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TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE
IN WAYS YOU NEVER THOUGHT
POSSIBLE OR ETHICAL



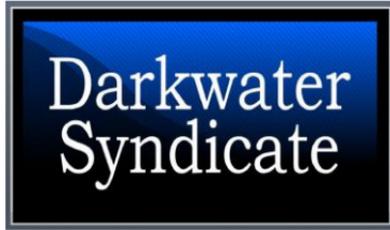
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CAVANAUGH K. SWEENEY
MBA, JD, DDS, BS

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All that aside, we hope you enjoy this book.

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“When I wasn’t running the country or beating would-be assassins half to death with my walking stick, Mr. Sweeny’s advice proved effective in advancing my political aims.”

- Andrew Jackson, 7th U.S. president (1829-1837).

“Sweeny’s insightful management strategies are Machiavellian. That says plenty, coming from me.”

- Niccolo Machiavelli, author of *The Prince*.

“Sweeny is a tactical genius.”

- Sun Tzu, author of *The Art of War*.

“Cav’s a decent young man. Buy his book.”

- Evangeline Stratton Sweeny, the author’s mother.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the authors of all self-help books everywhere, for profiting by telling us in 300 pages what should be said in three sentences, and for getting rich by telling us what we already should know.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Back in 2006, I was completely disillusioned with my work. Each sunrise brought the promise of more soul-killing drudgery. For twenty years it had gone like this: get up, get to it, bed down, do it again. Day in and day out, it went on seven days a week, fourteen hours a day.

The environment felt like a jail - long hours, repetitive work, uninspiring people, everybody breathing down your neck. Then came the day when I had had enough. I remember it fondly. It was the day that changed my life forever.

After much planning, I sat down one night to pen my resignation letter. That night I went to bed beaming an ear-to-ear smile in anticipation of quittin' day.

I turned in my resignation the very next morning. I felt like a free man – and in many ways, I was. With a solemn nod, my boss, the King County prison warden, accepted my resignation. Then he walked me out of my cell.

I was so full of pride. I felt like the governor himself had dubbed me an honorary colonel. You know, a real colonel, not like some guy in a white suit who sells fried chicken in a bucket.

Quitting took a veritable leap of faith. I was leaving behind twenty years of history. I'd made plenty of acquaintances – some I'd never forget and some I wish I could. A prison work camp is a tough place, I'll have you know.

I left my old life behind and haven't been back since. To King County, I mean. My lawyer tells me there are still active warrants for my arrest there.

If there's anything you get out of twenty years in prison, it's time to think. To reflect, mostly. It was while I was incarcerated that I came to the realization that my life sucked. Sure, that may sound negative as all get-out, but stop and think about it. Most people's lives suck, and yet they go about their days in blithe ignorance of this fact. Imagine how much better their lives could be if they acknowledged how terrible their lives are, and then did something about it.

That's what inspired me to write this book. People need to know they're leading awful lives if they're to have any hopes of betterment. Of course, it brings me a sort of guilty pleasure to tell people - to their faces, no less - "Hey buddy, your life sucks," but that's beside the point. The fact is I had a message that the world needed to hear, a message that would serve to make this world of ours a better place, one life at a time.

Naturally, writing this book had nothing to do with turning a buck or two off of some suckers.

Oh no. Nothing at all.

Buy my book,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C.K.S.', with a stylized, cursive flourish.

Cavanaugh K. Sweeny
MBA, JD, DDS, BS

INTRODUCTION

Your life sucks.

You hate your job, your boss is out to get you - hell, even your goldfish can't stand you. I'd hate to be you. That's why you need to buy this book.

This book contains my proven *Your Life Sucks, Buy This Book* system for life fulfillment. Whether it's your career, your spiritual development, or your degree of personal fulfillment, the information in this book will do absolutely nothing towards making your life better, but your money will get me that much closer to buying another Porsche.

My system is broken down into seven modules. We will begin by first identifying the reasons for your personal failures. From there, we will proceed to transforming your life in ways you never thought were possible, or even ethical.

My method will lend you the insight on how to become an “expert” seemingly overnight, and how to market that knowledge. Armed with your newfound expertise, we will then explore ways to tell the world about the amazing person you’ve become of late, until either you or they are blue in the face.

After that, I’ll show you how to build a team. No one achieves success alone. It is by stepping on the backs (and occasionally faces) of expendable grunts that anyone ever rises to the top.

Once you’ve established yourself as an expert and hand-picked your staff of patsies, I’ll show you how to leverage your professional knowledge through consulting. Consulting is a tried and true way to earn money without either solving clients’ problems or accepting responsibility for any new problems you may cause. We’ll also delve into the subject of client development.

While you will undoubtedly derive great value just from reading this book, the real value – and the true secret to your success with my *Your Life Sucks* method – lies in active participation on your part. Included in this book are written exercises (at no extra cost; you’re welcome). Use them. They will reinforce and build upon what you learn. If you need more worksheets, you can always buy extra copies from my website.

