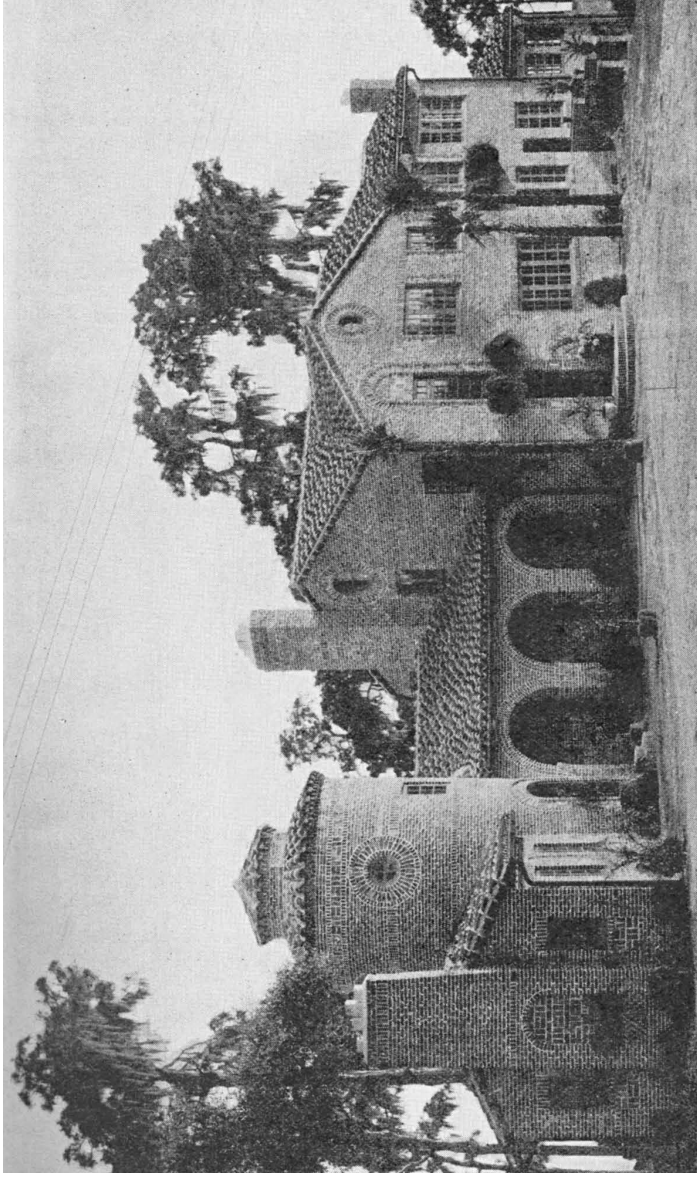
LIKE millions of others, I am a big fan of Napoleon Hill's timeless classic, *Think and Grow Rich*. First published in 1937, it has the distinction of being the best read self-help book of the twentieth century.

Not so well known is how Napoleon Hill earned his livelihood before he wrote *Think and Grow Rich*. In *How to Sell Your Way Through Life*, Hill explains how he spent many years perfecting his skills as a master salesman and sales trainer. *How to Sell Your Way Through Life* was written in the depths of the Great Depression. To write it, Hill drew upon contacts, interviews, and the cooperation of the most successful men in the country, including Andrew Carnegie, Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, and others.

The information in *How to Sell Your Way Through Life* is as relevant in today's economy as it was in a time very similar to ours. Hill could have been writing about today when he said, "Business depressions do not destroy the market for imagination; they merely increase the need and extend the demand for imagination. The world stands in need of men who will use their imagination."

From the psychology of negotiation and selling to an analysis of proven methods, positive thinking, and the all-important Golden Rule, *How to Sell Your Way Through Life* is an outstanding course in salesmanship. Invest some time in reading these pages and you'll understand why Napoleon Hill stands as one of the most masterful business philosophers of our time.

—Ken Blanchard,
co-author of *The One Minute Manager*[®]
and *The One Minute Entrepreneur*



THE AUTHOR SOLD HIS WAY INTO THIS FAMOUS "CASTLE ON THE HILL."
A glimpse of the magnitude and magnificence of Napoleon Hill's "Model American Home"
overlooking beautiful Lake Dora, Florida.

ONE OF THE FINE THINGS ABOUT THIS BOOK IS
THAT "IT WORKS"



TO write a book of theories on “how the other fellow should succeed” is quite common. But for an author to definitely demonstrate that his ideas *will work*, and that he personally can *make them work*, is quite rare.

