

Start: Punch Fear in the Face, Escape Average and Do Work that Matters

Gabrielle Rimmaudo, University of South Florida

When examining the topic of managing change, there are many facets to consider. It is important in the different roles professionals are playing to see how individuals can best manage themselves to do the most effective work they possibly can.

Fraternity/sorority professionals are always navigating change to best suit members, students, staff and more. Jon Acuff (2013) examines how individuals can start to follow the road to "awesome" in *Start: Punch Fear in the Face, Escape Average and Do Work that Matters*. The book elucidates five steps: learning, editing, mastering, harvesting, and guiding (Acuff, 2013). Through these steps and additional tips, Acuff teaches readers how they can become better versions of themselves, thus enabling them to manage and make change.

Start: Punch Fear in the Face, Escape Average and Do Work that Matters came about when a woman on a plane asked Acuff a question about his other book, *Quitter* (Acuff, 2013). She asked, "What do you do when all the excuses you used to not chase your dream are gone? What do you do then?" (Acuff, 2013, p.8). He did not have an answer for her, until one day when he woke up in his cubical and realized he had coasted through the last ten years of his life. This question sparked his interest and made him realize he could not have this happen again. By mapping out notes of author and businessman Dave Ramsey's life (someone whom Acuff admires), he was able to come up with the concept of the book – that awesome lives go through these five stages. The stages can apply to anything in life at anytime. Acuff says, "Age is no longer the primary factor that determines where you are on the map. Life is now less about how old you are and more about when you decide to live" (Acuff, 2013, p.19).

Through this book, Acuff gives a lot of great leadership advice applicable to the fraternity/sorority profession and how fraternity/sorority professionals can navigate change in the different parts of day-to-day operations. Prior to starting the journey to "awesome," he highlights the most important thing: "Find your true purpose. Be your true purpose. Live your true purpose. Repeat as necessary" (Acuff, 2013, p. 33). He then proceeds to explain how one may not exactly know what that looks like. You might choose to think of it in terms of the fraternal movement: It is important we examine what our purposes are, what drives our organizations. He then goes on to further explain, "You have to know the finish line before you cross the starting line" (Acuff, 2013, p. 34). With this in mind, one can see what the change he or she would like to make and how purpose will drive them across that finish line.

Through each of Acuff's (2013) steps to follow the road to awesome, he provides context and advice on how to best do this. The tips are applicable to the work of fraternity/sorority professionals. Whether one is a seasoned or a new professional, one can start this path at any point. One of the most prominent pieces of advice is, "Don't chase more instead of awesome" (Acuff, 2013, p.123). What this means is one should not do more for the sake of just doing more. When attempting to create change as professionals, for example, many propose to have more programs instead of fewer, more solid programs.

Start: Punch Fear in the Face, Escape Average and Do Work that Matters is a great book for anyone that wants to further their professional development and grow as a leader (Acuff, 2013). While some pieces may seem far-fetched, the book provides great context for how to be intentional in one's everyday profession. As mentioned

previously, this is applicable to the work fraternity/sorority professionals do everyday and allows one to be best equipped when working for change.

References

Acuff, J. (2013). *Start: Punch fear in the face, escape average and do work that matters*. Brentwood, TN: Lampo Press.