I also encourage you to purchase the companion materials - my books, instructional videos, desk calendars, coffee mugs, and the like. Be sure to attend my *Your Life Sucks* seminars, too. Remember, you will get out of this process only what you put into it, so be sure to set aside time and money for all the products I have for sale.

Before we begin, my parole officer requires I inform you that my system isn't for everyone. Detractors of my method have said everything from my system being ineffectual, to it being *completely* ineffectual and a bald-faced scam.

I neither admit nor deny these claims.

I've been told my system may seem daunting to the faint of heart. While it takes a bold person to follow my system through to the end, let me put this in perspective. My system boils down to two general facets.

First, your life sucks.

Second, buy this book.

If you put this book down right now without paying for it, then you're a quitter. Shame on you.

On the other hand, just by purchasing this book, you've accomplished fifty percent of my process - well, at least the part I care most about anyway.

Once you've invested in my method, you'll need to stick to the plan to reap the results. My system might not make much sense at first, but I assure you that eventually it will make no sense at all.

*You miss 100% of the shots you don't take,
but stray bullets always seem to find bystanders.*

As we embark on your evolutionary process of personal and business development that will pad my retirement fund, I want you to say the following affirmations out loud:

- Yes, my life sucks, but I'm going to change that today!
- Yes, I am ready to become an expert (in the loosest sense of the word)!
- Yes, I will find new and cheaper ways to promise more and deliver less!
- Yes, I will build relationships based on trust, and cash-in on people's confidence at top-dollar rates!
- Yes, I will send Cavanaugh Sweeny \$24.95 for his instructional VHS cassette, "Things I Say Out Loud To Make Me Feel Better About My Wretched Life."

CHAPTER ONE: (DE)CONSTRUCT YOURSELF

The First Step Is Admitting...

If you aren't yet convinced that your life sucks, then already I can list a number of personal flaws keeping you from attaining growth. Off the bat I can rattle off pride, arrogance, and fear. If it's a blow to your pride that I've called it how it is, then that's all the more reason your life sucks.

If you're too afraid to admit your life sucks, then you can just keep on living under your mother's blouse.

The truth hurts. Deal with it. Here's how.

Your Life Sucks Exercise 1.1

1. Take two sheets of blank paper.
2. At the top of the first, write: Weaknesses.
3. Note all your weaknesses; use more sheets as necessary.
4. Fold the second sheet in half four times.
5. On this tiny sheet, write: Strengths.
6. I bet you won't fill the second one.
7. Extra credit if you leave it blank, loser.

You're Not As Great As Your Mommy Says You Are

Things happen for a reason. I don't mean this in any metaphysical sense. Everything that happens in our lives is the effect of choices we or others around us make. In turn, the results that arise from these choices cause other events we experience in life. It's all cause and effect, plain and simple.

If you're dissatisfied with how your life is turning out, you need to consider two important precepts.

First, insanity is continuing to do the same thing with an expectation of different results.

Second, the only consistent factor in all of your failures is you.

Read these two principles in tandem and you realize that you - yes, you - are the reason your life is wretched. The solution, therefore, is to stop being yourself.

*Be wary of those who say:
"When you're passionate about what you do for a
living, it doesn't feel like work at all."
Hope to God you never become passionate
about bagging groceries, because
you'll never get rich doing that.*

Throw out everything your mom, your high school guidance counselor, and your psychiatrist told you about self-esteem. That feel-good hippie nonsense is the reason we give trophies to fifth-runner-up little league baseball teams. If people like this are on your payroll, fire them - especially your mother.

I'd like to share with you now a story from my childhood that's near and dear to my heart. It'll help illustrate my point. Some of you may have heard it before, but it bears retelling so please, don't skip ahead. This is the story of The Little Engine That Could.

The Little Engine That Could

Once upon a time there was a little railroad engine. And he was the littlest steam engine you ever did see. Despite his size, that engine had heart - day in and day out he pulled train loads meant for engines twice his size.

One morning, a large engine pulled into station hauling a long train of freight cars. No sooner had it rolled up than it let out a blast of steam. The big engine had blown a head gasket and could not continue on its way without repairs. A replacement engine was needed to deliver the freight on time.

The manager of the rail yard went from track to track, asking the biggest engines in his yard if they would haul the load the rest of the way. Each one he asked responded with, "Nope, I'm busy," and "Sorry, that load is too heavy," and "Why are you talking to trains?"

When finally the manager had asked each of his biggest engines, the little engine steamed up alongside him and volunteered for the work. The manager shook his head, saying, "You're too small. The load is too heavy and the mountain ahead is too steep."

"I think I can," the little engine responded. With brash determination and confidence in himself, he hooked himself up to the line of freight cars and steamed out of the yard.

Not far after leaving station, the grade became steep. The heavy load threatened to drag the little engine back down the sheer mountainside. The engine chugged upward with all his strength, telling himself, "I think... I can... I think... I can."

