



BY  
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# THE GOLDEN KEY

Have an open mind, and discover the opportunities!

## **Opportunity is all around**

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Knock, knock.

Who's there?

Opportunity.

Really? Is it really you? I have been waiting so long! Come on in! Hello? Where are you?

If you are waiting for opportunity to come knocking on your door like a coupon book salesman, I have some bad news for you. Opportunity will not track you down and pester you to give you a life changing experience. Ok, maybe it will once, but what if you are not home or you fell asleep watching TV?

If you are really seeking opportunity, why aren't you walking up and kicking in the door of opportunity?

The truth of the matter is that opportunity is truly everywhere, but we have to seek it out with an open mind, and the right attitude. There will be times when you see an idea or an amazing innovation, and you'll say "I wish I had thought of that!" But here is where you have to use that open mind, and realize that you missed that one, but you then need to be the first to find another opportunity.

The real challenge is that most of us have the habit of only seeing what we expect to see, often times missing the obvious, and completely avoiding the unexpected. By keeping an open mind and having a positive attitude, we can change our perspective, and see an opportunity when it is presented to us.

Have you ever been driving somewhere, and en route, you have to pass your own street? You inadvertently just make the turn down your street, even though you didn't mean to. We

often do things on autopilot, not realizing that we are doing them until afterwards! It is because we usually turn on our street, not pass it, and our brain knows that,

So, you are probably asking yourself, “What does this have to do with opportunity?”

The example I just gave shows how easy it is to fall into “auto pilot” mode. Humans are creatures of routine, doing the same things, in the same order. Routines are hard things to break, and we miss opportunities because they fall outside of our little routines.

Opportunity will probably never seek you out, so, you must seek out opportunities. The good news is that they are everywhere, and they will present themselves to you every day. However, you must train your mind to recognize them, and you actually must expect them to be there.

The whole point of this brief report is to show you how to find opportunities by asking the right questions of yourself, and others, and most importantly, taking action.

## **So what is the Golden Key?**

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The Golden Key is a concept developed to illustrate the fact that opportunity is all around you, and how different people, with different attitudes or ideas try to solve the problems or challenges they face in their search for success.

Let's say I hand you a locked box. And in that box is a golden key that can unlock a safe with ten million dollars in it. The money, all of it, belongs to you; all you need to do is open the box. The problem is you need a combination to open it.

You actually have four options:

1. You could try and decode the combination (nope - it has about 100 million combinations)
2. You could smash open the box. (too bad – it is unbreakable)
3. You could give up on your dreams of having it. (Sour grapes - you didn't want it anyway!)
4. You could ask me for the combination (but you'd have to ask me very nicely...)

The box with a key serves as a good metaphor, because right now, within 10 feet of you is a million dollar idea just waiting to be discovered...by you!

You can try and create opportunities, devising tons of ideas on your own for problems that don't really exist. There are many, many entrepreneurs and business owners that throw away years of their life creating products or developing services for needs that simply don't exist in the real world.

You can try and force your mind to recognize and take action on opportunities, but the human mind does not respond well to this type of training, and it usually proves to be counterproductive, and exhausting.

You could just give up trying altogether. But I guarantee, if you give up trying, you will never succeed. Wayne Gretzky, the legendary hockey player said it best, "You miss 100% of the

shots you don't take." I can almost guarantee that if you had a box, with a key in it that could open a safe with ten million bucks in it, you would not give up trying to get that key.

Finally, you could just ask. You just need to open your mind to the idea that there are opportunities surrounding you, and to know in your heart that they are really there, and that they are real. You just have to ask the right questions to get the answers for what you are looking for.

## That's great! Where is my Golden Key?

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Great question! It is actually the type of question you should ask.

Most people fail or never realize their dreams because of their own limiting beliefs like;

- I will never be financially free
- I will never be able to afford my dream home
- I am not capable of being successful

I have a very simple solution to those limiting beliefs. It is actually a question.

### WHY NOT?

Those 2 words can make all the difference in your world. Instead of always using “Why” as an excuse or asking “why me?” simply change it around and ask “why not?”

I have a little exercise to get your self doubts and limiting beliefs into perspective.

- Take a blank piece of paper, and across the top, write: **I cannot achieve my dream**
- Then in big, bold letters, write “Why Not?”
- Jot down everything that you think is holding you back or preventing you from achieving that dream.
- Look at that list. Now, realize that that everything on that list is your own personal belief. If you change your beliefs, you will change your life, and more importantly, you will achieve more, and you are far more likely to achieve your goals.

Stop thinking of the reasons you can't do something. Instead, change your perspective, and ask, “How can I...” The amazing thing? You will start coming up with answers, instead of excuses. If you start thinking that you can do something, you will actually begin to do it!

Earl Nightingale has the best quote regarding how our thoughts and mind control our lives:

“We become what we think about.”

Now, you need to realize that there are actually thousands of Golden Keys hidden around you. You simply have to find the combination to any one of them.

## It's all about perspective!

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The human brain is an amazing thing. It actually sees what it wants to see. In fact, I am going to show you how your mind is actually conditioned to recognize opportunities.

