


# 42<sup>TM</sup> Rules

*to Jumpstart  
Your professional  
Success*

**BUD BILANICH**  
THE COMMON SENSE GUY



# “42 Rules to Jumpstart Your Professional Success” Book Excerpt

A Guide to Common Sense Career  
Development and Entrepreneurial  
Achievement

**By Bud Bilanich**

foreword by Cynthia Brian, *New York  
Times* Best Selling Author

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## Foreword by Cynthia Brian

Where is the best place to meet a great guy? At a conference for women, of course!

I was one of the featured speakers on this particular day with a presentation about envisioning the possibilities. After I descended from the stage, a gentleman appeared at my booth with a book in his hand. "Cynthia, I am Bud Bilanich, and we have a lot in common." The confident Common Sense Guy handed me an autographed copy of 'Straight Talk for Success' and our mutual friendship began.

After reading his inspiring book, I invited Bud on my radio show, *Starstyle-Be the Star You Are!* to discuss his secrets for success. With enthusiasm and excitement, Bud shared his optimistic, no nonsense plans for achievement. What impressed me most was his earnest desire to help others succeed. It was obvious that he was a man of integrity, an individual who role modeled responsibility, and enjoyed being a mentor.

His newest book, '42 Rules to Jumpstart Your Professional Success,' is yet another brilliant gift to the world. As a cancer survivor, Bud understands that life is precious and time is to be valued. Although he calls his forty-two suggestions *rules*, they are realistic tools to aid you on your path of excellence. As you tackle each one, you'll find yourself learning to design your own life based on your own guidelines. Why live in the shadow of someone else when you can shine brightly on your own?

As I read and reread Bud's forty-two rules, I attempted to name a favorite. What I discovered is that each one is crucial to defining the person

you want to be. All of the rules summarize commonsense ideas that will never let you down. Once you dream the dream, clarify your purpose, be optimistic, believe in yourself and all the possibilities, you are ready to move forward, living expansively with passion and positivity in both your professional and personal lives.

Make sure to take Bud's advice to break the rules while creating your own. I would never have met this magnificent man had he not attended a "women only" conference. How grateful I am that Bud dares to be different! He challenges you to do the same. His actions accurately demonstrate that '42 Rules to Jumpstart Your Professional Success' truly works in real time.

Start anywhere. The important thing is to begin today. Pick up this book, buy it for a friend, and share the simple strategies knowing that you have the Common Sense Guy, Bud Bilanich, as your guide on the side. Why settle for mediocrity when greatness is probable?

Smile, have fun, take measured risks. You are about to be the star you are!

Cynthia Brian  
*New York Times Best Selling Author, Speaker,  
Coach, Radio/TV Personality*  
<http://www.cynthiabrian.com>

## Intro

### **You deserve to become a professional success.**

Are you ready for some commonsense advice that will accelerate your journey to professional success?

If so, you have the correct book in your hands. I've written these 42 *rules* to help you create the successful life and career that you deserve. That's right—you deserve to become a professional success. Everybody does!

I am happy to be joining the 42 Rules book family. I've read almost every book in this series. They are all filled with simple, straightforward advice. That's what you'll find in this book too—simple, straightforward advice on how to take charge of your career and become a professional success.

I've developed these rules over the last 37 years. They've helped me build a great coaching, speaking and consulting business. I'm sure they can help you too, no matter what you choose to do with your life and career.

These rules are broken into five main sections:

- Self Confidence
- Positive Personal Impact
- Outstanding Performance
- Dynamic Communication
- Interpersonal Competence

Outstanding performance is at the heart of these sections, because you can't succeed if you're not an outstanding performer. However, outstanding performance is not enough. It's merely the price of admission to the success game. Outstanding

performance is about *what* you do. But as I've said thousands of times, "It's not just what you do, it's how you do it."

The first, second, fourth and fifth sections of this book provide you with advice on how to conduct yourself as you go about delivering outstanding performance, the focus of Section 3. This should tell you something. One-fifth of the book is devoted to what you do, four-fifths is devoted to how you do it. Some simple math should tell you what I think is most important when it comes to jumpstarting your professional success.

You may already be aware of and practice some of these rules. Others may be new to you. Still others may be strange to you. I ask you to read what I've written in the following pages with an open mind. Think about each rule. If it makes sense to you, use it. If part of it makes sense, use the part that works for you. If you think I'm nuts, think again. If, upon further thought, you still think I'm nuts, take a big black marker and cross out the rule. In other words, use only those rules that make sense to you.

Thanks for reading this book. I hope you enjoy it. Please send an email to [Bud@Budbilanich.com](mailto:Bud@Budbilanich.com) with your comments and thoughts. I promise to read and respond to every email I receive.