The little engine was nearly at the top of the mountain when a man came running alongside the track, frantically waving his arms over his head.

“Turn back!” the man yelled. “You can’t go any further!”

But the little engine would not be deterred. He pressed on, telling himself, “I think... I can... I think... I can.”

After a long uphill struggle, the engine crested the peak of the mountain. He beamed with pride at knowing he had succeeded where the bigger engines had been fearful. “I thought I could!” he told himself, tooting his steam whistle in celebration.

His celebration was short-lived – the bridge at the top of the mountain was out. The little engine had built up so much steam on the way up that there was no way he could stop in time. He charged off the edge of the ruined bridge at full speed.

“I thought I could! I thought I could!” the little engine lamented as he and his heavy load plunged into the valley below.

The moral of the story is: if you’re not good enough, no amount of positive thinking is going to change that.

*A journey of a thousand vertical feet
begins with a single step off that cliffside.*

Armed with what I've taught you so far, you're ready to take the next *Your Life Sucks* action step. You can keep being your loser self, or you can be someone you're not: a winner. The choice should be clear.

If you choose to keep living your wretched life the way you always have, then you must pay close attention. I'm going to teach you the six magic words that will govern your success for the rest of your life. Memorize them. Practice saying them in the mirror. Chant them like a mantra, because you'll be saying them a lot from here on out.

The six magic words are: "Do you want fries with that?"

The Benefits Of Not Being Yourself

If being someone you're not weren't such a good thing, then there would be no masks. Think about that. Since time immemorial, men and women have donned masks to help them become people they aren't.

As proof of this, I cite to pagan rituals, masquerade balls, costume parties, Halloween - pretty much every occasion throughout the whole of history when people have used masks to forget about being themselves for a while.

And the reason people do this is: it's liberating.

*When things go wrong
be sure the first guy you blame is
the guy in the mirror.
That's right, that guy hovering over your shoulder.
That guy.*

It's great when you can stop being your crummy old self. Not least among the benefits of being someone you're not is the lack of accountability. Once you've stopped being yourself, you can't be held responsible for your actions.

*"There are plenty of recommendations
on how to get out of trouble cheaply and fast.
Most of them come down to this:
Deny your responsibility."
-Lyndon Johnson*

Chapter Recap

Congratulations – you’ve read to the end of the first chapter. Reward yourself with a cookie, but don’t eat it too fast, as this is probably the best thing that’s happened to you all week. Relish the feeling as long as you can, you miserable sap. Here’s what you learned (if you were paying attention):

- Your life sucks – not that I needed to tell you that.
- You are the reason your life sucks.
- The “you” that you are now just isn’t good enough, and no amount of delusion (i.e., positive thinking) will change this.
- You are doomed to your current wretchedness unless you change.
- The solution is to become someone you’re not.
- By becoming someone you’re not, you obtain complete control over how your will reshape your destiny.

*“The best way to predict the future is to create it.”
–Peter Drucker*

Your Life Sucks Exercise 1.2

It's time for a reality check. Look at the blank page that follows, then return to this page before moving on to the rest of this exercise.

- If the blank page you just saw is empty, you are a pessimist.
- If it isn't empty, you are delusional. I just said it was empty.
- If you drew on that page, you are a cheater with no credibility whatsoever. You should be ashamed.

CHAPTER TWO: BECOME WHO YOU'RE NOT

Being Yourself Doesn't Work Because You're Not Good Enough

Let's say you're at a fancy gala event, attended by dignitaries in tuxedos and ballroom gowns. It's a stretch for you, I know, but bear with me. You meet someone new and introduce yourself. He asks you what you do for a living. You answer as he takes a sip of his gimlet.

"Oh, how... nice," he says, feigning interest. He breaks eye contact to glance over his shoulder, excuses himself, then makes a hasty retreat back to the in-crowd.

What just happened? Did you bore him? Was he repulsed by your body odor? Solid possibilities on both counts. For the sake of discussion, let's say that you failed to engage him.

*When you're passionate about what you do,
you never work a day in your life.
The same is true if you're a trust-fund baby.*

What Is Engagement?

Engagement is a concept that escapes precise definition. In a nutshell, it means demonstrating to your audience that they have something to gain from you. Functionally, engagement is how likely you are to capture and hold people's attention.

People can be engaging through the strength of their personalities alone. These people are emotionally attractive. Still others command sufficient wealth and influence to be considered expert engagers. Chances are you don't fit into either of these categories, which is why you're reading this book. I'll discuss these two types of people in turn, and then I'll propose a solution for your wretched circumstances.

At the risk of belaboring the point, emotionally attractive people are emotionally attractive. These people win popularity contests, get voted class president, and are generally considered winners at life. In short, they are shallow, miserable people who would sell their mothers to a Yugoslavian pimp if they thought it would help them get ahead.

Therein lies the key to their success: they're winners at any cost. To illustrate this point, I'll draw upon a historical example. During the Cold War, the United States and Russia were engaged in a nuclear penis-measuring contest. In short, whoever had the most nukes had the biggest swinging dick on a global scale.

