

# Work the Law of Large Numbers

**T**he Law of Large Numbers is a pivotal success secret, inasmuch as it says:

- 1** Do enough of anything and you'll succeed;
- 2** Do more and you'll prosper, and outdo even that amount; and
- 3** You'll become a legend.

We've seen how this operates in all walks of life.

As with so many success principles, the Law of Large Numbers seems particularly apt in sports. Just yesterday, I read this quote from mighty basketball great, Michael Jordan:

"I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

If you don't try, you can't win. Try more and more, and even more than that, and you'll become a performer whose feats are celebrated forever.

Having said this, let me temper The Law of Large Numbers with this admonition:

**IT ONLY TAKES ONE TO SUCCEED!**

This is a critical corollary to the Law of Large Numbers. Yes, you have to make many attempts, but if you sink that final shot at the buzzer, **JUST THAT ONE SHOT**, you'll come up a game winner.

The key is to stay in contention long enough to be competitive, to spot your opening when it occurs and to seize the chance – these are the things that position you for victory.

Let's say you're a salesperson and you've gone for days, weeks, or months without closing a deal. This happens, by the way, more often than you might think, especially over the course of long careers.

You're in a slump, period.

How do you dig your way out?

You do it with repeated efforts – a Law of Large Numbers campaign, as I've pointed out elsewhere. But what do you tell yourself in order to overcome those inevitable obstacles and future rejections that you'll encounter on the road to recovery?

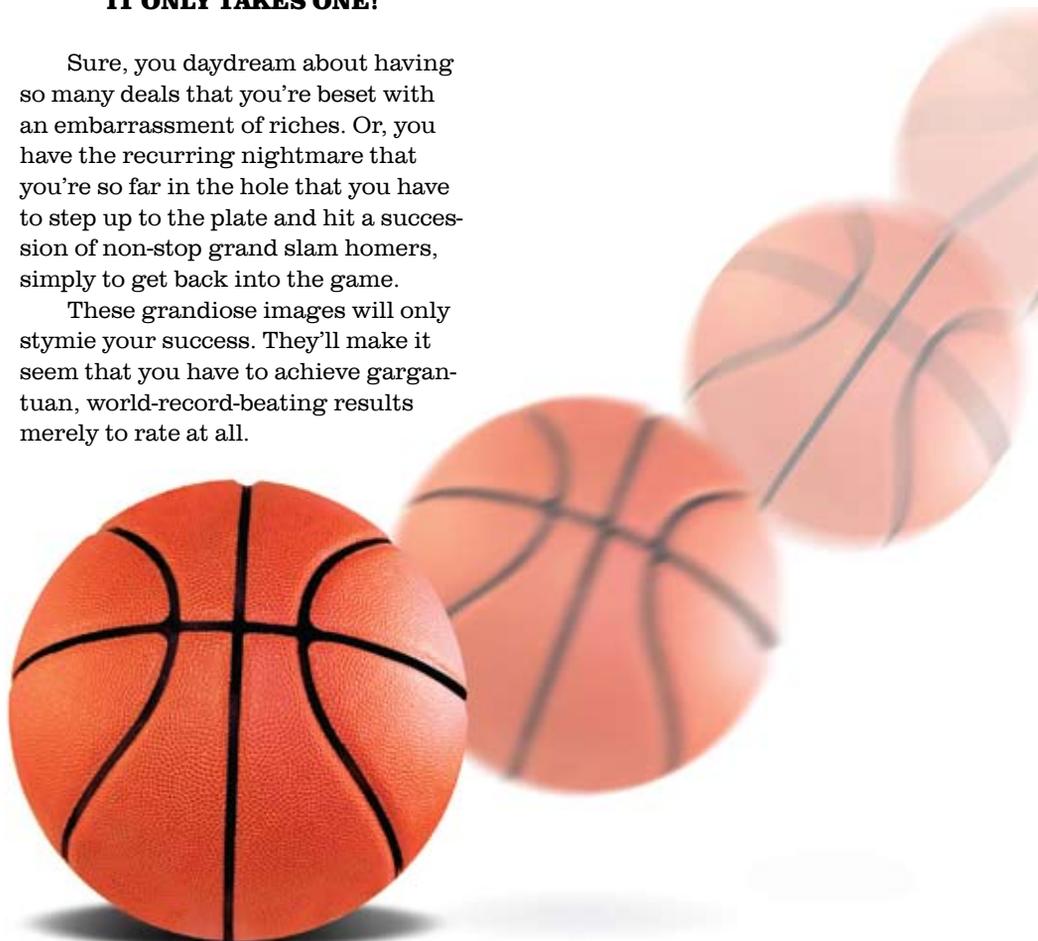
Repeat this phrase:

**IT ONLY TAKES ONE!**

Sure, you daydream about having so many deals that you're beset with an embarrassment of riches. Or, you have the recurring nightmare that you're so far in the hole that you have to step up to the plate and hit a succession of non-stop grand slam homers, simply to get back into the game.

These grandiose images will only stymie your success. They'll make it seem that you have to achieve gargantuan, world-record-beating results merely to rate at all.

**But Remember,  
It Only Takes One  
to Succeed**



And that's absolutely false and destructive thinking.

To climb out of the hole, all you need is to get onto the board with one score at a time.

About seven years ago, I found myself in a downdraft in my consulting and training business.

I had just published a series of books, six in a matter of four years, and none of them was instantly hitting big. The typical after-market that I expect from writing – people calling me to help them to improve their business results – was virtually nonexistent.

