

Nobody Cares About Excuses, They Care About Results.

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Webster's Dictionary defines "excuse" as "to make apology for" or "to try to remove blame from." When we make excuses, we're basically telling ourselves that it's acceptable that we didn't achieve whatever it was that was set in front of us. When we do this, we give up our responsibility and/or accountability to ourselves. We say, "that's the best I can do." With that inner dialogue going on we'll never strive to do better.

The truth is that nobody cares about our excuses, they only care about our results. Excuses may make us feel better about our results, but they will not get us any closer to achieving our goals. This reminds me of a personal story from my college years. It may be inaccurate to describe them as my college years, because for most of you that evokes memories of 4-5 years spent working to attain a Bachelor's Degree. In fact, it took me nine years to earn my Bachelor's Degree. The first seven years were spent relying on a lot of excuses: I'm not smart enough, I don't have enough time, my dog ate my homework, etc. The reality is I was making a lot of excuses that were covering up the real reason for my challenges: I lacked focus, effort, and attitude.

I was stuck in a dead-end job, not making enough money, and coming to the realization that what I had been doing was not working and that I wanted a better future. Having two years of general education credits, I decided to apply for the School of Business at the University of Louisville to see if I could get back on track.

I'll never forget sitting in the academic counselor's office to get my semester's course load signed off on. The counselor's eyes roamed back and forth from my transcript to the list of classes I wanted to sign up for.

After what seemed like an eternity, he looked at me and said: "Mr. McCauley, college isn't for everybody. I suggest you save your money, drop out, and go get a job." I responded: "It's my money I'm wasting, will you please sign the form and I'll get out of your hair." At first, I was insulted. Overtime, I became very determined. The meeting was just the kick in the pants I needed.

For the next two years, I held down that dead-end full-time job working up to 50 hours a week and carrying a full-time course load in the evenings. To say it was a challenge would be an understatement. It required a great deal of effort, and excuses were no longer going to work. Fast forward two years and I was sitting in my car after completing my last final exam. The realization that it was over and that I'd finally achieved my goal brought me to tears. I realized that maybe every teacher I had in elementary and high school was right. Mr. McCauley can do the work if he'll just apply himself. It sure would have been easier to listen to them all along and not make excuses.

Whether your goal is higher sales volumes, landing new customers, getting a promotion, or starting your own business, stop making excuses. Take ownership of your actions and your results: OWN IT. Only then will you be able to see how we often stand in our own way of reaching our goals and take real steps to owning your success. I'm reminded of a quote from best-selling author Rory Vaden: "Success is never owned. It is only rented, and the rent is due every day." Anything that is worth having is not given to you, you must earn it.



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