Both countries had enough weapons to fry the planet to a crisp, and all these missiles were ready to fly at the push of a button.

That's gamesmanship for you.

The U.S. beat Russia because Uncle Sam was willing to win at any cost. Forget that a mere finger slip could bomb the world back to the Stone Age - those reds had to be shown who's boss. It's that mentality that has made the U.S. the winningest country in history: back-to-back World War champions.

Wealthy and influential people are the second type of superior engagers. They are never at a loss for people willing to listen to them.

Unfortunately, the best and fastest way to get rich is to be born that way. Unless you adhere to a religion that believes in reincarnation, it may be too late for you to be born an oil baron's heir.

If you aren't emotionally attractive or filthy rich, don't despair. Thankfully for you, there is still another way.

What You Do Is Who You Are

It's time to face the facts: you aren't more than what you do. If you're a baker, you bake. If you're a butler, you... butle. What you do defines 80% of who you are. It's an uphill battle for you if you're locked in a boring or mundane profession that nobody cares much about.

Fortunately, you have options.

You could go to night school and earn a degree at your community college, but that takes money and effort.

You could also quit your job, but then you'd quickly devolve into a penniless bum. Whatever you currently do for a living, it's a sliver more dignified than being broke and jobless. The solution is much simpler, and so obvious that you'll kick yourself for not thinking of it first.

Lie about what you do.

Settle down. I can hear you screaming, “Lie?! No! I couldn’t possibly!” Well, why not? Everyone else does, except that once you’ve garnered sufficient wealth and influence, it’s no longer called lying. It’s called “posturing.” Alternatively, if you’ve got the letters MBA trailing your name, you’d call this “networking.”

My example of the dinner party above should inform you of two things. First, that people are naturally fickle, petty, and shallow. Admittedly, these are the qualities of a terrible human being, but most human beings become terrible people when given sufficient opportunities to do so. It’s simply a matter of time and odds. Use this to your advantage.

Second, in this age of cellphones and i-Whatever, people have the attention span of a pubescent flying squirrel on amphetamines. You must engage people quickly, or else you will bore them and they will want nothing more to do with you.

The quickest way to engage people is by appealing to their self-interest. Everyone is always looking for ways to improve their station in life. If you represent yourself as someone with greater wealth, influence, or status than your audience, you will hold their attention because they’ll think they have something to gain from you.

Reinventing Yourself

I fondly remember one afternoon in third grade, when my homeroom teacher, Mrs. Henderson, shared with me these words of wisdom: “You can be anything you want.”

The full import of her words didn’t hit me then, as I was only eight years old. At the time, I was torn between pursuing a career as an astronaut or a stage magician. Now, at sixty-seven years old, I can tell you definitively that lying opens doors to self-realization that the truth keeps shut.

Lying makes it deceptively simple to reinvent yourself into the popular, engaging person you’d never be otherwise. As easy as it may seem, there is a right way and a wrong way to go about this.

Let’s go back to our dinner party example. The first way to strike out is to sell yourself short. Say that you’re asked, “So, what do you do?” You could tell the truth, but we both know that won’t get you anywhere. The key to reinventing yourself by lying is to make the new “you” important-sounding.

You could also answer with a job category, something like, “I’m an airline pilot.” Under no circumstances should you do this. That torpedoed the conversation. You’ll know you’ve reached a dead end when your audience responds with, “How nice,” or “Hm,” or a frantic waving of arms for security personnel to escort you outside.

A better response would be to say, “I’m a millionaire,” or “I’m a Saudi prince.” These will raise eyebrows and keep the conversation going. You get extra points if you one-up your listener.

These responses are superior because they are important-sounding. However, they are not the best responses because they are not sufficiently vague. They also require you to know your audience, which puts you at risk of being called out. Calling yourself a millionaire in a billionaires’ club would only invite laughs at your expense. Going big and calling yourself a Saudi prince is a great idea, until you say that to the Saudi prince’s face.

My *Your Life Sucks* method will teach you that the absolute, very best response in circumstances like these is to say you are an expert.

Expert: (n) *A person who has made all the mistakes that can be made in a narrow field.*

What Is An Expert?

Open any dictionary and you'll find that the definition of expert is: "having specialized skill, knowledge, or insight acquired through training or experience." When speaking of experts, most people use the word as an adjective - "I'm an expert rat-catcher," or "I'm an expert laundry folder." Most people are quick to classify the word as an adjective. In this sense, the word cannot stand alone. Avoid this usage at all cost.

Instead, I recommend you become an "expert" - noun, not adjective.

Used in this sense, the term is sufficiently vague to allow you to become anything you want. Most people won't question you - you are the "expert", after all - which serves your purposes all the better.

Take me as an example. See that jumble of alphabet soup after my name? I didn't earn a single one of those degrees, with the possible exception of the BS, but we both know that sure as hell doesn't stand for Bachelor of Science.

