

**The Secret to Creating and Sustaining
a Successful Business**

The
One
Minute
Entrepreneur™

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and
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An Inspiring
Story About
Discovering Your
Entrepreneurial
Strengths



Building a Firm Foundation

From the time he was a kid, Jud McCarley dreamed of owning his own business. Yet he nearly blew his opportunity before he even graduated from high school.

Jud was a good kid but an unremarkable student. In everything that counted most to him he was having a great senior year. He was popular, played tight end on a winning football team, and had a pretty girlfriend who thought the world revolved around him. That great year, however, was about to be interrupted.

On what started as a typical Saturday night, Jud took his girlfriend home from their date and drove to the Gridiron Grill to meet the boys. Tiring of the small talk, some of them decided to drive out to the gravel pit, where they could drink a couple of beers.

Jerry “Race” Nelson invited Jud to ride with him. Race wasn’t a close friend, but Jud loved cars, and Jerry’s new high-performance Mustang was incentive enough.

Jerry was charging down Holmes Road doing seventy-five in a forty-five-mile-per-hour zone, living up to his nickname, when he saw blue lights flashing. He pulled over, got out his license and registration, and looked sheepish as the officer approached the car.

“Get out of the car, son,” the officer said.



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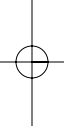
Jerry obeyed. Jud sat still, wondering if he was supposed to get out or not. After giving Jerry a lecture and a speeding ticket, the officer leaned into the car to look at Jud.

“What about you? You always go along with what your buddies do?” the officer asked.

“Uh, I, uh,” Jud began, but before he could form a complete sentence, the officer turned his attention to a small vinyl bag sticking out from under the driver’s seat.

“What’s that?” the officer asked.


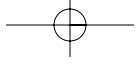
“I don’t know,” Jud said.



“Maybe I’d better have a look,” said the officer. He opened the door and took out the vinyl bag. “Sure looks like marijuana to me.” He looked at Race and then back to Jud. “I think we’d better go down to the station and call your parents.”

Wait! Had the officer just said “marijuana”? Jud’s ears pounded with the beating of his heart. How could this be happening? He’d never done drugs! What would his parents say? What would everybody think if he had to go to jail? How was he going to talk his way out of this?

On the long, quiet drive to the police station, Jud and Jerry were both imagining all kinds of outcomes. Once there, the process was cut-and-dried. Jud realized that nobody was going to talk their way out of anything that night. They made their one phone call, were put in a cell, and began discussing how they could get out of there.



The kid in the next cell overheard them and said, “This ain’t TV jail, boys. When you come here you spend the night, no matter who you are or what you did or didn’t do!” He sounded like a veteran of this environment. Jud sank further into his bunk.

Jud’s father showed up early the next morning. After a stern lecture from his dad, Jud was feeling like a criminal.

“Dad,” Jud said, “you raised me right, and you deserve better than being down here with me right now. I swear I didn’t do drugs. I didn’t even know Jerry smoked marijuana. I’m really sorry this happened.”

Reginald McCarley, a sternly principled man, had a strong sense of right and wrong.

“Jud, I believe you. But I’m going to tell you something that I never want you to forget. Are you listening?”

“Yes, sir,” Jud said.

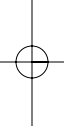
His father looked him in the eyes. “When I was about your age, my uncle taught me that at any given time, we are becoming the average of the five people with whom we are most closely associated. Don’t ever underestimate the importance of whom you choose to be with. And remember, when you have an opportunity to learn from someone who is exceptionally smart or successful, capture the gems they send your way.”




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It was a pivotal moment for Jud. Although he didn't realize it at the time, it would be the first of many meaningful insights he would learn over his lifetime. The incident taught him how lucky he was to have a loving, caring parent. It also led him to understand that if he associated with values-driven yet successful people, he couldn't help but improve himself.

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After football practice Monday afternoon, Coach Knapp asked Jud to come into his office. Jud had an idea what the visit would be about, and he approached Coach Knapp's office with trepidation.