Hence, it is not for the purpose of boasting—but to give you confidence that what you are about to read is practical, workable, proven philosophy—when we mention the following. As you read this book, you will feel as though the author was present in the pages. The lessons were not just written; they were first *lived*, and then put into print.

The author has sold his way through life so successfully using the philosophy and methods taught in this book, that he lives in a castle in Florida, which is one of the famous showplaces of the entire South. From it he commands not only a rare view of beautiful Lake Dora, but also of the entire town of fashionable Mount Dora, in the “Golden Triangle.”

He is the first to occupy this castle, upon which it is reported the builder spent about \$100,000. It is to be developed into a “model American home.” It is here that 15 children are to be adopted who will be schooled in these principles, so that they, too, may sell their way through life successfully.

This visible evidence of opulence demonstrates in a definite way that the author can not only prescribe the “medicine of success, but that *he can make it work for himself*. In a personal letter to his publishers (not intended for publication), he wrote:

“There is one thing of which you can be sure. Mrs. Hill and I have whipped life and actually made it pay in terms of complete and continuous happiness. We have found ‘that something’ which brings peace of mind and genuine joy in just living. I am astonished at not having discovered our vast riches before this.

“If I were only able to paint word pictures that truly represent the fortune Mrs. Hill and I have captured, *by applying the philosophy I am trying to teach the American public*, I believe you would not be able to produce books fast enough to meet the demand.”

And so, in this spirit, we pass on to you *How to Sell Your Way Through Life*.

—The Publishers

The great Edison failed 10,000 times before he made the incandescent electric light work. Do not become discouraged and quit if you fail once or twice before making your plans work.

THE CHALLENGE TO LIFE



The Spirit in which the Author of This Book Has Related Himself to Life

Life, you can't subdue me, because I refuse to take your discipline seriously.

When you try to hurt me, I laugh, and laughter knows no pain.

I appropriate your joys wherever I find them. Your sorrows neither discourage nor frighten me, for there is laughter in my soul.

When I get the thing I want, I am glad, but temporary defeat does not make me sad. I simply set music to the words of defeat and turn it into a song about laughter.

Your tears are not for me. I like laughter much better, and because I like it, I use it as a substitute for grief and sorrow and pain and disappointment.

Life, you are a fickle trickster, don't deny it!

You slipped the emotion of love into my heart so you might use it as a thorn with which to prick my soul, but I have learned to dodge your trap—with laughter.

You try to lure me with the desire for gold, but I have outwitted you by following the trail that leads to knowledge, instead.

You induce me to build beautiful friendships, then convert my friends into enemies so you may harden my heart, but I sidestep your fickleness by laughing off your attempt and selecting new friends in my own way.

You cause men to cheat me in trade, so I will become hard and irritable, but I win again because I possess only one precious asset, and this is something no man can steal—IT IS THE POWER TO THINK MY OWN THOUGHTS AND BE MYSELF, plus the capacity to laugh at you for your pains.

You threaten me with death, but to me death is nothing worse than a long, peaceful sleep, and sleep is the sweetest of human experiences—except laughter.

You build the fire of hope in my breast, then sprinkle water on the flames, but I go you one better by rekindling the fire on my own account—and laugh at you once more.

You plant vicious enemies in my path who try to assault my reputation and destroy my self-reliance, but you fail again because I turn their efforts into publicity that brings me to the attention of new friends whom I would never know without this perfidy.

For a quarter of a century, you hurdle-jumped me over every conceivable form of failure, but I coined the knowledge gained from these failures into a philosophy of success that now renders useful service and brings countless thousands of others the joy of laughter; and these newly made friends willingly pay me compound interest for every second of failure you have imposed upon me.

You bore me into this world in poverty, but this has proved to be a blessing in disguise because poverty has taught me patience and industry and imagination and temperance and humility and a hundred other useful traits that the idle will never know.

Life, you are licked as far as I am concerned, because you have nothing with which to lure me away from laughter and you are powerless to scare me.

This book was not written for the purpose of expressing heroism or brilliancy. Its sole purpose is to convey practical information on the psychology of negotiation; information that is known to be sound because it was obtained from the life experiences of hundreds of successful people who began at scratch and made for themselves enviable positions in the world. For this reason the book should be the handbook of every person who has just finished school and is ready to sell himself through life successfully. If I could place a copy of the book in the hands of the members of every family having children of the high school age, and every person graduating from business college, I would feel I had made a definite contribution to the successful lives of hundreds of thousands of young people who are today groping in the dark for the path that leads to self-determination.