The point is: I'm an expert because I hold myself out to be one. I've even got the proof to back it up - this same book you're currently enjoying. Did you ever think to question me or my credentials?

I didn't think so.

Becoming An Expert

Answer me this: wouldn't you like to be the person people turn to for insight, advice, and guidance? More importantly, wouldn't you like to be paid for being the person people turn to for insight, advice, and guidance? And as if this couldn't get any sweeter: wouldn't you like to be paid and yet not obligated to provide any of these things?

As I explain in my chapter on consulting, solving people's problems is hard, but talking about them is easy and lucrative. And you can never be blamed for being wrong if you never propose a course of action, which is why psychologists' malpractice insurance premiums are so low.

Establishing yourself as an expert is easy. Below, I will walk you through the *Your Life Sucks* action step of becoming an expert seemingly overnight.

Your Life Sucks Exercise 2.1

1. Look up experts in a field that interests you.
2. Note what college degrees these experts have.
3. Note the letters following their names.
4. Add those letters to the end of your name.
5. Presto! You're an expert.

Once you've become an expert, you'll need a highfalutin job title to lend you further credibility. Using my *Your Life Sucks* method, the cafeteria lunchlady becomes a juvenile nutrition engineer. The neighborhood gal who washes dogs for a living is transformed into a canine cleanliness facilitator. And guys who write self-help books like me become expert excrement expeditors, because they can sling it like the best.

Talking The Talk

Calling yourself an expert is only half the battle - you'll need to talk the talk. By this I mean: jargon. Jargon is the verbal jibba-jabba that members of a profession use to quickly single out others who aren't part of their clique. Don't fret if you do not understand what any of their technical terms mean. Chances are, neither do the even most established members of your chosen profession.

The key takeaway for you here is this: even if you don't know what any of these words mean, at the very least you must:

- Know what those words are,
- Be able to use them in a sentence, and
- Sound impressive while doing it.

Say you're a marketing expert. Marketing guys love throwing around phrases like paradigm-shift, game-changer, outside-the-box, and going-forward. You will immediately fit in with them when you start incorporating their jargon into your daily vocabulary. Your credibility will skyrocket as you learn how to use steadily more buzzwords in each sentence. Consider the following line:

"Synergizing our strategic thought leaders' best practices will leverage organic growth and become a game changer going forward."

I have no idea what that means, but boy-howdy, does it sound impressive. Here's another:

"By tapping our tiger teams' core competencies we can leverage scalable bleeding-edge opportunities to move the needle in Q3."

Contrary to what any grade-school grammarian will tell you, it is to your benefit to purposefully misuse jargon words. These words are so lacking in meaning that they practically scream to be misused.

For example, let's go back to the expression, paradigm-shift. It's clearly a noun (I think). Using it as a verb will mystify your audience. This has two distinct advantages. For starters, the less people understand you, the less accountable you will be for anything you say. Also, the less people understand you, the less likely they'll question your advice.

Opportunity: (n) An exploitable circumstance with uncertain outcomes. Synonymous with "Problem." Most often used in an ironic sense to minimize, mask, or pass blame for an unfortunate situation. For example: "Your house isn't on fire; this is just an opportunity to remodel."

Find Your Niche

In Oahu, they have an expression. I won't share it with you as it's in Polynesian and that language is unintelligible. Seriously. It sounds like a man gargling peanut butter.

A visit to Oahu will inform all but the dullest of souls that the place is an island. As such, land is scarce. You're not likely to find such things as graveyards because they take up inordinate amounts of land that could instead be developed into high-rise luxury hotels. Thus, niches are few and far between on Oahu.

The point I'm trying to make here is that niches are for dead people. Also, I have recently come to learn that a certain expression, "finding your niche," has something to do with developing a specialization in a narrow area of expertise. Personally, I fail to catch the meaning behind the expression. All that aside, you are unlikely to find your niche in Oahu.

Walking The Walk

While the information in this book is sufficient for your purposes, if you are interested in taking your game even further, I recommend a supplementary module, "Walking The Walk."

This module is available on VHS cassette for the low price of \$24.95, plus shipping and handling. In this half-hour video, I demonstrate a variety of impressive walks to further bolster your new image.

*The biggest fish in the smallest ponds
get caught and served to a family of four.*

Chapter Recap

If you've read this far, that means I haven't scared you off yet. You might actually be serious about undergoing this personal journey of transformation. I could care less, as I'm still holding on to your money. Here's what you learned in this chapter:

- Engagement is the quality in a person that tells others they have something to gain from him.
- The most engaging people are either filthy rich or emotionally attractive.
- If you're neither of these, then you're unimportant, you bore people, and your level of engagement is zero.
- You correct this by lying. Lying is a fast, cheap, and effective tool for reinventing oneself.
- The aim of lying is to become an expert - noun, not adjective - preferably one with a fancy title.
- Learn the jargon. You don't have to know what it means, but you have to know how to sling those words together in a way that sounds impressive.
- You will not find your niche in Oahu.
- Purchase my supplementary module, "Walking The Walk", for \$24.95.