And then, one day without any involvement on my part, the co-owner of a successful business on the east coast walked into her local bookstore and bought one of my current releases.

She read it, wondered if I could help her team to improve, and she contacted me.

We started with a very modest initial program, consisting of a single day; but that beginning led to a relationship that found me flying back and forth from coast to coast every other week for two years, investing hundreds of billable days together.

**“The practical challenge, of course, is FINDING or ATTRACTING THE ONE.”**

In fact, I was just recalled to that firm to update their skills.

All it took to bust that slump was ONE book reader out of thousands who was sufficiently impressed with its contents to reach out for assistance.

The practical challenge, of course, is FINDING or ATTRACTING THE ONE.

Smack in the middle of the darkest days of our national real estate meltdown, I wanted to sell an office property I owned. So, I did what any reasonably prudent person in my position would do.

I interviewed Realtor after Realtor, asking them for proposals. And guess what I amassed?

At the end of my research, I had several proposals that were so completely identical that they could have been photocopies of the top one on the pile. They all said I should list my property within a very narrow range of dollars.

How did they arrive at such a uniform prescription? They did market analyses that showed the most recent properties of its type that were sold in the city. These are, as you may know, called “comparables.”

But “comps” are fundamentally flawed. Unless you have a LARGE NUMBER of them that have been bought recently, and there are even more available on the market now, you won't have a suitable supply for comparison.

Moreover, every real property is unique. It will appeal more to some buyers than to others. And where there is more desire, there is a higher demand and a higher price that people

are willing to pay.

So, the question becomes: “To what SINGLE BUYER, or type of buyer, is this property MOST valuable?” Then you need to inject most of your time and energy into marketing to that one person or to that one niche.

But if you look at AVERAGES, which is where comps will take you, the BEST type of buyer won't even appear on your radar, just the TYPICAL ones; and they'll only be willing to pay the same as the lowest common denominator pays.

IT ONLY TAKES ONE thinking – assures you'll pursue the best avenues to reach your targets.

So, what did I do?

I performed my own analysis, believing that the sales prices I was urged to use were too low, that my land and building were worth far more.

From inside my building, I looked to my neighbour on the left. He had already built his property out to its limits, and was therefore unlikely to buy my parcel.

But the fellow on the right had room to grow. Combined, our two properties would enable him to exploit the commercial possibilities much more than either of us could do as individuals, so I determined he was: THE ONE.

If I wanted a premium, it would have to come from him; because by virtue of his positioning, at least in theory he could and would pay far more than the average buyer. So, I put all of the Realtors on hold and devised a personal marketing campaign aimed EXCLUSIVELY AT HIM.

I realized I needed to have a LARGE NUMBER of contacts with



him within a short time frame to motivate him to make a generous offer.

I found every excuse I could to bump into him to say hello, and one day I leaned into his car in the driveway and said, "You know, I'm thinking of selling. Before I list it with a Realtor, let me know if you'd like to make an offer."

Within 90 days, he was the proud owner of side-by-side properties and I had been cashed out.

Overall, I got a premium price:

1. It was 25 percent to 33 percent higher than the proposals suggested I list the property;

2. I sold it myself, without a Realtor, saving another six percent of the purchase price;

3. I sold it earlier than I would've done if I'd had it on the open market;

4. I got the price I wanted; and

5. I didn't have to invest a dime in repairs or upgrades before transferring title.

Exactly, how much better did I do by melding a Law of Large Numbers approach with an It Only Takes One approach?

I believe I netted minimally 45 percent more than I would have received had I gone the traditional route; and in real money terms, it was a lot more than I would have obtained otherwise.

Perhaps the most striking example of marrying the Law of Large Numbers to It Only Takes One thinking is in dating and mating. Unless you're a committed single who absolutely adores playing the field, you're going to settle down with one person, at least for a while.

As any matchmaker can attest, FINDING THE ONE is the challenge. This involves the Three E's: obtaining Exposure, Encounters, and Exclusivity.

The Law of Large Numbers gives you exposure, puts you into those situations where you will be "in play," available to see and be seen. This could be through computer dating sites, volunteer work, going to alumni events at your alma mater, or hosting barbecues.

To arrange encounters, you need to work on your "approach skills," learning to get the attention of the specific people you want to know better, as well as practicing ways to start and sustain conversations.

To gain exclusivity, you need to showcase your uniqueness and

develop a plan for enticing the people who interest you into spending one-on-one time together.

The Law of Large Numbers, almost without exception, leads to It Takes Only One opportunities.

Working together, these two principles create symbiosis, and the results we're all looking for, by combining quantity and quality.

I am a firm believer in The Law of Large Numbers; and thankfully, a large number of folks who have purchased my audio seminar bearing this title agree with its premise.

But committing to LARGE NUMBERS CAMPAIGNS, which I advocate doing, can seem daunting, because it's easy to forget that success is inevitable from our massive ministrations.

That's why it's so important to wed the Law of Large Numbers with It Only Takes One thinking. The realization that success may be just ONE smile, ONE sale, ONE phone call away,

keeps us happily choo-chooing along on the train that can, that will, and that is destined to succeed. **N**

*Dr. Gary S. Goodman is the author of Nightingale-Conant's popular audio program "The Law Of Large Numbers: How To Make Success Inevitable," and is a top speaker and business consultant. He can be reached at: [gary@customersatisfaction.com](mailto:gary@customersatisfaction.com).*