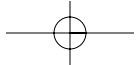


"Close the door and have a seat," the coach said.

Without a word, Jud lowered himself into a chair.

"I hear you had a rough weekend," the coach said, "and I want to say a few things I hope you'll remember. One of the hardest decisions I ever had to make was whether to take this coaching job or stay with a company I'd been with for eight years. I gave up what could have been a good career there, but I felt I could make more of a difference as a coach.

"Jud, you're popular, you're a decent student, and you're a pretty good football player. But every teacher you have is convinced you could do better. When are you going to make something of yourself, instead of jerking around drinking beer at that gravel pit?"



Jud felt like he'd been kicked in the stomach. He swallowed hard.

Coach Knapp continued, "You want to enjoy a successful life, right?"

"Yes, sir," Jud said.

"Then make this a turning point. You're a nice kid from a fine family. With all the remodeling my wife and I have done on our house, we've enjoyed doing business with your dad's lumber-supply company. You found out this weekend that you're not bulletproof, son. Now, I want to show you something."

The coach opened a drawer and pulled out a worn, blue linen book.

"My mother gave me this when I went away to college. She told me to take a minute every now and then to write down the important things that happened, and to put a star by the major lessons I learned, so that I could share them with her when I went home. I resisted at first, but before long I got into it, not only to keep the promise to my mother but to keep quotes I liked, things I learned, and thoughts about important decisions I made. To remember them better, I distill them down to their essence so that they take no longer than about one minute to read. It's a habit that has changed my life."

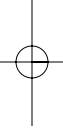


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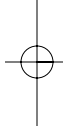
The coach pulled out a clean, new notebook and handed it to Jud.

“Try it. If you decide to make something of yourself, this can chronicle the best ideas you hear along life’s way.”


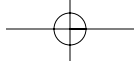
Jud respected the coach and was moved that he’d taken the time to have this talk with him. He left Knapp’s stadium office that day committed to turning his life around and getting it back on a successful path.



Before he turned off his lights that night, he pulled out his new notebook and took a minute to write down the advice he’d gotten that week from his dad and his coach. Thinking about what his coach had told him about keeping them short and to the point, he decided to call them One Minute Insights.



The following weekend, Jud joined the family for Sunday dinner with his grandparents. The family hadn’t told his grandfather about Jud’s “incident,” but they had given his grandmother a heads-up. Since she’d been a schoolteacher and a personnel director, nothing surprised her and few things got by her. While the others were visiting in the living room, Jud’s grandmother took him into the kitchen for a chat.



“You’re going off to college soon, Jud,” she said, “and you’ll be exposed to many people and ideas. You’ll encounter crossroads—points where you’ll need to make choices. Try your best to make good, well-thought-out decisions. Often the decisions you make when you are young are more important than those made later in life, because they have more years in front of them.”

“I’ll do my best,” said Jud.

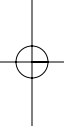

“Also, be guided by values such as integrity, love, honesty, and purposeful work, because they’ll be the foundation your life is built on. Write your values down and make sure you read them every day. Then, when your gut tells you you’ve violated one, stop. Take note and get back on the right path.” She paused, letting the advice sink in.

She continued, “Jud, your values are some of the most important things you will ever have. Don’t ever squander an opportunity to do the right thing. You never need to cheat to win. Remember that what’s right is more important than who is right. If you want a life of success and balance, your values will be the vehicles to get you there.”

Her special caring and perspective as a grandmother made her an appealing mentor—even more so than a parent—to Jud. That night he headed straight for his notebook and added the gems his grandmother had sent his way to the One Minute Insights he’d gotten from his dad and coach.



One Minute Insights

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- ☞ Associate with people you admire and can learn from.
 - ☞ Keep a notebook of the wisdom you read, hear, and learn, and distill that learning into One Minute Insights.
 - ☞ A good life is built on strong, solid values such as integrity, love, honesty, and purposeful work.
 - ☞ You never need to cheat to win.
 - ☞ What is right is more important than who is right.