—The Author

All anyone really requires, as a capital on which to start a successful career, is a sound mind, a healthy body, and a genuine desire to be of as much service as possible to as many people as possible.

PREFACE



THIRTY-FIVE years ago a young man dropped from a moving freight train in East Orange, N. J., and hurriedly made his way to the laboratory of Thomas A. Edison. When asked to state his business before being permitted to see Mr. Edison, the young man boldly replied, "I am going to become his partner!"

His boldness got him past the secretary. An hour later he was at work, scrubbing floors in the Edison plant. Five years later he was a partner of the great Edison. The man's name is Edwin C. Barnes, known throughout the United States as the distributor of the Ediphone dictating machine. His home is in Florida, not very far from my own home. I have known him for a quarter of a century; have known him through the relationship of close personal friendship that gives me the privilege of saying that he sold himself to Edison through the psychology of selling described in Part 1 of this book.

Edwin Barnes has accumulated a fortune far greater than he needs, and he owes every cent of it to the hour he spent in private conversation with Edison. During that hour he sold himself so thoroughly that it gave him his opportunity to go into partnership with one of the greatest men this country ever produced. Roughly speaking, that hour of selling was worth in actual cash the millions of dollars Edwin Barnes afterward accumulated.

My first job was that of secretary to General Rufus A. Ayers, for whom I went to work while I was still in my teens. Long before I was 20, I became the general manager of one of General Ayers's coal mines. The jump from secretary to general manager was made in less than one hour, during which I sold myself into the better position by voluntarily rendering confidential service for which I neither expected nor asked pay. That sale changed the entire trend of my life and led directly to my alliance with Andrew Carnegie, with its far-flung effects on myself and thousands of others.

If you asked me to tell you why this book may be of benefit to you and demanded I give you proof that I am an authority on How to Sell Your Way through Life, I would be compelled to pull aside the curtains that hide from view my private life and give you the information in these frank but truthful words:

Thirty years ago I began, at the request of, and in collaboration with, Andrew Carnegie, to organize all the causes of success and failure into a philosophy of individual achievement. During those 30 years of research it became necessary for me to contact, interview, and gain the cooperation of the most successful men of the country, including Henry Ford, Thomas A. Edison, John Wanamaker, Luther Burbank, Woodrow Wilson, and others of their type from whose rich experiences I organized the first practical philosophy of individual achievement, under the title of *The Law of Success*.

The best evidence the philosophy is sound and practical may be found in the use I have made of it in selling my way through life. The blessings this philosophy has given me are many, the greatest of them being the fact that I can truthfully say I have sold my way through life so successfully that I have everything I need or can use for the attainment of happiness, including, of course, absolute freedom from all manner of worry over money.

I am married to the woman of my choice, with whom I have found harmony and understanding sufficient to give me continuous peace of mind and inspiration to hitch my wagon to higher stars than any I had aspired to reach before I found her.

Having converted my philosophy into the privilege of living my own life, in my own chosen way, in any part of the world I desire, Mrs. Hill and I have established a permanent home in Lake Dora, Florida, where we have an abundance of sunshine, in a castle surrounded by trees and fresh air, far enough removed from the rest of the world to give us privacy, close enough to keep us attuned to the hearts and minds of our neighbors.

From 1 to 3 hours, out of every 24, we devote to our private Master Mind conference, at which we analyze our plans and prepare some form of service for the benefit of others who have been less successful than us in selling their way through life.

We have no fears of any nature whatsoever. We have no worries. We have no feeling of suspense over the past, the present, or the future. We have perfect health and enough years ahead of us, we hope, to enable us to write a score of books after this one. We have open minds toward all things and all people, and we make it our business to learn something of interest or value from every person we contact.

Mrs. Hill's major hobby is children. Having none of her own she has begun the adoption of a family that will not be complete until we are feeding, clothing, sheltering, and educating 15 homeless children, ranging in ages from 6 to 10 years, for whom we shall become responsible until we turn them back to the world fully capable of selling their way through life successfully.

My major hobby is Mrs. Hill!

I spent 15 years searching for my wife before I found her. I sold myself to her through the principles of salesmanship described in this book. This is, I believe, the best evidence of the soundness of the rules of selling I have described.

If you read this book, you will have your mind temporarily connected with that of a man who is thoroughly happy, who can truthfully say, "Life has nothing to offer that I do not already have." During these days of turmoil, when half of the world is arming itself to the teeth and threatening civilization with its spirit of greed and lust for power, it seems almost a miracle to find even one person who has made life pay on his own terms without damage to others.