Your Life Sucks Exercise 2.2

Using a pair of scissors and parental supervision, cut out each of the terms below. Select five at random and form one sentence with all five terms. You get extra points for intentionally misusing the terms. Repeat until you are fluent.

Best Practices	Meta
Big Data	Move the Needle
Bleeding Edge	Opportunity
Blogosphere	Outside the Box
Core Competencies	Over the Wall
Core Values	Paradigm Shift
Directionally Accurate	Pivot
Disruptive	Strategic
Game Changer	Synergy
Guru	Tiger Team
Influencers	Visionary
Innovate	Wheelhouse

CHAPTER THREE: WRITE A BOOK

Introductory Note

Writing is a profession with hardly any requirements. You don't need any special degrees, licenses, or training. Hell, you don't even need a pulse - do a search for everyone who's published posthumously and you'll turn up hundreds of names.

All you need to get started is a grade-school literacy level and a typewriter. You egghead types might opt for one of those newfangled home computers, but that's a waste of money in my opinion. Personal computers are a passing fad, and I'll lay even odds that there will no longer be any computers in the home by 2019.

Why You Must Write A Book

The advantages to writing a book should be obvious. First, it provides you another information product with which to fleece your target audience. More importantly, writing a book lends you instant credibility.

Your book must give the impression that the information it contains is valuable. In other words, your information doesn't actually have to be novel, insightful, or even useful. It need only appear to be so.

Canned Expert, Just Add Books

If ever you cared (or were bored enough) to look up other experts' credentials, you wouldn't find résumés. Instead, experts use *curricula vitae*. That's a Latin term for: "I've got a PhD, so I'm permitted to have a résumé longer than just one page."

They've got some nerve. Who do these entitled jerks think they are, burying us with pages of credentials when common, decent folk are relegated to one-page résumés? The answer, in short, is: they're experts. Society gives them a pass.

By now you should be jumping up and down, screaming, "But wait! I'm an expert too, as of a few minutes ago!"

Settle down before you give yourself an ulcer.

Yes, you are an expert, for what it's worth. But can you prove it? Without any publications under your belt, you're a bigger quack than a flock of ducks. In order to be taken seriously, you'll need to write a book.

*"Writing is easy. All you have to do
is cross out the wrong words."*

-Mark Twain

How To Write A Book

Anyone who's ever authored a book knows that writing is difficult work. It takes time, effort, brain cells, a minimum quantum of literacy, and a fair amount of emotional involvement.

That's right, writing is as much an emotional endeavor as it is an academic one. Like an athlete training for the Olympics, there comes a time in every author's life when he asks himself if it's worth it to continue.

During the creative process, an author wrestles with such questions as, "Do I have it in me to finish this project?" and "Will anybody publish this when it's done?" These doubts persist even after the book is written, only to be met with new ones such as, "Will the critics call me a hack?"

The bottom line is this: writing is tough, but you need to write. Now, I'm not about to offer some mushy, feel-good nonsense like, "Believe in your dreams," or "Never give up." You've heard it before, you've tried it, and it didn't work. What I'm about to share with you is practical book-writing advice. You'll slap your forehead for not thinking of this sooner.

Here's what you do: steal.

Pick yourself up off the floor and quit looking so stunned. Everybody steals - it's practically the secret to success - but you don't have to take my word for it.

*"Good artists borrow, great artists steal."
-Pablo Picasso*

That's a genuine quote. And while I can't say for sure whether the man practiced what he preached, at least one thing is certain: he was the best painter of funny-looking sideways women the world has known.

When you man up to the challenge of taking this *Your Life Sucks* action step, you'll find plagiarism takes all the effort out of making original, valuable works.

Writing 101:

Adapt Others' Work

First, select an author in your field of expertise who is famous, prestigious, or – if you're feeling ballsy – notorious. You will adapt his book to your methods, theories, or procedures.

By “adapting his book to your methods, theories, or procedures” is meant you will “take his methods, theories, or procedures and insert them into your book.”

Include original content only when absolutely necessary. You don't have to reinvent the wheel. You don't even have to make a better wheel. All you need do is produce a wheel so you can plausibly call yourself a wheel-maker. It doesn't matter if your wheel is as square as a cinderblock, but it's all the better if you make a wheel that looks like one people will want to buy.

Parables And Anecdotes

Tell lots of stories. I can't stress this enough. People love stories, and they make for great filler.

I recommend using parables and fairy tales to stress your main points. Your readers will find it easy to relate with stories from their childhood. In addition, these stories are usually in the public domain, so you're free to abuse them with impunity without fear of getting sued.

If you want to take a personal approach, consider an anecdote. Write about a customer experience, or perhaps a situation in which your expertise helped get a client out of a jam. Draft your anecdotes in such a way that your audience can meaningfully relate to the situation you present in your stories.

