

THE JORDAN HARBINGER SHOW

Worksheet for Guy Kawasaki | Life Lessons from a Wise Guy (Episode 190)

Before there was anything like social media, influencers actually had to do, be, or create something that warranted such influence.

By this definition, [Wise Guy: Lessons from a Life](#) author Guy Kawasaki has been a qualified Silicon Valley influencer for decades, beginning with marketing the Macintosh line for Apple back in 1984.

But Guy will be the first to tell you he's missed just as many opportunities as he's won. [On this episode](#), we'll dig into the treasure trove of Guy's life lessons and gaze appreciatively upon the sparkling nuggets of wisdom he's picked up along the way.

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Luck Is Not a Strategy, But...

Guy even contends that the biggest titans of modern industry arrived to their lofty perches more out of luck than by following any surefire formula or wishy-washy notion of “passion.”

“I don’t think that Mark Zuckerberg or Elon Musk or Steve Jobs had this plan,” says Guy. “I think one thing led to another. I surf a lot, and every once in a while I turn around, I don’t even paddle, and I catch a wave. It’s not because of skill — it just happens! But that’s not a strategy to surf.”

Guy happened to have a friend who got him a job at Apple at the right time — which was lucky — but he’d also made decisions that gave that luck a better chance of striking. When it did, he was ready to turn it into a career-launching opportunity.

In what ways has luck contributed to your own life’s triumphs? Do you go out of your way to make focused decisions that give luck a greater surface area to strike? Try to pinpoint a time when, had it not been for the sake of a lucky break, your life would have taken a dramatic turn that led to a radically different destination.

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Count Your Blessings

Guy has turned down some pretty heavy duty career opportunities — like when Steve Jobs offered him a third job at Apple after having quit the company twice, or when Sequoia wanted him in the running for CEO of Yahoo. While he's calculated that these decisions cost him billions of dollars over the years, he's still inclined to be grateful for the things he does have rather than lamenting over the things he doesn't.

"I don't think anybody would not think about those decisions every once in a while, but having said that, I'm healthy, I'm at wife 1.0. How many fathers can say they surf with their four kids — or do anything with their four kids? I've outlived Steve Jobs. It really depends on how you look at it."

We're all guilty of complaining about the bad turns life takes — whether we were ultimately responsible for steering it into those turns or not. But now, make a list of the good things you've got going on in your life for which you're truly grateful — and reflect on them. For additional reflection, you might make a list of bad turns your life could have taken but fortunately didn't.

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Embrace the Unknown

It's easy to see that the way we do things now isn't the way we did things yesterday. It's equally easy to forget that the way we do things now isn't the way we'll do things tomorrow. Guy uses ice to demonstrate. We used to harvest ice from lakes, but we could only do it in winter (Ice 1.0). Then we built factories capable of freezing and creating ice en masse in any season (Ice 2.0). Then we created freezers in which we could make ice not only in any season, but in the privacy of our own homes (Ice 3.0).

“The lesson: None of the ice harvesters became factories,” says Guy, “and none of the factories became refrigerator companies, because most organizations define themselves in terms of what they already do. And that’s why companies die.”

He also points out that Steven Sasson invented digital photography at Kodak in 1975, but proliferation of this technology would have rendered its chemical film development business model obsolete. Rather than adapting and spearheading a new industry, Kodak was eventually buried under it 18 years later.

But then we also have examples of companies like Amazon and Netflix that pivoted far beyond their original concepts toward the unknown and continue to thrive.

As a thought exercise, imagine how an existing product or service might be improved upon — whether through technological breakthrough or other innovation. If you were in charge of the disrupted industry, how might you adapt its infrastructure to survive and thrive under the new paradigm?

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Full show notes and resources for this episode [can be found here.](#)

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About



Join us as we get deep into the untapped wisdom of the world's top performers -- from legendary creators to intelligence operatives, iconoclastic writers to visionary change-makers.

We deconstruct the playbooks of the most successful people on earth -- and learn new strategies, perspectives, and insights you can't find anywhere else. Then, take these valuable insights into your own life and live what you listen.

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