

CHAPTER ONE

REJECTION IS A GIFT

WHAT IF, INSTEAD...?

Rejection is a gift. Rejection challenges us to pause, reflect, and realign our aspirations. Every rejection is an opportunity to refine your skills, learn from your mistakes, and evolve into the best version of yourself. Rejection serves as a test where you discover the inner strength and determination required to continue moving toward achieving whatever the hell you want!

Think about some of history's greatest innovators, artists, and visionaries. They all faced their fair share of failures and rejections. Thomas Edison famously said, "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work" when inventing the light bulb. Edison didn't let failure define him; he used it to fuel his journey to success. As with Edison, failure is not the end; it's a part of the process.

History is filled with famous and highly successful individuals who faced numerous rejections before achieving their dreams. These stories are powerful reminders that rejection is not a roadblock but a

redirection, guiding us toward our true calling. So, the next time you face rejection or encounter failure, remember this: You are not alone. Every successful person has been where you are. Here are a few notable examples:

- **Walt Disney** was fired from a newspaper for lacking imagination and then had his animation company go bankrupt. However, he went on to create a media empire, giving us beloved characters like Mickey Mouse and theme parks like Disneyland.

- **Oprah Winfrey**: Oprah Winfrey was told she was "unfit for television news" early in her career. She persisted and became one of the most influential media personalities, launching the OWN television network and significantly impacting the world through her work. "You get a car, and you get a car!"

- **Stephen King**: The best-selling author of horror novels, Stephen King, initially received multiple rejections for his first novel, "Carrie." He even threw the manuscript in the trash before his wife rescued it. Now, he's known for his prolific and successful writing career.

- **Albert Einstein**: The legendary physicist Albert Einstein struggled with academics as a child and initially faced rejections from several universities. However, his groundbreaking work on the theory of relativity earned him the Nobel Prize in Physics and transformed our understanding of the universe.

- **Elvis Presley**: Elvis Presley was told by a talent manager after an audition that he should consider driving trucks for a living instead of pursuing a career in music. He ignored this advice and became one of the most iconic figures in the history of rock 'n' roll.

- **Colonel Sanders**: The founder of KFC, Harland Sanders, faced rejection from hundreds of restaurants when trying to sell his fried chicken recipe. Eventually, he founded his franchise, KFC, which is now one of the world's largest fast-food chains.

These examples illustrate how rejection, though disheartening at the time, can serve as a powerful motivator to persevere, learn, and eventually succeed. Embrace rejection as a teacher, and remember, the road to success is rarely straightforward. Each "no" you encounter can bring you closer to your "yes" and guide you toward your ultimate goals. I hope that one day, you'll reflect upon your journey and believe that rejections and failures were not obstacles but catalysts that propelled you forward.

SIMPLE BUT NOT EASY

Clearly, embracing rejection is not easy, but it is simple. Doing so requires working through many emotions that we typically try to avoid visiting voluntarily. It is a gift in disguise. It pushes us to reevaluate, adapt, and grow. It forces us to refine and redefine our goals, become more resilient, and strive for excellence (not perfection).

Here are ten healthy responses to receiving rejection:

- Self-reflection: Take a moment to introspect and understand what led to the rejection. Assess your actions, decisions, and areas for improvement.
- Resilience: Embrace rejection as a natural part of life's journey and develop the resilience to bounce back stronger.
- Learning: See each rejection as an opportunity to learn and grow. Extract valuable lessons and insights to apply in future endeavors.
- Adaptation: Be willing to adapt and make necessary adjustments based on the feedback received, turning a rejection into a chance for self-improvement.

- **Positive self-talk:** Practice self-compassion and maintain a positive inner dialogue. Remind yourself of your worth and that rejection does not define you.

- **Seek support:** Lean on friends, family, or mentors for emotional support and guidance. Sharing your experiences can provide valuable perspective.

- **Persistence:** Use rejection as a motivation to persist and keep pursuing your goals with even greater determination. Remember that many successful individuals face rejection multiple times before achieving their dreams.

- **Setting realistic expectations:** Reevaluate your goals and expectations, ensuring they are attainable and align with your abilities and resources.

- **Networking:** Connect with others who have experienced similar rejection, as they can provide encouragement and share their own stories of overcoming setbacks.

- **Self-care:** Prioritize self-care, both physically and mentally. Engage in activities that bring you joy and relaxation to help maintain a healthy mindset and outlook.

Constructive reactions in the face of rejection assist in navigating setbacks and transforming them into valuable stepping stones. Rejection is not a final destination but a temporary detour. How you respond to rejection will profoundly influence the course of your journey, one rejection at a time.