I hope these 42 rules are the launching pad for the successful life and career you deserve.



## 2

## Clarify Your Purpose

**Clarity of purpose and direction is fundamental to your professional success.**

In my book, '4 Secrets of High Performing Organizations,' I point out that all successful, high performing organizations have four things in common: clarity of purpose and direction; the sincere commitment of all organization members; skillful execution of the things that matter; and mutually beneficial relationships with important outside constituencies.

Clarity of purpose and direction is also fundamental to your professional success. It all begins with a clear picture of how you define professional success.

When I was 25, if you asked me what I wanted to be doing when I was 50, I would have told you, "Running a one-person consulting, coaching and speaking business from my house." Guess what? I have been running a one person consulting, coaching and speaking business from my house ever since 1988. My clarity of purpose propelled me toward my goal.

I have a friend who is a serial entrepreneur. He started a software business when he was 27. He built it up and sold it to a major computer manufacturer by the time he was 35. He has since started and sold four other companies. His clarity of purpose lies in the challenge of creating something new, building it into a viable sustainable business, and then moving on.

I have another friend who recently retired as the Executive VP of Human Resources for a Fortune 50 company. We were chatting a few days ago.

She told me that when she was in college, she decided that she was going to join a good company and work her way up the ladder. She took an entry level HR job with a company she liked. It took her over 25 years, but she eventually became the most senior HR person in that company. Her clarity of purpose and definition of success was different from mine and the serial entrepreneurs, but she reached her goal.

My second friend told me that her son has yet a different definition of success. He is not interested in climbing the corporate ladder, or in being an entrepreneur. He wants an interesting job where he can contribute, but he doesn't want to spend inordinate amounts of time at work. He wants to spend as much time with his family as he can. His definition of success is different from that of his mother.

All four of us are professional successes—according to our clarity of purpose.

There is no one correct definition of professional success. There are as many definitions as there are people in this world. Your definition of professional success is what's right for you—not anyone else. I would not have been happy building and selling a number of businesses in succession, climbing a corporate ladder or working for a large company in an individual contributor position. However, as you can tell from the stories of the three people above, they were. They knew what they wanted and they went after it.

That's why clarifying your purpose is so important. Your clarity of purpose provides both a foundation and launching pad for your professional success. The old saying, "If you don't know where you're going, you won't know when you get there" is a cliché but true. Getting clear on your personal definition of professional success is the first step to becoming a professional success.

If you haven't already done so, I suggest you take some time and think about your clarity of purpose. How do you define professional success for yourself? Keep that purpose and definition of success in mind as you read the other rules in this book. Think about how these rules can help you reach your purpose.

## 3

**Take Personal Responsibility for Your Professional Success**

**I am the only one who can make me a success. You are the only one who can make you a success.**

It takes five things to succeed in your career and life: self confidence, positive personal impact, outstanding performance, dynamic communication skills, and interpersonal competence. Each of these is a key factor in becoming successful. However, there is one idea that is so fundamental to success that it is the foundation on which all five of these points rest: personal responsibility.

It's simple, really. Success is all up to you, and me, and anyone else who wants it. We all have to take personal responsibility for our own success. I am the only one who can make me a success. You are the only one who can make you a success.

Stuff happens: good stuff, bad stuff, frustrating stuff, unexpected stuff. Successful people respond to the stuff that happens in a positive way. Humans are the only animals with a free will. That means we—you and I—get to decide how we react to every situation that comes up. That's why taking personal responsibility for jumpstarting your professional success is so important.

Personal responsibility means recognizing that you are responsible for your life and the choices you make. It means that you realize that while other people and events have an impact on your life, these people and events don't control your life. When you accept personal responsibility for your life, you own up to the fact that how you

react to people and events is what's important. And you can choose how to react to every person you meet and everything that happens to you.

The concept of personal responsibility is found in most writings on success. Stephen Covey's first habit in 'The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People' is, "Be proactive." My friend John Miller's book 'QBQ: the Question Behind the Question' asks readers to pose questions to themselves like, "What can I do to become a top performer?" John really believes that taking personal responsibility for your life and career is the key to professional success.

The five keys to success—self confidence, personal impact, outstanding performance, communication skills, and interpersonal competence—work only if you are willing to take responsibility for your life and career. Personal responsibility is the foundation on which this model is built.

Personal responsibility means using this material once you learn it. I've written this book to provide you with useful information and knowledge on becoming a professional success. But, as the U.S. Steel pencils my Dad brought home from work used to say, "Knowing is not enough."

When I was a kid, I was really fascinating and puzzled by these pencils. "Knowing is not enough—what the hell does that mean?" I used to think. I spent hours struggling with that idea. I was too stubborn to ask a grown-up.