Take a look around wherever you are. Look at everything, and try and remember the scene and what is in it. Now, choose a shape:

Circle

Square

Triangle

Diamond

Rectangle

Look around again, but now focus only on items that are the shape that you chose, if you chose square, look for squares. Keep looking around, and try and see as many things that are your chosen shape.

Most people report that the scene they were looking at appeared totally different than the first time. Things that were the shape they chose stood out (and continue to stand out), and they notice things that they didn't notice the first time, patterns on doors, button shapes on TV remotes, the lace holes on shoes, etc..

Now, do the same exercise again, but pick a different shape. When you prime your mind to see things, it will begin to find them on its own, just like in this exercise.

I once met the designer that created the new logo for Federal Express several years ago. He asked me what I saw in the new logo, which was just the word, FedEx. He asked, did I see anything else? Any shapes, depicting motion? Look at their logo below:



Do you see the arrow between the E and the x? When I first saw the logo, I didn't. Now, it's all I see when I look at it!

Entrepreneurs and business people who can see and solve real problems can often become very wealthy.

I know a guy who works in the banking industry. He noticed that the little tickets that were scanned by the tellers would often not scan accurately. When they didn't scan correctly, the transaction would take considerably longer, and often, the bank would have to manually enter the transaction, preventing the customer from having access to their funds. He studied the tickets, and the machines that read them. He developed a way to print the tickets that increased their read rate to almost 99%! He then presented his solution to several banks, and they all started using his tickets. He has become considerably wealthy, because he solved a real problem.

Perspective plays a huge role in identifying opportunities. Find a problem. Focus on it. Know that there is a solution, and make it your goal to find that solution.

Remember the key to recognizing opportunities is having an open mind. Take the time to look at everyday problems or challenges, and look for a solution or a way to make them easier. But also equally important is to keep reminding yourself of the problem or challenge you are trying to solve, so that it can stay in front of you. Sooner or later, you will receive a flash of inspiration or what a friend of mine calls "spontaneous genius", and you will solve the problem. But you have to keep the problem "top of mind" or you won't recognize the solution when it is right in front of you.

## **Think outside the box!**

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There are a lot of different ways to discover a solution or uncover an opportunity. Some are easy, some, well, they are harder. And what may be easy for some, is difficult for others. I had a mentor tell me something that has had a huge impact on how I uncover opportunities, “not one of us is as smart as all of us.” He said that when we were having a brainstorming session. It really hit me as being pretty amazing advice!

One of the best ways to uncover solutions or to identify real opportunities is to brainstorm. Most people think that it has to be a group thing, but in actuality, it doesn't. Below is an exercise I often do to get my creative juices flowing.

Take out a sheet of paper, or use sticky notes. Write out the problem or challenge you are trying to solve. Now write, “How would I solve it?”

Write down every single idea or solution or related thing you can think of. Don't hold anything back. In fact, don't think too hard, write it down as soon as it comes into your head (use more paper if you need to!) You can set a time limit on the session, or when you feel you have enough, or if you come up with a clear solution – stop.

Now, look at the sheet or the sticky notes. Does one idea jump out at you? Do you see any themes or ideas that you can elaborate on? Do it, follow one idea or potential solution a bit further. Often times, you will look at the paper or the sticky notes, and think you have exhausted all of your ideas, or potential solutions. The good news is that you most likely haven't.

Remember, perspective is a huge part of the process of opportunities. Sometimes, a simple change of perspective can have a significant impact. Change your perspective on the problem or challenge and you will likely get another rush of ideas and inspiration.

Not sure how to change your perspective? Here's the secret.

Use your imagination. Be creative.

Imagine you are someone else. How would the problem look to them. How would a customer see it, and how would they want it solved. How would a scientist approach it? If you were a highly paid consultant, how would you go about identifying the problem, and solving it. If you were a lawyer, a physicist, a professional researcher? Maybe try thinking like a child, and take the most simple approach. Look at it completely unfiltered, without your predisposed notions or biases. This may not be easy, but it can yield some very interesting results.

Another option is to do a group brainstorm session. They do have their challenges, but lay down your rules at the very beginning: Nothing is too small, or insignificant. There are no bad ideas,. No holding back. No commenting or criticizing on others ideas. Once you have your ground rules out of the way – go for it!

Another option is to collect a bunch of images that are related to the problem. Make a collage of the images, and then look for solution based on what you see. If you can't collect images – draw a picture. It does not have to be a work of art. Doodles are completely acceptable.

You can also compare your challenge or problem with something else similar. Maybe it is in a different industry or specialty. Can you draw any ideas from the comparison?

Now, look at the solutions or ideas you have created. Are you making any assumptions that are unfounded, or that could be challenged? Are you trying to think of a solution in a linear fashion when it doesn't have to be done that way? Question all of your assumptions, and ask if they are real or founded. If not, move around them, and try another perspective.

Once you have an idea(s), you can begin to form a plan to solve it. You don't have to solve the problem or challenge all in one day. Stay focused on it, and you will solve it.

With the right attitude and mind set, you will begin to see opportunities everywhere. Many of them will require you to have a golden key to open the box, only to discover that you need another key. (I never said they would all be easy...) Stay focused and keep your mind open for the opportunities. You will find one that your key will open.

Good luck finding your Golden Key!