

University of the imagination

The perfect way to tap your unlimited potential

They learned foreign languages, designed buildings, and invented products.

They played their favorite sports—repeatedly hitting homeruns and scoring touchdowns.

Had they not been locked in tiny, filthy cells, fed like animals and frequently tortured, they could have passed for students in a special university. And, in a way, that's exactly what they were: students at the "University of the Imagination"—American POW's who used their imaginations to transcend the horrors of North Vietnamese prisons.

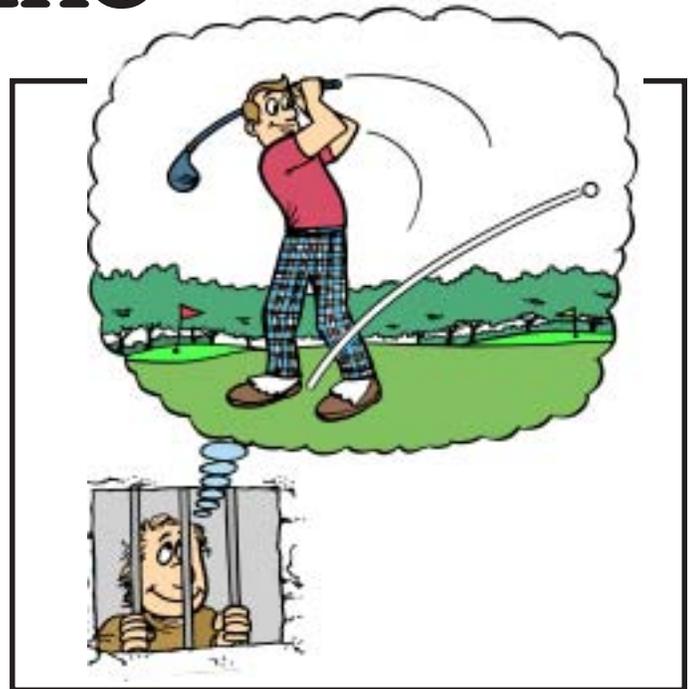
Remarkably, after years of incarceration, many of them came home speaking three languages fluently. Some earned millions of dollars on their inventions. Others, having learned to play the piano on imaginary keyboards scratched in the dirt, or having learned to play the guitar using crude wood slats with no strings, were accomplished musicians when they returned.

Col. George Hall is representative of these "University of the Imagination" students.

Before he was captured by the Viet Cong, Hall was an outstanding golfer. But his imprisonment lasted seven years, during which the closest he came to stepping on a golf course was when his bare feet touched the mold growing on the floor of his cell.

Still, he played eighteen holes of golf every day—in his imagination!

With his eyes closed, his concentration



focused on the courses he'd played back home, he experienced every detail as if it were real. He could smell the freshly cut grass, feel his hands caressing the grip of his driver as he teed off, see the ball's soaring trajectory against a vividly blue sky, and, later, see the ball falling gently into the cup.

Not once did he envision himself hitting wild shots, missing easy putts, or landing in the water. His imaginary practice was *perfect* practice. And, upon returning to the U.S., he continued playing near-perfect golf. In fact, his first time on a course—just a few weeks after his release—he entered a tournament and shot a brilliant 76, holding to the four handicap he had established seven years earlier!

When wide-eyed spectators asked him how he did it, Hall said, "What's the surprise? I've been practicing every day for over seven years."

Practicing indeed. He had graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of the Imagination.

Here's what you can do:

1. Discipline yourself to habitually imagine the



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best possible results. See the sales agreement being signed. Feel the thrill of achievement as you reach your business goal and receive recognition for a job well done. Hear the praise your loved ones will lavish on you as they share your victory.

2. Write your own script, just as Col. Hall did when he played his imaginary, perfect golf

games. Decide what result you want, then imagine yourself accomplishing each step necessary to attain that result.

3. Don't waste time. Use your free moments—relaxing in the bathtub, stuck in a traffic jam, waiting for an appointment, or just before going to sleep—to exercise your imagination and tap more of your unlimited potential.

A \$600 wrinkle

Brooke and Steve are a successful young couple. Both professionals, they earn an excellent income. Both are aware of how important it is to make a good visual impression. That's why they decided to have one of Brooke's teeth capped. It would improve her smile and make her feel even better about herself. Off they went to a well-known dentist for an examination and estimate. The dentist did his work efficiently, examined the x-rays, and confidently told them it would be a fairly simple procedure that would cost \$600. Wanting to discuss it privately, they told the dentist they would think it over.

When they got into their car Steve asked Brooke what she thought. They looked at each other, the way people do when they know what the other is thinking. Smiling she said, "Did you see the uniforms the staff was wearing?" Steve smiled too and said, "Yes, and they were all so wrinkled. Clean, but wrinkled."

The decision to invest \$600 to improve Brooke's appearance was made, but not with the dentist whose staff had the wrinkled uniforms!

Think about it—if that dentist didn't care enough about how his staff looked, why would he care how Brooke looked? Silly, you may say. But not at all—it's the *little things* that get to people. Sure, the dentist was good at his profession, but in Brooke's and Steve's mind, he wasn't a *professional*.

So ends the story of the \$600 wrinkle.

Here's what you can do:

1. Pay closer attention to the "little things"—even little things you may not think are important. The finest meal at the best restaurant in town will remain uneaten if just one thin strand of hair is found in the salad. A dirty, sloppy, greasy auto shop shows the car owner what type of repair job he can expect on his engine. The salesperson who's late for the appointment



unconsciously communicates to the customer that product delivery time may also run late.

