

# Young Tran - Acceptance Speech

Number 1 Field Agent for the Knights of Columbus

May 2021

1,160 words – 7-8 minutes

To get started, I want to thank you for listening to what I have to say. The opportunity to share my story with you is a real honor. I realize your time is valuable, and I promise not to waste any of it.

And while I'm passing out thank you's to people who I'm indebted to, I'd like to mention several others.

First, - My beautiful supportive wife, Kathy, and our wonderful children, Benjamin, Brendan, and Brayden – They helped me more than they will ever know.

Next, - All the Knights of Columbus members - without them nothing is possible – and a special thanks to the Supreme Knights, especially Carol Anderson

I can't say enough about my home office staffs, they are wonderful!

And my terrific GA, Gabe Kennedy and his staff

Last, and probably most important, I owe everything I am to my Holy God, Jesus Christ – he's been my guiding light through my journey.

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So, what does it mean to me to be an agent?

I see myself as an agent of transformation. As I'm working for families, my mission is to transform their lives for the better. The Knights have given me some great investment tools to work with.

But I continuously remind myself – these are only tools. I take pride in knowing how and when to use each of them and this boosts my enthusiasm. Without that enthusiasm, this would be just another job.

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So, why the Catholic community? That's an easy one. Being a devout Catholic myself, my biggest joy in life is to share my knowledge of financial security with people like us. My goal is to help families avoid the financial hardships that might otherwise kill their hopes and dreams. My use of Catholic principles is what makes this possible.

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I want to tell you a little about why I do what I do and what contributed to my success.

I immigrated from Vietnam to Portland, Oregon when I was 16 along with my family of twelve. We had only \$20 between us – not even enough to buy us a good breakfast. I had no knowledge of the English language and no job prospects. I was scared to death and aware of the huge challenge we faced. I prayed to God for help and never lost faith that he would give me the guidance I needed. He never let me down.

You know, some people look at the success I've had since that desperate start and say to me, "Tran, you sure got lucky." I guess you could say that God answering some of my prayers could be called luck. But is it really luck or is it simply faith and the willingness to work hard? Since I was a young boy growing up in Vietnam, I discovered one of life's little secrets – the harder I worked, the luckier I got!

Winning the lottery is luck, but the odds are several million to one. The better bet is working hard to get what you want. It worked well for me and it's almost guaranteed to work for anyone. That includes everyone of you (*opening your arms to the audience*) Just dig in and go for it! You really have nothing to lose.

When I was in high school, I worked a full-time job serving hamburgers at McDonalds – not a glamorous job, but I earned enough money to pay my own bills.

Another thing that led to my success was my eagerness to learn. If you think about it, studying hard is just another kind of work. But instead of getting a paycheck, you get a brighter future. I studied hard in high school and in college and then in graduate school to earn my MBA. But I did not use school as an excuse not to work. I had bills to pay so I worked a number of different jobs all the way through school. I now enjoy the fruits of my labor every day. Of course, that does not mean I just kick back and relax.

All of those years working for hourly wages and getting a good education were only the cover charge to get into the dance. In my case, the “dance” is my career and guess what that means. Yup - more hard work. I still look forward to working hard each day. That means at least 10 hours a day. And the studying does not stop either because I have certifications to earn.

People are always asking me about my secrets to success as a financial planner, so I thought I'd share a few ideas with you.

The first thing I had to do was clearly define my purpose – not just for my career, but my whole life including my religion. Living life without a solid purpose that you love and pursue every day is like going on a cross country trip without a map. You'll be lost and just wandering around.

Too many people think a career as a financial planner is all about the numbers. **WRONG!** It's really all about the people.

You must **TRULY** care about people – including their families. And you must be dedicated to helping them lock in a bright financial future free of worry about outliving their money.

It is **VERY** important to understand that you will fail miserably if you don't earn the trust of the families you're there to help. The commissions you're earning must **NOT** be your number one priority. You must become one with each family you help. Embrace their lifestyle, their finances, their goals and even their hopes and dreams.

So, how do you achieve that? The key is to ask lots of questions – and the **RIGHT** questions. Then, shut up and listen – I mean **REALLY LISTEN!** If you find you're doing most of the talking, you'll lose their trust...and you'll fail...**GUARANTEED!**

Avoiding failure is just a state of mind. When it comes to winning, we have the greatest opportunity in the world. Let's face it - Working on 100% commission is tough...lots of ups and downs. But look at the positive side – it's the only job where you can give yourself a raise anytime you want – **NO LIMIT!** It's just a matter of mindset. Isn't it great to be in control of your own salary?

Most sales people hate the word NO. Successful sales people don't take the word NO personally. We put a **POSITIVE** spin on it. Every NO we get simply gets us one step closer to the next YES. Every time we hear YES, we get a raise...so all we have to do is not give up and keep taking those forward steps. Be persistent and you **WILL** succeed!

In closing, I want to leave you with one more thought.

If a guy like me, who came to America with \$20 and unable to speak English can become a successful financial manager, just think about what **YOU** can accomplish!

Good Luck and God Bless!