STORY | LEADERSHIP

Don't Quit Won't Quit

Jordan began selecting instead of selling. He stopped trying to turn a three of clubs into an ace. And everything else changed for the better

from **The Greatest Networkers in the World** *by* **John Milton Fogg**

2219 words | 7 pages

Jordan Adler grew up in a 1,000 square foot home in a working class neighborhood in the south suburbs of Chicago. His father was in the advertising business. His mom stayed home and took care of him and his two younger sisters.

Although Jordan didn't know any entrepreneurs growing up— everyone in his neighborhood had jobs— he was always doing things like lemonade stands and a paper route. He focused on giving his customers good service, so he could get bigger tips over the holidays.

Jordan became an athlete— gymnastics and track— primarily to have fun with his friends. What he did best in high school was party, and Jordan openly admits he did a lot of things that he probably shouldn't have been doing.

His dad saved his entire life for Jordan to go to college, but with an annual income of at best $28,000, his father could only pay for one year.

If Jordan wanted to finish college, he'd have to pay his own way.

Jordan went to the University of Illinois. He really wanted to go out of state, but that cost a lot more money. He had no idea what his major was going to be, but as soon as he got there, Jordan met some guys that were "really cool" who showed him the Landscape Architecture Department. They were playing Frisbee in the courtyard and building bonfires at night. Jordan found his major.

He got a job as a night clerk, working from 11 PM to 7 AM and also worked as a resident advisor at the co-ed dorm. That's how he paid his way through school. Jordan worked very, very hard in all his classes, because he wanted only to take electives— like gym, weight lifting and gymnastics— in his final year. And he did.

Right out of school Jordan moved to Arizona with a suitcase, a guitar, and $250. He bought a little two-stroke Yamaha to get around.

His first job was renting roller skates at a little place called Cheap Skate — it was the only job in his life that he'd ever be fired from. Jordan also worked at a fitness center as a salesperson. He did that for about a year. Finally, he got a couple of jobs in landscape architecture.

Jordan was always looking for ways to free himself from the 9-to-5 "rat race." He just didn't want to have to report to anybody. He'd read the classifieds to find opportunities and would go to these Network Marketing meetings and sign up for different things with money he really didn't have. Literally, his "last pennies."

Jordan would get involved in a company, go to a couple of their meetings, tell two or three people about the opportunity and always get the same response: "No."

He figured there was something wrong either with the company or the product... or that he just couldn't do it and he would quit.

> **Jordan did that for 10 years with 11 different companies. But he was totally in love with the idea of Network Marketing.**

Back in 1984, Jordan had changed careers and was working for America West Airlines— at the time, a little start-up airline that had one plane and 179 employees. Jordan was #180. It was a very entrepreneurial company, but the pay was very, very low. People got stock options and $12,800 a year.

Jordan started off in customer service, but did a lot of different jobs. He was a flight attendant for a short time, worked in reservations, even on the ramp. The airline grew to over 15,000 employees. It was an

adventure for Jordan and lots of fun. But even though they were a phenom and became a household name, in 1992, they filed bankruptcy. Jordan was given a choice: He could either lay-off his people and stay for half the pay, or he could lose his job. His salary got cut from $28,000 to $14,000.

Jordan didn't have the confidence in himself that he could go out and find another job. He loved what he was doing, but it was getting pretty ugly. Still, he stuck around. At that point, Jordan got involved with his 12th Network Marketing company. He had come to realize that regardless of the company he was with, he was going to need to personally sign up 20-30 people to find one who would go out and build a big business. His thinking was:

> **If I have a consistent plan to bring in one person a month for a couple of years, a few of them will really do something.**

There was a little place on Mill Avenue in Tempe, Arizona, called Coffee Plantation. Jordan would grab people he worked with at the airline and sit them down with a yellow legal pad and explain the concept of what the company was doing.

Jordan figured that if he did that three or four days a week, he could find one person a month who would join him. If he could do that for a couple of years, he would have sponsored 24 people. So that was his goal: One person a month. Jordan would show the business to three people a week on his lunches, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

Jordan didn't have a personal success story when he started— and the company hadn't developed much in the way of marketing materials— so he'd simply tell people a little bit about his background and share with them why he loved Network Marketing so much. He focused on the value of residual income and having a check coming in whether he chose to go to work or not.

