**Would You Do This to Be Successful?**

I was born in Newark, OH. The population today is 47,790, which makes it the 20th largest city in Ohio. It was smaller in 1972 when I started selling radio advertising at WCLT-AM and FM, my hometown radio station. My high school buddies were all there working or looking for work.

I got married the next summer and settled into a $98 a month apartment with a garage. In 1973 we moved to Madison Wisconsin because my wife wanted a master’s degree in speech pathology from the University of Wisconsin. I got a job at WISM-AM and FM.

Just like that, I was in a new town with no network or support system except for the good folks at WISM. I worked hard and played on the station’s softball and basketball teams. I hung out with the owners. I business owners with bigger goals than some of the local merchants of Newark, OH.

Our radio station had bigger goals and better systems in place. And the owners were already millionaires.

I remember, getting called into the office Bill Walker, one of the owners, three years into my tenure in Madison. “We want you to be our new local sales manager, Chris. And we want to start selling some of our stock to key people in the company You can buy $25,000 worth to start and you’ll get dividends in addition to your regular income as you help the radio stations grow their sales.”

“Thanks, Bill,” I said. “But I don’t have $25,000 in the bank.”

“Don’t worry. I’ll cosign the note for you and you can borrow it from the United Bank. I’m a board member there. I’ll make a call.”

That statement impressed me. I want *that* kind of clout someday, I though. I want more of wealth and perks that succeeding in business can give. I started thinking bigger because I had to think bigger to measure up to the people I was hanging around with.

That story popped into my mind when I was listening to the late, great Jim Rohn do [his 3-minute rant on walking away from the 97%.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_01qgW9qHL8) He told his audience, “You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with.”

Fortunately, once I left the “safety” of my hometown, I got to spend a lot of time with successful people when I was 23-years old. And that made a big difference.

In Madison, I seemed to run into successful people them everywhere.

One day I was playing with my sales manager, Phil Fisher at his club. When we went into the locker room, there was a distinguished looking older gentleman with a towel wrapped around him.

“Chris, meet Oscar Mayer,” said Phil. “Oscar, this is Chris Lytle.” Well, I didn’t hang out with Oscar Mayer, but I hung out with people who out with him.

Who are you spending your time with? Are they lifting you up or holding you back?

Jim Rohn’s advice? “Walk away from the 97%. Don’t use their excuses. Don’t talk like they talk. Don’t go where they go. Don’t act like they act.” Please listen to his longer rant and see if it prompts you to make some positive changes in who you hang out with.

“You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with.” Seriously. Success is much easier and less complicated than many of us try to make it.

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