A problem young professionals encounter when inserting anecdotes into their writing is that they have none to offer. This is a common quandary: if you've got no anecdotes, how can you be expected to build a client base? Likewise, if you've got no clients, where will you draw your anecdotes from?

Never fear. What you need to realize is that these two literary tools - fairytales and anecdotes - are more similar than they might appear at first blush. What they most have in common is that they needn't be true.

Think about it: when you were a child, did you ever question how Jack climbed a beanstalk to the heavens? Did you raise an eyebrow at Rapunzel's absurdly long locks? Did you stamp your foot and shout, "Lies!" when Hansel and Gretel escaped the witch?

Of course you didn't.

You took it at face value because: (1) kids are gullible, and (2) you had neither the means nor the desire to fact-check what you were told.

Gullible kids grow up to become slightly less gullible adults, but laziness only intensifies with age. As between experts and laypeople, you'll find that laypeople tend to accept without question what experts say. In professional circles, this is called deference. If you are to survive for five minutes as an expert, you must cultivate deference in spades.

Be bold. Push boundaries. You're writing about yourself, what you know, and what you have to offer. Embellish your real-world experiences. Blow them out of proportion if you wish. Hell, make up complete fabrications if you prefer. Make a name for yourself. The exaggerations of today lay the groundwork for the tall tales of tomorrow.

Alternative: Going Solo With Original Content

So let's say you insist on writing original content into your book, when suddenly, writer's block strikes. That's what you get for trying to come up with your own ideas when there's plenty of good material to poach off of other, more capable authors.

Here's where you'll want to start writing to fill the pages. Use large fonts and leave plenty of white space between each line. Also, pad the book with call-out boxes, bulleted lists, useless inspirational quotes, and other filler. This makes your book longer. The longer your book, the more insightful people will think you are.

*This is a call-out box. Use them.
They make writing easy by taking up space
that could have been used for actual text.*

It also helps to recap everything at the end of each chapter. Not only does it reinforce your message, it too acts as useful filler.

Avoid Pitfalls:

Phrases To Steer Clear Of

You're an expert. Your writing needs to sound like it came from someone who knows what he's talking about. Unless you want to sound like a literary laughingstock, you must endeavor to avoid the following words.

Habits. Habits are for smokers who feel they can quit anytime they want, but don't care to just yet.

Empathy. Feelings are for hippies. If you want compassion, buy a puppy.

Service. The only time you can include this word in your book is when your name is in the running to become the next Dalai Lama.

Love. If you are writing a book on business development, then love - as in the word itself and the concept it stands for - has no place in your book. Your life isn't terrible for want of love.

*Money can't buy you love –
that's what diamonds and chocolate are for.
Money buys diamonds and chocolate.
Diamonds and chocolate buy you love.*

Writing 102:

Market Your Message

In keeping with good marketing strategies, you will want to name your book something catchy, so it can snowball into a trend. Take my book for instance: “Your Life Sucks, Buy This Book.” It resonates well with the reader because it’s a true statement.

Make sure your book’s title matches the name of your method, theory, or process. Then, repeat that name as often as possible. Mention your other products and services in your book for good measure.

A good way to check whether you’ve repeated your catchy name enough times is to read your manuscript aloud. If the repetition insults your intelligence, don’t stop – you’re almost there. Don’t be afraid to push the boundaries of banality.

As a corollary, it doesn’t matter that the title has nothing to do with the contents. What you want here is sticking power with your potential readers.

Here's another tip: use acronyms. Devise a kitschy acronym that stands for whatever gobbledygook you think will promote your method, and repeat it without surcease. I couldn't be bothered to come up with some for my book, but never fear. Anybody can come up with a trite jumble of nonsense letters. All it takes is two brain cells to rub together. I reckon you've got at least two brain cells – maybe a single big one you can fold in half for the purpose.

Writing 103:

Gather Good Reviews

Once you're done penning your opus (it sounds dirty, I know), you'll be ready for the next *Your Life Sucks* action step: gathering good reviews of your book.

The traditional way to garner reviews is to submit your work to book critics. The most reputable critics work for trade journals, newspapers, and other publications. Their opinions on forthcoming books carry plenty of clout among the reading community.

Sounds like a good idea, right? Wrong. Any time you submit your work to a critic for review, you are rolling the dice. The outcome is always uncertain. Sure, there's always the chance they may leave a favorable review, but the effects of a negative review – not to mention the extreme likelihood of one – ought to dissuade you from this route.

There is no reason to subject your work to the risk of negative reviews. You put a lot of other people's blood, sweat, and tears into your work. Your job now is to collect as many positive reviews as you can.

The easiest way to garner a large quantity of positive feedback is by paying off your reviewers. If you're on a tight budget, you could always write the reviews yourself, under assumed names. None of your readers will be the wiser, and indeed, nobody cares what the testimonials say. The important thing is to avoid having no testimonials. You can't expect to be taken seriously if it looks as though no one has read your book.