REFRAMING

In my personal and professional life, I've been purpose-driven about "reframing" how I interact with people and handle situations and emotions that no longer serve me in my life ambitions. Reframing re-

jections, negative experiences, and interactions involves changing how to perceive and interpret situations. For instance, if you receive constructive criticism (and possibly not-so-constructive criticism) from a client or colleague and initially feel demoralized, reframe it as an opportunity for improvement and professional development. Instead of viewing a past failure as a reflection of incompetence, see it as a valuable lesson contributing to your growth. When lacking confidence, rather than dwelling on perceived shortcomings, take account of what should become your customized roadmap to personal development. Knowing what needs work allows you to focus on growth and avoid spending time on areas where you already excel and feel comfortable. This insight becomes a tool for efficiency, guiding you towards self-improvement and ensuring your time and energy are invested where they make a difference.

Reframing is about shifting from a negative to a constructive perspective, turning challenges into opportunities and weaknesses into areas for improvement. Have I always managed to "reframe" my viewpoint when the situation calls for it? We both know the answer to that question. But even a 10% improvement in any tough situation or mental challenge is progress. By consistently making these seemingly small improvements, I've been able to transform aspects of my life that were holding me back. Reframing how I look at things allows me to pause, reflect, and adjust my inner narrative. It's easy to let these moments define us or hold us back. But what if, instead, we chose to see them as opportunities for growth and progress? What if we saw each rejection as a step in the right direction, a gift that guides us on our true path?

In business, turning negative thoughts into positive motivation is vital for resilience. Challenges are part of the entrepreneurial journey, but viewing them as opportunities for growth will fuel perseverance.

This mindset shift fosters innovation and adaptability, which are crucial in the dynamic business landscape.

What If, Instead...?

What if, instead of dwelling on our failures, we celebrate them as vital components of our success story? What if, instead of fearing rejection, we welcome it as a guiding force on our journey? What if, instead of viewing rejection as a setback, we treated it as a setup for something greater?

Often, when I am speaking with people (primarily salespeople, but keep in mind that I believe ANYONE who is a business owner or works on commission is a salesperson, and I mean everyone!), they usually attribute their success to a "numbers game"; some see it as luck, and others see it as purely application and "grind." Typically, salespeople spend an excessive amount of time networking, putting themselves "out there," primarily by "making calls" and "dialing for dollars." As a result, there are two types of salespeople: those who hate making calls and those who don't make them at all. In the expansive landscape of client prospecting, two distinct approaches generally emerge: the masochist who sets out to make calls and find 100 people to tell them "No" daily and the "Schrödinger's Salesperson" who avoids contacting people and therefore avoids any definitive answers and holds on to the potential hope of obtaining clients.

The Masochists: Some professionals adopt an unconventional client prospecting method, setting a daily quota for encountering rejections and framing the experience as a desensitization exercise. Rejection is not perceived as a hindrance but a calculated strategy, always getting them closer to their "goal" for the day. The masochist seeks rejection to build resilience and minimize the mental impact of

setbacks in the competitive field of client prospecting. This masochistic perspective, however, focuses on getting through the task rather than extracting valuable lessons from the process.

"Schrödinger's Salesperson" is inspired by Schrödinger's cat, a thought experiment in quantum mechanics. In the original scenario, a cat inside a sealed box is considered both alive and dead until the box is opened and the cat's state is observed. Similarly, "Schrödinger's salesperson" can humorously describe someone who hesitates to engage with potential clients out of fear of rejection. This individual might be considered both successful and unsuccessful in their sales efforts, existing in a state of professional ambiguity. Their reluctance to initiate conversations leaves the outcome uncertain, much like Schrödinger's cat, which exists in a dual state until observed. In this context, the term emphasizes the paradox of wanting to make a sale but avoiding client interactions to sustain the hope of success without facing potential rejection.

What if, instead, we adopted both techniques? Reframing our intentions and desired outcomes could alleviate the negativity and constant rejection of the masochist and provide some much-needed closure and success for 'Schrodinger's Salesperson.'

Take, for instance, a Real Estate Brokerage. They follow what I call the baseball model when building an office. In baseball, there are two traditional ways of "building" a franchise. The first is drafting and developing talent in the minors, hoping that a player grows into a "star" one day, and the second is trading or signing big-name, well-established, successful players to your roster. The same can be said for Real Estate Brokers canvassing for new-to-them Agents to recruit to the Brokers' firm.

Once Brokers rise above their Schrodinger's complex to actually make calls, they often reach out to Agents (usually within a month

or two of having a transaction with them) and try to get them to "come on board" at the broker's office. Typically, promises of "the best" training, "the best" support staff, or technology, etc, are made to get the agent to jump ship and hang their shingle with the calling Broker's firm. Look, we all know how typical recruiting calls go and how they are skewed to portray the benefits that can be subjective. The true intention of the call is that the broker wants as many agents in the office as possible because that means more money (in desk fees/co-broke, etc) for the broker. Once the broker is told "no," they are on to the next agent and the next, and the next, hoping to catch an Agent looking to make a move in their business. The challenge with this interaction is the broker is hard-pressed to keep calling any of the agents again once the masochistic checklist has been "checked" by being told "no." Considering how often Agents receive these recruiting calls from Brokers, if the agent is not, at that moment, contemplating a move, it is hard to stand out in the landscape of Brokers making recruiter calls. The broker gave themselves one shot, and they swung and missed.