When I got to Penn State, I took Philosophy 101 my freshman year. We had to read Johann von Goethe. One day, as I was plowing through an assignment, I came across this quote: "Knowing is not enough, we must do. Willing is not enough, we must apply."

Boy was I glad I took that course! It solved one of the profound mysteries of my childhood: "Knowing is not enough." As I take it, you have to take what you learn and use it, or what you've learned isn't very valuable. That's part of personal responsibility, using your knowledge to achieve your goals.

The other rules in this book will provide you with some ideas on what to do to jumpstart your professional success. It's up to you to think about these rules, decide how you are going to use them, and then to put them to work for you. That's what personal responsibility is all about.

## 4

**Build Your Self Confidence**

**If you believe in yourself and your success, you are likely to find ways to make that belief come true.**

I love stories. I think they are a very powerful way of making important points. Here's one of my favorites about self confidence.

The business executive was deep in debt and could see no way out. Creditors were closing in on him. Suppliers were demanding payment. He sat on the park bench, head in hands, wondering if anything could save his company from bankruptcy.

Suddenly an old man appeared before him. "I can see that something is troubling you," he said. After listening to the executive's woes, the old man said, "I believe I can help you." He asked the man his name, wrote out a check, and pushed it into his hand saying, "Take this money. Meet me here exactly one year from today, and you can pay me back at that time." Then he turned and disappeared as quickly as he had come.

The business executive saw in his hand a check for \$500,000, signed by John D. Rockefeller, then one of the richest men in the world! "I can erase my money worries in an instant!" he realized. But instead, the executive decided to put the uncashed check in his safe.

Just knowing it was there might give him the strength to work out a way to save his business. With renewed optimism, he nego-

tiated better deals and extended terms of payment. He closed several big sales. Within a few months, he was out of debt and making money once again.

Exactly one year later, he returned to the park with the uncashed check. At the agreed-upon time, the old man appeared. But just as the executive was about to hand back the check and share his success story, a nurse came running up and grabbed the old man.

"I'm so glad I caught him!" she cried. "I hope he hasn't been bothering you. He's always escaping from the rest home and telling people he's John D. Rockefeller." And she led the old man away by the arm.

The astonished executive just stood there, stunned. All year long he'd been wheeling and dealing, buying and selling, convinced he had half a million dollars behind him. Suddenly, he realized that it wasn't the money, real or imagined, that had turned his life around. It was his newfound self confidence that gave him the power to achieve anything he went after.

As nice as this story is, I doubt it is actually true. However, like a lot of fables, it makes a great commonsense point about professional success. If you believe in yourself and your success, you are likely find ways to make that belief come true. Think about it.

If you want to become self confident you need to do five things.

- Become an optimist. Learn from, and then forget yesterday's mistakes. Focus on tomorrow's achievements.
- Face your fears and take action. Action cures fear. Procrastination and inaction compound it. Failure is rarely fatal. Do something—anything—that will move you closer to achieving your goals.
- Surround yourself with positive people. Build a network of supportive friends. Jettison the negative people in your life.
- Find a mentor. A strong mentor will help build your confidence and guide you along the way. Mentors are positive people by definition—because they are willing to share their knowledge and experience to help others grow and succeed.
- Become a mentor. It's never too early to begin helping others. You have learned things that can greatly benefit others. Be willing to share what you've learned to help others from having to learn it the hard way—through personal experience.

## About the Author



Bud Bilanich, The Common Sense Guy, is an executive coach, motivational speaker, author and blogger. He is the Official Guide for Executive Coaching at SelfGrowth.com, and the Careers Group Coordinator at FastCompany.com. He is a member of the USA Today Small Business Advisory Panel. He writes the popular blog (<http://www.SuccessCommonSense.com>) to which he posts five days a week. Dr. Bilanich is Harvard educated but has a no nonsense approach to personal and professional success as a result of over 35 years of business experience, 10 years of research and study of successful people and the application of common sense. Bud is the author of seven other books, including 'Straight Talk for Success: Common Sense Ideas That Won't Let You Down.'

His clients include Pfizer, Glaxo SmithKline, Johnson and Johnson, Abbot Laboratories, PepsiCo, AT&T, Chase Manhattan Bank, Citigroup, General Motors, UBS, AXA Advisors, Cabot Corporation, The Aetna, PECO Energy, Olin Corporation, Minerals Technologies, The Boys and Girls Clubs of America and a number of small and family owned businesses.

Bud is a cancer survivor and lives in Denver Colorado with his wife Cathy. He is a retired rugby player and an avid cyclist. He likes movies, live theatre and crime fiction.

### **A Message From Super Star Press™**

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