Once you are satisfied with the number of positive reviews your book has gathered, you must leverage that feedback. Plaster these reviews all over the front cover, the back cover, and the inside of your book.

Go absolutely crazy with these. Make pretend your book is a Christmas gift and the reviews are your gift wrap. If your book has won awards (real or made-up), emblazon every last inch of your book with the contest medals.

Empty space on the front cover is your enemy. Attack it with extreme prejudice.

*"Nobody bothers to fact-check quotes on the Internet."
-Abraham Lincoln*

Chapter Recap

Are your creative juices flowing yet? I'd appreciate if you'd say so, so I can safely get out of the splash zone.

Seeing as you're so proficient at making a mess of your life, odds are your book won't turn out too different. In any event, be sure to have a mop and bucket on hand. They'll be useful for cleaning the mess, and if all else fails, remember that everyone needs a janitor.

- You must write a book.
- Plagiarism takes all the hard work out of writing.
- If you must write something original, pad the book with chapter recaps, call-out boxes, and bulleted lists. The longer your book, the more insightful people will think you are.
- Name your book after your system, and make sure that name is catchy. Repeat that catchy name throughout your book until it triggers your gag reflex.
- Gather only good reviews by bribing book critics, or better yet, writing these reviews yourself under assumed names.

END OF SAMPLE

**DISCOVER OTHER BOOKS AVAILABLE
THROUGH DARKWATER SYNDICATE**

The Gullwing Odyssey

By: Antonio Simon, Jr.

A four-time award winning fantasy/comedy adventure. When an unusual assignment sends Marco overseas, he finds himself dodging pirates and a hummingbird with an appetite for human brains. Little does he know the fate of a civilization may rest upon his shoulders. In spite of himself, Marco becomes the hero he strives not to be.

Shadows And Teeth, Volume One

Ten Terrifying Tales Of Horror And Suspense

By: Various Authors

Prepare for extreme horror. This collection of ten stories features a range of international talent, award-winning authors and new voices in the genre. Take care as you reach into these dark places, for the things here bite, and you may withdraw a hand short of a few fingers.

Miami Is Missing

By: Antonio Simon, Jr.

Discover a side of Miami so hidden even the natives don't know it exists. A space rocket abandoned in the swamp, a futuristic expo that never was, a city wiped off the map, a national monument at the bottom of the ocean. Photographs, addresses, and coordinates are provided to take a "then-and-now" look into the Magic City's hidden history.

The Many Deaths of Cyan Wraithwate

By: R. Perez de Pereda

The bad part about being immortal is that you cannot die. Cyan learns that not dying is worse than not living - the magic that made him immortal turns more of his body to lifeless iron with each passing day. Knowing time is short before he becomes just another statue in a town square, he sets off on a quest to rid himself of his cursed immortality.

R.A.G.E.: Roleplay Adventure Gaming Engine

By: Antonio Simon, Jr.

Written by an award-winning fantasy novelist and avid gamer, R.A.G.E. is an innovative roleplaying game system. This enhanced edition produces unforgettable adventures for you and your friends. All you need to get started are some friends, dice, a pulse, and a sense of humor (roughly in that order). See why this game is all the R.A.G.E.

Forgotten Spaces: Poetry For A Pensive Mood

By: Steven M. Fonts, R. Perez de Pereda, & Antonio Simon, Jr.

These twenty-five poems explore the dark paths on our walks through life: addiction, bereavement, solitude. These are the forgotten spaces, blighted areas we pretend don't exist. Everybody's got one. Tread lightly.

Transit Dreams

By: Antonio Simon, Jr.

Ever get kicked out of a Chinese buffet for eating all of their oranges? What do you do when bombs start dropping on your evening commute? And how on Earth did that red Buick punt that shopping cart into a tree?

Step aboard with these twenty-two short stories that delve into the oddities of our daily lives. You're in for a ride.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cavanaugh Kellough Sweeny, MBA, JD, DDS, BS, is a self-made Texan millionaire. After working for international oil companies for twenty years as part of a prison labor program, he achieved the American Dream with a winning ticket at the racetrack.

Cavanaugh - or "Cav" as his friends call him - is a highly successful motivational speaker. He is not a lawyer, dentist, or even a motivational speaker, but through the power of delusion (read: positive thinking), he believes he is. He has also served as a director for various multimillion dollar companies and successfully driven them into bankruptcy.

Mr. Sweeny now divides his time between lecturing and watching football in his numerous homes throughout the state of Texas, but not in King County as there's an outstanding warrant for his arrest there. Admittedly, he may be a tad senile, but he more than makes up for this with his extensive gun collection.

ABOUT DARKWATER SYNDICATE

We are Darkwater Syndicate. We're the publishing company with a defense contractor's name, and that sums up our approach to books. Our mission is to be your source for uncommonly good reading.

We refuse to be mainstream. Our authors are not afraid to push boundaries and buck trends. Pick up one of our books and see why we call them "uncommonly good" reading.

We are headquartered in Miami Lakes, Florida.

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