2. Become an example of professionalism in all you do. Look, act and be the person you want others to look up to and respect as a top professional.
3. Give the customer/client credit for being intelligent, observant and aware. Don't let yourself get away with using beautiful color brochures covered with finger marks, business cards that look dog-eared, or letters and price quotes with typos and misspellings.
4. Check everything, and act as if your life depended on things being right.

A lesson from Al McGuire

If you're a basketball fan you know him from his playing days at St. John's College, his coaching career at Marquette University, and as a colorful sports announcer on both radio and T.V. Al McGuire's a most unusual guy, with a real talent for picking up on little things.

Before every college game he coached, he used to walk across to the other team's bench and shake hands with the opposing coach. "No," he says with a twinkle in his eye, "I wasn't trying to be friendly. I was checking for a sweaty palm." Al explains that when you're not really ready to

play and not really expecting to win, you have a sweaty palm. But if you've done your homework and you're prepared mentally and physically—your palms are dry!

Here's what you can do: *Check your palms before your "game"—whatever you do—sell, speak, manage, build, write, or fly a plane. Invest the time to practice, prepare, rehearse, and when you think you've done enough, practice it some more. Don't wait for Al to shake your hand—learn to check your own palms. If they're sweaty, you're not ready.*

No more: "I'm dumb"

A fateful day in Chad Howey's young life—ten minutes under water. The term "cold water drowning" was used to describe his condition. At age 2½ his mind was swept clear of the alphabet and other things he had learned. Even though he was alive, and left with full intellectual capacity, he had a body "they said" that didn't go through the motions of life fast enough.

As he grew into boyhood it became harder and harder for him to keep up. He knew what he wanted to do, but he couldn't seem to get his body to do it quickly enough. Swinging at a baseball after it was in the catcher's glove made him feel dumb. Being behind in reading and having kids laugh at him in reading class made him feel dumb.

Then at age 10 Chad was given an opportunity to turn his greatest weakness into his greatest strength. With fierce determination and lots of encouragement from his mother, Chad enrolled in a speed reading course.

"Dumb? I'll show them!" he said to himself. It meant hours of practice in addition to keeping up with his regular schoolwork, but he dropped self-pity and stopped asking "Why me?" and just did what had to be done.

If you're average as a reader you're probably reading 250 words per minute with 70% to 80%

comprehension. Speed reading courses promise to double and even triple that. You might know someone who's up to 1,000 wpm.

Not Chad Howey. Newspapers in his hometown showed the ten-year-old's picture and then verified the statement: "TEN-YEAR-OLD CAN READ 9,000 TO 10,000 WPM WITH 90% COMPREHENSION!"

It's true — with tremendous effort and commitment, Chad's diligence paid off. It proves once again that people with a goal, a plan, a commitment, and hard work can...

- turn their weaknesses into strengths
- make negatives into positives
- improve and grow
- release their unlimited potential.

Chad Howey proved it.

Here's what you can do:

1. Say no more: "I'm dumb," or "I'm slow...old ...poor ...weak." Decide today to remove limitations of all kinds from your thinking.
2. Begin a program of improved reading. Get a book on the subject or take a course. Don't keep saying, "I'm a slow reader" —take ACTION!
3. Limitations are man-made—drop them and soar through life with your unlimited potential.

Be a “salesfriend”

In your relationships with customers, develop the qualities of a close friendship

Your phone rings, and you pick it up.
“Hello,” you say.

“Hi! I represent the Bay City Pest Control Company, and we’re offering a special this week...”

You hang up, feeling a little annoyed that another salesperson is trying to reach into your pocket or purse.

And that’s how we think of most salespeople, isn’t it? They seem only to want to reach into your pocket or purse and grab whatever loot they can lay their hands on.

But there are probably a few salespeople—your favorite ones—who you don’t think of as ever “selling” you anything. For instance, the man at the local hardware store who advises you and helps make your household repair jobs easier. Do you eye him skeptically, wondering what trick he’ll pull next? Of course not. He’s your friend; you trust him and appreciate his suggestions.

That’s how your customers and clients should feel about you. And they will, if instead of acting like a typical salesperson, you act more like a friend: a “salesfriend.”

Identify the qualities you appreciate in a close friendship, and you’ve also got a partial list of what separates the *salesfriend* from all the other salespeople.

In a close friendship, there is no purpose other than mutual benefit. Both give, and both receive. So it is with salesfriends. They don’t see prospects as dollar signs with arms and legs. They see them as people they can help, and who can, in turn, help them.

Friends also look for and fill each other’s needs. If one is upset, the other will provide comfort. Likewise, the salesfriend looks for the needs of his prospects—not just the desires. That way, long after the sale is made, the salesfriend’s customer is pleased with his or her investment.



And another mark of a close friendship is the willingness to give. Friends give to one another not just because they’re asked to give, but because they WANT to give. It’s the same with the salesfriend who gives all that’s required, and then some. He or she gives a little extra.

How do your clients see you? In their eyes, are you a salesfriend interested in mutual benefit, anxious to fill needs, and willing to give a little extra? Or are you just another salesperson? If, in your relationships with customers, you can develop some of the qualities of a close friendship, you’ll find that your rewards—financial and emotional—will increase substantially.

Here’s what you can do: *To develop the attitude of a salesfriend:*

1. *Make a list of your friends, those people you like, respect and trust.*
2. *Identify the qualities they express when you’re with them that make you feel good about them.*
3. *Do the things for your prospects and customers that your friends do for you.*
4. *Salesfriends think, “WIN-WIN”!*



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