The philosophy with which Mrs. Hill and I have sold our way into happiness is fully and frankly described in this book. The spirit of our philosophy may be found in the challenge to life that I wrote nearly 10 years ago, the day after the Depression had shut off my income and destroyed my entire fortune. (See the first pages of this book.)

The rhythm of our Florida home is both positive and contagious because it has been established by a blending of the minds of two people who are doing exactly what they wish to do and through their work have found supreme happiness. This environmental rhythm is so definite it affects everyone who contacts it, including all the members of our household, our secretariat, our adopted children, and all who visit us. It is so noticeable that it is the first thing our visitors observe when they enter our home, and always they speak of the inspiring effect it has upon them.

This same rhythm of opulence and peace of mind has been written into the lines of this book, every word of which was carefully examined, weighed, and evaluated by both Mrs. Hill and myself before the manuscript was given to the publisher. We would be greatly surprised if any reader of the book failed to pick up the influence of this rhythm as he reads.

The book consists of four parts. Part 1 describes the psychology of negotiation through which successful men and women sell their way through life with a minimum amount of friction in their relationships with people. Part 2 is devoted entirely to the psychology of selling

personal services of every nature, with particular emphasis on facts of great value to young men and young women just beginning their careers. Part 3 is a comprehensive analysis of the methods by which America's number one citizen, Henry Ford, sold himself from poverty to fame and fortune.

The facts described in the four parts of this book were not merely written; they were lived by men and women who have made America the greatest industrial nation on earth. I got the facts directly from the distinguished people who lived them which, of itself, was a job of selling that continued for 30 years and gave me access to the rich store of experience of such men as Frank A. Vanderlip, John D. Rockefeller, Dr. David Starr Jordan, Harvey S. Firestone, William Wrigley, Jr., F. W. Woolworth, James J. Hill, Charles M. Schwab, and scores of others who sold themselves into fabulous riches with the aid of the principles of selling I have described.

I cannot overemphasize the importance of studying carefully the story of Henry Ford's rise from poverty to riches, as described in Part 3, for here you have an authentic outline of the principles that everyone who sells himself through life successfully must use. It may be helpful if you measure yourself point by point on the 17 principles of achievement described in the Ford analysis, taking care to observe wherein you differ from Ford in applying each of these principles.

Part 4 has been devoted to analysis of a principle that has been responsible for all that is good in our present civilization: The principle that must be understood and applied by every person who attains and holds any worthwhile station in life. Unless you make this principle a part of the foundation of your salesmanship, you may sell your way into a high station but you will not be able to hold your gains. Perhaps some may complain that Part Four sounds like a preachment on ethics. Very well, what if it is? I can think of nothing right now that you and I and most of the others now living need more than to improve the manner in which we relate ourselves to one another in business and social dealings.

Part Four should be interesting to every American who has the right to vote, because it accurately describes the principle through which Franklin D. Roosevelt did one of the finest jobs of selling in the history of the United States during his first term in office, when he stopped the stampede of fear and resold the people on the merits of their country. It will be interesting to observe if, by a neglect to apply this principle during his second term in office, the president loses the confidence of the people, which he at first had in so great a measure.

Part 4 also describes what I believe is going to happen because of the relations between the president and John L. Lewis. The business recession cost thousands of people their jobs. Any principle of human conduct capable of such far-flung results as these is worthy of careful analysis by all who are trying to sell their way through life.

The principle analyzed in Part 4 reveals the path by which the world may sell itself out of the spiritual bankruptcy into which it has been drifting since the World War. It is the only principle that will prevent another World War. It is the only solution for all this controversy between the president of the United States and the business and industrial leaders who supply the economic lifeblood that keeps the nation alive. It is the only solution of the widespread labor racket that is costing working men both their peace of mind and millions of dollars of their wages. It is the only solution available to those who are suffering religious and racial persecution throughout the world.

This great universal principle has been the very foundation on which Mrs. Hill and I have made life pay us off in coin of our own mintage, and we sincerely believe it is the only principle through which any person can find and retain peace of mind, prosperity, and happiness. For these reasons, Part 4 could not well be omitted from a book whose chief purpose is to inform people on how to sell their way through life successfully.

HOW TO
SELL
YOUR WAY
THROUGH
LIFE

I



The Principles of Practical Psychology Used in Successful Negotiation
