

Rock Yourself or Your Company to the Top

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11 rules for achieving rock-star success

In any industry, rock stars get to the top and stay at the top with more than just talent. Hard work, perfecting your craft, collaborating with others, daily habits and a network of fans, promoters, band members, roadies, publicists, co-writers, management and more play a role in a rock star's career.

One of the greatest rock-and-roll tribute movies ever made was the mock documentary "Spinal Tap." The character Nigel Tufnel proudly points out that his guitar amp "goes to 11" when most only turn up to 10. In a nod to one of the finest rock movies ever made, here are the 11 Rules of Business to take you a notch above the rest:

1 Always let people know what you want or need.

Music doesn't appear on the radio and create rock stars just by chance. No, there is a network of people constantly asking for that airplay and on-air promotion. Always let others know when you need help, information, an introduction or anything. No one can read your mind. You may not get what you are asking for immediately, but you will have put it out there.

2 Failure is not the end; it's a learning opportunity.

Very few songs become hits; you probably haven't heard most of the music that's been recorded and released. Yet, bands keep recording and keep trying. If you are not failing, you are not succeeding. Successful people fail all the time. They may not publicize it, but they fail. That's how you figure out what works and what doesn't. You learn from those lessons and move forward in a different direction.

3 Read everything you can get your hands on.

"When Gene Simmons of KISS was asked to what did he attribute his success, he easily answered, "I read." He went on to say, "I read everything I can get my hands on—in my industry, in the papers, reports, everything I can get my hands on." When asked the same question, investor and billionaire Warren Buffet answered the question the same exact way. If you are not keeping up with the world, the world is not going to keep up with you. And you will miss opportunities every day. You will also become a really boring person to be around.

4 Have a mentor.

Bill Gates has Warren Buffett as his mentor. For years, I had the late, great Ed Leffler, manager to Sammy Hagar and Van Halen. A mentor has already been down the road you are traveling and can provide great guidance and insight. You are never too smart to reject advice from someone more experienced and successful than you. Find someone you can knock ideas around with and who can open doors for you.

5 Google yourself, your company, and/or your product or brand every single day.

Rock stars love to read their reviews, and the best way to keep up with those is to set up a Google alert. Anytime you, your product, business, brand or employees are mentioned in articles, blogs and social media posts, you will receive an email alert. Don't be blindsided when something goes wrong with your product or business. Odds are someone will post something negative, and you'll get the alert. This puts you in a proactive position, allowing you to nip the problem in the bud.

6 Be able to say what you do in three words.

My three words are: Create rock stars. When someone asks me what I do on a plane, those three words lead to a full conversation 100 percent of the time. And that usually results in a book sale, paid consultation or speech booking. Create your three words, then come up with a compelling sentence that conveys what's in it for them. My sentence is: "I deliver business success and leadership tools garnered from the world's greatest rock stars." Then, be prepared with a short paragraph to explain more. You should be well into a fruitful conversation by that point.

7 Return emails and calls promptly.

If you didn't return my calls or show up on time, you did not get airplay on my show. Period. Even if you are busy, at least

acknowledge a message and let someone know you will give it more attention at a later date. Ignore enough people on a regular basis and people will begin to ignore you. Once you are off someone's radar, it is hard to get back on it. You have a phone number and email on your business card for a reason. If you don't want to be contacted, don't give out your contact information.

8 Send handwritten thank-you notes.

To this day, it is fun to have a few platinum-selling albums on my walls from Van Halen, The Police, Aerosmith and others. These were the bands' version of a thank-you note for the airplay and the promotion that helped get them to the top. Always acknowledge when someone does something for you. Receiving a phone call, a platinum album or an email is nice, but a handwritten thank-you note is the most powerful tool of all. Try it a few times and see what happens.

9 Take care of your health and your money.

Mick Jagger, Jon Bon Jovi, Bruce Springsteen and a host of other rock stars are still around for a reason. Eat right, exercise, get some sleep and save some money. This is not rocket science. Rock stars and successful people do these things. One-hit wonders do not. Enough said.

10 Do things for others without ever expecting anything in return.

Sammy Hagar is one of the best at this. He is constantly doing interviews, playing free shows, giving away guitars and other items; he is the king of marketing and promotion. He knows it all eventually comes back around. That's what made him a radio station favorite. Make an introduction, send information, give a gift for no reason, send a lead, share a client. The more you do to help others be successful and shine, the more you will get in return and more adventures and opportunities will come your way. Some might call this karma. Whatever you call it, I guarantee it works.

11 Always remember money follows passion.

Passion does not usually follow money. It is tough work being a rock star. It's hard to get to the top and even harder to stay there. There are many failures along the way. But rock stars love what they do and keep trying until the next hit. Do something because you can't imagine not doing it. Or find another career.

In the words of Nigel Tufnel, "What we do is, if we need that extra push over the cliff, you know what we do? 11. Exactly. One louder."

Rock on, my rock-star friends. Rock on.

Dayna Steele is the Chief Tipster for YourDaily SuccessTip.com and creator of the "101 Ways to Rock Your World" book series. Her bestsellers include "Surviving Alzheimer's with Friends," "Facebook and a Really Big Glass of Wine" and "Rock to the Top: What I Learned about Success from the World's Greatest Rock Stars." In her spare time, she plays golf, invests in Broadway and drinks wine. Follow her on Twitter @daynasteele.