What if, instead, the broker reached out to agents not to ask a question but to develop a relationship? What if, instead of calling agents to ask about moving to their brokerage, brokers called on Agents to talk about the housing market? What if, instead of Brokers asking one pointed question, they asked Agents about their thoughts on current housing prices, the state of mortgage rates, the trends in decorating, or the differences in how agents need to market themselves this year as compared to last year and then let the conversation go wherever it may?

Do you see the difference? By adjusting tactics and desired outcomes, the broker still gets to "make calls" (the Masochists) but never hears a "no" from the Agent (satisfying Schrodinger's Salesperson). In this case, the broker can contact the agent again to follow up on the

previous conversation, and we all know the best sales tactic is to stay "top of mind." Someday, when the agent is looking to make a change in their brokerage firm, they are much more likely to remember their conversations with that broker than anyone else cold-calling them to "jump ship." So I ask you: what if, instead of making a sale, we set out to make friends? Choosing this tactic is what I like to refer to as avoiding the 1:1 Mentality.

The 1 to 1 Mentality

I always marvel at people who do not like making calls but enjoy in-person networking. It may be the pace of the interactions they prefer. Making calls exposes you to MANY possible rejections in a short period of time. Calling people on the phone allows the prospect to benefit from "cover," and they are more likely to reject you or even hang up (I mean, what are you going to do about it? That's right, nothing). Meeting people in person might mean covering less ground or making fewer contacts, but it is less likely people will flat-out reject you since most people dislike or try to avoid a confrontation. The expectation is anyone you are networking with or taking the time to "chat up" will at least be polite. It saves you from rejection even in the face of potentially "wasting your time," and you still get to feel like you are doing something "beneficial" for your business.

What if you changed your mindset when it comes to client prospecting? I always caution people against adopting the 1:1 Mentality. It is no secret that I have spent more than 30 years in sales. The way I built my business was "unconventional" (something I encourage everyone to do). I spent an inordinate amount of time educating people about my profession. Most people in my classes and seminars would never become clients. But I saw a mutual benefit. The atten-

dees received the information they needed to make decisions or, at a minimum, understand the "behind the scenes" of what is usually a hidden process. I got an opportunity to "perfect my craft" (more on that later). In these seminars, I could practice my elevator speech, learn what people didn't know about my industry, and discover the most common questions prospects were asking. This insight later benefited me when I was writing my first book, blogging, and putting my online courses together. Everyone in my office thought I was insane and wasting time teaching classes and giving seminars. They all had a 1:1 mentality.

A 1:1 mentality is when your actions are done only and specifically to affect a sale or "win" a client, which means that you do one activity with one outcome in mind. In business, every person you meet should become a client or a megaphone for you and your business. Having someone act as a megaphone for your business means leveraging others to advocate or promote your brand and offerings to a broader audience, regardless of whether they have a personal need for your services. It's a strategy to tap into their credibility and reach to boost your brand's visibility and credibility. Just because someone isn't going to be a client today doesn't mean they won't be a client at some point, and in the interim, turn them into your biggest cheerleader.

Example of a megaphone: I met people through my seminars who kept in contact with me (yes, you read that right, they kept in contact with me) for seven years before they became clients. During those seven years, I continued to share my knowledge and advice with them, and they became some of my biggest cheerleaders. They referred me to everyone they knew: friends, co-workers, and relatives. Just because they were not in a position to become a client when we met doesn't mean they didn't know people who were.

In addition to the attendees of my seminars becoming eventual clients or megaphones for my business, the organizers and hosts of the seminars have been clients or made referrals to me. Back then, if I had a 1:1 mentality, I would have only looked at the expenditure of time and evaluated my ROI for the seminars, not the entire experience and all the possible (positive) outcomes. Today, people I met at the beginning of my career are repeat clients, a large source of referrals, and 30 years later, I am taking on their children as clients.

Understanding rejection as a valuable gift is crucial for success in both personal and professional realms. The key lies in reframing negativity – shifting from a negative to a constructive perspective. This shift is especially significant in business, where avoiding the 1:1 mentality becomes essential. Instead of focusing solely on immediate sales, build relationships and connections that will yield long-term benefits. Never be so short-sighted as to miss the long game in business. By embracing rejection, reframing our mindset, and steering clear of narrow-minded approaches, we pave the way for resilience, adaptability, and ultimate success in the dynamic landscape of business, one rejection at a time.