CLASSIC | INDUSTRY | WISDOM

Network Marketing and the American Dream

Luck-of-the-draw lottery... or determination and hard work? This in-your-face Upline® editorial is nearly 13 years old (March, 1993). Is it true — still? Does it matter? Did it ever? For you to decide....

by **John Milton Fogg**

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Why do we lose so many once-upon-a-time network marketers?

Why is the attrition rate so very high in our business?

There are the classic answers: The cost of becoming a distributor is so low, people have little or nothing at risk... people aren't trained properly... people lack enough self-discipline to cut it... new people don't get immediate results and therefore lost incentive and interest... Hey, real estate and insurance sales people turn over at about 90 percent, too... etceteras, etceteras.

All these contain some truth — yet for me, they all miss the fundamental mark. I think the reason people wash out in such numbers in Network Marketing is because they do not do the business.

90 percent of the 90 percent who quit, turn over and attrit' within three to six months of signing up had no intention of doing the business to begin with. In fact, it seems to me that most people who come into network marketing are not here for an opportunity to enter into free enterprise and build a business.

They're here for the American Dream.

So, what Is the real American Dream — a house in the suburbs, white picket fence, two-point three kids, and six days/five nights twice a year at Disney World? Is it unlimited wealth... world travel... status, position and power...?

Nope.

The real American Dream is to win the lottery.

Just think, $2,130,979.00 (after taxes) coming in every year for 20 years — and you don't have to do a darn thing for it.

It's much more than just "get-rich-quick." The American Dream is to get rich and "not work" — money to burn with nothing to earn. The Lottery, Lotto, Ed McMahon and Publishers Clearing House, Las Vegas, the Irish Sweepstakes — and yes, network marketing.

The American Dream appeals to two oft-cherished values — "laziness and greed".

Which must be why it comes as such a disappointment to learn that Carnegie, Rockefeller, J. Paul Getty, Sam Walton, Ross Perot, Microsoft's Bill Gates and Mary Kay Ash... all worked their tails off making their respective fortunes.

I guess that's why little kids dream of becoming super-successful business people. Actors and actresses — that's more like it. You know, go to Hollywood and be discovered. Maybe it can happen for me, just like it did for Dustin Hoffman, that lucky son-of-a-gun. You know the story: He was an overnight sensation in The Graduate... and it was "fame at first sight," right?...

Right — after 11 yrs waiting on tables and doing all the off-off-off-*off* Broadway theatre he could eat (along with likewise struggling peers and room mates Gene Hackman and Robert Duvall).

Does it spoil the whole dreamy illusion to know how hard these people worked, how much time, energy and effort they invested in making it big? If it does, then surely it'll drive you nuts, as it does so many others, to learn:

.. that Mark Yarnell — NuSkin leader who with his wife Rene made $1.5 million-plus in a year — prospects 30 people per day.

.. or that Sandy Elsberg's six-figure income comes from a pretty consistent 72-hour work week (with an hour and a half every morning before school and all day Sunday set aside for the kids).

.. or about Russ DeVan proudest of all fathers — who spent 20 of the 28 days in February on the road training and building.

> ***Everybody dreams. Some people buy lottery tickets. Others work — hard.***

Sadly, many to most of the people who enter network marketing do so as if they were buying a lottery ticket; Herman and Hillary Hope-It-Happens, John Kalench calls them. Even more disappointing is how willing would-be sponsors are to sell them one.

So, enough: You get the picture. Now, shall we be pro-active?

If you want to put the blocks to this whole high turnover business of our business, start by telling the truth about what it takes to succeed in network marketing.

This is a business — like any other *business*. We (Americans) are a nation of builders. Network marketing is a business of builders building businesses and business-builders. Success in network marketing requires projects, partnerships, action plans and consistent action.

It has its "numbers game" aspect (e.g., you've got to count on X number of prospecting or "sorting" conversations to find Y number of business-builders, etceteras.), and the numbers must be played in order to win. However, that fact (that "you've got'ta play to win") is the only real similarity between us and winning the lottery.

True, there are a number of one-legged stork distributors who got lucky and sponsored a superstar. However, in the high-pitched fever-fervor of recruiting, far too many distributors don't feel compelled to reveal the more sober side of that heady, once-in-a- great-while story — I.e. that there were seven people downline between Richard Kall and Mark Yarnell when Mark signed up and went looking for upline support. Today Mark's on Richard's first level.

Think Kall just "got lucky"? Hmm.

Okay, sometimes you've just got to wait for your ship to come in.

The question is, what are you going to do while you're waiting?

Bottom Lines

We've done a bit of seat-of-the-pants research with Upline® subscribers to discover if there's a threshold income level above which people stay in the business and below which they quit.

Now, it's obviously a slippery question, because of all the variables — personal and professional goals, current financial reality and employment status, smoldering versus burning desire, etc. But overall, here's what we have found:

> ***When part-part-timers (i.e. some-timers) earn $300 plus... when serious part-timers make $500 to $1000... and when full-time folks are making $2500 and up... then they stick with the business.***

And a fantastic business it is. [REMINDER: This was written in 1993.]

Network marketing's wide-open criteria for entry (i.e., lack of same) permit nearly anyone, regardless of background, to begin a business of his or her own. The cash requirements are within reach for almost everybody. The fact that about 90 percent of those who start Networking quit within a year is actually great news: If you're one of the 10 percent who sticks with it, your chances of success are far higher because of the turnover rate.

The point: Network marketing is not the lottery — not the "Golden Sloth" Shangri-La of free enterprise. Network marketing is a business, and as such, it demands to be treated with GBP — Good Business Practices: hard work, smart work, applied consistently to a plan of action whose structure will produce the results you are committed to accomplishing. Wisdom will make it all duplicatable, like the mini-franchise it is: a turnkey business opportunity you can offer to all your people and they in turn can offer theirs.

Networking success takes time. It's a building process: foundation, superstructure, interior and exterior elements, and the finish work following through on all of it, which when done with intelligence and compassion results in a high-rise of residual income — and a life of contribution that makes a difference in thousands of people's lives.

You've probably heard this one:

"Luck is that place where opportunity meets preparedness".

Network marketing has the opportunity. You provide the rest.

Truth is, the American Dream is better and more exciting — and more available — than ever.

You just can't buy tickets for it at the corner 7-Eleven!

John Milton Fogg is an author, editor and speaker. His books and audios have sold over three million copies worldwide.

He is the founder and former Editor-in-Chief of the highly regarded publication Upline®... was a Contributing Editor to SUCCESS magazine... the founder and former Editor-in-Chief of Network Marketing Lifestyles magazine... founding editor of Networking Times... the founder of GreatestNetworker.com... and is co-founder of TheNetworkMarketingMagazine.com.

John is the author of the best-selling industry classic *The Greatest Networker in the World,* which has been read by more than two and a-half million people around the world and he has edited and contributed to far too many books to be mentioned here.

He has spoken around the globe, through out Canada and the United States, in Australia, China, Costa Rica, Crete, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Russia, Singapore, Trinidad and the Ukraine.

John is 57 years old, married to Jekaterina (Katyusha), has a daughter Rachel 24, son Johnny 20, daughter Eleonora Milena (Ele) who's 3.6 and is expecting his (last :-) child in April, 2006.

"95 percent of all the men and women who get involved in network marketing are struggling, failing and will quit within their first year. The worst part is, it's not their fault! That's totally unacceptable. We can change that— starting right now. It's time...."