Jordan explained the product (telecom) and talked a little bit about what it did and how it would help people. He showed them the opportunity by drawing circles. He didn't have a strong upline, so there was nobody he could do three-way calls with. It was just Jordan... winging it.

As the company grew, there were more and more success stories and local events were held. Jordan would bring the interested people he'd shown the business to over lunch and always sit in the front of the room. Even if he didn't know the speakers, Jordan acted like he did and he'd introduce them to his guests.

After doing that for three or four months, the top leaders got to know "that guy, Jordan Adler from Arizona, who was always bringing guests and introducing them."

If there is such a thing as a natural Networker, Jordan Adler was one.

After a few months, Jordan used his flight benefits to fly to an event in San Francisco. He was sitting in the hotel lobby and the top leaders in the company, Jay Smith and his wife, recognized Jordan and invited him to dinner. All the highest earners were there. At the time, they were all making about $10,000 a month. Most of them went on to make a quarter million a month. One of them went on to make over $12 million a year.

To Jordan, $10,000 a month was like winning the lottery. He didn't say much that night. He listened. And he thought, "I want to be part of this group, be their peer. I don't want to be just this guy in the audience who knows who they are. I want to be onstage with them."

At that point, Jordan— who today earns more than $2 million a year— had not yet sponsored one single distributor in his entire Network Marketing 10-year career!

But after that meeting, he went to work and started signing people up. He was just consistent with people, continued to follow up, continued introducing the business to new people.

Jordan went from believing to knowing.

"Most people," he says, "go in and out of believing and doubting, believing and doubting, but there's a point where you just know." At that

dinner, Jordan knew. There was no doubt. Sure he got discouraged, felt down, disappointments happened, but he knew he could do it. There was a future out there that would provide him with an amazing lifestyle. He also knew that in order to get that he was going to have to completely run the course.

He couldn't and wouldn't quit.

Jordan began selecting instead of selling. He stopped trying to turn a three of clubs into an ace. "There are four aces in the deck," he says, and his job was to find those aces.

He ended up signing up 19 people in two years. From those individuals came a group of over 12,000 distributors and over 40,000 customers eventually making Jordan his first $1 million.

"The business is ridiculously simple," Jordan says. "*Ridiculously simple.* You put yourself in the flow of people, so you're constantly meeting them. You've got to get good at building relationships, connecting with people on a personal level. It's really just connecting and creating that level of trust between you, then learning how to call them and invite them to take a look at what you're doing."

Networkers are always asking, "What do I say to someone to get an appointment with them?" For Jordan, they're asking the wrong question. He says you can pretty much say anything to someone you have a good relationship with. Focus on building that level of trust, then you can call them and say, "I want to show you something," and they'll say, "Sure, what have you got?"

What does Jordan believe it takes to be a million-dollar leader in this business?

"First," he says, "You've got to love people. Love people to the point that you're willing to let them be whoever they are, whether that means being part of your company or not, and continue to love them regardless."

It requires that you be on a journey of growth, both personally and financially. You need to be hungry. You need drive and ambition. "You've got to want more to a point that you're not willing to settle," he says. "You're just not willing to settle. That's just not an option."

You've got to develop the skill of letting go and the skill of reframing.

"When I look at every single top leader in Network Marketing," Jordan says, "they're good at reframing things for themselves and for other people."

Every Networking company has people who struggle and every company has people who become wildly successful under the same set of circumstances. What's the difference?

Jordan says, it's people's ability to reframe and their ability to let go of those tough situations, because everyone has them. There's not one successful leader he knows who hasn't had to deal with tough things on their journey. It's how quickly you can let go of those difficulties and re-focus on your future.

As cliché as it sounds— and Jordan is sensitive to using clichés— the best thing about Network Marketing for him is the freedom. It's the ability for Jordan to call his own shots.

"I travel a lot," he says. "I've got residences in multiple places. I choose to spend time with the people who I really love and care about. This business gives me the opportunity to contribute and really grow. There's never ever a week that doesn't pose some challenge and the opportunity to work through it. Usually, your life is pretty fulfilling when you're constantly growing."

"At the age of 52," Jordan says. "I can still go after my dreams, continue to live a higher quality life and bring other people along with me."

"It just doesn't get any better."

From ***The Greatest Networkers in the World***

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